[Organization and Content of the Tiwi File]

[This file has 9 sources by 6 different authors. Of these, three offer general accounts (1:Hart and Pilling; 5:Basedow and 9:Harkney and Elkin) while the remaining works deal with more limited aspects of Tiwi culture. Hart and Pilling offer some particularly interesting data on manipulations for social status and its connections with marriage and feuds; the Harkney and Elkin source provides a convenient short-hand introduction to Tiwi culture; while Basedow gives the only detailed information on material culture and physical characteristics. All three sources contain more general ethnographic data as well. Mountford (2) is an account of Tiwi art and religion and contains information on myths, and ceremonies along with a number of excellent plates. The two Fry sources (7 and 8) deal respectively with mourning rites and initiation ceremonies. The three remaining articles by Hart deal with community organization and matrilineal totemic clans, (3),the latter corresponding to OCM category 614, Sibs; personal names (4), and a description of the personalities of five Tiwi brothers (6). The file as a whole provides the best coverage on ceremonies, art, marriage practices, social status, feuds, and local organization. However there is very little material on kinship relations, personality development, economic organization and material culture.]

Processed in 1961

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 609 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human [101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate [173] to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distribu- 171 tional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how [411] isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their [531] wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus- [764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the [511] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

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[177 524] [1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation. Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life—for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws) scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago. Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature, though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; graveposts were *pukimani*

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER I

The Art of the Tiwi

1. THE ART FORMS

ALTHOUGH Melville Island is separated from the mainland of Australia by the Dundas Strait, only fourteen miles in width, the art forms on either side of this swift-running tideway bear little resemblance to each other. That of the mainland, of which the bark and cave paintings of Oenpelli are typical (Mountford, 1956, pp. 112–264; Spencer, 1928, pp. 802–24), is representational, and among the most decorative art forms employed by the Australian aborigines, while that of Melville Island is highly formalized, and cannot be interpreted without the aid of the artist. In this respect (although they employ different motifs) the art of the Melville Islanders resembles that of the aborigines of Central Australia (Mountford, 1937, pp. 84–95). 171 531 [131]

2. MEDIUMS OF EXPRESSION

The aborigines of Melville Island,[8] like those on the mainland (Spencer, 1928, p. 793) painted designs on the inside of the sheets of bark that made up their wet-weather shelters. Basedow (1913, p. 320, Pls. 19–20) figured bark paintings he collected from bark shelters on Melville Island, and Campbell (1834, p. 151), referring to shelters he saw near Fort Dundas (Punata), in Apsley Straits, writes, "Some of them were ornamented with figures drawn in white pipeclay; one, in particular, was neatly and regularly done all over, representing the cross-bars of a cell."[9] 171 353 531

Under normal tribal conditions, however, it is in the carving and painting of the elaborate burial poles and the ceremonial spears, coupled with the decorating of the large bark baskets, that the aborigines of Melville Island find an outlet for their artistic efforts. 531

The effect of the *pukamuni* burial ceremony was evident in many of the bark paintings collected on the expedition. For example, Pl. 3D, Pl. 54F, and Pl. 54A, are essentially the same designs as a Melville Island artist would use to

[8] For the sake of simplicity I will, in future, use the term, Melville Island, or the tribal name, Tiwi, to indicate the Melville and Bathurst Island culture, both of which are part of the same tribal unit. [101]

[9] This would have been a design similar to that on bark painting (Pl. 52D).

[p. 18 blank]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

INTRODUCTION

MELVILLE ISLAND (Fig. 1), the research field of the 1954 National Geographic expedition, is, with the exception of Tasmania, the largest of the Australian islands. Eighty miles from east to west, and seventy from north to south, it rises barely five hundred feet above the sea. Its level surface is covered with a monotonous grey-green forest of eucalypts and acacias, whose monotony is broken only by the steep cliffs and sandy beaches of the coastline, the salt-water creeks which cut deeply into the northern coasts, and the almost impenetrable mangrove swamps that line those waterways. 131 133 137

Between Melville Island and the mainland are the swiftly running tideways, the reefs and shoals of the Clarence and Dundas Straits, tideways so dangerous that, before the installation of a series of flashing light-buoys, no ocean-going ship would attempt to navigate their broken waters in the darkness.

Abel Tasman, in 1644, was the first European to sail along the east, north, and west coasts of Melville Island and the adjacent Bathurst Island,[1] naming Cape Van Diemen and Van Diemen Gulf after the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. As Tasman's account of that journey was lost, we do not know whether he actually landed on the islands, or only saw them in the distance. 175

Sir Philip King circumnavigated the two islands in 1818 and in 1824 the British Government, both to prevent the French from settling along the northern coasts of Australia and to protect British commerce from the rapidly expanding Dutch trade, established a military post at Fort Dundas, on the Apsley Straits. After five unhappy years the authorities moved the garrison to Port Essington, on the Coburg Peninsula, on the mainland, but not before both Sir Gordon Bremer (12th Nov. 1824) and Major Campbell (1834, pp. 135–60) had made some excellent observations on aboriginal graves, burial poles, bark paintings and canoes. [114]

In the early days of this century, a buffalo hunter, Joe C. Cooper, having gained the confidence of the warlike people of Melville Island, known as the Tiwi tribe, established a camp near Cockle Point (Fig. 1) on the south-western corner of Melville Island. There he earned a living shooting buffaloes for their hides, buffaloes whose forbears had escaped from the settlement at Fort Dundas.

[1] Melville and Bathurst Islands, separated by the narrow Apsley Straits, are both a geographic and cultural unit. [107]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After Cooper had established himself a number of investigators, Brown in 1905, Klaatsch in 1906, Spencer and Basedow in 1911, and Fry in 1913, paid short visits to the Islands, and recorded valuable information on the aborigines and their ceremonial life. 175 114

Following their departure no research work was carried out until 1929, when Hart spent a year or more among the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands. But though Hart must have collected a great deal of data among the almost untouched aborigines of those times, he has published only two short papers on their customs. (Hart, 1930, pp. 167–80; pp. 280–290.)

Again there was a lag in time, except for a short paper by Harney and Elkin (1942, pp. 228–34), until Pilling in 1953, stationed at the Bathurst Island Sacred Heart Mission, spent over a year studying aboriginal life and social organization.[8]

In 1954 the National Geographic Society's expedition established a camp at Snake Bay on the north coast of Melville Island (Fig. 1), and for six months studied the ethnology, the geology and the ornithology of the area. Although the National Geographic Society of America provided the bulk of the funds, Mr. John Bonython of Adelaide financed the geological survey of Melville and Bathurst Islands. 121 114 [122]

The expedition party of American and Australian scientists was an excellent example of international co-operation. It was made up of Miss Jane Goodale, ethnologist, and Dr. Carleton Coon, Professor of Anthropology, both from the University of Pennsylvania; Mr. David Parsons, ornithologist from Yale University; Mr. Brian Daily, geologist from the University of Adelaide; Mr. William E. Harney, guide, Mr. George Joy, cook, and myself, as leader and ethnologist.

Our combined research covered a wide field. Miss Goodale concentrated on the place of the women and children in the community, Mr. Parsons collected and studied the birds of the island, Mr. Daily, by an examination of the outcropping rocks, established the geological history of Melville and Bathurst Islands, whilst I, apart from the duties of leadership, concentrated on the art, myth, and particularly the burial ceremonies.

During their visit, Dr. Carleton Coon and his wife made a special study of the physical characteristics of the aborigines.

I chose Melville Island as a centre of research, because it was evident from the scattered writings of Basedow, Fry, Hart, Harney, Spencer and 121 10

[8] The Sacred Heart Mission was established on Bathurst Island, opposite Cooper's camp, during 1911. [797]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 northeastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired
[175] the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indi-
[177] cate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even
[609] had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

184 they speak one language and they regard a certain defined area of land as
619 belonging to them.

[171] The Australian tribe is a collection of persons who speak a common
619 language, or what they themselves regard as such, practise the same
101 customs, and normally have a name by which they distinguish themselves and their language. The inhabitants of Melville and Bathurst Islands are therefore to be regarded as a single tribe, but it is difficult to find a true tribal name. The Uwaidja of Port Essington call the Melville Islanders, *Wuyuk*, as Spencer notes, but the Melville Islanders scarcely
186 regard it as necessary to call themselves anything. The local group of
648 which a man is conscious of being a member is the horde, and until the
101 advent of the white man, the Melville Islander was not aware that any other people existed except themselves. It was impossible and also quite unnecessary for them to visit the mainland in their bark canoes more
[725] especially as the coast around Cape Don and Cape Hotham, dimly seen on clear days, was regarded as the abode of departed souls, *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead. It was apparently just as impossible or unnecessary, or perhaps danger was the chief deterrent, for the Uwaidja or the Larakia to visit Melville Island.

The result was that the people, with no contact with people not of their own tribe, did not really need a tribal name, and very seldom used the word *Tiwi*, which is the only one that can be regarded as the name of the tribe.

101 Tiwi is a word that is known and but seldom used. Some of the younger men were in fact surprised and interested when they heard the old men using it in response to my enquiries. There is no question of secrecy or tabu about it. In common everyday use are the words *tini*, meaning a man of one of the Melville or Bathurst Island hordes, *i.e.*, a male member of the Tiwi, and *tiya* meaning a female member of the tribe. *Tiwi* is the plural form of *tini* and *tiya*. It is often said by informants that *tini* means a man, and *tiya* a woman, irrespective of colour or race, but in point of fact these words are only used as applying to members of the *Tiwi*, and some other word would be used in referring to a white man, or a Larakia or Uwaidja.

101 Objection may be made to the adoption as the tribal name of these
619 people of a word that theoretically at any rate seems simply "men" in the ordinary language. But in point of fact the word is never used except

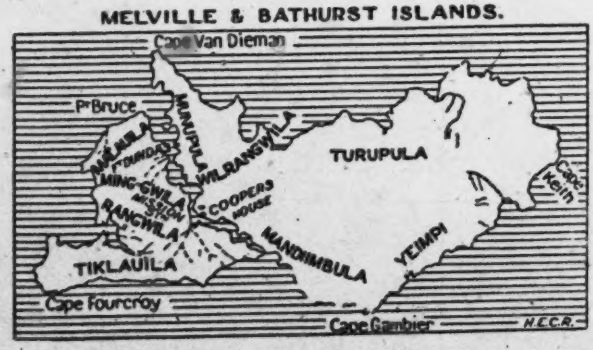
3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the same way as such words as Larakia, Worgaits, Uwaidja, etc., are used. For example, if a Melville Islander at home is asked who a certain group of natives are, he will reply in his own language that there are, *e.g.*, two *Tiklauila* and two *Munupula*, these being horde names. Ask him the same question in Darwin about another group and he will reply, *e.g.*, "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira Larakia*" (four Tiwi and two Larakia); he does not mean to insult the Larakia by denying them the status of men; he is merely applying the term *Tiwi* to men of his own tribe. Should he be uncertain of the tribe of the other, he will say "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira wanarui*" (literally "four Tiwi and two blackfellows"); *wanarui* being a term denoting black fellows as distinct from white men.

In other words, when at home on the Islands, a man thinks of himself as a *Tiklauila* or a *Munupula*, or whatever his horde may be, since there he feels strongly his bond of solidarity with the fellow members of his horde. When in contact with other tribes, however, as in Darwin, he thinks of himself as Tiwi, a member of a group which despite the divisions inside it, is nevertheless a group distinct from other tribes, and this seems quite an adequate reason for us to adopt Tiwi as the tribal name.

The hordes number nine, five on Melville and four on Bathurst Island. This division is not strictly accurate, as may be seen from the accompanying map; the *Malauila* territory, while mainly on Bathurst stretches across Apsley Strait on to Melville, while a portion of Bathurst Island, including the site of the Mission Station, is *Mandiimbula* territory.

MELVILLE & BATHURST ISLANDS.



MAP SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF THE TIWI HORDES

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

101 621 Like other concrete things in this culture, the hordes have a multiplicity of names, and this has caused a certain amount of confusion and doubt as to their actual number. A full list of these names is as follows. The name most commonly used in each case by the natives themselves is given first in each case, as these are the names used throughout this account of the Tiwi culture.

1. *Tiklauila*: *Arupula, Matjulauila, Muliuŋabila, Tuŋalimbila, Taiŋauila, Pilauiruntabila, Aritui, Waŋiŋui, Adauinabila, Paŋondiŋalauila, Pukuŋinabila, Primanduwila.*
2. *Wraŋgwila*: *Mungwaiunabila, Puianarurwila, Tintauwila.*
3. *Miŋgwila*: *Wonuruwila, Kaliprauiŋuwila, Malamikwariuŋabila.*
4. *Malauila*: *Mirkalambila, Pulunduwila, Iwiriwila, Malamuŋoriuŋabila, Papiuŋabila.*
5. *Wilraŋgwila*: *Panodjiwila, Mirkawiuŋabila, Marawauila, Kambuŋambila.*
6. *Munupula*: *Urumaiawila, Tunuŋabila, Imaluwila, Parumunupula.*
7. *Turupula*: *Yuŋanduwila, Tikampula.*
8. *Yeimpi*: *Arupontuwila, Araŋgitarila, Palwiuŋabila.*
9. *Mandiimbula*: *Tumulambila, Tilambila, Urumaiuŋabila, Uruwinapila, Ilubiuŋabila.*

101 114 621 If Spencer's list[1] is compared with mine it will be seen that allowing for our different spellings, his "Kambuambulla" are really the *Marawauila*, his "Cherupulla" are the *Turupula*, his "Purumunupulla" are really the *Munupula*, his "Mindaluulla" probably mean the *Miŋgwila*. "Ulobu" (or *Ilubi*) is a place-name of a favourite camping ground in the country of the Mandiimbula slightly to the north-west of Cape Gambier; hence *Ilubiuŋabila*. "Marungallambu" similarly is a camping ground in the territory of the *Malauila*. "Barranpunalli" I am unable to trace; *Punali* (or *Bunali*) is, however, the name for the district around the English Point Alley. "Arangijerulla" is an alternative name for the *Yeimpi*, but I prefer to spell it *Araŋgitarila*, while "Balauiungambulla" is obviously a misspelling of the *Palwiuŋabila*, which is another alternative name for the *Yeimpi*.

121 To explain this multiplicity of horde names, and also to throw some light on the actual composition of the horde, I propose to consider one of the hordes in detail, taking for this purpose the *Tiklauila*.

[1] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, 1914, page 45.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

period is the prelude to the complete lapsing of the title to the district. 423
The prominent part played in this institution by the father's father and the 628
fact that most of the present districts held on such a title are held from the 613
father's father whereas comparatively few are held through an ancestor 685
(necessarily more remote) who has been forgotten, seems to indicate that *yirt' amini* holdings do not last more than three generations before they lapse for want of sufficient able-bodied men to enforce them.

It must not be imagined that the whole of Melville and Bathurst 423
Islands are divided into such holdings nor indeed that everyone in the tribe 613
belongs to such a group. The main obstacle to this lies in the self- 621
evident fact that if one's father's father dies in the territory of another horde, as must have quite frequently have happened in the days of marauding expeditions between hordes, there can be no such thing as a *yirt' amini* holding of the district wherein he died. Moreover there are numbers of the Tiwi whose fathers and grandfathers died young, and the essence of the system is that the grandfather should have been old enough to have sufficient male children and grandchildren to enforce the claim.

It can easily be seen from the above how it comes about that each horde has a number of names, since each one of the *yirt' amini* group-names 621
is liable to be applied to the whole horde merely by adding *-ila* or *-ula* to 101
the name of the district they control.

Spencer's list of horde names is at variance with mine, because he 101
did not realize this. Out of six men of the *Tiklauwila*, one might easily 114
get six different answers to his question as to their "country," each 103
giving the name of his *yirt' amini* group. It is quite possible that the 621
horde names that are used here—*Tiklauwila*, *Munupula*, etc.—are really *yirt' amini* names that have become extended to include a whole horde either by the identification of a very powerful *yirt' amini* group with a horde in the eyes of the rest of the tribe or by the former horde name becoming tabu and a *yirt' amini* name being substituted. This view is strengthened by the fact that in one or two of the hordes, the horde name is still in use as the name of a district. Thus whereas the whole of the territory of the *Wilraŋgwila* on the north of Melville is technically *Wilraŋgu*, the native name for Karslake Island, a small portion of that territory, is *Wilraŋgu*. Similarly *Malau* is a creek in the territory of the *Malauila* horde.

A man is born into the horde of his father. Should his father die and 591
his mother be taken by a member of another horde he goes with her, and [611]
WHILE THE WOMAN WILL ALWAYS BE LOOKED UPON 621
AS BELONGING TO HER FORMER HORDE, THE CHILD [768]
CHANGES HIS, TAKING THAT OF HIS STEPFATHER.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

while the woman will always be looked upon as belonging to her former horde, the child changes his, taking that of his step-father. Very often when a boy is aged about 14 or 15 he is taken by his mother's brother of another horde to live with that horde for some years. Often he is initiated there and not quite so often he will spend the rest of his life there. It is no uncommon occurrence for a man to have spent his adolescent years in two or three different hordes in addition to the one into which he was born, always under the supervision of one or other of his classificatory mother's brothers. Two cases at least occurred in the last few years of young unmarried men who had been reared and initiated in one horde leaving that horde of their own free will and going to live permanently in another because they considered they had there more chance of obtaining a wife.[8]

On the other hand, a woman will usually be looked upon as belonging to the same horde all her life, even though she marries young and goes to live with another horde. To the tribe at large such a woman is for example a *Tiklawila*, though she has lived with the *Yeimpi* ever since her marriage, and her *Tiklawila* origin will never be forgotten.

As a result of these conflicting customs it is difficult to lay down any definite rule in regard to membership of the horde. The best generalization is perhaps to say that a woman retains all her life a connection with the horde into which she is born no matter where patrilocal marriage may lead her, while a man on the other hand belongs to whatever horde he is living with at the moment, this being normally but not at all invariably his father's horde.

TOTEMISM

The Tiwi have a system of matrilineal totemic clans. Each clan has a special relation to one or sometimes to two and in two instances to three species of natural objects. The members of the clan have a solidarity of their own, helping each other in tribal fights, speaking of each other as "brother" despite the variation in their actual blood relationship, and not marrying women of their own totem. There are, however, few of the distinctive features of Australian totemism as known from other parts of the continent. They eat their totem without any

[8] It was hardly a logical proceeding as one left the *Tiklawila* for the *Munupula* and the other (quite independently) left the *Munupula* for the *Tiklawila*.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

 101

restriction; they have no ceremonies for the increase of the totem species. 614 771

Since the totem of a child is that of its mother it follows that the members of one totemic clan are found in different hordes, and inversely each horde contains persons of several totemic clans. Nevertheless each totem is associated in the minds of the natives with a particular locality or district. This association appears in the myths, there being a number of stories which connect particular natural species with particular localities. Thus each clan may be said to have its ancestral home or centre, but there is little or nothing of any feeling of reverence or ritual attachment to the home of one's totem. Taking it all in all Tiwi totemism does not amount to very much compared with the elaborate forms of totemism found in other parts of Australia. 614 [621] 778 [101]

The word for totem and totemic clan is *pukui*. But the same word means also "sun" and in addition "breath." The connection between these three concepts denoted by one word is not at all apparent. 192

The totems are grouped into three phratries. The term phratry is here used in the sense of an exogamous group containing a number of clans and not being a moiety. The phratries are unnamed. Should a man want to mention a phratry he will call it by the name of one of the totemic clans composing it. He will generally use the name of his own totem clan if his own phratry is in question, or that of the clan that is powerful in the phratry. Thus the phratry that I am calling Phratry 1, will more often be called *Tjilarui* than anything else because at the present time the *Tjilarui* clan is very numerous and many of them are the kind of people who are usually much in the public eye. For a similar reason Phratry 2 is more often called *Timiririyui* than anything else, and Phratry 3 is usually *Tokwombui*. There is a much stronger feeling of solidarity with one's clan than with one's phratry, which will perhaps explain that while the clan name is very important there seems no need, or much less need, for any specific name for the phratry. 615

A complete list of the clans and their totems is given below. Each clan name has three forms, masculine singular, feminine singular, and plural, and these are given in the list in this order. 614 [193]

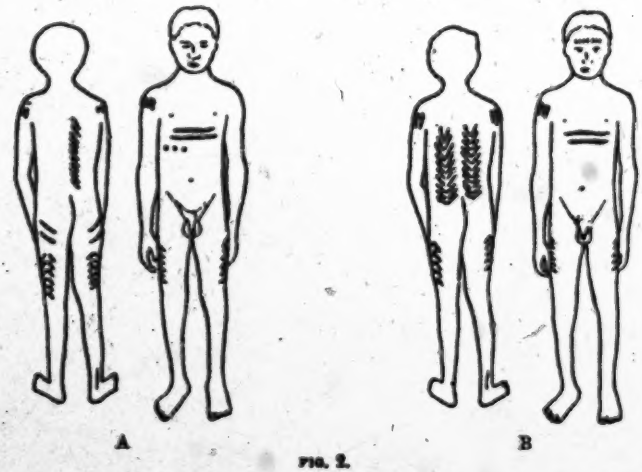
Clan Name	Totems
Phratry 1.	
(a) *Tjilati, Tjilariya, Tjilarui*	jaberoo
(b) *Ariri, Arwidina, Arwudui*	mullet

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

302 black; ears, red; hair and beard on lower part of chin, yellow. *Case* (4): Lower half of face from below the eyes to the chin, yellow, excepting the lips and the immediate surrounding, which are red; the upper half of face divided vertically in a median line, the left segment being black and the right red. *Case* (5): A broad, horizontal band of black extends across the forehead and the eyes; beneath this, the whole face is yellow, excepting (as in the previous case) the nose and lips, which are red. *Case* (6): A broad horizontal band of black across the forehead; beneath this, the whole surface from the eyes to the level of the nostrils, yellow; the remaining portion including the lips and chin, red. *Case* (7): The crown of the head and hair, red, the forehead yellow; a black horizontal band across the eyes, below which the whole surface is yellow, excepting the nose and lips (as in previous cases), which are red. More complicated patterns are better understood by referring to the sketches.

Body Scars.

304 A type of cosmetic body-scars is prevalent on the island, which is unique and [101] different from the system found on the mainland. The production of this permanent ornamentation is, as elsewhere, dependent on the formation of an elevated cicatrix. This is done by cutting the skin and artifically inducing a prolific granulation by



A B

FIG. 2.

keeping the edges of the wound apart with foreign matter, such as ochre and ashes. [171] On the mainland we find such cicatrices in the form of horizontally or vertically disposed parallel ridges on various parts of the body. Although to a small extent such are also found on Bathurst Island, the characteristic pattern there is one made in direct imitation of an object of nature, namely, the frond of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*). The former simple type of cicatrices, consisting of two to five,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on The

or more, parallel ridges, is found first, as vertically disposed ridges, about 10 centimetres in length, on the outer surface of the upper arm, in the region of the deltoid muscle (*vide* Fig. 2, A and B); secondly, as two or three horizontal ridges, about 20 centimetres long, upon the chest and abdomen, either in the epigastrium or immediately below the nipples, or in the umbilical region; thirdly, as two or three ridges, horizontally disposed or slightly inclined from back to front, on the buttocks and outer surface of the thighs (*vide* Fig. 2, A). 304

Occasionally a horizontal row of short vertical scars is cut upon the forehead immediately above the eyes (*vide* Fig. 2, B); and also an asymmetrical vertical group on the chest or back consisting of a number of parallel scars which slant outwards and downwards from the sternum or spine, respectively (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

The palm-leaf pattern is composed of a series of V-shaped figures, whose angles rest one within the other and point downwards (or upwards as the case may be) and are so disposed as to lie one immediately above or below the other in a vertical line; the enclosing sides standing out as parallel and inclined ridges. The constituent V's are often slightly larger in the centre of the group than at either

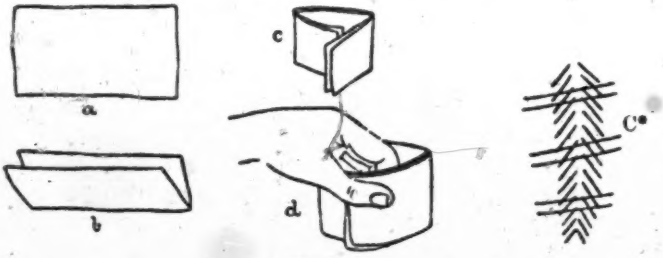


FIG. 3.

end. There is little doubt that the incentive to this design was given by the leaf of the "*Zamia*" (*Cycas media*). The designs, being of different dimensions and of different lengths according to their situation, were observed on the back (on both or either side of the spine) and on the upper and outer surfaces of the arm and thigh (*vide* Plate XVI). The number of the completed palm leaves, in any one particular part of the body, varies. The usual number is from one to three on the arms and thighs, and from two to five, or more, on the back. The design was not noticed on the chest or abdomen. Occasionally a design on the thigh might be seen modified by additional pairs of horizontal scars[1] (*vide* Fig. 3, C*).

[1] I also observed the same "palm-leaf" scars on the chest, back, and arms of Melville Island natives. These natives also paint their faces with ochre; one conspicuous method in use is to paint the hair yellow, the nose red, and to daub the chest yellow over the region of the sternum. [302]

Professor H. Klaatsch also noticed some of the scars on the Melville Island natives and stated that "they are totally different from the ornamentations on the mainland. They seem to imitate leaves arranged on a branch; but I make the suggestion that they are connected with the arrangements of the barbs on spears." *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 586. [101] [184]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations
101 during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted
171 either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the
681 fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversa-
516 tion, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the
[101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so
372 far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head.
513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed
302 with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as
[171] 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 the mainland. In the first place no spears are manufactured for projecting by
other method than simply by hand. No spear-throwers, so much in evidence
[101] among all true Australian tribes, are in use on these islands. Yet light spears
411 were observed which really marked the beginning of the development of the arrow.
524 These were seen to be used by youths at play and during their sham fights. Light green sticks, a little over a metre in length and slightly more than a lead pencil's thickness, are cut and scraped to a simple point at one end. The opposite end, that is, the back- or hand-end, is next put to the mouth and split with the teeth along its fibres into several strips some 10 centimetres long. The split pieces are then bent outwards like the feathers of an arrow and the toy weapon is ready for use. It can be hurled by hand with astounding precision. The opponents evade the missiles by dodging and crouching and contorting their bodies in much the same clever manner as I have described[1] of the Larrekiya and Wogait tribes.

411 Strictly speaking, one type of spear prevails. It is made of a single piece of solid wood, straightened to a greater or less degree over a fire. It is barbed at the front end and tapers to a simple point behind. The extreme variations in length and, consequently, in weight also, of this spear attract the attention at first sight. It is nothing unusual to find spears measuring 450 centimetres in length and weighing 2,700 grammes, but at the same time the smaller specimens measure only 250 centimetres in length and weigh 370 grammes. When we consider that a fair average length of the Northern Territory spear is 300 centimetres and a good average weight 260 grammes, the maxima of the islanders' spears quoted seem
[136] very remarkable indeed. The more do these appeal to us since the largest species of the indigenous fauna is but a fair-sized wallaby. Crocodiles are comparatively scarce, and the buffalo, introduced from Timor by Captain Barlow, first commandant of Fort Dundas, in 1826, is practically unknown on Bathurst Island. On Melville Island, where similar spears are in use, the buffalo is very plentiful, but it is a singular fact that the natives do not hunt this beast to any considerable extent.

The head of the spear has many barbs carved on one side and, occasionally, on two diametrically opposite sides. There are usually from ten to thirty barbs, which are directed backwards (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 5 (Series)). Behind these there may or may not be from four to eight small serrations that stand out at right angles to the length of the shaft. In other cases, too, some six or more barbs are cut at the back part of the spear-head pointing the opposite way, that is, in the direction the spear is thrown. The spear heads have a long point resembling a cutting-blade or spike. The barbs are symmetrically carved with sharp edges and point. They are flattish lancet-shaped, with a central ridge on the outside, and project from the head to various degrees of prominence in different specimens. Many of the spears are longitudinally grooved with an adze, either for the whole of their length or along the head-end only. They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 33.

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. Harney and A. P. Elkin[1]

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and 136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog 825 (*wongine*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts 757 of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

●101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] [1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. Elkin.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 O120 Tiwi O120

which is interesting. It means the "Moon People" and is probably the name of the tribe displaced by the Purakapale people in the past. It is Arakitamun-uwi (plural), Arakitamun-ini (masculine), Arakitamun-inga (feminine). 101

Horde Places. Living in isolated groups, these people talk of horde places. A man from the south of Bathurst Island will tell you he is of the Tikaluwila people, in the horde place of Tikalaru, the country. Thus a man is a Tikaluwinala and a woman is a Tikiluwinila of the country of Tikalaru in the tribe of Worunguwi. (Hart writes Tiklauila). 621 361

As it is with this horde so it is with all the groups, three of which are on Bathurst Island; Tikalaru on the south of the Island, Arangu on the north, and Malo on the western shore of the Island. We are not sure of the Melville Island divisions but the following are fairly reliable: Mundiimpu, Anangatera, Yaimpi, being three hordes united as one horde on the southern shore; Turupu and Maruwu, two hordes living as one horde to the north-east of the Island; and Wilarunggu and Munaipu, two hordes living as one local group on the north-west of the Island. (This does not conflict with Hart's list.)

These hordes have indefinite tribal boundaries, yet it is considered a transgression to go too far into them for hunting purposes. One law relating to food gathering is, "He who burns the grass first is considered to own all the food that is caught on that burnt patch; he is a boss as it were and remains such until after the cold weather sets in and the dews bring on a new lot of grass." 423 224

Clans. Although the people are divided into numerous hordes they have only three clans (*aramipi*), but each of these clans has a number of sub-totems, *emuya*.[2] These may be survivals of weaker clans or possibly an example of classificatory totemism. Hart calls the *aramipi*, phratries. The totems are: 614

1. Main totem	*Kudjarli*	Fire
Sub-totems	*Yarinapila*	Red ochre
	Iywati	Honey nest
	Pinkwarui	Stingray
	Ilitui	Tree with red flower
	Woriapita	Sun
2. Main totem	*Tukambani*	Martin
Sub-totems	*Tapitapini*	March fly
	Buygaluwila	Stone
	Ariyguwila	Stone.
3. Main totem	*Miatui*	Pandanus
Sub-totems	*Murukpungama*	Flying fox
	Mudumbila	Mullet
	Mandupowi	Fly
	Andolui	Spring
	Tjilati	Jabaru.

[2] The same name as the gall-bladder and the pulse.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 1. Snake Bay Settlement

114 Islanders on a hunt. The trip took us to a small clearing on the right bank of the Paluwiunga River, ten miles upstream from where it empties into the Arafura Sea.

131 A brief glance at the map will help to further pinpoint this location. Ten degrees south of the equator and at a distance of twenty to fifty miles due north from the Australian Northern Territory capital of Darwin, lies the relatively large Melville Island (1,000 square miles), named for Viscount Henry Dundas Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, who authorized the coastal survey of 1818 during which the island was circumnavigated. To the west, separated by a narrow strait, lies the smaller Bathurst
101 Island. The group of people with whom I found myself camped by the river bank were members of the Tiwi, a tribe of Australian Aboriginals whose country includes both these islands. Today about
[161 361 797] seven hundred members of the tribe live near to the southeast corner of Bathurst Island where they are in various ways administered to by the Sacred Heart Mission. On the northern coast of Melville
161 Island, on a hill overlooking Snake Bay, near the mouth of the
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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960

OI20 Tiwi OI20

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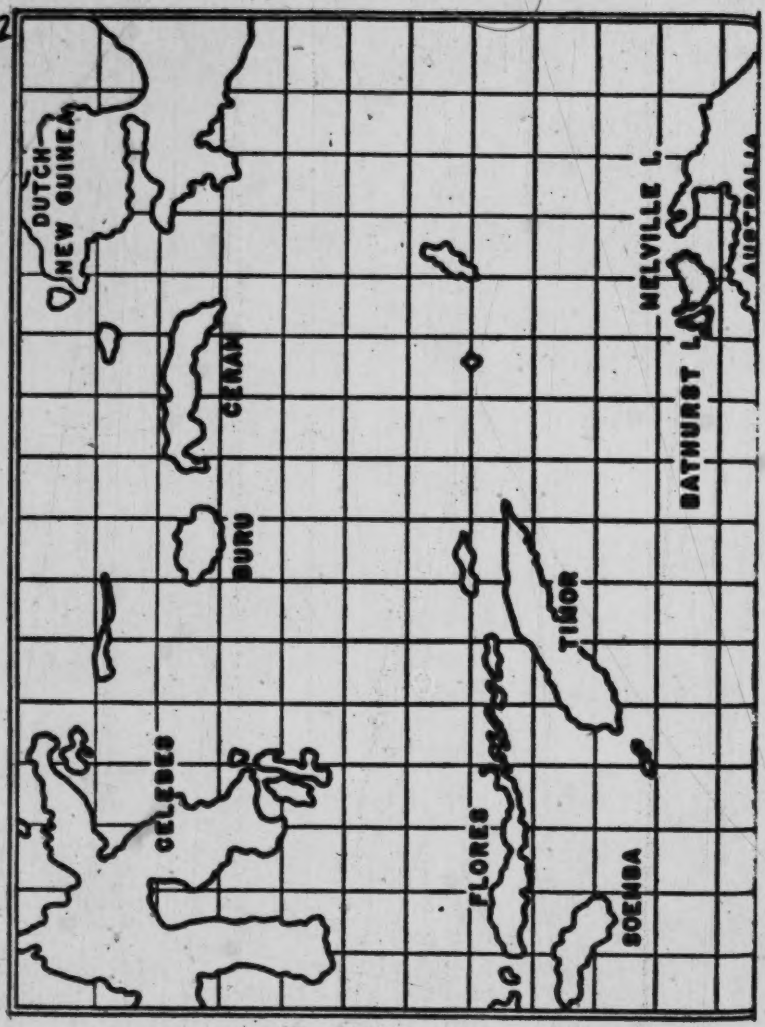

[p. ii]

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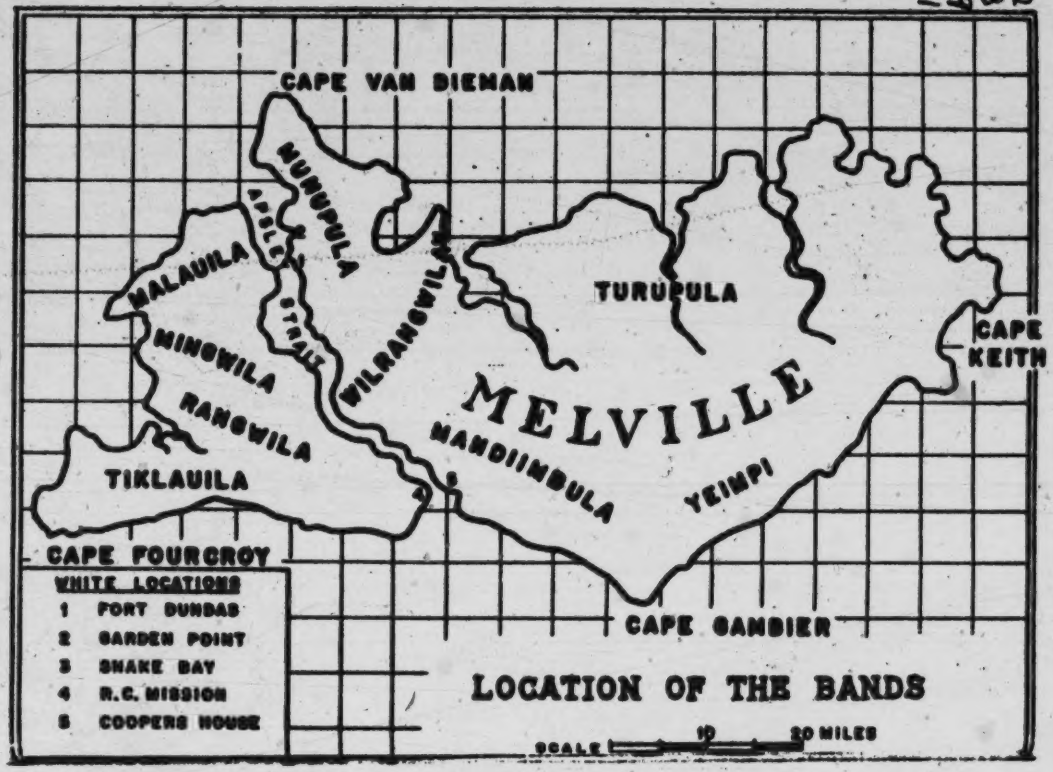

[p.xii]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OZ20 T1w1 OZ20

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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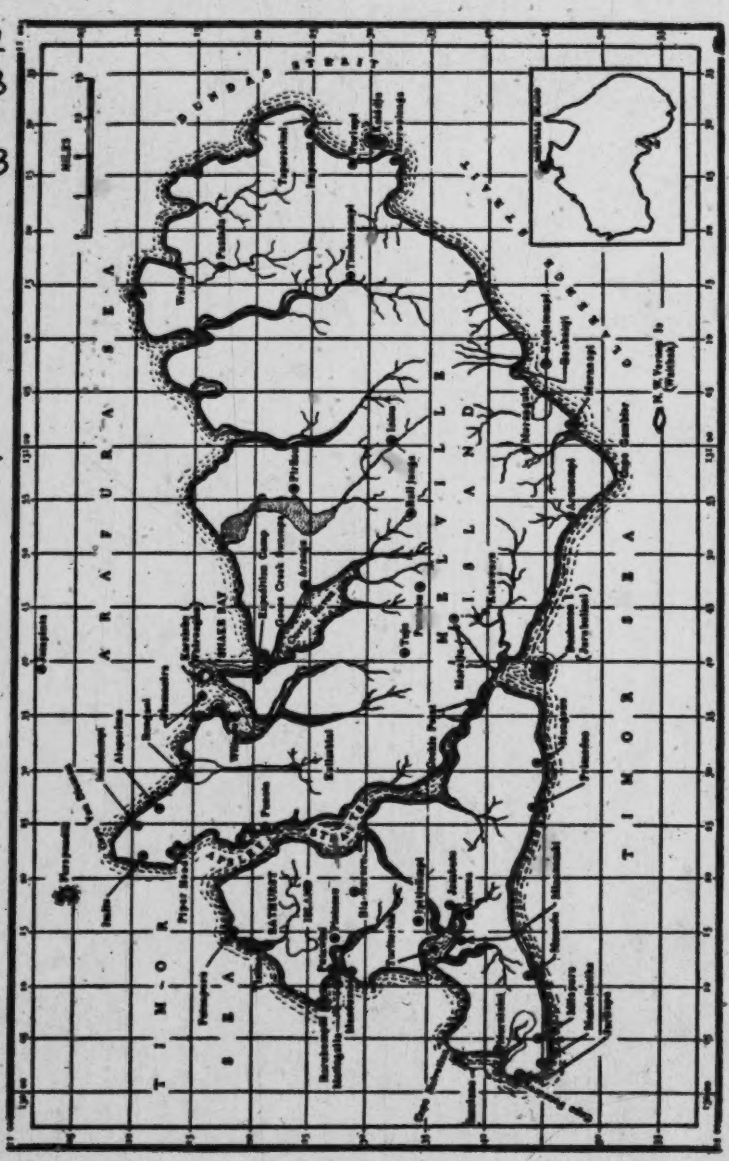
ARAFURA SEA
TIMOR SEA
MELVILLE ISLAND
DUNDAS STRAIT
APSLEY STRAIT
BAKER BAY
BATHURST ISLAND
Pirlangimpi
Nguiu
Tapaquin
Tikalara
Tiwi
Pularumpi
Wurankuwu
Milikapiti
Bamyili
Jilamara
Nguwarla
Pumpuna
Mantaranga
Mandjaitji
Mandjaitji
Mandjaitji

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

in the same way as such words as Larakia, Worgaits, Uwaidja, etc., are 101
used. For example, if a Melville Islander at home is asked who a certain 619
group of natives are, he will reply in his own language that there are, *e.g.*, two *Tiklauila* and two *Munupula*, these being horde names. Ask him the same question in Darwin about another group and he will reply, *e.g.*, "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira Larakia*" (four Tiwi and two Larakia); he does not mean to insult the Larakia by denying them the status of men; he is merely applying the term *Tiwi* to men of his own tribe. Should he be uncertain of the tribe of the other, he will say "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira wanarui*" (literally "four Tiwi and two blackfellows"); *wanarui* being a term denoting black fellows as distinct from white men.

In other words, when at home on the Islands, a man thinks of himself as a *Tiklauila* or a *Munupula*, or whatever his horde may be, since there he feels strongly his bond of solidarity with the fellow members of his horde. When in contact with other tribes, however, as in Darwin, he thinks of himself as Tiwi, a member of a group which despite the divisions inside it, is nevertheless a group distinct from other tribes, and this seems quite an adequate reason for us to adopt Tiwi as the tribal name.

The hordes number nine, five on Melville and four on Bathurst Island. 101
This division is not strictly accurate, as may be seen from the accompany- 131
ing map; the *Malauila* territory, while mainly on Bathurst stretches across 621
Apsley Strait on to Melville, while a portion of Bathurst Island, including the site of the Mission Station, is *Mandiimbula* territory.

MELVILLE & BATHURST ISLANDS.

[102]

MAP SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF THE TIWI HORDES

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OIZO Tiwi OIZO

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"SIXTY MILES OF SHARK-INFESTED WATERS LIE BETWEEN BATHURST ISLAND AND THE MAINLAND."

[P.15(C)]

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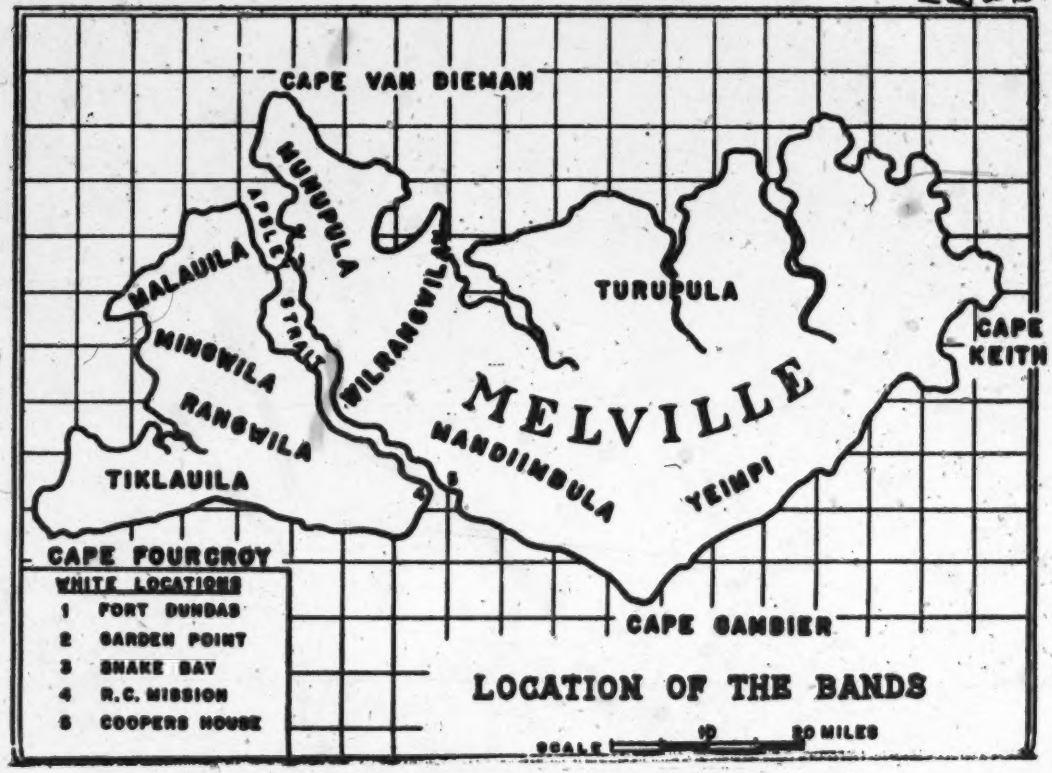

[Fig. 4]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OKZO Tiwi OKZO

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

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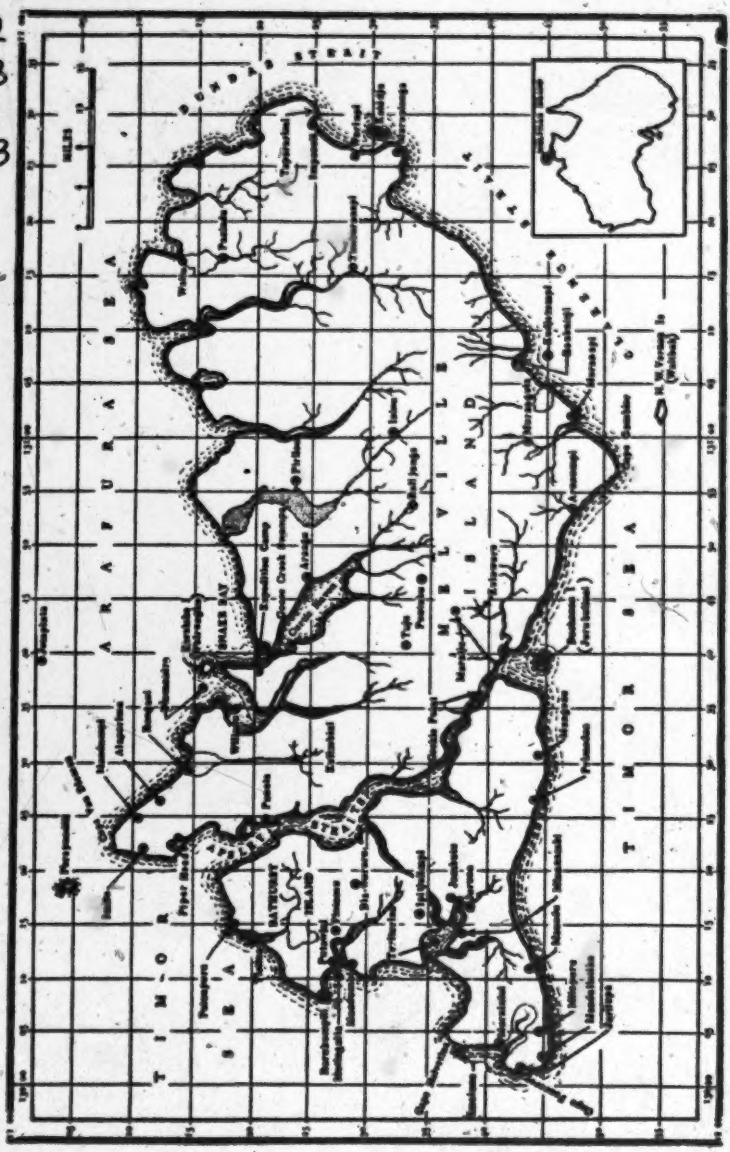
ARAFURA SEA
TIMOR SEA
MELVILLE ISLAND
BATHURST ISLAND
DARWIN STRAIT
APSLEY STRAITS
Tiwi
Pirlangimpi
Nguiu
Pularumpi
Milikapiti
Wurankuwu
Bamyili
Jilkminggan
Minjilang
Garden Point
Snake Bay
Cape Fourcroy
Cape Gambier
Cape Van Diemen
Cape Dundas
Cape Bedford
Cape Hotham
Cape Fanshawe
Cape Stewart
Cape Ward Hunt
Cape Cockburn
Cape Bateman
Cape Gaudin
Cape Grant
Cape Wickham
Cape Fourcroy

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 0120 Tiwi 0120

The territory of the *Tiklauila* is roughly contained in the area in the south of Bathurst Island, south of Point Hurd and west of *Mukambrimo*, which is a river about eight miles to the west of the mission station. In this area, roughly about two hundred square miles, there are a number of districts with specific names. Anyone familiar with the Australian blackfellow knows how certain districts are given certain names, and although no native can tell the exact boundaries, everyone in the tribe knows when he has come into one of these districts and when he has left it. The principle of differentiation of these areas seems to be upon the basis of the physical aspect of the country, a valley for example having a distinct name from either set of hills surrounding it, a plain being distinguished from a thickly-wooded piece of bushland on its margin, and so on. 361 621 103

These districts play an important part in Tiwi land ownership. Certain districts are not owned by the horde as a whole, but by a single family of that horde. Thus in the horde we are considering, *Tapio*, the extensive district in the extreme south-western corner of the island around Cape Fouveroy, is owned by a single set of men, all of whom are the son's sons of *Mikidjimirla*, a man who as far as can be judged died about 1870-1880. The basis of their title is the fact that *Mikidjimirla* died and was buried in the district, hence all the game and fruit in *Tapio* belong to them, and cannot be hunted or collected by anyone else without their consent. 423 [621]

The question immediately arises as to whether the mere burial of a man in a district gives his heirs property rights in that district. The Tiwi answer is that it always does if the man was sufficiently important. The man in question here, *Mikidjimirla*, was from all accounts one who left a deep impression on the society of his time both by his personality and by his prowess in warfare. More than that he left his mark on following generations by the number of children he had. At the present time, there are nine men, all grandchildren of *Mikidjimirla*, in whom the hunting and fruit-collecting rights of *Tapio* are vested, and these men and their families normally camp in *Tapio* and deny the right of other *Tiklauila* families to hunt there. This group has a solidarity of its own which is expressed by a name *Tapiauwila*, which is one of the alternative horde-names. It should be noted in this connection that the Tiwi name for father's father is *amini*, and the members of this group will frequently 423 425 554 423 613 [601]

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

period is the prelude to the complete lapsing of the title to the district. 423
The prominent part played in this institution by the father's father and the 628
fact that most of the present districts held on such a title are held from the 613
father's father whereas comparatively few are held through an ancestor 685
(necessarily more remote) who has been forgotten, seems to indicate that *yirt' amini* holdings do not last more than three generations before they lapse for want of sufficient able-bodied men to enforce them.

It must not be imagined that the whole of Melville and Bathurst 423
Islands are divided into such holdings nor indeed that everyone in the tribe 613
belongs to such a group. The main obstacle to this lies in the self- 621
evident fact that if one's father's father dies in the territory of another horde, as must have quite frequently have happened in the days of marauding expeditions between hordes, there can be no such thing as a *yirt' amini* holding of the district wherein he died. Moreover there are numbers of the Tiwi whose fathers and grandfathers died young, and the essence of the system is that the grandfather should have been old enough to have sufficient male children and grandchildren to enforce the claim.

It can easily be seen from the above how it comes about that each horde has a number of names, since each one of the *yirt' amini* group-names 621
is liable to be applied to the whole horde merely by adding *-ila* or *-ula* to 101
the name of the district they control.

Spencer's list of horde names is at variance with mine, because he 101
did not realize this. Out of six men of the *Tiklawila*, one might easily 114
get six different answers to his question as to their "country," each 103
giving the name of his *yirt' amini* group. It is quite possible that the 621
horde names that are used here—*Tiklawila*, *Munupula*, etc.—are really *yirt' amini* names that have become extended to include a whole horde either by the identification of a very powerful *yirt' amini* group with a horde in the eyes of the rest of the tribe or by the former horde name becoming tabu and a *yirt' amini* name being substituted. This view is strengthened by the fact that in one or two of the hordes, the horde name is still in use as the name of a district. Thus whereas the whole of the territory of the *Wilraygwila* on the north of Melville is technically *Wilraygu*, the native name for Karslake Island, a small portion of that territory, is *Wilraygu*. Similarly *Malau* is a creek in the territory of the *Malauila* horde.

A man is born into the horde of his father. Should his father die and 591
his mother be taken by a member of another horde he goes with her, and [611]
WHILE THE WOMAN WILL ALWAYS BE LOOKED UPON 621
AS BELONGING TO HER FORMER HORDE, THE CHILD [768]
CHANGES HIS, TAKING THAT OF HIS STEPFATHER.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

in which they invariably succeeded. Their canoes and weapons were similar to the mainland."[4] 177 [114]

The probability that the Tiwi have been isolated from external influences for a long time is still further supported by their culture. Their artefacts are remarkably simple—they do not even possess a spear-thrower or small mounted stone tools—their art forms and ceremonial life are unlike those in any other part of Australia, there are no secret rituals, and the social status of the women is on a much higher plane than that of any other aboriginal women. 174 105

[4] From the evidence given above we can safely discard this writer's statement. Foelsche, who was a police officer in Darwin, probably quoted a rumour without checking its accuracy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CONCLUSION

105 171 This study of the Tiwi tribe of Melville and Bathurst Islands, made through the medium of their art, their myths, and their ceremonies, reveals wide differences between many phases of their cultural life and that of the aborigines who live on the adjacent mainland. These differences are probably the result of isolation caused by the dangerous tideways which have separated the two peoples from each other for an unknown, but probably lengthy, period.

[174] Though both are of aboriginal stock, and from the same cultural background (as indicated by basically similar creation stories), this isolation has allowed the two groups to develop independently. It may well be that the beliefs of the Tiwi represent those of one of the aboriginal migrations to Australia, and has remained somewhat constant, while the mainland people, enriched by occasional waves of new ideas, have developed a much more varied philosophical and cultural life.

The main differences between the two cultures can be summarized as follows:

171 ×532 (a) The art forms of the Melville and Bathurst Islands are so highly formalized that they seldom resemble the objects they represent. In contrast, the art of their neighbours on the mainland, the Arnhem Land aborigines, is not only entirely representational, but is probably a more vital and colourful art than exists in any other part of the continent.

171 765 (b) Compared with the rest of Australia, too, the ceremonies of the Tiwi are particularly limited, there being only two in the whole culture. The major ceremony, that of burial, is by far the more elaborate. It extends over several months, involves the co-operation of many people, and provides the tribe with a complete outlet for their grief, their music, their dancing, and their art. This ceremony is without parallel in Australia, and, so far as we know, elsewhere in the world.

171 881 The other ceremony, the Kulama, is a blending of several rituals: the initiation of men and women into the social grades of the tribe; the ceremony of preparing a poisonous yam for food,[68] which ceremony the participants believe prolongs the wet season; and the airing of grievances

[114] [68] Spencer, 1928, p. 661, speaks of the Kulama as a food increase ritual. It is probable that Spencer was only expressing an opinion, having previously carried out research in Central Australia where increase rituals are both numerous and important. I did not obtain any evidence which indicated that food increase rituals were carried out by the Tiwi.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly
412 limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe
[177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of
[415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the
[245] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[44]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[44] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female
[114] ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This
[773] information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 O120 Tiwi O120

all these day-to-day activities of ordinary elementary field work, are, one presumes, based upon some common-sense judgments about the "personalities" of the natives with whom the anthropologist is living in rather intimate association. 121

Unfortunately the conventions of anthropology are such that it is just this sort of material which is never published and yet it would seem to be precisely this sort of material, if organized and systematized a little, which would throw light upon the amount of individual personality variation and the range of personality types which are to be found in the simpler societies. Too often the old-fashioned anthropologist, asked what he knows about the "personality" of his tribe, is apt to reply rather defensively, "Well, nothing much; you see I didn't pay much attention to toilet training when I was there, nor was I competent to give Rorschachs and T.A.T.'s." If, instead of being intimidated by the question, he would take the trouble to recall the ten natives he knew best (in the sense of knowing that is involved in the everyday statement "I know him pretty well") and attempt to describe briefly the "personality" of each of the ten, he would, one suspects, be astonished not only at how much common-sense knowledge he has of the personalities of the men he is describing but also at the range of difference that they exhibit.

As a crude sample of what would be revealed if the ordinary fieldworking anthropologist would make some attempt at "personality description" along such lines, there is offered in this paper a very superficial and cursory examination of the "personalities"[1] of five Australian aborigines whom the writer believes (perhaps erroneously) he got to know reasonably well *as people*, in the course of field work among the tribe to which they belonged—the Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands, North Australia. One cannot live with any tribe for two years, especially in the very primitive and intimate living conditions of nomadic Australian life, without getting to know certain individuals better than others, and two of the five men in question were not only trusted informants and advisers but also twenty-four-hour-a-day companions for weeks at a time. The basis of selection of these two, Mariano and Tipperary, is that the writer knew them over a long period of time and was able to observe them under a great variety of circumstances.[2] The addition of the other three—Antonio, Louis and Bob—is suggested by the fact that they were brothers or half-brothers of the first two, all five having a common mother, a woman named Bongdadu. The selection of a group of brothers for intensive study is justified in the present context by the self-evident fact that if, as is alleged by the personality and culture adherents, a common culture, with common toilet training, common family conditioning, etc., produces homogeneous personalities in the simpler societies, then such homogeneity of personality should be all the greater in a group of men who not only are products of the same culture but grew up in the same household, and were suckled, reared and toilet-trained by the same mother. 115 124 [121]

The Tiwi, who numbered 1,062 people in 1928-30, are divided into nine hordes or subtribes scattered over two islands. The southern section of Bathurst 105 000

1: Hart, C.W.M. and Arnold R. Pilling. The Tiwi of North Australia. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1960.

Pp. xii, 118; 1 map; 1 plate; bibliography

Yale: Nkd93 T5 960 H

[This account of the Tiwi is based on field work undertaken independently by each of the authors at different times. The study deals primarily with status manipulation and political behavior among the Tiwi but includes in connection with this a wide range of material on social life, marriage patterns, burial ceremonies, feuds, antagonisms, etc. The nature of Tiwi household organization, its economic functions and organization, and the functional relationship of this organization to the status system is also discussed. There is also some attempt to relate the peculiar nature of Tiwi social structure to geographical factors of isolation and to the favorable environment and abundant food supply found in their area of habitation. Religious practices and beliefs receive some treatment as well. Finally the authors consider some of the changes that have occurred among Tiwi as a result of mission influence and European contact and show how the nature of the changes has been

1: Hart, C. W. M. and Arnold R. Pilling.

adapted to basic Tiwi cultural patterns. The source is weak however on material culture and socialization processes, except for puberty initiation and there is little concrete material on kinship relations, sib and band organization.--Analyst]

Field dates: 1928-1954
Analyst: Betty Potash

Evaluation: Ethnologists-5
Processed in 1960

2: Mountford, Charles P. The Tiwi: their Art, Myth and Ceremony. London: Phoenix House, 1958.

185 pp.; 64 plates; 15 figures; map; bibliography; index.

Yale: Nkd93 T5 958M

[This source deals primarily with Tiwi art and religion. The author summarizes a number of creation myths and beliefs about nature and describes funeral and initiation ceremonies. The numerous photographs of Tiwi art are described and explained in detail. A number of indications of acculturation appear in the source, particularly with reference to song texts, and there is also some discussion of changes in the age of initiation. While initiation rites are now for men of 30 or older, Mountford believes that formerly such ceremonies took place at or around puberty. This agrees with Hart and Pilling's claim of puberty initiation. The author is an ethnologist primarily interested in art who did field work among the Tiwi. --Analyst]

Field date: 1954
Analyst: Betty Potash

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1960

3: Hart, C. W. M. The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands. Oceania, Vol. 1, pp. 167-180. Melbourne: Published for the Australian National Research Council by Macmillan and Company Limited, 1930-31.

Yale: Nk 10. Oc2. 1

[This source is essentially a study of Tiwi social organization as seen first from the standpoint of the local groups and secondly from that of the "matrilineal totemic clans." In his discussion of the hordes the author describes the boundaries and territorial rights of the groups, the variations in terminology used to refer to themselves, the transmission of property rights to other members of the group, and to a lesser extent, male and female status in the horde.

This paper embodies some of the results of the research carried out by the author during the time he served as a Science Research Scholar of the University of Sydney. --Analyst]

Field date: 1928-1929
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1961

4: Hart, C. W. M. Personal Names Among the Tiwi. Oceania, Vol. 1, pp. 280-290. Melbourne: Published for the Australian National Research Council by Macmillan and Company Limited, 1930-31.

Yale: Nk10. Oc2. v.1

[This article is a brief analysis of the use of personal names among the Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands in North Australia. Each individual of the society has a multiplicity of personal names which he acquires during his life-time, but when death occurs not only is his name taboo to others, but also all other names similar in sound to that of the deceased. The Tiwi also impose a taboo upon all names that were bestowed by the dead person during his life-time.

[This paper was originally presented by the author to Section F, Anthropology, of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, during the meetings in May, 1930 at Brisbane, Australia. -- Analyst]

Field date: 1928-1929
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1961

5: Basedow, Herbert. Notes on the Natives of Bathurst Island, North Australia. The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 43, pp. 291-323. London, 1913.

Yale: Nk 10. + R 81.43

[The author of these ethnographic notes, the Commonwealth Government's chief medical inspector of the area, recorded his observations during a nine-day tour to Bathurst and part of Melville Island. The data presented give attention to the physical appearance of the people, their methods, designs and techniques of body painting and tatooing, house types, clothing and personal decoration, household utensils, weapons, foods, canoes and canoe building, decorative art, ceremonies and burial practices. Special emphasis is placed in this latter category on the "memorial" poles used to mark the graves, both as to their construction and decoration. -- Analyst]

Field date: 1911
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Physician-5
Processed in 1961

6: Hart, C. W. M. The Sons of Turimpi. American Anthropologist, Vol. 56, pp. 242-261. Menasha: American Anthropological Association, 1954.

HRAF copy

[This article describes the personality characteristics of five Tiwi brothers. The author attempts to show the different types of personalities that can be encountered in primitive societies and uses these differences to point out the fallacies of culture and personality theories which suggest the presence of more or less uniform personality types. The author, an ethnologist did field work in the area. --Analyst]

Field dates: 1928-1930
Analyst: Betty Potash

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1961

7: Fry, H. K. A Bathurst Island Mourning Rite. Mankind, Vol. 4, pp. 79-80. Sydney: Anthropological Societies of Australia, 1949.

Yale: Nk10 An875e 4

[This brief article describes a death ceremony witnessed by the author when he visited Bathurst island during an epidemic. The author also discusses Tiwi beliefs regarding the cause of the epidemic which they attributed to magic brought about by mainland natives on the island. -- Analyst]

Field date: 1913
Analyst: Betty Potash

Evaluation: Physician-5
Processed in 1961

8: Fry, H. K. A Bathurst Island Initiation Rite. Mankind, Vol. 4, pp. 167-168. Anthropological Societies of Australia, 1950.

Yale: Nk10 An 875e 4

[This brief article describes an initiation rite witnessed by the author. He also describes Tiwi reactions to the observer. --Analyst]

Field date: 1913
Analyst: Betty Potash

Evaluation: Physician-5
Processed in 1961

9: Harney, W. E. and A. Peter Elkin. Melville and Bathurst Islanders: A Short Description. Oceania, Vol. 13, pp. 228-234. Sydney: The Australian National Research Council, 1943.

Yale: Nk10 Oc. 2v. 13

[This is a very brief introduction to the Tiwi, providing essential information on the locale, name, social organization, rites and religion, magic and individual names of the people. The authors close with a statement on missionary influences in the area and their recommendations for future maintenance of the culture. The article is most detailed with respect to the data on social, political and territorial organization. --Analyst]

Field date: ca. 1940
Analyst: George R. Bedell

Evaluation: Ethnologists- 4, 5
Processed in 1961

10: Goodale, Jane C. Marriage Contracts Among the Tiwi. Ethnology, Vol. 1, pp. 452-466. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1962.

HRAF copy.

/This source is mainly a description of the form and nature of the varying types of marriage contracts among the Tiwi. The emphasis is on the factor of relative age as an important consideration. The author attempts a new perspective by using the point of view of a female Ego.

Kinship terminology and classification are discussed relevant to the marriage system. The last section deals with some aspects of the exchange of women between descent groups and local groups. -- Analyst/

Field date: 1954
Analyst: Joan Steffens

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1963

111

OI20 Tiwi

11: Goodale, Jane C. Qualifications for Manhood: Tiwi invoke the Power of a Yam. Natural History, Vol. 72, No. 4, pp. 10-17. New York: American Museum of Natural History, 1963.

15 photographs

Personal copy of T. J. O'Leary.

[This article discusses the three-day Kulama ceremony of the Tiwi - a formal initiation into adulthood centering around the ritual preparation of a toxic yam. There is no set age for initiation. The instruction lasts six years and the initiates must participate in six Kulama rituals. An important feature of the ritual is the composition of songs and several examples are given. --Analyst]

Field date: 1954, 1962
Analyst: Joan Steffens

Evaluation: Ethnologist - 5
Processed in 1963

13: Barclay, Arthur. Life at Bathurst Island Mission. Walkabout, Vol. 5, No. 8, pp. 12-19. Melbourne and Sydney: Australian National Travel Association, 1939.

6 photographs; 1 map.

Yale: Eic +A91 5

/This article is an account of an Australian journalist's visit to the Mission of the Sacred Heart station on Melville and Bathurst Islands. The major emphasis is on the activities of the missionaries with some reference to the reaction of the natives. Sketchy data are included on Tiwi dress, toilet, weapons, dances, "wars", status of women and their concepts and treatment of illness. The description refers primarily to the "Christianized", semi-acculturated Tiwi living on mission grounds. --Analyst/

Field date: ca. 1939
Analyst: A. Vinogradov

Evaluation: Journalist-3
Processed in 1964

12: Goodale, Jane. "Alonga Bush" A Tiwi Hunt. University Museum Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp. 2-35. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1957.

21 photographs

Yale: A53P 216 21

/This source is a popularized account of the author's experiences and observations recorded during the hunting expedition of a Tiwi band in which she was allowed to participate. These observations are interspersed from time to time with bits of ethnographic data pertaining primarily to routine of travel, hunting and fowling techniques, food preparation, gathering activities, and perhaps most important of all, the high degree of acculturation effects, coupled with aboriginal techniques which seem to exist in the society without apparent conflict.

The author, a professional anthropologist, lived on Melville Island for a period of eight months, and was sponsored in her work by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum. --Analyst/

Field Date: 1957
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1964

Mountford, Charles P. Expedition to the Land of the Tiwi. The National Geographic Magazine, Vol. 109, pp. 417-440. Washington, D. C.: National Geographic Society, 1956.

2 maps; 27 plates

[This source contains information about an expedition to the Tiwi area along with some cultural materials on this tribe. However the material appears in other sources and consequently the article has not been processed for the files. --Analyst]

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Recommended Reading

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GARDINER, LYNDSAY, 1957, *Pacific Peoples*. London, Melbourne, New York: Longmans, Green.

The Australian Aborigines

BERNDT, R. M. and C. H., 1952, *The First Australians*. Sydney: Ure Smith.

A short, simple, and very sound attempt to summarize the life of the aborigines for the general reader. Written by two professional anthropologists (a husband and wife team) with extensive fieldwork experience in Arnhem Land.

DARK, ELEANOR, 1941, *The Timeless Land*. New York: Macmillan.

Written in novel form but draws heavily upon documentary sources, both of history and anthropology. Concerned with the impact of the early white settlers upon the culture of the aborigines.

HART, C. W. M., 1954, The Sons of Turimpi. *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 56, 242-261.

Brief article that uses five Tiwi brothers to show that "personalities" in simple cultures differ as much as among ourselves and therefore disputes the theory that people in simple cultures are standardized.

MOUNTFORD, CHARLES P., 1948, *Brown Men and Red Sand*. Melbourne: Robertson and Mullens.

The author has traveled extensively in the most barren and isolated areas of Central Australia and therefore among the most isolated and primitive surviving tribesmen. Excellent pictures of native life in the deserts.

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

leads to the situation—quite foreign to our way of thought and also apparently to that of Polynesian cultures—whereby a young bachelor can prowl around the bush all night without arousing the slightest interest but his daytime wanderings, ostensibly in search of game, are watched by his married seniors with the deepest suspicion. 837

[8] The buffalo, which are confined to Melville Island, are the wild descendants of domestic East Asian water buffalo which were imported during an early attempt at settlement. 136

[9] It is perhaps not without interest that one of Tip's jokes is imperishably preserved in the files of the Peabody Museum at Harvard. Tip was in Darwin in 1927 when W. Lloyd Warner was collecting at the Native Compound the anthropometric measurements which were afterwards analyzed by W. W. Howells (1937), and like all other natives in town from many tribes he and a number of Tiwi were measured by Warner. On the card for each subject Warner wished to record the personal name of the native. Led by Tip, all the Tiwi measured bestowed upon themselves the most obscene "native name" they could think of, and years later Tip would shout with laughter when telling how Warner faithfully recorded these obscenities, often repeating them several times to make sure of the correct pronunciation. 159 522 114

[10] This set of sentiments surrounding Tip's wife also gives a little more insight into the sex activities of Louis. His reluctance to move in on her, because of the way "the old men would feel," while showing no such reluctance to move in on Mrs. Bob, supports the view implied above that Louis, while sex dominated, was no fool in his amours. He had an intelligent and realistic appreciation of just how much he could get away with. 159 626

[11] I use this slang term deliberately, since it expresses somewhat the Tiwi attitude toward those young bachelors who go about seducing the wives of their elders and betters.

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discussed the factor of relative age as a major determinant of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in the particular type of contract which is universal for first marriages among females and is also the preferred contract for males. I have also described several variant patterns of Tiwi marriage contracts and have shown that these cannot be considered as alternatives to the preferred type but rather as additional patterns which apply only to a woman's secondary marriages. These additional types of contracts are also, to some extent, conditioned by the relative ages of the participants, but the resultant form of marriage may vary from a continuance of patrilateral cross-cousin marriage to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and even to marriage with certain relatives who are not cross-cousins. The wide variation in contracts leading to secondary marriages for women does not affect the continuance of preferred unilateral cross-cousin marriage or the exchange of wives between particular descent and local groups until the second generation after the variant marriage. Consequently, any change in the social organization of the Tiwi brought about by variations in marriage contracts is a gradual change, but it is also an inevitable and accepted form of change. The Tiwi rightly consider that as individuals they have considerable freedom in the selection of mates from almost any descent and local group and even from among a number of categories of kinsmen. Their Ego-oriented marriage system provides both stability and flexibility, and this is reflected in their system of kin classification.

NOTES

1. The field work on which this paper is based was undertaken in 1954 at the Snake Bay Native Settlement on Melville Island and was jointly financed by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.
2. In 1959, I used the relative age of spouses in a preliminary analysis of Tiwi unilateral cross-cousin marriage (Goodale 1959). It was with considerable pleasure that I found that a similar analysis by Rose (1960) had quite independently arrived at the same conclusions. Even more interesting was the fact that in cases where I had to calculate expected ages for many of my kin relations, Rose, with more complete age data, could give the average and range in ages for the same relatives, and that in most cases his "average" and my "estimated" ages were the same or within one or two years of one another.
3. For their valuable comments, criticisms, and advice I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Robbins Burling, Ward H. Goodenough, Edward B. Harper, Barbara S. Lane, and George P. Murdock.
4. Unfortunately, since the only age data collected in the field were for husbands and wives, I have had to use expected ages rather than average or mean ages throughout most of this paper (see note 2 above).
5. The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche.

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About the Authors

C. W. M. HART was born in Australia and became an American citizen in 1933. He studied at the Universities of Sydney, Chicago, and London; and has taught anthropology at the London School of Economics, University of Toronto, and the University of Wisconsin where he is now professor of anthropology. He was associate editor of the *American Anthropologist* from 1949 to 1952 and was recently elected president of the Society for Applied Anthropology. 114

Arnold R. Pilling, a Californian, studied at the University of California at Berkeley. He was a Fulbright Fellow to Australia in 1953 and 1954 and spent most of that time studying the culture of the Tiwi. He is now a member of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Wayne State University in Detroit.

About the Book

This is a case study of a system of influence and power which is based on a strange currency. The currency is woman. Newborn females, nubile marriageable females, toothless old hags — all are valuable in Tiwi terms. Because men compete for prestige and influence through their control over women, women have the value of a scarce commodity. Under this system there are no illegitimate children, no unmarried females of any age, and wives are either very much older or very much younger than their husbands. 562 [557] [848 589]

A vivid picture of Tiwi life, as viewed from within the culture, emerges in this book. The reader is not made an outsider, left to peer into a dimly understood, formalized, alien way of life. Rather, he is taken inside the family group, by the night's campfire. He becomes a witness to angry quarrels, a participant in involved machinations aimed at success — as defined by the Tiwi. He comes to know individual Tiwi as real people. 114

This book is a study of social interaction. But it is also a study of culture change. Much happened between Hart's and Pilling's visits to the Tiwi. These changes are described, and we see them in the context of the period of Tiwi contacts with the outside world. 12

GEORGE AND LOUISE SPINDLER
General Editors

Stanford, California
December 1959

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Preface

HART WORKED among the Tiwi during 1928 and 1929, and in Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4 summarizes the main aspects of their culture as it was at that time. Pilling's fieldwork was carried out during 1953 and 1954, and he outlines in Chapter 5 the contacts of the Tiwi with the outside world before and up until the coming of the first missionaries in 1911, and in Chapter 6 describes the modifications in Tiwi culture that have occurred since 1930. It is rare for two anthropologists who have studied the same tribe at widely separated times to collaborate in writing about them, hence it is worth mention (1) that the two anthropologists had never met nor even written to each other until after Pilling had returned to the United States in 1955; (2) that when they finally got together during 1957-1958 to plan and write the present book, they were both astonished at how little basic disagreement there was between them. Arguments about each other's statements have been numerous and prolonged, but almost invariably these concerned matters of detail or emphasis. The chief result of the collaboration has been the discovery, by each author, and exciting for both, of how well the other knows his Tiwi. This is uncommon enough in anthropology to be noteworthy. We are both grateful to the Tiwi for having brought us together and we are both impressed by the fact that the Tiwi who brought us together were the same complicated but delightful people, despite the twenty-five year interval in our respective sojourns among them.

114 121 [18]

C.W.M.H.
A.R.P.

Madison, Wisconsin
Detroit, Michigan
December 1959

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

forward to the periodic visits of the luggers, for they brought a new source of iron and trinkets. 175 648

Joe Cooper, the Australian buffalo hunter who had been chased out of the islands on his first attempt in 1897, returned again a few years later having first kidnaped two Tiwi women so that his mainland native helpers of the Yuwatja (Iwaidja) tribe near Cape Don could learn the language. When they had, he returned with a strong mainland detachment and well equipped with guns and horses. By 1900, European firearms were efficient weapons and a Tiwi spearman no longer could expect to kill a man armed with a modern rifle. Cooper is said never to have gone unarmed in his fifteen or so years (from about 1900-1916) as "King of Melville Island."[4]

In retrospect it is apparent that the agent through whom the Tiwi learned of the outside world was not Cooper, the white man, but his companions the Yuwatja (Iwaidja). They were more numerous and more approachable than Cooper, and several of them even had Tiwi wives whom they had captured. Tiwi accounts of these captives are noteworthy. It was the young Tiwi men hanging around Cooper's camp who suggested to the Yuwatja that they go and capture, by force of arms, Tiwi females who had recently become widows. The young men were thus performing their customary role of agents in widow remarriage—but in this case for foreign clients.

Cooper and his Yuwatja camped at various localities on Melville Island until about 1916 when their last base, at Paru opposite the site of the Mission, was abandoned and he and his mainlanders withdrew from the islands. It was this last camp at Paru that was made headquarters by Sir Baldwin Spencer, the well-known Australian anthropologist, when he visited the Tiwi in 1912.[5] [114]

While Cooper was at Paru he was also visited by a young Alsatian priest, Father Francis Xavier Gsell, M. S. C., who was contemplating establishing a mission on adjacent Bathurst Island. Cooper tried to discourage Father Gsell by telling him that the Bathurst Islanders had guns and were dangerous; apparently Cooper did not want any missionaries around his rough-and-ready establishment. But Father Gsell did not scare easily; in June 1911 he returned and built his mission station on the southeast corner of Bathurst Island, where it still stands today. Cooper left Paru permanently about five years later. 175 717

By 1916, five years after its founding, the Mission had two French priests, several French nuns and some Filipino workmen, and a lugger which ran to and from Port Darwin once a month. It was not until the nuns came that the local Tiwi put any trust in the missionaries; they could not understand why a man who claimed to be as important as Father Gsell claimed to be did not have any wives. When the nuns arrived, the Tiwi were more ready to accept the priest as "a big man" and began to bring their women around.

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[4] Hardly a year goes by without a newspaper in Australia running a Sunday supplement article on Cooper's stay at Melville Island. Such stories often are titled "The King of Melville Island" and are normally extremely romanticized.

[5] Spencer 1914. Spencer's account of the Tiwi is remarkably inaccurate and confused. On this trip to the Northern Territory in 1912 he was without his usual collaborator, Gillen.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

INTRODUCTION

MELVILLE ISLAND (Fig. 1), the research field of the 1954 National Geographic expedition, is, with the exception of Tasmania, the largest of the Australian islands. Eighty miles from east to west, and seventy from north to south, it rises barely five hundred feet above the sea. Its level surface is covered with a monotonous grey-green forest of eucalypts and acacias, whose monotony is broken only by the steep cliffs and sandy beaches of the coastline, the salt-water creeks which cut deeply into the northern coasts, and the almost impenetrable mangrove swamps that line those waterways. 131 133 137

Between Melville Island and the mainland are the swiftly running tideways, the reefs and shoals of the Clarence and Dundas Straits, tideways so dangerous that, before the installation of a series of flashing light-buoys, no ocean-going ship would attempt to navigate their broken waters in the darkness.

Abel Tasman, in 1644, was the first European to sail along the east, north, and west coasts of Melville Island and the adjacent Bathurst Island,[1] naming Cape Van Diemen and Van Diemen Gulf after the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. As Tasman's account of that journey was lost, we do not know whether he actually landed on the islands, or only saw them in the distance. 175

Sir Philip King circumnavigated the two islands in 1818 and in 1824 the British Government, both to prevent the French from settling along the northern coasts of Australia and to protect British commerce from the rapidly expanding Dutch trade, established a military post at Fort Dundas, on the Apsley Straits. After five unhappy years the authorities moved the garrison to Port Essington, on the Coburg Peninsula, on the mainland, but not before both Sir Gordon Bremer (12th Nov. 1824) and Major Campbell (1834, pp. 135–60) had made some excellent observations on aboriginal graves, burial poles, bark paintings and canoes. [114]

In the early days of this century, a buffalo hunter, Joe C. Cooper, having gained the confidence of the warlike people of Melville Island, known as the Tiwi tribe, established a camp near Cockle Point (Fig. 1) on the south-western corner of Melville Island. There he earned a living shooting buffaloes for their hides, buffaloes whose forbears had escaped from the settlement at Fort Dundas.

[1] Melville and Bathurst Islands, separated by the narrow Apsley Straits, are both a geographic and cultural unit. [101]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After Cooper had established himself a number of investigators, Brown in 1905, Klaatsch in 1906, Spencer and Basedow in 1911, and Fry in 1913, paid short visits to the Islands, and recorded valuable information on the aborigines and their ceremonial life. 175 114

Following their departure no research work was carried out until 1929, when Hart spent a year or more among the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands. But though Hart must have collected a great deal of data among the almost untouched aborigines of those times, he has published only two short papers on their customs. (Hart, 1930, pp. 167–80; pp. 280–290.)

Again there was a lag in time, except for a short paper by Harney and Elkin (1942, pp. 228–34), until Pilling in 1953, stationed at the Bathurst Island Sacred Heart Mission, spent over a year studying aboriginal life and social organization.[8]

In 1954 the National Geographic Society's expedition established a camp at Snake Bay on the north coast of Melville Island (Fig. 1), and for six months studied the ethnology, the geology and the ornithology of the area. Although the National Geographic Society of America provided the bulk of the funds, Mr. John Bonython of Adelaide financed the geological survey of Melville and Bathurst Islands. 121 114 [122]

The expedition party of American and Australian scientists was an excellent example of international co-operation. It was made up of Miss Jane Goodale, ethnologist, and Dr. Carleton Coon, Professor of Anthropology, both from the University of Pennsylvania; Mr. David Parsons, ornithologist from Yale University; Mr. Brian Daily, geologist from the University of Adelaide; Mr. William E. Harney, guide, Mr. George Joy, cook, and myself, as leader and ethnologist.

Our combined research covered a wide field. Miss Goodale concentrated on the place of the women and children in the community, Mr. Parsons collected and studied the birds of the island, Mr. Daily, by an examination of the outcropping rocks, established the geological history of Melville and Bathurst Islands, whilst I, apart from the duties of leadership, concentrated on the art, myth, and particularly the burial ceremonies.

During their visit, Dr. Carleton Coon and his wife made a special study of the physical characteristics of the aborigines.

I chose Melville Island as a centre of research, because it was evident from the scattered writings of Basedow, Fry, Hart, Harney, Spencer and 121 101

[8] The Sacred Heart Mission was established on Bathurst Island, opposite Cooper's camp, during 1911. [797]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired
[175] the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indi-
[177] cate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even
[609] had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in which they invariably succeeded. Their canoes and weapons were similar to the mainland."[4] 177 [114]

The probability that the Tiwi have been isolated from external influences for a long time is still further supported by their culture. Their artefacts are remarkably simple—they do not even possess a spear-thrower or small mounted stone tools—their art forms and ceremonial life are unlike those in any other part of Australia, there are no secret rituals, and the social status of the women is on a much higher plane than that of any other aboriginal women. 174 105

[4] From the evidence given above we can safely discard this writer's statement. Foelsche, who was a police officer in Darwin, probably quoted a rumour without checking its accuracy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER II

The Creation Period

WHATEVER differences may exist between the Melville Island cultures and those of the mainland, and, in some aspects, those differences are considerable, the creation stories indicate that the two cultures sprang from the same source.[5]

At the close of the creation period, both on Melville Island and the mainland, the original creators, men and women, were transformed, or transformed themselves, into various creatures, plants, natural forces or heavenly bodies.

Although I would not claim that the list of totems is complete, I feel certain that the aboriginal artists pictured, on the bark paintings, most of the areas created by their mythical forbears. More detailed research may reveal additional totemic places.

The list of the thirty-four totemic ancestors illustrated on the bark paintings is curiously unbalanced in its distribution. More than a third of these are trees, almost all eucalypts. The remaining four groups are: the natural forces, creatures of the air, the sea, and one inanimate totem, i.e. red ochre. Neither land animals nor reptiles are referred to in the bark paintings of the totemic places, although they appear in the myths.

These facts contrast strongly with the Central Australian beliefs regarding their totemic creatures (Mountford, 1948, p. 23; Spencer and Gillen, 1899, p. 387), where almost every living thing, particularly the creatures, took some part in the creation of the topography; plant totems are uncommon in Central Australia.

The same Central Australian characteristics are also evident in the myths of Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 21), although in the adjacent Arnhem Land, the great creators, i.e., the *Wawalik* Sisters (Warner, 1937, p. 250), and the *Djunkgao* Sisters (Berndt, 1952; Mountford, 1956, p. 267; Warner, 1937, p. 336), made the bulk of the topography, plants and creatures.

Although the Groote Eylandt pantheon, like that of Melville Island, originated as men and women, they were, almost without exception, changed to non-human totems, whereas the great creators of Arnhem Land, the *Wawalik* and the *Djunkgao* Sisters, have always remained human.

[5] Little research has been carried out on the creation stories of the Australian aborigines; Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 387) giving the most detailed account.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

6. THE BARK PAINTINGS OF THE TOTEMIC PLACES

×532
778
The aborigines of Melville Island produced forty-five bark paintings dealing with the totemic localities of Melville and Bathurst Islands. The assistance of the two aboriginal artists, *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, and Mr. W. E. Harney, who had spent many years on the islands, coupled with the aboriginal names on the official map of Melville and Bathurst Islands, and my increasing knowledge, enabled me to locate the approximate position of twenty-five totemic areas associated with the bark paintings.
[115]

The Honey-eater Bird-man, Tukimbini, at Murupianga

Four bark paintings deal with the myth of *Tukimbini* and the totem place he created at Murupianga, south-eastern Melville Island; Pl. 4A, B; Pl. 4C, D; Pl. 6C, D; Pl. 7A.

The circle *a*, on Pl. 4A, B, is a mangrove swamp on a low island adjacent to Murupianga, *b*, *b*, and *p*, *p*, *p*, being rocks on its shore. The long sandy beach at Murupianga is shown at *d*, and a shoal at *j*. At *c* is a stingray, *h*, a dugong, *k*, a turtle, and *l*, a diamond fish. At *f*, *f*, etc., are piles of dead leaves on the beach, and at *e*, *e*, *e*, and similar designs, stringy-bark trees growing along the shore. A freshwater spring is at *t*, with two trees growing from its banks. Bunches of sea-weed are at *g*, and *r*, *r*, *r*, and at *s*, on the left-hand side of the painting, are the tree-covered uplands at Murupianga. The totemic place, Wuriupi, created by the woman, *Wuriupranala*, and her son, is at *m*.

On Pl. 4C, D, a jungle near the shore at Murupianga,[37] is indicated by the central black disc, *g*, and the camps of the bird-man, *Tukimbini*, are shown by the symbols, *a*, *a*, etc. The circle, *d*, *d*, pictures high, white cliffs, adjacent to the totemic jungle; *k*, is a monsoon forest tree, and *f*, *f*, its limbs; at *h*, *h*, are living paper-bark trees, at *b*, *b*, *b*, dead jungle trees; and at *c*, *c*, etc., poisonous yams, similar to the *kulama* (Pl. 44D), which *Tukimbini* created for food. The dots on the painting indicate the red seeds of a jungle vine lying on the ground.

Pl. 6C, D, is one side of a *pukamuni* basket;[38] the holes at *a*, *a*, show that it is a female basket.

[37] In the companion bark painting, Pl. 4A, B, the totemic place is a mangrove swamp. Within the same area, as with *Mundubuku*, south-western Bathurst Island, several adjacent localities are associated with the same totemic being.

[38] Klaatsch (1907), p. 577, who saw this type of basket on an old grave, states that, according to the aborigines, it indicated the burial place of a woman. Though it may be that Klaatsch was correct, my informants simply referred to the *pukamuni* baskets as male and female, as they did to male and female *pukamuni* spears (Pl. 32A, B). No female baskets were used at the *pukamuni* of the woman, *Makapini*.
[114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Timarai-inga, at Mandumpi

Pl. 12A pictures the totem place of a eucalyptus-tree woman, *Timarai-inga*, a small rocky island, near the coast at Mandumpi, north-western Melville Island. 532x 778

The black diamond shapes indicate bands of yellow ochre, and the light-coloured designs, *a*, *a*, etc., white ochres in the cliff face at Mandumpi. The barred panels, *b*, *b*, symbolize a freshwater stream which flows into the sea. The chevrons throughout the design picture ferns growing among the rocks.

Although I did not gather specific details of the totemic story, it is safe to assume that *Timarai-inga* was the creator of this totemic place. [114]

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Pungulu, at Patuapuru

The totemic place of the eucalyptus-tree woman, *Pungulu*, is at Patuapuru (Deception Point), northern Bathurst Island.

The horizontal lines *b*, *b*, on Pl. 14C, D, symbolize the open sea at Patuapuru, and *a*, *a*, etc., on the top of the painting, high light-coloured cliffs. At *c*, is another cliff of reddish colour, and *d*, *d*, etc., are the many rocks on the beach which are covered at high tide.

The long panel *f*, *f*, on the left-hand side of the painting, is the open beach at Patuapuru, and the vertical panels *e*, *e*, etc., are parallel lines of sand-ridges behind the beach.

In the centre line of the painting, at *h*, and *n*, are two casuarina trees, and at *k*, is a freshwater lagoon on the banks of which are many unidentified jungle trees. A high sandhill is indicated at *m* (upper right), and the marine grass on the sea-shore, by the cross-hatching on the background.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Aragoutourina,[39] *at Putawini*

The first camp of *Aragoutourina* was at Puntubu, at the headwaters of the Tjipripu River, central Melville Island, where she stayed for a while. She then travelled south-west over the watershed to Kuruwu River which empties its water into the Apsley Straits. After making this water-course, *Aragoutourina* walked to Putawini Point, western Bathurst Island,[40] where she created the topography and natural history of the surrounding country. 773

A jungle near Putawini is represented on Pl. 14A, B, by the central white 532x 778

[39] A red-flowering eucalypt locally known as the bloodwood.
[40] Called Marloo Point on the official maps.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER III

The Pukamuni Ceremony

765 THE burial ceremonies of the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands,
182 based on the *pukamuni* of the mythical man, *Purukupali*, are, by far, the most important events in their ceremonial life.

These ceremonies, which allow the aborigines full expression for their grief, provide, at the same time, a complete cultural outlet for their philosophical beliefs, their music, their art and their dancing. No one, watching these
[781] primitive rituals, night after night, could fail to be impressed by the obvious pleasure experienced by both the participants and the onlookers.

●114 Spencer (1928, pp. 647–52), is the only investigator to describe and illus-
765 trate any details of the *pukamuni* ceremony. Although he saw but one day of the ceremonials, and that of the closing rituals, he records, briefly, many of the procedures which we witnessed in 1954, i.e., the rite of fire-jumping (p. 73), the spearing of the grave (p. 83), and (p. 89), the "spearing" of one of the participants and the erecting of the poles. This evidence shows
177 that, in spite of the disturbing effects of civilization and the complete
765 ecclesiastical ban on Bathurst Island, the *pukamuni* ceremony is still a vital force in the lives of the Tiwi people.

During the six months the expedition was on Melville Island, Miss Jane
123 Goodale, Mr. W. E. Harney and I witnessed some, or all of the rituals of four *pukamuni* ceremonies; one of a man, *Waniamperi*, who had been buried within half a mile of our camp; another of an old woman, *Makapini*, who, against the wishes of her relatives, had been buried in the mission cemetery on Bathurst Island; still another of a premature infant; and, only a few weeks before I left Melville Island, one of *Nulatini*, the deceased wife of our helper, *Pulanimbuwi*.

I will describe the burials of *Waniamperi* and *Nulatini*, and the final rituals
123 of *Waniamperi* and *Makapini*. However, as we saw, in all, twenty-seven
128 *ilanias*, the general pattern of which was similar, I will describe but five of them; three belonging to *Waniamperi*, one to *Makapini* and one to *Nulatini*.[44] The short rituals, associated with the dead infant, will be treated as a separate unit.

[44] The final rituals took place after my departure from Melville Island. These will be dealt with by Miss Goodale.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(a) One of the first series, when the "workers" were appointed, which was held in the main camp. 765

(b) One of the second series, held at a ceremonial ground mid-way between the first and the place of burial.

(c) An *ilania* performed by the Bathurst Island group who attended to take part in the final *pukamuni* rituals.

(a) *The First Ilanias*

The first series of *ilanias* was performed on a ceremonial ground, about forty feet in diameter, adjacent to *Wurarbuti's* camp. All stones and tree roots had been dug out so that the dancers would not injure their feet. In the centre of the dancing circle, or *milimika*, a fire was laid ready for the later ritual of *wandiatapinda*, or fire-jumping,[60] a ritual which was carried out at most but not all of the *ilanias* (Pl. 24B). At some of the later *ilanias*, particularly at the second *milimika*, aborigines, close relatives of the dead, performed a similar ritual by climbing a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and dead leaves (Pl. 23C).

Although I suspect that the ritual of jumping over the fire once had a deeper significance, the present day belief is that the fire, by burning the hair on the legs of the aborigines, protects them from stumbling over logs; from their limbs becoming tired on long journeys, or from dead trees falling on them as they travel through the forest. The smoke from the fire also brought them good health. No women took part in the *wandiatapinda* rituals, although the men often held their small children in the smoke. [751] [372]

Wurarbuti, the ceremonial leader or *alouwia* (frontispiece) of the *Waniamperi's pukamuni* rituals, was an intelligent, sophisticated aboriginal, who had worked for long periods in Darwin, and, more recently, had visited the southern States to dance before the Queen of England. 765 177

Because of his knowledge of European ways and the goods of the white man, the songs and dances of this first series of *ilanias* were a curious mixture of the old and the new cultures. Although most, if not all, of the dances performed at the *ilanias* are traditional and totemic, it is permissible to modify them for the song of the moment. [176]

The ceremony opened when the assembled aborigines, about twenty of them, standing within the *milimika*, gave the low-pitched honey call, with the high-pitched mosquito call, which precedes and finishes all *ilanias*.

[60] Spencer (1928, p. 648), saw this rite at Cockle Point, on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), during 1911. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

announced that he had bought enough food from the store at the settlement to feed all the men who were to cut the poles.[61] 765

Following this announcement, the chief woman mourner, *Prupadau*, whose privilege it was to decide on the size of the burial poles, marked with her toe, in the dust of the *milimika*, the length and thickness of a series of oversized poles.

This led to a great deal of discussion between the leader, *Wurarbui*, and the woman, *Prupadau*, before he finally persuaded her to reduce the dimensions of the poles to a reasonable size. *Prupadau* wanted the poles for her relative to be as many and as large as possible.

This matter settled, the "workers" brought a number of steel axes into the *milimika*. The *alowia*, painting the handles white and putting red cross lines on the blades, stood the axes in the centre of the dancing ground. Then both the *alowia* and the other performers walked around the axes singing the telephone song. [177] [531]

A series of traditional dances followed, representing *Jirakati*, the white-headed sea-eagle (Pl. 30j), *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Tjalati*, the jabiru (Pl. 29A).[62] Two women and two young boys performed the shark (*Tadwale*) dance (Pl. 25c), the ritual finishing with the honey and mosquito calls. The "workers" picked up their axes and walked away, accompanied by everyone except *Prupadau*, who remained behind, still chanting the *amburu* song of mourning. 535 765 [825]

(*b*) *The Second Ilanias*

The second series of *ilanias* was performed about halfway between *Wurarbui's* camp and the burial ground. 765

In this series, we were able to see the traditional pattern of the *ilanias* in operation, including the return and feeding of the "workers" after their day's labour of cutting the poles near the grave site. The songs and dances, too, instead of referring, as in the first *ilanias*, to the goods of the white man, his radio and his telephones, dealt almost exclusively with dances belonging to the locality of Wallu, north-eastern Melville Island, the country of *Wanamperi's* father and the totemic place of fresh water, *Andjalui* (p. 42). [533] [177]

This series of *ilanias* could be divided into five sections,

[61] At the present time, this is just a traditional gesture, reminiscent of the days when it was the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the workers while they cut and painted the poles (Pl. 25B).

[62] In a creation myth, the jabiru is called *Tipuru-andunga*. It is likely that the bird has several names. Hart (1930, p. 280), drawn attention to the multiplicity of names among the Tiwi. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 then, with the group, returned quietly to their companions among the poles."

(*b*) *The Songs and Dances*[18]

On the return to *milimika* A (Fig. 4), *Wurarbuti* and his wife mimed, to the accompaniment of appropriate songs, paddling a canoe, with their hands around one of the poles. This was followed by a man and his wife, who acted, with considerable detail, the making of a bark canoe; stripping the bark from [396] the tree; holding the bark over a fire to make it flexible; folding the bark and sewing the ends together, and the final launching.

By the time this act was over, it was dark. The aborigines from both *milimikas* retired to the nearby forest, lit their fires and cooked their food. There were no ceremonies during the evening, except, occasionally, some woman left her camp and wailed among the deserted *pukamuni* poles.

533 About 8 o'clock on the morning of the last day, the *pukamuni* men opened 539 the ceremonies with the honey and mosquito calls. These calls were followed 765 by a number of songs, chanted by *Wurarbuti* and some of his companions, which referred to the mythical boobook owl-man, *Purujikini*, and the instructions he gave to his fellow performers at the first *kulama* ceremony (p. 123). They were:

"Make the *milimika* large and clean for many people and when it is ready, sing first, then dance round the ring."

"You will paint yourself beside the *milimika*."

"When you decorate yourself for the *kulama*, put white on one side of your face, yellow on the other, and red down the middle of your hair. And as you dance, your wives will help you, as my wife, *Pinioma*, the owl-woman, once did for me."

"You sing, *Mikinatrina*[19] (a *kulama* initiate), and we will follow."

"When you sing in a *kulama*, put the cockatoo feathers, *primitiki*, in your hair, and the wind will shake them."

While those songs were being chanted, other men mimed the appropriate action.

[17] Although the aborigines did not explain the ritual, it is likely that the first man looked for and thought he saw the *mopaditi* of *Wanimperi*. On the second occasion, [114] *Marawani*, a near relative, hunted the dead man's spirit away. This ritual, in a modified form, took place at the two other *pukamunis* we witnessed. Spencer (1928, p. 648) mentions the same ritual.

[18] The songs and dances in this series were neither traditional nor totemic. They were composed usually by a number of performers, especially for the occasion, and quite an amount of thought went into their production.

[19] During the initiation of the *Mikinatrina* at the *kulama* ceremony, he performs his first dance amid general applause.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending
535 over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milimika* to the
766 rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first
[177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[90]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten-
● [114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and
[775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[91] the fundamental idea
[517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the
[775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[92]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon
[126] drawings[93] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[90] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.
[91] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women
[832] were attracted to them.
[92] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.
[93] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama*
778 rituals.

Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known
[411] respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear,
[531] *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines
[114] told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville
[322] Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making
[412] of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *miluanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *muruguna*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines
[302] of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin
[413] paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[94]

Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati*
[515] *kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed
[413] to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkitas*, are used by the Tiwi
765 for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkitas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in
[301] white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwiangu*, his chest ornaments,
[302]

[94] The lines of dots on *Wurarbui* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

211
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where they have not suffered from ecclesiastic prohibitions, are still using a similar form of grave and posts. [178]

Major Campbell (1834, p. 158), writing of a grave he saw on Melville Island in 1826, states: "It (the grave) is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberts, 14–15 feet high, and between these the spears and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground."

Brown (1905, p. 28) found a grave on Luxmore Head, in Apsley Straits surrounded . . . "by wooden slabs, portions of which had been burnt. Aboriginal markings were faintly discernible in places on the wood, some of the posts had the wood cut away from the outside toward the centre, leaving a short spike standing up in the middle of the post."

Klaatsch (1907, p. 257), in referring to the same burial poles at Luxmore Head, writes: "In some examples the slab was so carved that the upper part was only connected with the lower by two thin pillars or, on others, the top was mushroom-shaped.

"It is easy to see that the aborigines used fire for this work of sculpture, scratching the burnt part away with shell."

Basedow,[99] in 1911, came across a grave of an infant, on Bathurst Island, surrounded by five simply decorated posts, which had "been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk."

Basedow persuaded the aborigines to renovate the designs, which did not vary greatly from those in use at the present day.

[114] Spencer,[100] in 1911, made sketches of many of the burial poles, and arranged for the aborigines to redecorate a group which was later displayed in the National Museum, Melbourne. He states (1928, p. 682) that: "It (the pole) was slowly and laboriously cut with an iron tomahawk, but formerly with a sharp shell, until it has the form decided upon by the artificer." [177]

Dr. Kenneth Fry, who visited Melville Island in 1913, was the first investigator to ascertain the meanings of a number of poles. These, with his permission, are illustrated on Fig. 8. All of these shapes, but two, are those still most commonly used among the hundred or more which I saw on Melville Island.

[115] An old aboriginal, *Tjamalampua*, told me that in *palaneri* times, i.e., a long while ago, before there were any steel axes, the aborigines used stone axes to fell the hollow trees for *pukamuni* poles. Although there were just as many poles around the grave as there are today, they were neither as

[99] Basedow (1913), p. 314, Fig. 4, Pls. 13, 14, 16, 17, 18.
[100] Spencer (1928), p. 682, Figs. 471–7, Pl. X.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

recorded on the expedition, however, indicates that this may not be so, i.e.,

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Forks or limbs of trees	26 per cent
Breasts of women	9 per cent
Rocks on sea-coast	18 per cent
Windows and doors (openings in poles)	15 per cent

That is, four shapes make up 68 per cent and the remaining eleven shapes, 38 per cent.

This would suggest that certain shapes have a traditional meaning, and that these shapes predominate. In fact, an examination of the accounts of the early travellers, Bremer, Campbell, Klaatsch, and Spencer, suggests that, except for those poles in the form of human figures, the *pukamani* poles have not changed in shape to any extent during the last fifty years or more. [114] [178]

Description of the Burial Poles

(a) *The Pukamani of Waniamperi*

The *ma mulais* which the "workers" cut and painted for *Waniamperi's pukamani* were looked upon as a family, a man, his two wives, and their children.

Pl. 32J, a middle-aged man, had two wives; Pl. 34E, a very fat, but young woman, and Pl. 35A, B, her much older sister.

The young wife, Pl. 34E, had three children; Pl. 36A, B, a small boy about ten, Pl. 36D, a girl of twelve, and Pl. 37D, a young married woman without a family.

The older wife, Pl. 35A, B, had four children; Pl. 36F, a boy of five, Pl. 36C, a girl about twelve, Pl. 32H, a young unmarried man, and Pl. 37D, an unmarried woman.

Plate 32J, eighteen feet in height, was by far the tallest pole in the group.

Because the actual shapes of the poles seldom had any relationship to the designs painted on them, the pole shapes and the painted designs will be described separately.

The pole shapes of Pl. 32J are: the projection, *c*, on the top, represents the branch of a tree, the bosses, *a*, *a*, *a*, are the breasts of women, the three cylindrical sections, *m*, *m*, *m*, large rocks on the sea-coast, and the narrow uprights, *n*, *n*, joining them, the limbs of eucalyptus trees.

In the painted designs, *a*, *a*, *a*, are, as before, the breasts of women, and the short vertical lines, *b*, *b*, etc., the teeth of a comb. The painted white projection, *c*, on the top of the pole, is a shovel-nosed shark; the crossed circles, *d*, *d*, are the noses of crocodiles, and the diagonal bands, *e*, *e*, *e*, the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532 765 [114]

Dr. Kenneth Fry, when visiting the islands during 1913, made sketches of the pole shapes of eight *tudinis* and found out the meanings of five of them. These are reproduced on Fig. 8.

Fig. 8A represents a man carrying a roll of blankets on his back, *a*, being his hat, and *b*, his blankets. Fig. 8B also represents a man, *a*, as before, indicating his hat. On Fig. 8C, *a*, is the mast of a boat; on Fig. 8D, *a*, is the crutch in the boom of a pearling lugger (usually called branches of trees in the 1954 series); and on Fig. 8G, *a* is a window.

Dr. Fry did not find out the meanings of Fig. 8E, F, and H.

The present-day meaning of design, Fig. 8F, which could have applied to Dr. Fry's example, is somewhat interesting. The aborigines at the Bathurst Island mission are warned of the terrors of their future life if they are not buried "under the cross", i.e., in the mission cemetery.

[177] [797]

When I asked the aborigines at Melville Island what was the significance of the cross they had carved on the top of several of their *pukamuni* poles, they explained that it was there purely as a "safety measure", just in case there was something in the mission story.

11. THE CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

[171]

It has been known, for about twenty years, that aboriginal craftsmen, in widely separated places in Northern Australia, but particularly in north-eastern Arnhem Land, have made carved and painted figures in wood.[10] It was a surprise, however, to find that the Tiwi people, who appear to have been separated from the mainland cultures for a considerable time, were using similar figures in their burial rituals.

Inquiries revealed that, for some years, one or another of the aboriginal craftsmen, skilled in the carving of *pukamuni* poles with steel tools, and, no doubt, experimenting with new shapes, occasionally made a burial pole in the form of a conventionalized human body (Pl. 39), or smaller human figures (Pls. 40, 41), which were placed on the grave.

I gathered information about three old human-headed burial poles as well as adding to the expedition collection, two recently made poles and six smaller figures.

At the burial, about thirty years ago, of the mother of one of my informants, a "worker", called *Kado*, made and erected a human-headed burial pole. In 1941, Mr. W. E. Harney saw a well-carved head on a burial

[10] Mountford, 1956, p. 415, traces the distribution of the carved wooden figures in Northern Australia and their development at Yirrkalla, from simple human-headed burial posts of Malay origin to carved heads and full-length figures of considerable merit.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pole at Punata on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), while I saw and photographed the third example in the form of a highly conventionalized human figure (Pl. 38A, B, C), which was on an old grave not far from our camp. No doubt there are other examples of these poles on the deserted graves of the Islands. I saw recently, in the Musée Ethnographique et Musée Suisse de Folklore, Bâle, Switzerland, two full-length human figures which had been collected at Bathurst Island by Mr. Karel Kupta in 1956. 532x 765

This evidence indicates that, for thirty years, at least, the men and women of the Tiwi,[11] occasionally carved burial poles in human form; we do not know when the practice of carving the smaller figures[12] began.

At first sight it appeared that these wooden figures might have been a cultural trait borrowed, as in north-eastern Arnhem Land, from the Malay trepangers. Further research, however, did not confirm this hypothesis. [177]

Although now and again some Malay prau, driven off its course by contrary winds, must have touched the shores of either Melville or Bathurst Island, it is certain that the men of the Tiwi, who were notably unfriendly, would have endeavoured to drive them away. This unfriendliness probably explains why the Malays were not able to establish themselves on these Islands as they did in north-eastern Arnhem Land. The old men of the Tiwi do not remember any Malay fishermen visiting their country. This evidence that the Malays did not settle on the land of the Tiwi is further supported by Campbell (1834), who writes (p. 143), "The Malays were never seen near Melville Island", and later (p. 155), ". . . Malay fishermen were forbidden to go near Melville Island . . . alleging that it was infested with pirates. . . ." 174 648 [114]

This evidence suggests that the Tiwi practice of carving human figures in wood was not, like that of the aborigines of Arnhem Land, borrowed from a Malayan source, but is a recent local development, probably stimulated by the acquisition of steel tools and the other possessions of the white man. For instance, it would be easy to imagine a skilled aboriginal trying to make his pole resemble the tall bodies of the white man's saints in the mission church. From these larger would develop the smaller figures. 532x 765 177

It is unlikely that any elaborately carved burial pole, much less one in the form of a human figure, would be more than fifty years old. Before that time, except those stolen from the short-lived Fort Dundas settlement, the Tiwi would have owned few, if any steel tools. 532x 765

Although the Tiwi have no specific myth about the larger burial poles, 773

[11] A woman may cut a burial pole instead of her husband, should he be absent.

[12] There is a difference, however, between the two; the *tudini* poles, in human form, are cut from the hardest and most durable eucalypt; the smaller figures from the soft wood of the beach kapok, a wood which is quickly destroyed by insects.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER IV

The Kulama Ceremony

114 881 ALTHOUGH little has been recorded about the colourful *pukamani* burial rituals of the Tiwi, several investigators have published details of the *kulama* ceremony.

Spencer saw a *kulama* ceremony during March 1912. His records of those rituals (Spencer, 1928, pp. 658–76), the most complete we have, show that, [178] during the last forty years the pattern has not changed to any extent. Although the names of the initiation grades given by Spencer do not agree with those recorded by later investigators, it is likely these differences are due to Spencer's interpreter, the buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who was not then fully conversant with the ceremony.

Fry (1949, p. 176), during 1913, witnessed an initiation ceremony in which Reuben Cooper, Joe Cooper's half-caste son, passed from the *Kolloponiati* (my *Kilipaniati*) stage to that of a *Wadjeniati*.

In the same year Fry (1950, pp. 79–80), saw the closing phases of the *kulama* from the peeling of the yam (p. 138), to the final rituals (p. 142). Although Fry was mistaken in considering that this ceremony was part of a burial rite, his record is a valuable and accurate description of the last two days of the *kulama*.

Hart (1930, p. 286), recorded the *kulama* initiation names and the duration of the grades of both male and female initiates. These names correspond closely to those I was able to obtain from the fully initiated men, with one exception. Hart stated that the grade of *Mikingula*, i.e., the fully initiated, lasted for four years. This is obviously incorrect, as the *Mikingula*, being the final grade, lasts for life.

178 881 It appears certain that Tiwi initiation has ceased, although, I feel sure, within comparatively recent times. The *Mikingulas* often talked about initiating some of their companions, but when the opportunity came, they procrastinated.

115 881 However, the same fully initiated men gave me full details of the rituals at each stage of initiation, explained how those rituals fitted into the *kulama* rituals we had witnessed, and either decorated themselves, or painted designs

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Grades of Kulama initiates		Period of initiation
Mikinatrina	Male	2 years
Mikinarrininga	Female	
Mikintara	Male	From one kulama until the next
Mikintaringa	Female	
Mikiatarima	Male	From one kulama until the next
Mikiatarimingа	Female	
Mikingula	Male	Fully initiated for life
Mikingulinga	Female	

2. THE PRELIMINARY RITUALS OF THE KULAMA

881 (1) *The Capture of the Marukumuni Initiate*

According to my informants, any tribesman chosen for initiation, must be a mature man, usually married and with children. In fact, all the men pointed out to me as being suitable candidates were thirty years of age or older.[18]

The first time there is a gathering of people after a *kulama* ceremony, such as at a burial, or an *ilania*,[19] the fully initiated *kulama* men, the *Mikingulas*, ask the permission of the leader of the *kulama*, the *Naripikilitipi*, to capture any man or woman, who is suitable for the first stage of initiation, that of the *Marukumuni*.[20] In preparation for this, the *Mikingulas* have already mixed a quantity of yellow ochre.

At a given signal, one of the *Mikingulas*, who has been standing unobtrusively near, suddenly throws his arms around the chosen initiate. The captive struggles to release himself, protesting against being initiated into the *kulama*. But a number of the *Mikingulas* rush to their companion's aid, lay
[302] the struggling initiate on the ground, paint a design, in yellow, on his upper
[301] arms and body (Pl. 42A), and put the red tail feathers of a black cockatoo in his hair. Meanwhile, other initiated men are walking around the group

[18] The age of initiation has been raised since Spencer and Fry saw the *kulama* in the
[178] early days of the century. Spencer (1928, p. 664) refers to young boys, while Reuben
[114] Cooper, whom I knew in 1920 as a young man about twenty, would have only been about thirteen years of age when Fry saw him as a *Kilipaniati*.

[19] A preliminary ceremony for the burial rituals.

[20] I do not know who captures the female initiate, the *Marukumuninga*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Dry sticks, about three feet in length, were pushed upright into the ground around the *tumarapi* (oven), kindling wood was laid between them, other pieces of dried wood piled cross-wise between the uprights until there was a stack about three feet high (Pl. 45A). 88 [372]

(5) *Placing the Uncooked Yams in Water*

About sunset, the *kulama* men went to the bloodwood tree, the *wuringalua*, where the *Mikinarinas* had stored the yams in the morning and, on pulling bushes away, revealed some of the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates squatting, holding in their arms a basket of the uncooked *kulama* yams. The *Marukumuni* initiates took the yams to the water, everyone assisting in laying them on a pad of grass in the bed of the stream (Pl. 46B).

Immediately this task was completed, the *kulama* men pushed the *Marukumuni* initiates over,[20] and, holding them by the legs and arms dragged them backward and forward through the now muddy water to wash off their body paint. They were then taken back to camp, seated beside the *milimika* and painted with a different pattern (Pl. 42F). Neither the *Marukumuni* nor the *Wadjaniani* initiates took any further part in the rituals of that day. When, after dark, the *kulama* men entered the *milimika* to chant another series of songs, the camp fires were allowed to burn brightly, because the aborigines said that the yams, being in the water, were now "quiet" so that there was no fear of *taini*, the spirit of *kulama* sickness. [302]

The chanting men walked counter-clockwise around the *milimika* because *Purujiktini* did so at the first *kulama*. To have walked in the opposite direction, even then, would have made the spirit of the *kulama* yam angry. 881

The following are literal translations of a selection of the songs. 533

(*a*) "I had a quarrel with Tom Crow, the Superintendent of Snake Bay Settlement." 539 [177]

(*b*) "My mother-in-law is good to me, she did not take away my promised wife."

(*c*) "The fruit of the *binania* (*Eugenia* sp.) ripens and falls to the ground."

(*d*) "The little *Pitipituis* (spirit children) are dancing on the beach."

[20] Spencer, 1928, p. 664, describing a similar ritual, states, "Several old men seized the *Wapinyeri* (my *Wadjaniani*), and plunged into the water with him. As many as could get near him gripped him by the legs and arms, and yelling, splashing and churning up the mud, . . . dragged him backward and forward several times, . . . As soon as the *Wapinyeri* were released, the men turned their attention to the *Marukumuni* boys. . . ." Although my informants did not say so it is likely that the *Wadjaniani* initiates were also pushed into the water to remove their body paint in readiness for the second design of a *Mikinarina* (Pl. 42J). [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

blood from the arm of the victim, yet leaves no wound. As the sick person becomes weaker, the *Papinjuwari*, making himself sufficiently small, enters the body through the mouth, and, by drinking up the rest of the blood, kills the victim.

FIG. 12. *The Spirit People*
The Meteor-man, Papinjuwari.

On his return to Wangidji, the meteor-man vomits the stolen blood into a bark container. This provides a drink for the assembled *Papinjuwaris*.

The aborigines stated that, as the Tiwi have no medicine men, they are without protection against these dangerous spirit people.[42]

Pl. 47c is a simple bark painting of the *Papinjuwaris*. The white figures are the ghoulish sky-people, the crescents are moons, and the circles, stars.

Fig. 12 is the copy of a crayon drawing showing a *Papinjuwari*, *a*, inside of his paper-bark hut at Wangidji. On either side of him at *b*, *b*, are the large

[42] Spencer, 1928, p. 671, refers to a song chanted in a *Kulama* ceremony which is supposed to protect the initiates from an evil spirit, the shooting star, *Mukinua* (almost certain to be my *Papinjuwari*); Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 282, who call the meteor man, Papinowari, or Lamparapari, state that, if a piece of dried blood of a person is burnt, the smell will attract the meteor-man.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CONCLUSION

105 171 THIS study of the Tiwi tribe of Melville and Bathurst Islands, made through the medium of their art, their myths, and their ceremonies, reveals wide differences between many phases of their cultural life and that of the aborigines who live on the adjacent mainland. These differences are probably the result of isolation caused by the dangerous tideways which have separated the two peoples from each other for an unknown, but probably lengthy, period.

Though both are of aboriginal stock, and from the same cultural background (as indicated by basically similar creation stories), this isolation has allowed the two groups to develop independently. It may well be that the beliefs of the Tiwi represent those of one of the aboriginal migrations to Australia, and has remained somewhat constant, while the mainland people, enriched by occasional waves of new ideas, have developed a much more varied philosophical and cultural life. [174]

The main differences between the two cultures can be summarized as follows:

171 ×532 (a) The art forms of the Melville and Bathurst Islands are so highly formalized that they seldom resemble the objects they represent. In contrast, the art of their neighbours on the mainland, the Arnhem Land aborigines, is not only entirely representational, but is probably a more vital and colourful art than exists in any other part of the continent.

171 765 (b) Compared with the rest of Australia, too, the ceremonies of the Tiwi are particularly limited, there being only two in the whole culture. The major ceremony, that of burial, is by far the more elaborate. It extends over several months, involves the co-operation of many people, and provides the tribe with a complete outlet for their grief, their music, their dancing, and their art. This ceremony is without parallel in Australia, and, so far as we know, elsewhere in the world.

171 881 The other ceremony, the Kulama, is a blending of several rituals: the initiation of men and women into the social grades of the tribe; the ceremony of preparing a poisonous yam for food,[68] which ceremony the participants believe prolongs the wet season; and the airing of grievances

[68] Spencer, 1928, p. 661, speaks of the Kulama as a food increase ritual. It is probable that Spencer was only expressing an opinion, having previously carried out research in Central Australia where increase rituals are both numerous and important. I did not obtain any evidence which indicated that food increase rituals were carried out by the Tiwi. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly
412 limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe [177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of [415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the [285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[66]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[66] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female [114] ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This [773] information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

101 Like other concrete things in this culture, the hordes have a multi-
621 plicity of names, and this has caused a certain amount of confusion and doubt as to their actual number. A full list of these names is as follows. The name most commonly used in each case by the natives themselves is given first in each case, as these are the names used throughout this account of the Tiwi culture.

1. *Tiklauila*: *Arupula, Matjulauila, Muliuŋabila, Tuŋalimbila, Taipauila, Pilamiruntabila, Aritui, Wayiŋui, Adauinabila, Payondiŋaluwila, Pukuŋinabila, Primanduwila.*
2. *Wraŋgwila*: *Mungwaiunabila, Puianaruwila, Tintauwila.*
3. *Miŋgwila*: *Wonuruwila, Kaliprauiŋuwila, Malamikwariuŋabila.*
4. *Malauila*: *Mirkalambila, Pulunduwila, Iwiriwila, Malamuŋoriuŋabila, Papiuŋabila.*
5. *Wilraŋgwila*: *Panodjiwila, Mirkawiuŋabila, Marawauila, Kambuŋambila.*
6. *Munupula*: *Urumaiawila, Tunuŋabila, Imaluwila, Parumunupula.*
7. *Turupula*: *Yuŋanduwila, Tikampula.*
8. *Yeimpi*: *Aruponturwila, Araŋgitarila, Palwiuŋabila.*
9. *Mandiimbula*: *Tumulambila, Tilambila, Urumaiuŋabila, Uruwinapila, Ilubiuŋabila.*

101 If Spencer's list[1] is compared with mine it will be seen that allowing
114 for our different spellings, his "Kambuambulla" are really the *Marawauila*,
621 his "Cherupulla" are the *Turupula*, his "Purumunupulla" are really the *Munupula*, his "Mindaluulla" probably mean the *Miŋgwila*. "Ulobu" (or *Ilubi*) is a place-name of a favourite camping ground in the country of the Mandiimbula slightly to the north-west of Cape Gambier; hence *Ilubiuŋabila*. "Marungallambu" similarly is a camping ground in the territory of the *Malauila*. "Barranpunalli" I am unable to trace; *Punali* (or *Bunali*) is, however, the name for the district around the English Point Alley. "Arangijerulla" is an alternative name for the *Yeimpi*, but I prefer to spell it *Araŋgitarila*, while "Balauiungambulla" is obviously a misspelling of the *Palwiuŋabila*, which is another alternative name for the *Yeimpi*.

121 To explain this multiplicity of horde names, and also to throw some light on the actual composition of the horde, I propose to consider one of the hordes in detail, taking for this purpose the *Tiklauila*.

[1] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, 1914, page 45.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

period is the prelude to the complete lapsing of the title to the district. 423
The prominent part played in this institution by the father's father and the 628
fact that most of the present districts held on such a title are held from the 613
father's father whereas comparatively few are held through an ancestor 685
(necessarily more remote) who has been forgotten, seems to indicate that *yirt' amini* holdings do not last more than three generations before they lapse for want of sufficient able-bodied men to enforce them.

It must not be imagined that the whole of Melville and Bathurst 423
Islands are divided into such holdings nor indeed that everyone in the tribe 613
belongs to such a group. The main obstacle to this lies in the self- 621
evident fact that if one's father's father dies in the territory of another horde, as must have quite frequently have happened in the days of marauding expeditions between hordes, there can be no such thing as a *yirt' amini* holding of the district wherein he died. Moreover there are numbers of the Tiwi whose fathers and grandfathers died young, and the essence of the system is that the grandfather should have been old enough to have sufficient male children and grandchildren to enforce the claim.

It can easily be seen from the above how it comes about that each horde has a number of names, since each one of the *yirt' amini* group-names 621
is liable to be applied to the whole horde merely by adding *-ila* or *-ula* to 101
the name of the district they control.

Spencer's list of horde names is at variance with mine, because he 101
did not realize this. Out of six men of the *Tiklauwila*, one might easily 114
get six different answers to his question as to their "country," each 103
giving the name of his *yirt' amini* group. It is quite possible that the 621
horde names that are used here—*Tiklauwila*, *Munupula*, etc.—are really *yirt' amini* names that have become extended to include a whole horde either by the identification of a very powerful *yirt' amini* group with a horde in the eyes of the rest of the tribe or by the former horde name becoming tabu and a *yirt' amini* name being substituted. This view is strengthened by the fact that in one or two of the hordes, the horde name is still in use as the name of a district. Thus whereas the whole of the territory of the *Wilraŋgwila* on the north of Melville is technically *Wilraŋgu*, the native name for Karslake Island, a small portion of that territory, is *Wilraŋgu*. Similarly *Malau* is a creek in the territory of the *Malauila* horde.

A man is born into the horde of his father. Should his father die and 591
his mother be taken by a member of another horde he goes with her, and [611]
WHILE THE WOMAN WILL ALWAYS BE LOOKED UPON 621
AS BELONGING TO HER FORMER HORDE, THE CHILD [768]
CHANGES HIS, TAKING THAT OF HIS STEPFATHER.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

614 Phratry 1 (*continued*) Clan Name	Totems
(*c*) *Mandubani, Mandubuka, Mandubowi*	fly
(*d*) *Udungini, Uduna, Udunui*	crocodile
(*e*) *Milubruinila, Milubrukela, Milubruwila*	cockatoo
(*f*) *Mierdi, Mierdina, Mierdui*	pandanus
(*g*) *Tanikini, Taninka, Tanikui*	flying fox
(*h*) *Mutuninila, Mutungula, Mutunibila*	a fish
(*i*) *Timilani, Timiluka, Timilowi*	sand fly
Phratry 2.	
(*a*) *Timiririnini, Timiririna, Timiriringui*	woolly-butt tree
(*b*) *Yarinabila, Yarinabunela, Yarinabila*	red paint, sugar bag, (wild honey)
(*c*) *Orandjani, Orandjuka, Orandjowi*	stingray
(*d*) *Paroliunginila, Paroliunggula, Paroliungibila*	mud
(*e*) *Iliti, Ilitina, Ilitui*	*malikini* (a wild fruit)
(*f*) *Andjulini, Andjuluna, Andjului*	rain, turtle
Phratry 3.	
(*a*) *Tokwombini, Tokwombuna, Tokwombui*	a bird
(*b*) *Aringuinila, Aringuinela, Aringuwila*	stones
(*c*) *Pinaluwinila, Pinaluwinela, Pinaluwila*	wood
(*d*) *Walikuinila, Walikuinela, Walikuwila*	stars
(*e*) *Wirnigiti, Wirnigitina, Wirnigitui*	bloodwood, *mipari* and a kind of fish.
(*f*) *Taparini, Taparina, Taparui*	moon
(*g*) *Djabijabini, Djabijabuna, Djabijabui*	march fly.

198 614 In reference to the list it must be pointed out that among the Tiwi there are two languages; one is used in common everyday conversation, and the other is a sacred language used on ceremonial occasions, in ritual songs and formulae. Most of the clan-names of the above list are words belonging not to the ordinary language but to the esoteric language. Such words would never be used in ordinary conversation *except as totemic names*. A bloodwood tree in ordinary speech is *urnalaka*, the wild plum is *malikini*, rain is *paketirina*, the cockatoo is *ingaga*, trees are *tuka* and so on. Of the twenty-two clans nine are normally called by a word in use in the ordinary language; the other thirteen have names taken from the sacred language.

[114] Sir Baldwin Spencer apparently failed to distinguish between the

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

sacred and the ordinary language, with the result that his list of Tiwi clans and their totems is confused and inaccurate.[4]

The Tiwi do not seem to associate very closely the totemic clan and the object that is the totem of the clan. For instance a man of the *Udunui* considers himself as *Udunini*, not as a crocodile, which he normally thinks of as *irungrabai*. The bond of solidarity is between one member of the clan and another rather than between a member of the clan and his totem.

So much is this the case that it is occasionally difficult to ascertain what is the natural object which gives the clan its name, *i.e.*, what is the totem of the clan. The *Ariŋgwila* are a case in point. In order to find what natural object was the emblem of this clan recourse had to be had to a few old men of the clan who were apparently the only people in the tribe who knew what natural object was the emblem of the *Ariŋgwila*. Everyone knew that a number of men, women and children were *Ariŋgwila*, thought of them and referred to them as *Ariŋgwila*, but very few members of the community connected them in any way with stones—" any kind of stones"—which according to these old men, are the *Ariŋgwila* totemic emblem.

With regard to the origin of the totemic clans and their names the natives say that the system of *puknī* was instituted by the old men a very long time ago. One old man said at some time in the distant past " *Udunui nia puknī kapi Primandua*—Udunui is my totem at Primandua," and so everyone knew his totem was *udunui*. Knowing their legends everyone knew the connection between *Udunui* and *Primandua* since it is at this place, a district in Bathurst Island, that *Munutuni*, the father of all crocodiles, still has his home. Another old man decided upon *mandubani* as his *puknī* because his favourite camping ground was at *Pripanyimili* which has a mythological association with *mandubuka* (the sand fly), such association being founded no doubt on the fact that sand flies breed in great numbers in the mangrove swamps of that region.

The *Ariŋgwila* (the stone totem) are closely associated with a famous rock in *Miŋgu* called *Wurukwompi* which, due no doubt to a hollow interior, gives forth a roll like thunder when beaten with a stick and hence is a sacred object to the natives. The former home of the *Ariŋgwila* is in the

[4] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, page 200.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

strictly descriptive rather than terms of address, yet quite frequently they are used in both ways. They refer to the state of life the person has reached and are often used as substitute names during the period in which an individual is nameless on account of his name being tabu. Names such as baby, young man, etc., are of course found in every language; it is their occasional use as terms of address that makes them interesting among the Tiwi, and also the fact that Spencer has confused them with the initiation-grade names. These names are :—

Age-Grade Names (Male).

Male baby	(Birth to about 11)	*Kiritini*
Boy approaching puberty	(12-14)	*Mala-kuniŋa*
Uninitiated boy or young man		*Tatiŋ-ati*
Young man during initiation		(Initiation Grade Term)
Initiated man		*Mikingula*
Old man	(over 60)	*Irula or Palini*

Age-Grade Names (Female).

Female baby	(Birth to about 6)	*Kiritiŋa*
Girl approaching puberty	(7 to 11)	*Aliiŋa*
Girl beginning to menstruate	(12-14)	*Muru-kibura*
Girl at first pregnancy		*Miriŋaladja*
Shortly before birth of child		*Poporganti*
Mother of male child		*Ari-aui*
Mother of female child		*Pirnambili*
Mother of several children		*Nurau-rika*
Old women with children		*Pirimariŋa*
Barren woman		*Timiriŋa*

If these two lists are compared with Spencer,[4] it will be found that all the names which he gives as "status terms" are included in one or other of my two lists with the exception of "Gunmurdi" which Spencer gives as "very old man," and which I was quite unable to trace at all. I have adopted the division into age-grade names and initiation-grade names and rejected "status terms" altogether as the two groups of names are quite distinct, one depending on age, the other on advancement in initiation.

[4] *Native Tribes of Northern Australia*, 1914, p. 84.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

197 continued all the while, is at this stage strengthened. Any of these acts may be
527 interrupted at any moment by changing to the "hauling of sail or anchor" scene
535 and many interjections of "poop" and "iah" accompany them. The performer himself now ceases to stamp with his feet, but in place thereof he bends his legs at the knees and knocks his thighs together while he extends his arms outwards, either in front or at the side of him.

527 *Corrobboree of a fight.*—During several of the corrobborees described, a chant
535 was heard which accompanied the acting in addition to the clapping of hands against the thighs or buttocks. In trying to reproduce the words or syllables of this chant, the nearest analogy I can find is—

[533
539]

"*Tupera monan la jerra*
Tupera monan la jerra,"

and

"*Tupatunan tenakomejona.*"

These chants are muttered uninterruptedly throughout the particular part. The corrobboree of a fight consists in the imitation of a spear duel between two angry blackfellows. They carry the same kind of reed-spears as was described under the "kangaroo ceremony." They first place themselves in defiance of one another at either side of the half-circle and go through all sorts of antics, brandishing their spears, rolling their eyes, and furiously throwing their bodies about. Next they start running about the ring and stamp their feet, throwing up their arms and knocking their thighs together in much the same way as previously described.

Corrobboree of the jungle fowl.—After the usual excessive amount of shouting, jabbering, and excited shrieks of laughter, an old man runs forward into the ring. He bends his arms at the elbow and holds them close against the sides of his body, while the closed fists rest on his chest, an attitude resembling that of a professional runner. This is to resemble the wings of the bird (*Leipoa*). He looks about the ground from side to side as though in search of something. Presently he imitates the bird's call with a shrill penetrating voice which sounds like "he-r-r-r-l." The onlookers' accompaniment consists in producing short spluttering and bubbling noises with their lips that sound like "brrl, brrl, brrl." The performer often interrupts the proceedings by shouting "he," to which all others respond with a loud "yeh." Now he throws up clouds of dust behind him with his feet, in imitation of the way in which the jungle fowl scratch and throw up the earth into the enormous mounds that contain their eggs.

To conclude the ceremony, all performers are led off again by the original leader in Indian file and go through much the same performance as they did in the initiation of the ceremony; the final shouts and shrieks, after the completion of the "trot" in spiral line, being particularly loud and enthusiasic.

114 Captain King[1] was probably the first white man to have witnessed the
527
535

[1] *Survey Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

corrobboree of the Melville Islanders, but it appears that he regarded the [114] demonstration as hostile. He writes that "the dance consisted chiefly of the per- 527 formers leaping two or three times successively out of the sea, and then violently 535 moving their legs so as to agitate the water into a foam for some distance around them, all the time shouting loudly and laughing immoderately; then they would run through the water for eight or ten yards and perform again; and this was repeated over and over as long as the dance lasted."

During none of these ceremonies, or indeed anywhere on the island, did I see [771] anything of totemism in the scientific sense of the word. This fact is in accordance [114] with my observations in Central and North Australia, and my negative evidence is amply borne out by the researches of Drs. W. E. Roth and H. Klaatsch and others.

Pastimes.

The sham-fights of youths with small arrow-shaped spears have already been 524 mentioned. Children were observed upon the beach competing in running and long jump. A favourite amusement of the younger folk on a breezy day is to collect the light globular seed-heads of the "spring rolling grass" (*Spinifex hirsutis*), that grow on every sand-hill near the coast, and take them to the beach and there release them on the hardened sand. Driven along by the wind, these seeds travel over the surface at no mean pace. Allowing them to gain a fair start, the children bolt after them and endeavour to overtake them and pick them up from the ground while dashing past them at full speed in "cow-boy" fashion.

Another game is that of hand-ball. The seeds of the zamia (*Cycas media*) take the place of a small ball. Two lads stand facing one another and hit the seed to and fro with the palms of their hands, after the style of a modern game of tennis.

Despite their keenness of sight and quickness of hand, they are, nevertheless, [147] very backward in catching with their hands an object which is thrown at them.

Burial Method.

The aborigines of Bathurst and Melville Islands have a unique and elaborate 764 method of burial; graves have been found on both islands. It appears that the favourite places for burying the dead are there, where a jungle or mangrove-thicket breaks to the ordinary eucalypt-woodland, usually near to the sea-coast or to a native water.

Historically we have to note several observations in this connection.

Sir Gordon Bremer[1] mentions having discovered a grave on Bathurst Island in 1824. "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it

[1] *Imperial Parliamentary Paper*, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, London, March 27th, 1843; also in *The Genesis of Queensland*, by H. S. Russell, Sydney, 1888, p. 24.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there, and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilized people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed round with trees of 7 feet or 8 feet high, some of which were carved with a stone or shell, and further ornamented by rings of wood, also carved. On the tops of these posts were placed the waddies of the deceased. . . . At the head was placed a piece of a canoe and a spear, and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and the earth were cleared away from the sides, and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."

Major Campbell,[1] who in 1826 relieved Captain Barlow as commandant of Fort Dundas, in his interesting memoir to the Royal Geographical Society also refers to native graves observed by him. He writes: "It appears to be the custom of the natives to bury their dead, their burial places being in retired spots near their most frequented encamping ground. The burial place is circular, probably 10 or 12 feet in diameter; it is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberds, 14 or 15 feet high; and between these the spear and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground." [114] This description applies equally well to those seen by us, with the exception that the cleared circular space was considerably larger in our case, while the height of the posts, above the ground, was less.

171 764 In 1847, Bete Jukes,[2] naturalist to the expedition of H.M.S. "*Fly*," described and figured a native tomb seen at Port Lihou in Endeavour Strait; "Round a central mound of sand there had been a broad ditch or hollow scooped out and swept quite clean for several yards in width. The mound was of a quadrangular form, 8 feet long, 4 feet wide, and 3 feet high. A stout post stood upright at each corner, and the sides were ornamented by rows of the ribs of the dugong placed regularly along them. . . . On each post was either a large shell or the skull of a dugong, and on the grave were several other dugongs' skulls and shells of the *Nautilus pompilius*. All these, as well as the posts, were smeared with red ochre." Additional interest is attached to the description of Jukes, since he states that "between the two posts, near the sea, a long stick had been inserted, ornamented with feathers and streamers of grass, and fastened to the post by other cross-sticks similarly ornamented." From this wording, and more so from the [778 114] figure reproduced by him, it would seem that the decoration between the posts was one of those sacred ornaments to which I have elsewhere referred as the *wunaingi*.[3]

[1] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 158.

[2] *Narrative of the Surveying Voyage H.M.S. "Fly,"* vol. i, pp. 149 and 150 (1847).

[3] *Vide* also George French Angas, *S. Australia*, illustrated, 1847, Plate XXIV; Edge Partington, Album III, Plate CXIV; Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes Cent. Australia*, pp. 230 and 231; W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies, Queensland Aborigines*, Fig. 437;

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 Territory in 1905, Messrs. Brown and Gee[1] found, near Luxmore Head on Melville Island, "a grave enclosed by wooden slabs, portions of which had been burnt. Aboriginal markings were faintly discernible in places on the wood, and some of the posts had the wood cut away at the top, leaving two spike-like horns at the sides; others had the wood cut away from the outside towards the centre, leaving a short spike standing up in the middle of the post."

As I was examining the Rivers' country on the mainland at the time, I did not personally see the find.

Soon after Professor H. Klaatsch, when visiting Melville Island, discovered close to the site of the old naval settlement of Fort Dundas a "grave decorated by monuments." Professor Klaatsch[2] describes the find as follows: "The grave was surrounded by nine wooden pillars, arranged in an elongated oval, each post differing in size and shape from its fellow. The longest was about 6 feet, and each was variously painted in yellows and reds."

●114 764 Bremer, Campbell, and Klaatsch found implements and weapons, presumably the belongings of the deceased, lying upon the grave or the grave-posts or stuck upright into the ground. They mention spears, waddies, bark water-vessels and baskets of fan-palm leaves.[3] No relics of this kind were noticed by me; in explanation thereof I state that such are likely to be destroyed by the numerous bush-fires occurring on the island, and secondly, in the case presently to be described, on account of the immature age of the individual, since children rarely are in possession of any belongings. I have, however, recorded[4] a similar custom from Central Australia.

764 The discovery I am now about to describe was made in the south-eastern corner of Bathurst Island. The grave was situated not far from the coast and on the edge of a eucalypt forest, adjoining a thicket of mangroves (*vide* Plate XIII, Figs. 1 and 2). The space was cleared; a circular patch of ground, 8 metres in diameter, had been artificially elevated by a few centimetres and swept clean.[5] It was bestrewn with numerous burnt fragments of shells of the edible *Telescopium fuscum* and *Cyrena cuningtonensis*, and also with ashes. In the centre of the elevated patch was a small elongated oval mound, which indicated where the corpse had been buried. The direction of its longer axis was north-west by south-east. Five ornamented posts[6] surrounded the small mound in an irregular way;

[1] *Vide Report on Explorations by Govt. Geologist and Staff*, 1905, p. 28, and *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, vol. xi, 1907, p. 546.

[2] *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, vol. xi, 1907, pp. 586–8, and *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, vol. xxxix, 1907, pp. 678 *et seq.*, Plate IX.

[3] *Cf.* H. Basedow, *Proc. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxi, 1907, p. 38, Figs. 40 and 41.

[4] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxviii, 1904, p. 24, Plate VI, Fig. 1.

[5] Whether this was done to guard the grave-posts against bush fires or to facilitate the detection of an imaginary visit of the evil spirit ("devil devil"), as is the case in Central Australia, or both, is still unsettled.

[6] Another grave, situated not far from the one under consideration, was surrounded by the remnants of nine posts.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 O120 Tiwi O120

The southern section of Bathurst

Island (Hart 1930) is inhabited by a subtribe called the Tiklauila. In 1911 a Roman Catholic Mission station was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island, virtually in Tiklauila territory, and at the time of the present writer's field work this was the only white settlement. In the generation before the missionaries arrived the "big man" among the Tiklauila was Turimpi. Because of their complicated marriage and inheritance regulations the average Tiwi old man in the course of his lifetime accumulates an impressive number of wives and Turimpi was no exception to this rule. At the time of his death, which occurred toward the end of the 1890's at an age which was probably something approaching 70, Turimpi counted as his wives then living or pre-deceasing him no less than 25 females. Of these the only one we need to pay any attention to is the woman named Bongladu. She, while Turimpi's wife, had borne numerous children, of whom three males grew to manhood—Antonio, born in approximately 1883, Mariano born three or four years later, and Louis born around 1893. Sometime between 1895 and 1900 she was widowed by the death of Turimpi, whereupon she married another elderly man, Murikambunga, to whom she bore two more sons—Tipperary, born around 1900, and Bob born about a year later. Bongladu of course had numerous other children who did not survive childhood.[5] It is her five adult sons who concern us here.

Turimpi, as the number of wives suggests, was an important tribal figure during his lifetime. Importance, prestige, tendency to be spoken of as a "big man" are in Tiwi functions of a number of factors in which age, number of wives, fighting ability, wisdom in council, and "family" in the sense of having relatives who are also "big men," are all compounded. On all these counts Turimpi was important, and his prestige tended to carry on after his death. Since the horde or subtribe is a comparatively small group, ranging in size from 214 for the Tiklauila (the biggest) to 57 for the Mingwila (the smallest), there will seldom be more than two or three "big men" in a subtribe at the same time, and at certain periods there may be none at all since the few old men who have the age qualification may not have the other qualifications. Turimpi's death left the Tiklauila to some extent in this state. There were few other men with comparable seniority and none of them had the qualifications for informal leadership and local prestige that he had possessed. His death left a gap, and a gap that could hardly be filled by his eldest son Antonio, who at the time of his father's death was a youth of about 16 years of age. About thirty years later, in 1928 to 1930, the field work upon which the present paper is based was carried out.

ANTONIO

It so happened that the present writer had been with the Tiwi for nearly three months before he met Antonio, although during those three months he had been closely associated with two of his brothers, Mariano and Tipperary. These two gave Antonio a great build-up as one of the most important men around, as a "big man" in every possible Tiwi sense. But when encountered in person he proved most disappointing. The only words that fitted Antonio

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

leads to the situation—quite foreign to our way of thought and also apparently to that of Polynesian cultures—whereby a young bachelor can prowl around the bush all night without arousing the slightest interest but his daytime wanderings, ostensibly in search of game, are watched by his married seniors with the deepest suspicion. 837

[8] The buffalo, which are confined to Melville Island, are the wild descendants of domestic East Asian water buffalo which were imported during an early attempt at settlement. 136

[9] It is perhaps not without interest that one of Tip's jokes is imperishably preserved in the files of the Peabody Museum at Harvard. Tip was in Darwin in 1927 when W. Lloyd Warner was collecting at the Native Compound the anthropometric measurements which were afterwards analyzed by W. W. Howells (1937), and like all other natives in town from many tribes he and a number of Tiwi were measured by Warner. On the card for each subject Warner wished to record the personal name of the native. Led by Tip, all the Tiwi measured bestowed upon themselves the most obscene "native name" they could think of, and years later Tip would shout with laughter when telling how Warner faithfully recorded these obscenities, often repeating them several times to make sure of the correct pronunciation. 159 522 114

[10] This set of sentiments surrounding Tip's wife also gives a little more insight into the sex activities of Louis. His reluctance to move in on her, because of the way "the old men would feel," while showing no such reluctance to move in on Mrs. Bob, supports the view implied above that Louis, while sex dominated, was no fool in his amours. He had an intelligent and realistic appreciation of just how much he could get away with. 159 626

[11] I use this slang term deliberately, since it expresses somewhat the Tiwi attitude toward those young bachelors who go about seducing the wives of their elders and betters.

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8 :Fry D-5 (1913) 1950 OI20 Tiwi OI20

A Bathurst Island Initiation Rite.

Sir:

000 Not many white men can have had the experience of being tried by a native court. The following story may therefore be of interest.

● 114 I had visited a native camp in northern Bathurst Island in March 1913, and had made the acquaintance of an adolescent native boy called Cooper. He was smeared 881 from head to foot with red ochre and wore a [301] collar made of a thin piece of wood bent [302] round his neck with the ends tied together with hair string behind with a strand of string about six inches long hanging down his back terminating in a blob of gum.

[p. 167-A]

881 He was in the *holloponiati* stage of initiation
[301] grade and was forbidden in the camp. One day in great secrecy he showed me some bark arm bracelets known as *tuguti*. A
[114] month later I was on a Malay lugger in the same region and some natives came out to the lugger in canoes. They told me that Cooper was to take the ceremony for his next degree that afternoon. I persuaded the master of the lugger to put me ashore on Papiau beach, opposite old Fort Dundas.
123 The natives were unwilling to take me with them at first, but finally consented. We walked inland for about four miles and met the main group, all painted for the ceremony. Cooper was said to be out in the mangroves, but came in shortly after about midday. He then went out again for a sugar bag. Having learned a few words of the language I attempted conversation. After a time I attempted to ask something about Cooper's *tuguti*. Immediately the cheerful group about me hushed and everyone seemed very concerned. They had gained the impression that I had stolen the *tuguti*. I tried to explain that I had only looked at them. About twenty of the men seated themselves in a circle and proceeded to discuss the problem. I overheard a few recognizable words at times, *ardjidit waitamanna*, no good white men, *paltoa*, dead, *yergobai*, alligator. I was sitting meanwhile with my back to a pandanus facing a salt water inlet. An emissary from the circle visited me from time to time and questioned me anxiously about what I had done with the *tuguti*. One humourist came over several times, tapped me on the shoulder, and grinningly pointed to the water, saying *yergobai*. Suddenly the discussion stopped, everybody stood up, and cordial relations were resumed as if nothing had happened.

881 Cooper returned about 4 p.m. He washed
[313] and was smeared all over with red ochre except the upper part of the face. Mean-

[P. 167-B]

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca.1940)1943 O120 Tiwi O120

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. Harney and A. P. Elkin[1]

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and 136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog 825 (*wongine*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts 757 of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] [1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. Elkin.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

MoBrSo to be the first husband of a girl is not merely a question of preferential choice; a FaSiSo is actually the only cross-cousin of the appropriate age to be considered as a party to a Type A contract. 582

As a first step, let us consider the expected relative ages of the principal parties to a Type A contract: the mother-in-law, the son-in-law, and the expected daughter-wife. A girl becomes a mother-in-law at puberty. For the sake of convenience we may consider this to be at the absolute minimum age of ten. A boy becomes a son-in-law at an age of not less than ten, and he may well be older than this. The minimum age of a Tiwi male is determined by his physical ability to hunt for and otherwise serve his mother-in-law in order to fulfill his part of the contract. 582 606 [581]

We cannot expect the future daughter and wife to be born, on the average, for at least five years and conceivably not for twenty years after the contract is made. However, again for convenience, let us assume that, on the average, the promised daughter will be born ten years from the date of the contract, i.e., when both the mother and the son-in-law are about twenty years old. The young girl will not become a cohabiting wife for approximately another eight or ten years, at which time her promised husband will be at least 28 to 30 years of age. Thus an average difference of twenty years between the ages of a girl and her first husband is to be expected—a difference which is dictated solely by the form and nature of the initial Type A contract. 582

Hart (1930: 282) believed that this twenty-year age difference was largely a result of the excessive practice of polygyny quite evident in his time (ca. 1930). However, in 1954, when most polygynous households had been broken up, an analysis of age differences for all primary unions for women in my sample still reflected the same disparity. Few men under the age of 30 had received wives, and only one girl over the age of ten had not yet been given to her promised husband. The average age difference between wives and first husbands was 18.9 years, with a range of from three to 54 years (Goodale 1959: 72). [114] [595] [593]

I shall next consider the expected relative ages of parents, siblings, and the children of siblings (cousins). If there is a twenty-year age difference between husbands and wives, it logically follows that the same age difference will also exist between the mothers and fathers of children. A woman can expect to have children by the age of twenty, while a man will not be expected to have legitimate children until about the age of 40. If we assume that siblings are of the same relative age (there being a 50/50 chance that brothers and sisters are older or younger), then we can expect that a sister will, on the average, have a child twenty years before her brother has a child. Thus it can be expected that the FaSiSo of a female Ego will be twenty years older than she is, and that her MoBrSo will be twenty years younger. In arranging the primary marriage of a girl, it is thus virtually impossible that she be promised to a MoBrSo who by expectation is twenty years younger than she, and who indeed is 582 593 582 605

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

discussed the factor of relative age as a major determinant of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in the particular type of contract which is universal for first marriages among females and is also the preferred contract for males. I have also described several variant patterns of Tiwi marriage contracts and have shown that these cannot be considered as alternatives to the preferred type but rather as additional patterns which apply only to a woman's secondary marriages. These additional types of contracts are also, to some extent, conditioned by the relative ages of the participants, but the resultant form of marriage may vary from a continuance of patrilateral cross-cousin marriage to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and even to marriage with certain relatives who are not cross-cousins. The wide variation in contracts leading to secondary marriages for women does not affect the continuance of preferred unilateral cross-cousin marriage or the exchange of wives between particular descent and local groups until the second generation after the variant marriage. Consequently, any change in the social organization of the Tiwi brought about by variations in marriage contracts is a gradual change, but it is also an inevitable and accepted form of change. The Tiwi rightly consider that as individuals they have considerable freedom in the selection of mates from almost any descent and local group and even from among a number of categories of kinsmen. Their Ego-oriented marriage system provides both stability and flexibility, and this is reflected in their system of kin classification.

NOTES

1. The field work on which this paper is based was undertaken in 1954 at the Snake Bay Native Settlement on Melville Island and was jointly financed by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.
2. In 1959, I used the relative age of spouses in a preliminary analysis of Tiwi unilateral cross-cousin marriage (Goodale 1959). It was with considerable pleasure that I found that a similar analysis by Rose (1960) had quite independently arrived at the same conclusions. Even more interesting was the fact that in cases where I had to calculate expected ages for many of my kin relations, Rose, with more complete age data, could give the average and range in ages for the same relatives, and that in most cases his "average" and my "estimated" ages were the same or within one or two years of one another.
3. For their valuable comments, criticisms, and advice I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Robbins Burling, Ward H. Goodenough, Edward B. Harper, Barbara S. Lane, and George P. Murdock.
4. Unfortunately, since the only age data collected in the field were for husbands and wives, I have had to use expected ages rather than average or mean ages throughout most of this paper (see note 2 above).
5. The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche.

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11;Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By JANE C. GOODALE

In 1912 SIR BALDWIN SPENCER, a professor of biology at the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony, however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe that such participation cannot prepare them adequately for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Melville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Economically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied, and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

TIWI NATIVE on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11, (B)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CX20 Tiwi CX20

884 the technique had to be made meaningful to the initiates,
174 the lifesaving qualities of this famine food were explained as health-giving powers. A ceremony accompanied by song and dance was certainly a dramatic and effective means of impressing the initiates in preparation methods. The ritual served another purpose as well: because traveling is so
[180] difficult during the rainy season, each household is isolated from the others. The *Kulama* ritual follows this period, and it is natural to expect a reunion to be an occasion to exchange news, settle differences, and tell stories or sing songs that keep traditions alive.

885 MUCH harder to account for is the Tiwi idea of adulthood. That every adult is solely responsible for his own health and wealth, and that success in life depends entirely on personal behavior and industry, are ideals
[171] strangely similar to those that underlie the American way of life, despite the great gulf between the aboriginal culture and our own. But it is not at all surprising that the Tiwi
177 have a great sympathy for much of Western civilization. Many hold the same views as the *Kulama* singer quoted earlier in this article who saw his children wearing clothes
[181] and shoes and going to school to learn to write, for this is the Tiwi's contemporaneous idea of success in a way of life introduced to them only a few short years ago.

Early in the summer of 1962 I revisited the Tiwi for
[114] two weeks. Although I knew that the Tiwi desired schooling and training in European ways of life and would seize any such opportunity afforded them, I was hardly prepared for the tremendous changes that had taken place during the eight years that had elapsed since my first visit.

Three months after the *Kulama* ceremony of 1954, a
[871] government school was opened. Now all the Tiwi children go to school, and some who have finished the six-year program in the government school have received subsequent training as teaching or nursing assistants. Some others have had "on-the-job" training in various activities connected with a large-scale forestry project that has been started on Melville Island. In fact, all the able-bodied Tiwi men and women are currently employed, and their tasks bear little or no relation to their old life in the bush.

It is perhaps significant—but to me not at all surprising—that I did not hear a single real complaint from the Tiwi regarding their new manner of living. They seem to like it and are anticipating bigger and better things (in the
[324] Western sense) for their children. Hunting has become
[868] a week-end diversion and the children receive little or no real instruction in that traditional skill.

178 SOME aspects of Tiwi life are slow to die, however. Most
784 of the old taboos, the observance of which was considered necessary in the past in order to insure health and wealth, are still observed, although at least one teen-ager expressed doubt that the taboos had any actual effect on the outcome of one's life. Western medicine and public
177 health practices are fast replacing belief in the *Kulama*.
884 During the past eight years only three men have begun the six years of training for *Kulama* initiation, and some of the older men no longer participate in the ceremony. However, as long as even a small number of Tiwi believe in the *Kulama*, the ritual will survive, but I doubt that it will for long.

000 NEAR END of *Kulama* ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.
[P. 16, (B)]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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"ALONGA BUSH"

A TIWI HUNT

Jane Goodale

It was April when I arrived on Melville Island, in the company of a small group of men, with the purpose of studying the culture of the Islanders, and it was eight months later that I packed up my notebooks and flew home. During this time we were amply supported by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum. 114 [122]

In my notebooks was all the information I could gather concerning the way of life, past and present, of this particular tribe of Australian Aboriginals. Much of the information in these diaries will eventually find its way into proper chapters of a Ph.D. thesis concerned with the particular economic system, tribal organization, ceremonial activities, and so on. My hand-written notes of day-by-day observations will be transformed through analysis into scientifically derived generalizations so that the information will be in the form most useful to other ethnographers. Included will be the so-called "typical daily life" of a group of interesting and very primitive hunters and gatherers; but because of the demands of time and space some things will be left out: the account of a succession of days, some of which were perhaps almost "typical," but most of which were unique, made so by the personalities of the particular people I was with, by the weather, and by hundreds of little incidents. Only by mixing the days together can one describe a "typical" day and then it becomes a classification and not a true description.

I think something very real is lost by the scientific demands of ethnological reports, so I would like to take this opportunity and space to record some of the incidents which occurred during a series of seven days when I accompanied a group of Melville

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 1. Snake Bay Settlement

114 Islanders on a hunt. The trip took us to a small clearing on the right bank of the Paluwiunga River, ten miles upstream from where it empties into the Arafura Sea.

131 A brief glance at the map will help to further pinpoint this location. Ten degrees south of the equator and at a distance of twenty to fifty miles due north from the Australian Northern Territory capital of Darwin, lies the relatively large Melville Island (1,000 square miles), named for Viscount Henry Dundas Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, who authorized the coastal survey of 1818 during which the island was circumnavigated. To the west, separated by a narrow strait, lies the smaller Bathurst
101 Island. The group of people with whom I found myself camped by the river bank were members of the Tiwi, a tribe of Australian
[161 Aboriginals whose country includes both these islands. Today about
361] seven hundred members of the tribe live near to the southeast corner
797 of Bathurst Island where they are in various ways administered to by the Sacred Heart Mission. On the northern coast of Melville
161 Island, on a hill overlooking Snake Bay, near the mouth of the
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648

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

412 short, cylindrical stick, about three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter. This was dipped in the colour and transferred to the painting surface with the brush held as in Fig. 2B.

FIG. 2. *Methods of Holding Brushes*

4. THE ARTISTS

531 [463] [302] As with other aboriginal groups with whom I have worked in Central and Northern Australia, there is no special artist class; all aboriginal men and women of the Tiwi, would, on occasions, be required to paint designs on the bodies of one or another of their relatives, or on objects, particularly those associated with the *pukamuni* ceremony.

Some men, however, were looked upon as being more skilled than others in some particular field, i.e., cutting and decorating the burial poles, or the ceremonial spears, painting the large bark baskets, or the bodies of men and women who take part in the *pukamuni* or *kulama* ceremonies.

On Pl. 1 are four men who were regarded as good craftsmen and artists.

Pulanimbuwi (Pl. 1A), hard-working and meticulous in all he did, produced the unusual *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 35); two other poles as human figures (Pl. 37A, B; 37E, F), and a number of bark paintings; Pl. 13B, D, and Pl. 14C, D, being typical.

Inbidjarmeri (Pl. 1B), being fully employed by the Superintendent of the nearby settlement, was unable to make bark paintings for me. He was most expert in carving and painting the beautiful, multi-barked ceremonial spears. Pl. 32B is his work. He was also in great demand for decorating the performers for the *pukamuni* and *kulama* ceremonies. Pl. 28K and Pl. 28B are examples of his craftsmanship in this field.

●115 *Tjamalampua* (Pl. 1C) and *Malumerinita* (Pl. 1D) are two men to whom I

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

115 owe much, not only for the many bark baskets and paintings they made, but also for the wealth of information they so courteously imparted to me about the creation of their world, their totemic ancestors and the philosophies of their people.

These two old men are the storehouses of the tribal beliefs and philosophies. As the younger men are no longer taking a deep interest in their tribal lore, the passing of *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita* will be an irreparable loss to the aborigines of Melville Island.

[184]
[178]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

1. THE CREATION OF THE LAND OF THE TIWI

773 In the beginning there was no light, the earth was flat and featureless; no hills or valleys broke its monotonous surface, no trees covered its nakedness, no call of birds disturbed its quietness. It was a dead, silent world.

Then, at some period in those dim and far-off times, known to the Melville Islanders as the *palaneri*, an old blind woman, *Mudungkala*, rose miraculously out of the ground at Murupianga, south-eastern Melville Island, carrying in her arms three infants, two girls, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, and a boy, *Purukupali*.[10] No one knows from where she came, nor after she had finished the creation of the land of the Tiwis, where she went.

Clasping her children to her breast and crawling on her knees, *Mudungkala* travelled slowly northward, the fresh water, that bubbled up in the track she made, becoming the swift tideway of Dundas Strait now separating Melville Island from the Coburg Peninsula on the mainland (Fig. 1).

Mudungkala then turned westward, and, as she formed the northern shores of Melville Island as far as Cape Van Diemen, she made occasional journeys inland, creating the Johnson and Lethbridge Bays, Curtis Haven, the Tjipripu River, Shark Bay, and the northern entrance of Apsley Straits.

Mudungkala, still carrying her children, crawled along the west coast of Bathurst Island until she reached Cape Fourcroy, creating Port Hurd on the way. On Turiturina Island in Port Hurd, the mythical bird-men and women, and later, the *Ningaui* spirit people, performed the first *kulama* ceremonies.

At Cape Fourcroy, the old woman turned toward her starting place, Murupianga. One side of the wide channel she created became the southern shores of Bathurst Island, where, at Maundu, the dreaded *Marajis* made their home.

But when *Mudungkala* reached the present Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island), she thought she was making the island too large. So, remembering the deep inlet near Cape Van Diemen, she crawled northward, her track becoming the winding Apsley Straits that now separate Melville from Bathurst Island.[11] She then turned back, felt her way to Jurubulinai[12] at the southern end of

[10] Not all the informants mentioned *Purukupali*, although, in the creation period, it was *Purukupali* who brought the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*, to their mothers.

[11] At this point in the creation story, some informants interpolated a myth that describes how *Mudungkala*, under a different name, was speared by *Purui* (sea osprey) and *Jirakati* (sea-eagle). This myth, described on page 26, is obviously an accretion.

[12] In the last phase of creation, this island was the totem place of a woman of a similar name, *Mudungkala*, one of the wives of *Tukimdini*. At present we do not know the correct relationship between these two women; further research no doubt will clarify the situation.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

6. THE BARK PAINTINGS OF THE TOTEMIC PLACES

×532
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The aborigines of Melville Island produced forty-five bark paintings dealing with the totemic localities of Melville and Bathurst Islands. The assistance of the two aboriginal artists, *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, and Mr. W. E. Harney, who had spent many years on the islands, coupled with the aboriginal names on the official map of Melville and Bathurst Islands, and my increasing knowledge, enabled me to locate the approximate position of twenty-five totemic areas associated with the bark paintings.
[115]

The Honey-eater Bird-man, Tukimbini, at Murupianga

Four bark paintings deal with the myth of *Tukimbini* and the totem place he created at Murupianga, south-eastern Melville Island; Pl. 4A, B; Pl. 4C, D; Pl. 6C, D; Pl. 7A.

The circle *a*, on Pl. 4A, B, is a mangrove swamp on a low island adjacent to Murupianga, *b*, *b*, and *p*, *p*, *p*, being rocks on its shore. The long sandy beach at Murupianga is shown at *d*, and a shoal at *j*. At *e* is a stingray, *h*, a dugong, *k*, a turtle, and *l*, a diamond fish. At *f*, *f*, etc., are piles of dead leaves on the beach, and at *s*, *s*, *s*, and similar designs, stringy-bark trees growing along the shore. A freshwater spring is at *t*, with two trees growing from its banks. Bunches of sea-weed are at *g*, and *r*, *r*, *r*, and at *s*, on the left-hand side of the painting, are the tree-covered uplands at Murupianga. The totemic place, Wuriupi, created by the woman, *Wuriupranala*, and her son, is at *m*.

On Pl. 4C, D, a jungle near the shore at Murupianga,[37] is indicated by the central black disc, *g*, and the camps of the bird-man, *Tukimbini*, are shown by the symbols, *a*, *a*, etc. The circle, *d*, *d*, pictures high, white cliffs, adjacent to the totemic jungle; *k*, is a monsoon forest tree; and *f*, *f*, its limbs; at *h*, *h*, are living paper-bark trees, at *b*, *b*, *b*, dead jungle trees; and at *c*, *c*, etc., poisonous yams, similar to the *kulama* (Pl. 44D), which *Tukimbini* created for food. The dots on the painting indicate the red seeds of a jungle vine lying on the ground.

Pl. 6C, D, is one side of a *pukamuni* basket;[38] the holes at *a*, *a*, show that it is a female basket.

[37] In the companion bark painting, Pl. 4A, B, the totemic place is a mangrove swamp. Within the same area, as with *Mondukuku*, south-western Bathurst Island, several adjacent localities are associated with the same totemic being.

[38] Klaatsch (1907), p. 377, who saw this type of basket on an old grave, states that, according to the aborigines, it indicated the burial place of a woman. Though it may be that Klaatsch was correct, my informants simply referred to the *pukamuni* baskets as male and female, as they did to male and female *pukamuni* spears (Pl. 32A, B). No female baskets were used at the *pukamuni* of the woman, *Makapini*.
[114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

211
765 where they have not suffered from ecclesiastic prohibitions, are still using a
[178] similar form of grave and posts.

Major Campbell (1834, p. 158), writing of a grave he saw on Melville Island in 1826, states: "It (the grave) is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberts, 14–15 feet high, and between these the spears and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground."

Brown (1905, p. 28) found a grave on Luxmore Head, in Apsley Straits surrounded . . . "by wooden slabs, portions of which had been burnt. Aboriginal markings were faintly discernible in places on the wood, some of the posts had the wood cut away from the outside toward the centre, leaving a short spike standing up in the middle of the post."

Klaatsch (1907, p. 257), in referring to the same burial poles at Luxmore Head, writes: "In some examples the slab was so carved that the upper part was only connected with the lower by two thin pillars or, on others, the top was mushroom-shaped.

"It is easy to see that the aborigines used fire for this work of sculpture, scratching the burnt part away with shell."

Basedow,[99] in 1911, came across a grave of an infant, on Bathurst Island, surrounded by five simply decorated posts, which had "been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk."

Basedow persuaded the aborigines to renovate the designs, which did not vary greatly from those in use at the present day.

[114] Spencer,[100] in 1911, made sketches of many of the burial poles, and arranged for the aborigines to redecorate a group which was later displayed in the
[177] National Museum, Melbourne. He states (1928, p. 682) that: "It (the pole) was slowly and laboriously cut with an iron tomahawk, but formerly with a sharp shell, until it has the form decided upon by the artificer."

Dr. Kenneth Fry, who visited Melville Island in 1913, was the first investigator to ascertain the meanings of a number of poles. These, with his permission, are illustrated on Fig. 8. All of these shapes, but two, are those still most commonly used among the hundred or more which I saw on Melville Island.

● [115] An old aboriginal, *Tjamalampua*, told me that in *pulaneri* times, i.e., a long while ago, before there were any steel axes, the aborigines used stone axes to fell the hollow trees for *pubamuni* poles. Although there were just as many poles around the grave as there are today, they were neither as

[99] Basedow (1913), p. 314, Fig. 4, Pls. 13, 14, 16, 17, 18.
[100] Spencer (1928), p. 682, Figs. 475–7, Pl. X.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER IV

The Kulama Ceremony

114 881 ALTHOUGH little has been recorded about the colourful *pukamani* burial rituals of the Tiwi, several investigators have published details of the *kulama* ceremony.

Spencer saw a *kulama* ceremony during March 1912. His records of those rituals (Spencer, 1928, pp. 658–76), the most complete we have, show that, [178] during the last forty years the pattern has not changed to any extent. Although the names of the initiation grades given by Spencer do not agree with those recorded by later investigators, it is likely these differences are due to Spencer's interpreter, the buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who was not then fully conversant with the ceremony.

Fry (1949, p. 176), during 1913, witnessed an initiation ceremony in which Reuben Cooper, Joe Cooper's half-caste son, passed from the *Kolloponiati* (my *Kiliponiati*) stage to that of a *Wadjeniati*.

In the same year Fry (1950, pp. 79–80), saw the closing phases of the *kulama* from the peeling of the yam (p. 138), to the final rituals (p. 142). Although Fry was mistaken in considering that this ceremony was part of a burial rite, his record is a valuable and accurate description of the last two days of the *kulama*.

Hart (1930, p. 286), recorded the *kulama* initiation names and the duration of the grades of both male and female initiates. These names correspond closely to those I was able to obtain from the fully initiated men, with one exception. Hart stated that the grade of *Mikingula*, i.e., the fully initiated, lasted for four years. This is obviously incorrect, as the *Mikingula*, being the final grade, lasts for life.

178 881 It appears certain that Tiwi initiation has ceased, although, I feel sure, within comparatively recent times. The *Mikingulas* often talked about initiating some of their companions, but when the opportunity came, they procrastinated.

115 881 However, the same fully initiated men gave me full details of the rituals at each stage of initiation, explained how those rituals fitted into the *kulama* rituals we had witnessed, and either decorated themselves, or painted designs

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

on sheets of paper to illustrate the body markings used at each stage of initiation. 115 881

To give a complete account of the full *kulama* which included initiation as well as the preparation of the yam for food, I have included both groups of rituals, as they would have been performed in the original *kulama* ceremony. However, it must be borne in mind that we witnessed only the rituals belonging to the *kulama* yam. As stated before, the details of initiation were obtained from the fully initiated men. 128 881 123

1. THE MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGIN

(1) *The first Kulama Ceremony*

During *palaneri* (creation) times, not long before the death of *Purukupali*, when all the animals and birds were still men and women, *Purutjikini*, a boobook owl-man, and his wife, *Pintoma*, a barn owl-woman, decided to perform the first *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina, in Port Hurd, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1). They invited *Jirakati*, later the white-headed sea-eagle, and *Tupatupini*, the small owl, to be present, planning to make them the first initiates. Many other people assisted in the ceremony, the *Ningauis*, a small spirit people who still live in the mangrove swamps nearby; *Inwati*, *Mauwini* and *Taparalili*, three groups of the honey people; *Jirakupai*, the sea-going crocodile; *Narina*, the black cockatoo, and *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle. 773 881

Tukimbini, *Wuriuprinili* and a number of ancestral people from the eastern end of Melville Island, being opposed to the holding of the *kulama* ceremony, did not attend.

At the ceremony, the white-headed eagle, *Jirakati*, was the first *Wadjeniati* initiate (he still wears the ceremonial paint), and the owl, *Tupatupini*, the first *Mikinatrina*. There is no mention in the creation myths of the other grades of initiation.

When the first *kulama* ceremony was finished[16] the participants returned to their homes until the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, which was performed at the end of the *palaneri* (creation period). It was then that *Purutjikini*, the leader

[16] Some informants referred to a fight which took place at the first *kulama* in which *Purutjikini* was attacked because he did not wait for some late-comers. Others described another quarrel which started when one of the *kulama* men followed a woman of the Kaiakumuniri group into the mangrove swamps and raped her so badly that she died.

The Kaiakumuniri people attacked the performers of the *kulama*, killing some and driving others into the mangrove swamps where they live today as the *Ningauis*. The more elderly informants, *Tjemelompua* and *Mokumirinia*, however, said that there were no quarrels at the first *kulama*.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

all these day-to-day activities of ordinary elementary field work, are, one presumes, based upon some common-sense judgments about the "personalities" of the natives with whom the anthropologist is living in rather intimate association. 121

Unfortunately the conventions of anthropology are such that it is just this sort of material which is never published and yet it would seem to be precisely this sort of material, if organized and systematized a little, which would throw light upon the amount of individual personality variation and the range of personality types which are to be found in the simpler societies. Too often the old-fashioned anthropologist, asked what he knows about the "personality" of his tribe, is apt to reply rather defensively, "Well, nothing much; you see I didn't pay much attention to toilet training when I was there, nor was I competent to give Rorschachs and T.A.T.'s." If, instead of being intimidated by the question, he would take the trouble to recall the ten natives he knew best (in the sense of knowing that is involved in the everyday statement "I know him pretty well") and attempt to describe briefly the "personality" of each of the ten, he would, one suspects, be astonished not only at how much common-sense knowledge he has of the personalities of the men he is describing but also at the range of difference that they exhibit.

As a crude sample of what would be revealed if the ordinary fieldworking anthropologist would make some attempt at "personality description" along such lines, there is offered in this paper a very superficial and cursory examination of the "personalities"[1] of five Australian aborigines whom the writer believes (perhaps erroneously) he got to know reasonably well *as people*, in the course of field work among the tribe to which they belonged—the Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands, North Australia. One cannot live with any tribe for two years, especially in the very primitive and intimate living conditions of nomadic Australian life, without getting to know certain individuals better than others, and two of the five men in question were not only trusted informants and advisers but also twenty-four-hour-a-day companions for weeks at a time. The basis of selection of these two, Mariano and Tipperary, is that the writer knew them over a long period of time and was able to observe them under a great variety of circumstances.[2] The addition of the other three—Antonio, Louis and Bob—is suggested by the fact that they were brothers or half-brothers of the first two, all five having a common mother, a woman named Bongdadu. The selection of a group of brothers for intensive study is justified in the present context by the self-evident fact that if, as is alleged by the personality and culture adherents, a common culture, with common toilet training, common family conditioning, etc., produces homogeneous personalities in the simpler societies, then such homogeneity of personality should be all the greater in a group of men who not only are products of the same culture but grew up in the same household, and were suckled, reared and toilet-trained by the same mother. 115 124 [121]

The Tiwi, who numbered 1,062 people in 1928-30, are divided into nine hordes or subtribes scattered over two islands. The southern section of Bathurst 105 000

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

usually wives and children only, but this life lived in an isolated household is broken in upon at intervals by short interludes of the "collective life," when members of numbers of households gather together for ceremonies, legal proceedings, fights and initiations. If we may call these two types of living the public life and the private life of the adult male Australian, then we may say that Antonio was very happy in private life and uncomfortable in public life. The two activities which made him happiest were playing with his children and hunting with his dogs. When left alone by society to do these two things Antonio was a kindly, patient, gentle, good-natured and relaxed man, but in all social relations with other adult men he was nervous and uncertain of himself. One might hazard the opinion that it was because children and dogs made no great demands upon him that he was happy and at ease with them, but people he found very trying since they were always expecting him to "take a stand" or to make a decision and this was something he had no talent for, something which did not "come naturally" to him, and something which gave him no satisfaction. Turimpi's mantle had fallen on a man who just wanted the world to let him alone, who preferred his home, his family and his dogs to any rewards which public life could give him.

159 [571]

MARIANO

Mariano was first encountered in Port Darwin before the writer had got to the Tiwi. Finding me waiting for transportation to the islands, Mariano offered to come with me and act as my chief interpreter and informant. As he appeared a very intelligent and mature member of the tribe, I promptly hired him. Or so I thought at the time. Events were to prove that what had happened was that Mariano had appropriated me. For Mariano was (in his own opinion, at least) the only possible person fit to escort and advise a white man visiting the Tiwi. He had created something of a monopoly in the job of white man's escort and adviser. The beginning of this not unusual native profession went back, in his case, to the foundation of the Mission station. When the missionaries arrived in 1911 and began to build their mission houses Mariano became almost immediately the principal go-between of Mission and natives. As far as the situation of 1911 can now be reconstructed the factors operating to select Mariano for this position were merely suitability of social status, availability and willingness to undertake it. As already mentioned, the Mission was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island. This was Tiklauila territory and at that time the dominant family among the Tiklauila was that of Turimpi. Of Turimpi's sons, Antonio, the eldest, was about 28 or 29, Mariano was about 25 and Louis, the third son, was a youth not yet 20. Antonio's role as eldest son was already fixed, Mariano's, as second son, was still flexible. Antonio was personally unaggressive except when forced into taking a strong stand, Mariano (we may speculate) was already more forceful and more prone to draw attention to himself by aggressive behavior.[8] Mariano was just ready in 1911 to emerge from the age group of young men who should, according to Tiwi ideas, be seen and not heard into the age group of "junior adult men" who

123 158 [115] 159 [797] [561]

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

121 theorists," says Boas, "assume a mental equipment of primitive man distinct from that of civilized man. I have never seen a person in primitive life to whom this theory would apply. There are slavish believers in the teachings of the past and there are scoffers and unbelievers; there are clear thinkers and muddle-headed bunglers; there are strong characters and there are weaklings" (1951). It is noteworthy that this (for Boas) unusually flat and definite statement was made in an attempt to demolish the views of Levy-Bruhl that between civilized man and the primitive there is an impassable psychological gap. Perhaps—as Tipperary would say, if he understood the matter—perhaps, the personality and culture movement is merely Levy-Bruhl in modern dress, perhaps the latent content of the movement is to deny to the people of the simpler cultures the ordinary elementary human qualities of individual difference and human variation, thereby enabling "personality" and "individuality" to be treated as unique creations of the white races to be found only among the followers of the American way of life. If this indeed be the latent content of much "personality and culture" literature, it seems to warrant a flat and unqualified rejection, in terms as emphatic as those of Boas, by all those anthropologists who, like Boas, may not know projective tests but do know something about the simpler native societies.

NOTES

121 [1] In view of the wide discrepancies in the use of the word "personality" it must be made clear again that all that is meant by the word here is the level of description one is apt to get if in ordinary social conversation one asks the question, "What sort of person is he?"

115 [2] The native names of these men are all polysyllabic and difficult for the reader to remember. I use therefore the names bestowed upon them by white men, to aid in keeping them distinctly in mind. The Spanish names, Antonio, etc., were bestowed by certain Filipino carpenters who built the building for the Roman Catholic missionaries when they first arrived. Tipperary is, of course, a white corruption of a native name.

159 [3] It will be noticed by close students of the above information that Turimpi must have been born in the 1830's, Bongladu born somewhere around 1865. She had her first child when she was about 16 or 17, at which time her husband Turimpi was at least 50. This is a perfectly normal Tiwi marital situation, the commonest marriage arrangement being one in which a newly-born female child is betrothed by her father to a man in his thirties.

159 177 297 [4] Even from the anthropologist Dooley would not accept tobacco until he had convinced himself that in return he would not be required to sacrifice any of his principles. Nor would he take his son, to whom he was passionately attached, to the Mission station for medical treatment—perhaps the most striking proof of the uncompromising attitude that Dooley had adopted toward the Mission.

159 [5] Such a speculation about Mariano's personality at the age of 25, seventeen years before the author knew him, is based upon the general belief of social scientists that personality does not change much between 25 and 42, and the particular evidence of the older missionaries that Mariano was "already inclined to throw his weight around" when they first arrived.

13 182 837 [6] Goodenough (1949) is apparently one of the few anthropologists to discuss the relation between extra-marital sexual activity and the opportunities provided by the nature of the physical environment. The point here is slightly different; whether the Tiwi physical environment encourages adultery is uncertain since a social system such as theirs would promote adultery whatever the physical environment, but it certainly helps to increase the suspiciousness of husbands.

837 [7] That seduction has to be a daytime activity is implied in what has already been said. After sundown the women are concentrated in their husband's camp and have no opportunity. Which

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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142
302
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Fig. 2. Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend, Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

lores and customs, and if the white people were disappointed by his performance in settlement work, the old men of the tribe were just as pleased by his attitude to his native heritage.

Agnes, a slim tall girl of twenty, was even shyer than Albert and to cover up this shyness she always smiled or giggled. She was a cheerful soul to have around. Feeling that the responsibility of the care and feeding of the *murandanga* (female white person) was a little more than their young shoulders could bear, Albert asked Big Jack, his older brother, a "big man" in the tribe to come along. At the last minute a fifth member was added, Tchuwiunga, a tiny black-and-white puppy of about eight weeks old.

Number one canoe was the largest canoe and was considered the safest. The Malay fishermen, a century or more ago, had taught the Melville Islanders how to hew a rough canoe from a single log, but the art had never been perfected. This canoe measured about fifteen feet in length by about three feet in width at the center. There were small platforms in the bow and stern which

Fig. 1. Setting off in Number one canoe

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CASE STUDIES IN
CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

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George and Louise Spindler
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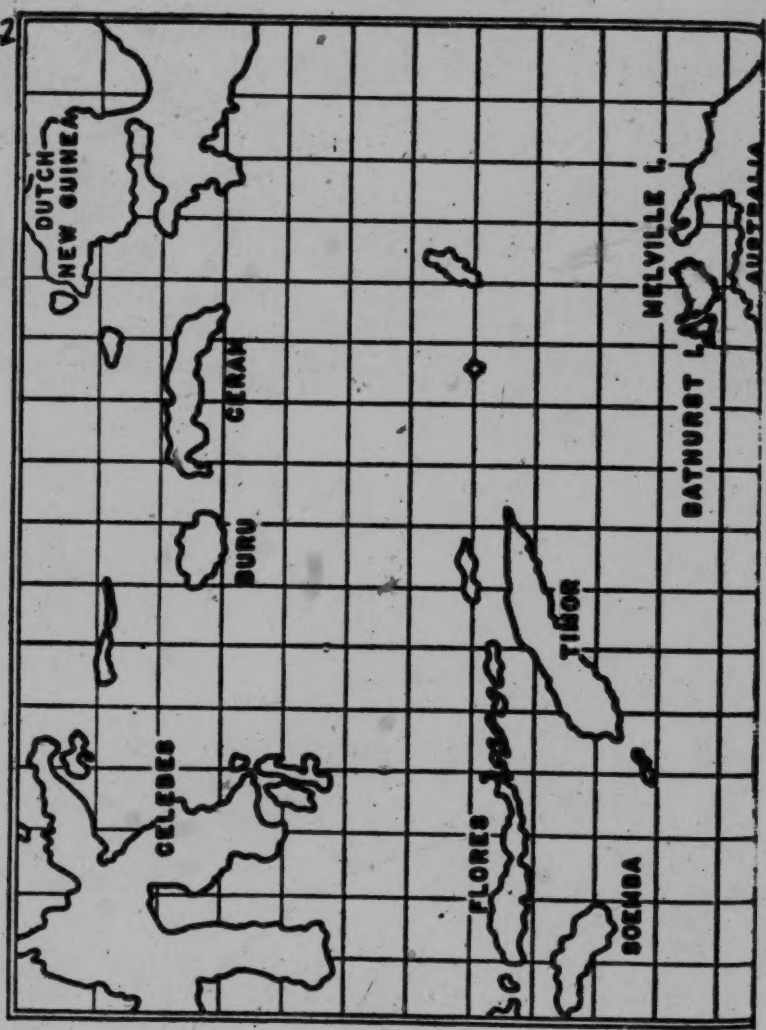
THE TIWI OF NORTH AUSTRALIA

[p. i]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960

OH20 Tiwi OH20

102



[p. ii]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

THE TIWI OF NORTH AUSTRALIA

BY

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University of Wisconsin

AND

ARNOLD R. PILLING
Wayne State University

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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About the Authors

C. W. M. HART was born in Australia and became an American citizen in 1953. He studied at the Universities of Sydney, Chicago, and London; and has taught anthropology at the London School of Economics, University of Toronto, and the University of Wisconsin where he is now professor of anthropology. He was associate editor of the *American Anthropologist* from 1949 to 1952 and was recently elected president of the Society for Applied Anthropology. 114

Arnold R. Pilling, a Californian, studied at the University of California at Berkeley. He was a Fulbright Fellow to Australia in 1953 and 1954 and spent most of that time studying the culture of the Tiwi. He is now a member of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Wayne State University in Detroit.

About the Book

This is a case study of a system of influence and power which is based on a strange currency. The currency is woman. Newborn females, nubile marriageable females, toothless old hags — all are valuable in Tiwi terms. Because men compete for prestige and influence through their control over women, women have the value of a scarce commodity. Under this system there are no illegitimate children, no unmarried females of any age, and wives are either very much older or very much younger than their husbands. 562 [557] 848 589]

A vivid picture of Tiwi life, as viewed from within the culture, emerges in this book. The reader is not made an outsider, left to peer into a dimly understood, formalized, alien way of life. Rather, he is taken inside the family group, by the night's campfire. He becomes a witness to angry quarrels, a participant in involved machinations aimed at success — as defined by the Tiwi. He comes to know individual Tiwi as real people. 114

This book is a study of social interaction. But it is also a study of culture change. Much happened between Hart's and Pilling's visits to the Tiwi. These changes are described, and we see them in the context of the period of Tiwi contacts with the outside world. 121

GEORGE AND LOUISE SPINDLER
General Editors

Stanford, California
December 1959

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

Preface

HART WORKED among the Tiwi during 1928 and 1929, and in Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4 summarizes the main aspects of their culture as it was at that time. Pilling's fieldwork was carried out during 1953 and 1954, and he outlines in Chapter 5 the contacts of the Tiwi with the outside world before and up until the coming of the first missionaries in 1911, and in Chapter 6 describes the modifications in Tiwi culture that have occurred since 1930. It is rare for two anthropologists who have studied the same tribe at widely separated times to collaborate in writing about them, hence it is worth mention (1) that the two anthropologists had never met nor even written to each other until after Pilling had returned to the United States in 1955; (2) that when they finally got together during 1957-1958 to plan and write the present book, they were both astonished at how little basic disagreement there was between them. Arguments about each other's statements have been numerous and prolonged, but almost invariably these concerned matters of detail or emphasis. The chief result of the collaboration has been the discovery, by each author, and exciting for both, of how well the other knows his Tiwi. This is uncommon enough in anthropology to be noteworthy. We are both grateful to the Tiwi for having brought us together and we are both impressed by the fact that the Tiwi who brought us together were the same complicated but delightful people, despite the twenty-five year interval in our respective sojourns among them. 114 121 [181]

C.W.M.H.
A.R.P.

Madison, Wisconsin
Detroit, Michigan
December 1959

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Contents

Introduction: The Australian Aborigines 1

The First Men in Australia, 1
Australian Culture When the White Men Came, 5

1. Tiwi Marriage 9

Cultural Isolation, 9
The Tribe and the Bands, 11
The Household, 13
Marriage by Betrothal, 14
Widow Remarriage, 18
Naming Rules, 21
Levirate, Sororate, and Cross-Cousin Marriage, 23
"Disputed" Wives, 28
The Household: An Overview, 29

2. Life in the Bush 31

Organization: Band and Household, 31
Daily Activities, 33
Joint Activities, 40
Making Things, 46

3. The Prestige and Influence System 51

The Beginning of Tiwi Careers, 54
A Very Successful Elder: Ki-in-kumi, 63
The Establishments of Malau, 65
The Politics of Widow Remarriage, 67
The Politics of Bestowal, 71

4. The Collective Life 79

Legal Affairs, 79
Religious Activities, 87

5. Friend and Foe (1600-1928) 97

Hostility toward Outsiders (1600-1900), 97
The Beginning of Friendly Contact (1900-1928), 100

[p. viii]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

6. The Tiwi Today 105
Changes since 1930, 105
Marriage Arrangements, 107
Residence Patterns, 109
Patriliny to Matriliny, 111
Tiwi and the Australian Nation, 112

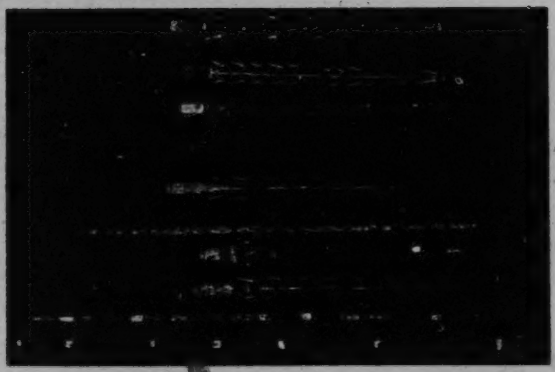
References Cited 115

Recommended Reading 117

302

Top to bottom: Timalarua, the canoe maker; Tiwi spears; mourning ceremony around graveposts.

411
531



764
765

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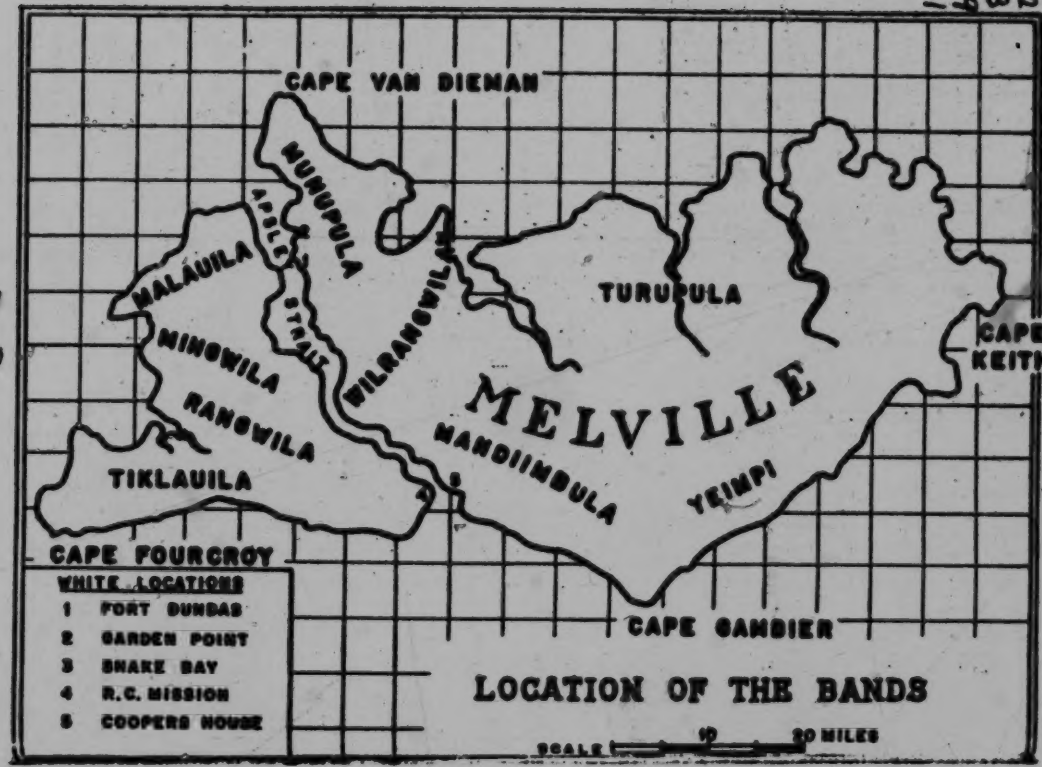
102
103
69
621



[xii]

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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Introduction: The Australian Aborigines

The First Men in Australia

THOUGH EUROPEAN SEAFARERS, particularly the Portuguese and the Dutch, had sighted and even landed upon the shores of Australia at much earlier dates, the first real knowledge of Australia and what it contained was brought back to Europe by the great English explorer, Captain James Cook, as a result of his voyage of 1769-71. During that voyage, Cook surveyed and mapped most of the long eastern coastline of the island continent, and since he was a keen scientist himself and also had on board several naturalists, including the noted botanist Sir Joseph Banks, the wonders of the new country—its peculiar flora and fauna and its strange, primitive human inhabitants—were carefully examined and described for the first time. We may therefore fix the bringing of the Australian native peoples to the attention of the Western world as dating from Cook's discovery of 1770.

By that date, most of the rest of the world was known and at least some rough notions of what the existing races looked like were held by educated Europeans. Captain Cook and the naturalists with him were therefore quick to realize that the Australian natives, both in their physical appearance and way of life, were distinct from any people elsewhere. Dark skinned and wide nosed as they were, their low brows and wavy hair (including luxuriant beards) clearly differentiated them from the African Negroes, while the general crudity of their culture distinguished them from the dusky islanders of the Pacific. Physical type different from anybody else, culture simpler and more primitive—these were the two predominant impressions which the Australian natives made on the first Europeans to associate with them and they are still, to modern anthropologists, the two basic features that must be used when trying to place the Australians within the racial and cultural history of mankind.

Why the Australians—when finally discoverd by the Europeans—should be so different in physical type and so primitive in culture compared with most of the world is usually explained by employing the same concept that

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

scientists use to account for the continued survival in Australia of eucalyptus trees, kangaroos, koala bears, and the duck-billed platypus—namely, the long-continued isolation of early forms, which elsewhere have either died out or changed into something a little more modern. Australia is a large and geologically an ancient country, but in relation to the other large land masses on the earth, it is very "cut-off" and remote. Recent white settlement in Australia has built up large modern cities which are similar in many respects to those in America. During World War II, American troops stationed in these Australian cities were astonished to find so many of their cherished American institutions—department stores, drug stores, movie theaters—located in a country "so far from everywhere." It is this isolation that accounts for the preservation in Australia of plants, animals, and a native race which, deprived of contact with the rest of the world until recently, developed or retained characteristics which are unique in the modern world.

Most of what we know about the first entry of men into Australia is based on probability and inference. Since Australia is in such an out-of-the-way corner of the earth's surface, man is not likely to have originated there. He must therefore have migrated—probably accidentally—from somewhere else. A glance at a world map will show that this migration can hardly have been from any continent other than Asia. The long chain of islands stretching down into the Pacific from the neighborhood of Singapore suggests the obvious migration route. There was a time in the geological past when many of these islands were joined to each other by land bridges which also tied them to Asia and Australia, so that early animals such as marsupials were able to walk (or hop) from Asia to Australia without getting their feet wet. But these land connections disappeared under the ocean long before the appearance of man on earth, and therefore the early ancestors of the Australians, in moving down from Asia through the islands, must have encountered stretches of open ocean on their route. Such inferences pose the general shape of the problem. The early Australians came from Southeast Asia; they came, part of the way at least, by water, and they must have remained isolated in Australia after their arrival.

How early in terms of years these first humans reached Australia can be inferred from indirect evidence. The crucial point is the simplicity of the Australians' tools and weapons. Present-day anthropology does not subscribe to the idea that human technological development has only been along a single line (the doctrine of unilineal cultural evolution), but nonetheless in a rough sense the presence or absence of certain basic pieces of human technology can be used as time indicators. When the Europeans first encountered the natives of southeastern Australia in the 1700's, the following items of technology were completely lacking among them: all use of metal, agriculture, domestic animals (except the dog), pottery, and the bow and arrow. As they had none of these in 1700, the belief is that their ancestors had none of them when they first arrived. Since those ancestors came from Asia via the islands, they must have left Asia before these items of culture were

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

invented or known there. Agriculture, pottery, and metal using were developed comparatively late in human history, but the absence of knowledge of the bow and arrow in the southern parts of Australia is particularly notable since this weapon is relatively ancient and very wide-spread among hunting and gathering peoples. Moreover, its value to hunters is so great that it is unlikely to be given up. Hence, we infer that the earliest Australians migrated down from Southeast Asia at a time so early that knowledge of the bow and arrow had not yet reached that area. Evidence regarding the origin of the bow and arrow is still not certain. In Western Europe this weapon is usually dated as first appearing in the Mesolithic Period (roughly 20,000–6,000 B.C.). Dr. Kroeber includes the bow among the artifacts which the first ancestors of the American Indians carried across Bering Straits around 15,000 B.C. This last date will suffice as an approximation. By 15,000 B.C. the bow and arrow were present in Northeast Asia (that is, the section lying towards Bering Straits) and probably were also known in Southeast Asia. We may hazard the conclusion, therefore, that the ancestors of the Australians must have already left the vicinity of the Asiatic mainland by that date. This leads to the inference that when discovered by Captain Cook in 1770, the Australians had been in Australia for something like 17,000 years,[1] having drifted down from the mainland of Asia possessing only the primitive technological equipment that the rest of the world had evolved at that time. Having arrived "at the end of the line" in Australia, they could go no further, and survived there in isolation, keeping, but not improving upon, the simple technology they had brought with them.

But why were they left alone while other peoples, at later dates, with improved tools and weapons (including the bow and arrow) occupied the islands behind them and beyond them? For today the island chain from the mainland of Asia down to New Guinea and the numerous island groups further out into the Pacific (Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia) are occupied by peoples who not only differ from the Australians in physical type but also possess such cultural items as the bow and arrow, agriculture, domesticated pigs, pottery, and many others, which were unknown in Australia. The answer to this second part of the problem seems to hinge upon the types of ocean transportation employed by these early migrants.

In reconstructing the early culture history of the Pacific region, it is impossible to operate without one general assumption—namely, that the type of tools (including the type of canoe) possessed by a given native people when the white man first arrived was approximately the same as that which the early ancestors of those people brought with them when they first entered the area in question. (This assumption can, of course, only be made if there is strong supporting evidence that changes in the tools (and canoes) *after arrival* were minimal or superficial.) On this assumption the early Australians

[1] So far, very little archaeological investigation has been carried out in Australia. The earliest dated cultural material from the continent is about 8,500 years old. However, Australian archaeologists have located human artifacts which apparently are earlier than this dated culture.

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

174 are thought to have arrived in the type of canoes that were still in use by their descendants in the 1700's. These craft, mostly in use in Cook's time on the northern and eastern coasts and the inland waterways, were called canoes by courtesy but were incredibly frail. They consisted of a single sheet of bark bent roughly into the shape of a boat, laced together at the ends, caulked with wild honeycomb or some vegetable gum, their sides held apart by a few sticks. Such "canoes" are little better than rafts; even in calm water they are likely to swamp, capsize, or disintegrate, and the only thing that can be said for them is that when swamped or capsized, the bark will still float, enabling the occupants to cling to the remains, at least briefly. Hanging on to a swamped sheet of bark is not an activity that merits the name seafaring, and in the shark-invested waters around the Australian coastline and in the crocodile-infested rivers of the north it is not conducive to survival. Such canoes were until recently in use here and there by Australians as these [177] craft could be very quickly constructed. But today where the natives use canoes, those made of bark have been replaced by the dugout canoe.[8] No Australian would willingly have ventured very far from land in a bark canoe, and therefore, as we said earlier, the crossing of open stretches of ocean by the first Australians on their migration down from Asia through the Indonesian islands must have been accidental and involuntary, by being blown or carried on, whether they liked it or not. In short, they finally reached the Australian coastline as castaways drifting in from the islands to the northwest or north.[9]

When they arrived on the North Australian coast, their sea wanderings were over, for they possessed no boats which could carry them onward to the far-off Pacific Islands. These first human occupants of Australia had to make the best of the inhospitable country they found. They moved into the large, empty land mass before them and their descendants remained there without much alteration in their way of life for succeeding millennia. Those who stayed near the coast or found rivers to settle along retained the use of crude bark canoes, while those who reached the desert interior forgot about them entirely.

Such a pattern of reasoning brings us to the final question: Why were these Australians left isolated from the influence of later migrants who came by way of the same series of islands? The answer is that all later migrants—whose descendants we know today as Melanesians, Polynesians, or Micronesians—had much better canoes when they left Asia. Hence they could control where they went and had greater freedom to move on further if they did not like an area where they had landed. Evidence seems to suggest that the bulk of these later peoples, and certainly the Melanesian peoples, came from the direction of Southeast Asia around the *northern* side of New Guinea

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[8] Lloyd Warner and others have established that the Australian tribes along the northern coasts learned about dugouts from Malay visitors in relatively recent times. (Warner 1937)

[9] See Andrew Sharp who has recently demonstrated this to be true for the Pacific generally. (Sharp 1957)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

and therefore never approached the northern coasts of Australia at all, being carried on past the eastern end of New Guinea toward the Solomons and the New Hebrides. If any such later peoples did sight or land on the northern coast of Australia, they stayed only briefly, leaving no trace, probably because the region appeared uninviting. More recently, others have also found the northern coastline of Australia unattractive; these include the Japanese Navy, in World War II, which carefully by-passed it and followed the route of the Melanesians along the northern shores of New Guinea, through the Bismarcks and the Admiralties toward the Solomons and Guadalcanal. Thus the early Australians were left in isolated possession of an empty continent during the fifteen thousand or more years following their arrival. 174

For those who maintain that human progress is an inevitable movement, it should be noted that all the evidence indicates that during those long centuries the Australians remained at almost the same technological level as they were when they first landed.

Australian Culture When the White Men Came

The continent of Australia varies a good deal in such matters as climate, rainfall, and amount of vegetation, but in general it may be said that well over half of it is country in which keeping alive is fairly easy, even for people of such a low level of culture as that represented by the first Australians. In particular, there were no dangerous animals (except snakes), and much of the climate being like that of Southern California, the country was mostly free of tropical jungles and the diseases that are associated with them. For a primitive hunting and gathering people, the main problem of existence in Australia was lack of water, as indeed it still is today, despite modern technology. At least one-third of the continent, comprising about a million square miles, is arid desert or semidesert where rain rarely falls, and the so-called river beds are bone dry for years at a stretch.[4] Elsewhere there are well-watered areas which provide an adequate food supply for a hunting and gathering people. The Murray River Valley in the southeast and the coastal strips along the east, southeast, and north coastlines are the best watered regions, and these were the areas that supported the largest native populations when the white man arrived. But even in such favorable tracts the population was spread very thin. The best estimate of size of the native population for the whole continent before the arrival of Europeans is that within the total area of approximately three million square miles there lived slightly above a quarter of a million people, giving an average density of one person to every twelve square miles. Since over one-third of the continent is almost waterless and could support, then as now, very few humans, the density for the livable parts is more re-

[4] It rained in Alice Springs in Central Australia on New Year's Eve, 1939-40. According to their parents, white children six to seven years old were then seeing rain for the first time in their lives.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

000 alistically estimated at about one person to six and a half square miles, and for the best watered sections as about three persons to every ten square miles.[5] Some detailed corroboration for this last figure is supplied by the Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands who are dealt with at length in this monograph. The Tiwi are one of the few tribes occupying a well-watered and favorable environment for hunting and gathering who have been left in continuous occupation of their native habitat down to the present day. A careful [161] and exhaustive census of them (by Hart) in 1928-29 showed that the approxi- 162 mately 2900 square miles comprising the two islands were occupied and used by 1062 people.

Thus between the time of their first arrival and approximately 1770 when the white men first got to know them, the original group of primitive castaways had multiplied to a population of between 250,000 and 275,000. This relatively small number (for the size of the continent) was thinly spread over most of the land, but was more numerous in the areas where the water supply was good and where the natives had available adequate sources of meat—marsupial, reptile, and bird—and fish, as well as a considerable quantity of wild plant foods.

Basically, all Australian tribes had cultures of the same general type, although local variation had developed as the original emigrants spread out into different geographical environments and their descendants lost contact with each other. The question of how many tribes there were at the beginning of white settlement is almost impossible to answer since "tribe" in Australia meant little more than a group of bands with a distinct language. There were at least five hundred distinct languages (all belonging to the same linguistic family, but most of them mutually unintelligible) which in the total population of a quarter of a million gives an average of about five hundred speakers for each distinct linguistic group. This seems a low figure for a so-called tribe and is probably brought about by the large number of very small linguistic units ("tribes") which early writers report in some areas such as coastal New South Wales and parts of Victoria. Certainly the linguistic units ("tribes") which survived down to modern times and could therefore be studied by twentieth-century anthropologists, such as the Arunta, Murngin, and Tiwi tribes, were considerably larger than five hundred people, but probably even the biggest "tribes" did not exceed two thousand in population.

Scattered in small local groups (bands) over enormous areas of country and armed only with boomerangs, crude stone-pointed spears, and spear throwers, the Australian natives were in no position to resist the white settlers. They were simply brushed aside by the early British colonists[6] who began arriving in 1788, and in the course of the next century and a half, the natives

[5] Radcliffe-Brown 1930.

[6] There is an interesting link between American history and the first white settlement in Australia. Prior to the Revolutionary War, Great Britain deported her worst criminals to convict settlements in the colony of Georgia. After American independence, she had to find a new dumping ground to relieve the overcrowding in the British jails and established her new convict settlement at Botany Bay near the present city of Sydney on the east coast of Australia.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

disappeared entirely from much of the landscape. Since the British settled first in the well-watered fertile areas of the east and southeast, it was the tribes of these regions who disappeared earliest, so that in the present state of Victoria which once contained a comparatively dense native population, an aborigine at the present time is about as rare as a full-blood Indian in Massachusetts and for much the same reasons.

White settlement in Australia since Cook's discovery of the fertile southeast corner has tended, however, to be very localized and uneven. The lack of water in the desert and semidesert areas has continued to hamper or inhibit white occupation. Moreover, even in some places where the rainfall is relatively high, such as the northern and northwestern coastlines, isolation has continued to make these regions unattractive to any heavy white intrusion. In American terms, such lands have remained until the present day as frontier areas ("The Outback" is what the Australian city dwellers call them) and in such regions the native or aborigine ("abo" in Australian slang) can still be found, often in surprisingly large numbers and in many cases still practicing and adhering to many of the traditional customs of his ancestors. In the central desert regions the western neighbors of the Arunta continue to practice something not far removed from their aboriginal tribal life on land which the white man regards as useless for settlement purposes. Further north, in the area called Arnhem Land, on the western side of the Gulf of Carpentaria, there exists an enormous stretch of inaccessible but not at all hopeless country in which the whites have shown very little interest and in which native tribes such as the Murngin (studied by Lloyd Warner) still retain much of their traditional culture. Similarly, to the west of Arnhem Land, along the coastline and on islands lying offshore, isolation and lack of white settlement have permitted a number of tribes to continue down to the present time relatively untouched by European influences. Since the annual rainfall along the northern coast is [132] appreciable and reliable, some of these tribes live in country that is much more favorable to hunters and gatherers than is the desert area inhabited by the Arunta and their neighbors. Among these north-coast tribes the people occupying Melville and Bathurst Islands and who call themselves Tiwi have twice been studied by modern anthropologists—by Hart in 1928-30 and by Pilling in 1953-54. The brief account which follows is presented with two main objectives in view: first, to explain how this Australian culture operated as a going concern in aboriginal times, and second, to analyze what has happened to it as it was brought into contact with the modern world.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Tiwi Marriage

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Cultural Isolation

PEOPLE WHO LIVE in the congested cities and towns of the modern world have difficulty in realizing how different life can be at the hunting and gathering level of human existence. The basic fact about the life of hunters and gatherers is the thinly spread-out manner in which they live and the isolation of families and households from each other. In the case of the Tiwi, these conditions of isolation and dispersal were accentuated by their island habitat. Melville and Bathurst Islands lie off the northern coast of Australia some fifty to eighty miles from Darwin, which is the administrative capital of the empty north. They are separated from the mainland by about twenty-five miles of open sea at the narrowest part. This distance is slightly greater than the distance that separates England from France at the Straits of Dover, and just as the dim outline of coastal France can be seen from England on clear days, so the dim outline of the Australian mainland can be seen from the southern edges of the islands. However, Tiwi tradition is firm and certain that before the white man's arrival there was no contact between the islands and the mainland. To them, the dimly seen coastline of Australia was *Tibambinuui*, the home of the dead, to which all Tiwi souls went after death. It follows from this they they regarded the inhabited world as composed of their own two islands, and on those islands they lived a self-contained and exclusive existence. Occasionally outsiders appeared, either castaways from surrounding areas, including presumably the Australian mainland, and in recent centuries, fishing boats and pirates from Indonesia, loosely called "Malays" in the literature. To such visitors from outside, the Tiwi were consistently and implacably hostile. Their own traditions and what little written history there is of "Malay" penetration into the Arafura Sea both tell the same story. Outsiders who landed on the islands were massacred or vigorously resisted. Whether they were classified as *Malai-ui* ("Malays") or *Wona-rui*

861 131 [173] [175] [823] 186 609

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 609 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human [101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate [173] to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distribu- 171 tional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how [411] isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their [531] wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus- [764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the [511] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

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[177 524] [1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tralian tribe that was able to develop within the general Australian type of culture a number of distinct features, some of them unique, while at the same time lacking entirely other features which were widespread on the mainland. Tiwi isolation from the mainland explains the differences and the lacks; their favorable environment explains why they were able to develop certain traits along their own unique lines.

The Tribe and the Bands

Because they were isolated and few outsiders came near them, they did very little as a united tribe. Everybody on the two islands was a Tiwi, and the Tiwi world stopped at the water's edge. Fuzziness on the edges of tribal territory—a chronic headache to anthropologists working with mainland tribes—did not exist, nor did the problem of marriage outside the tribe. All Tiwi, of course, spoke the same language and practiced the same customs and regarded themselves as *the* people; these were almost the only respects in which they could be said to do anything as a tribal unit. There was no tribal government, there were no tribal officials, and no occasions which required the whole tribe to assemble together as a collective entity. For daily and yearly living, the important group was the band or horde,[2] of which there were nine. The total area of the two islands is about 3000 square miles, but some of this is swampy, some of it waterless, some of it mosquito-infested mangrove jungle, and the suitability of the rest for native living varies a good deal. Hence, the actively used and lived-in areas for each band probably averaged about two hundred square miles each and, in any case, there was not a very close relationship between band size and area occupied. Details of band size at various times are given in a later chapter, but, typically, Tiwi bands probably varied in size between a hundred and three hundred people.

The band was the territorial group with which a man most closely identified himself. Though the band lived from day to day spread out over a wide area and a man might not see many of his fellow band-members for weeks at a time, the average Tiwi thought of the two or three hundred square miles of band territory as his "own country" and of his fellow members as his own people. This is why the tribal name—Tiwi—so seldom needed to be used at home on the islands. It did not identify one group as distinct from another, since all locals were Tiwi. Just as in a New York suburb one does not say that there are some Americans in the house next door, but may say that there are some Texans or some Californians or some people from Michigan next door, so a Tiwi, seeing a group of visitors arriving in his band territory, would immediately identify them as Malauila or Rangwila or by whatever band they belonged to. A father would say casually, "I have betrothed my daughter to a

[2] Radcliffe-Brown, the great authority on Australian tribal society, tried to introduce the word "horde" for the Australian local group, but probably because of its suggestion to the popular mind of a dense concentration of people, it has never become established and in these pages we have used the more neutral word "band."

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

621 Tiklauila" or "My wife is a Munupula woman"; a mourner would say, "He
619 died when visiting the Munupula and therefore we will have to go to Munupi for the funeral"; an old man would reminisce about being brought up as a youth by his mother's brother, who was a Turupula, and the good times he had in Turupi; and another would recount details of big battles between the Munupula and the Malauila. All of these were band names or band territories. The nine bands thus acted, psychologically, as small tribelets or semisovereign groups, since it was with one of them that every Tiwi most closely identified in his day-to-day life on the islands. It is only when, as nowadays, he leaves the islands to go to work for the white man in Darwin that he has to think of himself as a Tiwi, since there he mingles with men of other tribes. Even then, [177] work and residence in the white man's town does not entirely obliterate band identification. A Tiklauila in Darwin prefers to work with and to consort in the evenings with other Tiklauila, and Malauila with Malauila.[8]

Because of certain peculiar features of Tiwi domestic life, to be dis-
621 cussed below, it is difficult to sum up the Tiwi band in any simple formula.
591 People, especially women, changed their band residence frequently in the course of their lives, and being born into a band did not at all require permanent residence with that band, either for males or for females. Thus the district (for example, Tiklaru or Malau) was a firm, fixed, known quantity, but the people who "owned" the district (for example, Tiklauila or Malauila) were a flexible and constantly shifting collection of individuals.

The territorial boundaries between bands were clear and well known
423 to everybody, though they were not the sharp lines on a map such as we
621 regard as essential for a frontier or a land boundary. All pieces of country—clumps of jungle, stretches of grassland, sections of thick woods—had names. One such piece of country, say a thickly wooded area, belonged to one band, while the more open country that began where the woods thinned out belonged to another; thus the boundary was not a sharp line but a transitional zone— [137] perhaps of several miles—where the change from trees to open savannah became noticeable, with the band territories thus fusing into one another rather [823] than being separated by sharp lines. The Tiwi, so to speak, thought of the landscape as a sort of spectrum where a man moved gradually out of one district into another as he passed from one type of horizon to the next. Since [133] rivers, and even Apsley Strait, a very narrow arm of the sea separating Melville from Bathurst Island, usually have similar types of vegetation on *both* sides or banks, none of the island rivers nor Apsley Strait was a boundary or frontier between bands. The Mandiimbula, predominantly a Melville Island

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[8] In the early 1930's the situation at the Government Hospital in Darwin offered
177 a good illustration of this. The hospital authorities said they gave preference for house-
797 boy jobs to "Melville Islanders because of their greater intelligence and reliability." In
181 point of fact, some of the younger Tiklauila had established a monopoly on hospital jobs and no Tiwi other than a Tiklauila was ever hired there. The whites thought they were hiring Tiwi but the Tiklauila saw to it that they hired only Tiklauila and felt no vestige of obligation to other Tiwi to help them get these desirable jobs. The alleged greater intelligence of the islanders was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Tiklauila, having had a Catholic mission in their territory since 1911, were more used to white requirements.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

tribe, owned also the country on the opposite side of Apsley Strait at the 423
southeast corner of Bathurst, while the Malauila, the band in the northern
half of Bathurst Island, conversely overlapped their ownership across the 621
strait to take in a thin strip of coastline on the northwest corner of Melville.

These details illustrate the fact that the band was the land-owning, workaday, territorially organized group which controlled the hunting, the food supply, and the warfare. Until the white man arrived in force in the 619
coastal waters of North Australia, the average Tiwi regarded the nine bands
as the main functional units of his existence, and his loyalty to and identifica- 621
tion with his band were given much greater opportunity for exercise than any loyalty to or identification with the whole Tiwi tribe. He did many things as a member of a band, but he did little as a member of a tribe. Only when an outsider turned up did he need to think of himself as a Tiwi, and outsiders were very rare. For the rest of the time he thought of himself as a member of his band, thought of his band as his people, and of his band territory as his country.

The Household

Since the band consisted of anything from one hundred to three hundred people, it could not live together in one place, except for very short
periods of time. Hunting and gathering in almost any part of the world (ex- [361]
cept the northwest coast of America in pre-white times) require the human population to disperse itself very thinly over the countryside and live from
day to day in small hunting and camping units. Such small primary groups 592
are usually in one sense families and in another sense households, and this is the case among the Tiwi. We propose to call such units households rather than families for reasons that will soon become apparent. It is true that Tiwi "houses," especially in the long dry season (from March to October), were the flimsiest and most temporary of structures, but the group of people in
question was the group who lived together day after day, hunted as a unit, [342]
pooled the results of their food getting, and ate and slept together. Functionally this group is identical with an American household, even though the "house" they used was nothing more than a few piled-up tree branches, used as shelter for a night or two and then abandoned. Like the American household also, the Tiwi household usually consisted of a man, his wife (or wives),
and their children, though in many would also be included a few leftovers or [574]
extras, common to all cultures, such as bachelor uncles, visiting cousins, ancient
widowers, and ambiguous "men who came to dinner" and were still there. [589]
(Tiwi households did not, however, include maiden aunts, female orphans, or ancient widows, since these could not exist in Tiwi culture.)

Thus the Tiwi household was more or less the same thing as the Tiwi family group, but Tiwi family organization had such a number of unusual twists that we find it desirable to insist upon calling such a group the house-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 hold rather than the family. There was no ambiguity about its "living together" aspect; there were many ambiguities about its kinship aspects. To some of these unusual domestic usages we now turn.

Marriage by Betrothal

589 In many nonliterate societies, including most, if not all of the mainland Australian tribes, there is a tendency to believe that the main purpose in life for a female is to get married. The Tiwi subscribed to this idea, but firmly carried it to its logical conclusion; namely, that all females must get married, regardless of age, condition, or inclination. They (and they almost alone among human societies) took the very slight step from saying "All females *should* be married" to saying "All females *must* be married." As a result, in aboriginal times there was no concept of an unmarried female in Tiwi ideology, no word for such a condition in their language, and in fact, no female in the population without at least a nominal husband. Their own explanation of this unique situation was connected with their beliefs about conception and where
581 babies come from. Anthropologists have long been aware that the Australian
842 aborigines generally (and indeed some of the Melanesians, such as the famous case of the Trobriand Islands) ignored the role of the male in human conception and firmly believed that a woman becomes pregnant because a spirit has entered into her body. The Tiwi were no exception, but went a step further than the mainlanders in dealing with the dangerous situation created by the unpredictability of the spirits. Since any female was liable to be impregnated by a spirit at any time, the sensible step was to insist that every female have a husband *all the time* so that if she did become pregnant, the child would always have a father. As a result of this logical thinking, all
[584] Tiwi babies were betrothed before or as soon as they were born; females were thus the "wives" of their betrothed husbands from the moment of birth onward. For similar reasons, widows were required to remarry at the gravesides
[587] of their late husbands, and this rule applied even to ancient hags who had already buried half a dozen previous husbands in the course of a long life. It can readily be seen that these rules—prenatal betrothal of female infants and immediate remarriage of all widows—effectively eliminated all possibility of an unmarried female from Tiwi society. They also eliminated any possibility of an unmarried mother or a fatherless child. No matter where the unpredictable spirit chose to create a baby, whether it was in the body of a pretty young woman, a toothless old hag, or a little girl of six or seven, the pregnant
[711 female would have a husband, and the children when born would have a
842] father. The Tiwi were thus probably the only society in the world with an illegitimacy rate of zero.

584 The practical application of these two unusual rules had certain unusual
851 consequences. The rule of prenatal betrothal obviously gave a great deal of
593 power to the person with the right to betroth, and in Tiwi this right belonged

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
0120 Tiwi 0120

to the husband of the pregnant woman. We carefully say "the husband of the 584
pregnant woman" rather than "the father of the child" because the right 851
resided in the male head of the household at the time of the birth. Although 593
he was ordinarily both the father of the child and the husband of its mother, there were naturally occasions when a child was born after the death of its father, in which case the right of betrothal unquestionably belonged to the mother's new husband. The clearest statement of this rule is to say that the right of betrothal of all newly born females resided in the husband of the mother at the time of the girl's birth. "He who named the child bestowed it."

In most human societies the proportion of males and females in the 162
population is approximately equal, except in the older age-groups where women predominate owing to their tendency to live longer than men. The Tiwi conformed to this norm biologically, but their cultural insistence that all females of every age be married resulted in further unusual features of the domestic situation. No such compulsory marriage was required or expected of [581 595] males. Hence, the total female population, but only part of the male population, was married. Mathematically this permitted, indeed required, a high degree of plural marriage. The men who held the right to betroth—namely, [584] the fathers of the female babies—could, within certain limits imposed by the 593
kinship system, bestow their about-to-be-born or newly born daughters where 582
they wished, and they certainly did not bestow them on about-to-be-born or 581
newly born males. On the contrary, they bestowed them, generally speaking, where some tangible return was to be anticipated. Put bluntly, in Tiwi culture daughters were an asset to their father, and he invested these assets in his own welfare. He therefore bestowed his newly born daughter on a friend or an [562] ally, or on somebody he wanted as a friend or an ally. Such a person was apt to be a man near his own age or at least an adult man, and hence perhaps forty years or so older than the newly born baby bestowed upon him as a wife. Or, the father might bestow an infant daughter on a man—or some close [572] relative of such a man—who had already bestowed an infant daughter upon him, thus in effect swapping infant daughters. Obviously, the fathers who did the swapping, even if they were not quite the same age themselves, were bound to be many years older than the infant wives they thus received from each other. Or, thirdly, a father looking for a suitable male upon whom to bestow his infant daughter's hand might decide to use her as old-age insurance—in which case he selected as her future husband not one of the older adult men who would be old when he himself was old, but a likely looking youngster "with promise"; that is, a youth in his late twenties or thirties who showed signs of being a good hunter and a good fighting man, and who was clearly on his way up in tribal power and influence. Such a youth, in his late twenties [606] at the time of betrothal, would, with luck, be in his prime as "a big man" in [888] about twenty years—a time when the father of the infant daughter would be getting old and decrepit and much in need of an influential son-in-law who was obligated to him.

There were other bases upon which infant daughters were betrothed, 582 593

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

582 and indeed the father was seldom an entirely free agent, since he not only
593 had to make his choices for his daughters within the limits imposed by the kinship system, but he was also caught in an intricate network of previous commitments, residual interests, and contingent promises made by other men who had had some prior interest in the baby or the mother of the baby. To mention only the most common limiting situation of this sort, the mother of the baby might have been given to him in the first place on the understanding that when she grew up and had a female baby it was to be bestowed on so-and-so or even returned as a *quid pro quo* to its mother's father, either as wife or as ward.

582 We have oversimplified the situation, but it should be clear that Tiwi fathers, in an overwhelming number of cases, bestowed their infant daughters on husbands a great deal older than those daughters. It is hard to strike an average, but the overall situation is best expressed by saying that no Tiwi father, except in the most unusual cases, ever thought of bestowing an infant daughter upon any male below the age of at least twenty-five. Taking this lowest limit for illustration, this meant that a youth of twenty-five had his first wife betrothed or promised to him at that age but had to wait another fourteen years or so before she was old enough to leave her father's household and take up residence and marriage duties with him. By this time he was about forty and she was fourteen. An age gap between husband and wife at least as great as this, but usually greater, was a necessary and constant result of the Tiwi betrothal system.

No Tiwi young man, then, could expect to obtain his first resident wife through betrothal until he was well into his thirties, at which time this first resident wife would be around fourteen, having been betrothed to him
582 at her birth or before. But it was likely that his first wife's father, who spotted
595 him in his twenties as a "comer," was not the only older man to want him as a son-in-law. As in our own culture, where the first million is the hardest to make, so in Tiwi the first bestowed wife was the hardest to get. If some shrewd father with a daughter to invest in a twenty-year-old decided to invest her in you, his judgment was likely to attract other fathers to make a similar investment. As a result, for *some* Tiwi men, the arrival in residence of the first wife, an event for which they had to wait until their late thirties, was quickly followed by the arrival in residence of a second, third, and fourth (at least), all of them bestowed very shortly after the bestowal of the first. Thus a successful Tiwi, having had no resident wife at all until his late thirties, would accumulate perhaps half a dozen between his late thirties and his late forties as his various betrothed wives reached the age of puberty and joined his household, and from then on he was practically certain to accumulate still more wives as later bestowals grew up and as he was able to invest the daughters borne by his first crop of young wives in transactions which brought in a later crop.

595 That this is not an exaggerated or overdrawn picture of the number of wives that could be accumulated in the course of a long life by a successful

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

Tiwi household head is shown by the genealogies of the grandfathers of the present generation. Turimpi, who was born in the 1830's and died in the early 1900's, was at his death the most powerful old man among the Tiklauila. Some of his sons are still alive, and all of them were in the prime of life around 1930.[4] A complete list of Turimpi's wives, not all of them living in his household at the same time or necessarily alive at the same time, contains more than twenty names. But Turimpi was outshone in this regard by several of his contemporaries in other bands. A prominent Turupula of the same generation had a list of twenty-five; the father of Finger of the Wilrangwila had twenty-nine; the father of Tamboo and Puti had twenty-two. As late as 1930, men with lists of ten, eleven, and twelve wives were still plentiful, and Tu'untalumi, who was aged about seventy in that year and was a man of great influence, had by then accumulated no less than twenty-one.[5] 595

Such numbers of wives as these per husband are very much higher than usually prevail even among the most polygymous hunting tribes. Obviously, a domestic unit with twelve or more wives in it makes for a very large household. Among the Tiwi, a household even of such men as those just named did not contain all these wives at the same time, mainly because of the very great variation in the ages of a man's wives. As far as bestowed or betrothed wives were concerned, such wives arrived at their husband's household to take up wifely duties therein when they reached the age of about fourteen. Hence the first of them to arrive (typically when their husband was nearly forty) would be women of nearly forty by the time the latest of them arrived (typically when the husband was well into his sixties). Even when the husband died, let us say at the ripe old age of seventy-five, there would probably be some of his bestowed wives still under the age of fourteen who were as yet too young to join his household. Tu'untalumi, the man of twenty-one wives, was already about seventy in 1930, yet in his list of twenty-one wives five were still *al'inga*—that is, little girls not yet approaching puberty—and two were still babies at their mothers' breast. On the other hand, some of his earliest bestowed wives, who had taken up residence with him when he was in his late thirties, were already dead. 592 582 595

Because of this wide variation in the ages of a man's wives, it is necessary to distinguish between a "list" of a man's wives and those actually in residence in his household at any given time. The resident or active wives—one might almost say the working wives—were always fewer than the listed wives. This would necessarily be so even if marriage by betrothal were the only way by which a Tiwi man could obtain a wife. But while it was the most prestigeful form of marriage and the only respectable way in which a man could obtain a *young* wife, there were other ways of setting up a household 595 584 587

[4] See Hart 1954.

[5] Finger, Tamboo, and Puti were elders prominent in tribal affairs at the time of Hart's fieldwork. Puti was still live in 1953-54 and well known to Pilling. Tu'untalumi, held in great affection by Hart, but anathema to the Mission Station, died in 1935.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

584 The most important way is one which we have already mentioned—namely,
587 widow remarriage.

Widow Remarriage

595 To become "a big man" a Tiwi had, among other things, to accumulate
557 a lot of wives. This required time, in addition to everything else. A rising star
587 who accumulated by bestowal seven or eight wives by his middle forties and then died, merely left a lot of widows to be redistributed at his graveside, and by the process of wealth attracting more wealth, or capital creating more capital, these widows were most likely to be redistributed among his rivals and competitors of his own age group or among men even older than he. Hence, the largest number of wives ultimately accrued to the successful man who lived longest, since he was likely to gather up at least a few of the widows of each of his contemporaries or seniors as they predeceased him.

There was thus a close correlation between increasing age and the number of wives a man had, and the largest households belonged to a few surviving old men in each band. The two conditions, therefore, which were necessary to accumulate a large household were (1) to attract prospective fathers-in-law to invest their infant daughters in you while you were a young man, and then (2) to live long enough to reap the dividends. The longer you lived, the more dividends would accrue to you from one source or another, provided you started off right by attracting betrothals in your twenties and thirties.

But what about the unimpressive young men, the "noncomers," who somehow failed as young men to attract any prospective fathers-in-law to invest an infant daughter in them? As we have seen, even the most highly regarded and well-connected Tiwi young man had to wait until his late thirties or longer before his first bestowed wife was old enough to join him in domestic bliss, but at least while waiting he knew the time was coming. The overlooked or unbetrothed young man had no such prospects. Since the only source of supply of new females was through the birth of female infants whose hands only their fathers could bestow, it would appear as if a young Tiwi male overlooked or ignored by all fathers of bestowable female daughters had no alternative except permanent bachelorhood. Doubtless Tiwi fathers, as a class, would have regarded this as an ideal situation and would have said that permanent bachelorhood was a proper fate for such friendless and hence useless young men, but no social system of such rigidity has ever been discovered by anthropologists. Tiwi fathers were able rigidly to control the marriages of their infant daughters, but they were not able to control with the same rigidity the remarriages of their own widows, and it was widow remarriage that supplied the loophole in the system, or the cultural alternative that took care of young men.

587 A Tiwi husband was unavoidably and necessarily always much older than a bestowed wife. Therefore he usually died much earlier than she. A girl of fourteen who entered into residence with her first husband when he was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

fifty was likely to be left a widow by him within the next fifteen years, and 587
even if she remarried a man of the same age as her first husband, she could easily be widowed for the second time while still herself a comparatively young woman. There were several different patterns, most of them intermingled in the same household, for a female matrimonial career, but the situation may be illustrated by the concrete case of one of Turimpi's widows, an ancient crone (in 1930) named Bongdadu. Born about 1865, she was betrothed at birth to a powerful old man named Walitaumi who was at least the same age as her father, if not older. Not unnaturally, he died while she was still a child and well before she was old enough to join his household. Her betrothal was then reassigned, so to speak, to Walitaumi's half-brother, Turimpi, then in his early forties. About seven years later, she joined Turimpi's household as a blushing bride of fourteen, her husband then being close to fifty. In the next twenty years she became Turimpi's most prolific wife and bore numerous children, three of whom, Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, all born between 1883 and 1900, were men of importance in Tiwi politics in 1930, and one of whom, Louis, is still alive today.[6] Around 1900, when Bongdadu was still only about thirty-five, she passed to M., a middle-aged Tiklauila, and was his wife until his death around 1925. By this date, Bongdadu was over sixty and had borne ten children, four of whom died young. Not unnaturally, she was beginning to approach the hag or crone stage of Tiwi womanhood.[7] Nonetheless, she had to remarry, but by now all of the people who might have claimed any rights of bestowal in her were long since dead, her eldest sons were adult men of some importance and able to protect their mother's interests, and clearly she was unlikely to produce any more children.[7] Her chief value was as a food producer and housekeeper and female politician, roles for which she had been well trained in her long years as wife of Turimpi and M.

Old women in Bongdadu's position had to remarry, but they were in 587
a good position to exercise some choice of their own as to whom they re- 888
married, especially if they had strong influential sons to support them in their wishes. There was a frequent pattern in such cases for the widow, aided and abetted (or perhaps even forced) by her sons, to arrange a marriage of convenience with some obscure nonentity much younger than herself and usually a friend or contemporary of her sons. In 1925, then, Bongdadu, widowed [554]
three times already, married as her fourth husband one Dominico, a man of no importance whatever, as was shown by the fact that at this time he was nearly forty and had not been able to attract even one bestowed wife. He had, 587
however, already married one widow, so that his marriage to Bongdadu gave 595

[6] Tiwi personal names are polysyllabic and hard for the reader to remember; hence, wherever possible, we have used "whiteman names" for individuals. The frequency of Spanish names among these "whiteman names," such as Mariano or Dominico, derives from the fact that the original buildings for the Mission Station were built by a number of Filipino workmen whom the priests brought with them. [551 128 797]

[7] The Tiwi saw no inconsistency between believing in spirit impregnation and believing at the same time that an old woman was unlikely to bear children. It was to them a matter of probabilities, and of course with them as with us, occasionally an elderly lady did—disconcertingly—have a baby, proving the logic of their position. [842]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 him a second wife, also, of course, a widow. This marriage is of further interest
[595] when we discover that Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, the main sons of Bongdadu by a previous marriage, had some influence in arranging this marriage of their mother to a contemporary and satellite of theirs, and that a year or two before, Antonio had married the ancient mother of Dominico when *she* became a widow. In other words, Antonio and Dominico had married each other's mothers; Antonio while waiting for his oldest bestowed wife to grow up, Dominico with no bestowed wife in sight. The approximate ages of the parties at the time of these marriages were:

Antonio	37	Dominico's mother	55
Dominico	38	Bongdadu (Antonio's mother)	60+

584 Earlier, we mentioned the practice of fathers swapping their daughters within
587 the infant bestowal system; here we find sons swapping their mothers within the widow remarriage system.

This is a relatively simple example of the complexity of Tiwi domestic arrangements, and we hesitate to complicate matters further. But clearly the last remarriage of Bongdadu (to Dominico) and the remarriage around the same time of Dominico's mother to one of Bongdadu's sons, a friend of Dominico, raise some important issues of social structure, particularly the question of whether widow remarriages of this type are to be regarded as a subspecies of bestowal marriages, with the sons having a right of bestowal over their mothers parallel or similar to the right of bestowal possessed by fathers over their infant daughters. Space does not permit any adequate discussion of this fascinating theoretical issue, but we can point out two factors which strongly deter us from regarding Tiwi widow remarriage as a special case of bestowal marriage. One is the self-evident and empirically observed fact that Tiwi widows, who remarried as Bongdadu and Dominico's mother remarried in the quoted case, were usually highly vocal and pretty tough old ladies who were not easily pushed around by anybody, even by their adult and ambitious sons. Whom they remarried in their old age was a matter upon which they had themselves a good deal to say. Secondly, to any anthropologist familiar with the kinship structures of Southeast Asia and the Pacific countries, there
584 is a great deal of difference, in a society with matrilineal clans such as the
587 Tiwi had, between a father making marriage decisions for his daughters, who
614 do not belong to his clan, and sons making marriage decisions for their widowed mothers, who do belong to the same clan as their sons. We prefer, therefore, to view the overall Tiwi marriage situation and the interrelationship of their two forms of marriage as essentially a system wherein the matrilineal clan had lost its right to make marriage decisions for its female children, that right having been taken over (usurped) by the fathers of those children. The daughters of the clan were disposed of, not where fellow clansmen decided, but where an outsider (the father) decided—thus, bestowal or betrothal marriage. But when the female no longer had a father—that is, when she was old and could only be remarried through widow remarriage—then the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

right of her clansmen and more specifically her sons (in consultation with her own wishes) to arrange her remarriage became restored as a sort of residual or reanimated right. Moreover, as we shall see, it was in line with their own political interests for the sons to insist on exercising such a right. 584 587 614

Naming Rules

Such a way of integrating the two forms of marriage is supported by the Tiwi rules for naming children, which are very relevant to the issue. We mentioned earlier that the right to bestow a daughter was vested, strictly speaking, not in the actual father, but in the man who named her. Personal names were important in the Tiwi value system[8] and were given to every child a few weeks after its birth by its father or the man currently married to its mother. But whenever a husband died and the widows remarried, all the personal names given to their children by the dead man became strictly taboo, and the new husbands of the widows had the duty (or right) of providing all the children with new names. Since most women were widowed several times in their lives, most children were thus renamed several times in *their* lives, and the names given them by the earlier husbands of their mother dropped completely out of use.[9] Logically under this system nobody would get a permanent name until his or her mother was dead, since as long as she were alive she would remarry and her new husband would rename all her children, no matter how aged they might be. The Tiwi insisted that logically this was how the naming system was supposed to work, and, in fact, the personal names of even prominent senior men did become taboo whenever their mothers' current husbands died. But convenience proved stronger than logic and the personal names of most men and women became well established in their early adulthood as people became used to them. While such names did become taboo when the man who had given them died, the taboo in such cases was temporary rather than permanent, and after a decent interval the name would creep back into use replacing some new and unfamiliar one which might be bestowed by the widow's new husband. In general, the name which thus became permanently or irrevocably attached to a person was the name which a person held when he or she first emerged into tribal prominence or first began to get talked about. For a male, this was most usually the name he was bearing in his late twenties and early thirties; for a female, the name she was known by in her early adolescence when she first left her father's household to take up residence with her earliest husband. 553 768 587 [183] [551]

That convenience thus overbore logic in the Tiwi naming system by

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[8] See Hart 1951.

[9] It can easily be seen what headaches this naming system created for an anthropologist trying to collect genealogies. Individuals would occur in one genealogy under one name and in another under another name, making the task of cross-indexing and cross-checking enormously difficult. [124]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

553 768 587 attaching some one semipermanent name to a person despite the rules of name taboo should not cause us to overlook the importance of these rules. In theory, at least, every new husband renamed all his wives' children by all their previous marriages—thus, at least symbolically, canceling out the signs of title of all the previous "fatherhoods" in those children and asserting his own fatherhood right as a new and exclusive one. A widow's new husband was the new household head for all her children, and he took over this position by renaming them all, thus becoming their legal father. If we can stop thinking of "father" as a biological or kin relationship, and think of the word as meaning only "head of the household," the Tiwi concept will become understandable. We will also realize that there is no contradiction or illogic involved in the Tiwi beliefs that male parents were not necessary for conception, but that every child born must be born to a woman with a husband. All they meant was that every child must be born into a household with a male at its head who belonged to a different clan from its mother—in other words, a "father," in Tiwi context.

584 592 768 The renaming of the children by the new household head was not, of course, sufficient to wipe out the commitments made by previous titleholders. Although the new father could and did change his step-daughters' names, he could not change their bestowals. The men upon whom the daughters had been bestowed by the previous father made sure of this. The new father was compelled to carry out the marriage arrangements for the daughters made by his predecessors in the fatherhood role, and there was sure to be a terrific row if he tried to alter them. Nevertheless, he acquired some power over the future of the daughters. The man to whom one of them had been promised by the previous father might die, thus making redisposal of the girl possible for him, or some new deal might be arrangeable in which he could use his new assets—for these new step-daughters were assets, regardless of the fact that their immediate matrimonial future was already settled. The new father could delay his decision as to whether they were yet old enough to join their betrothed husband or even drop a few hints that he did not think the betrothed husband's right to them was quite as certain as was generally believed. Such actions, of course, were liable to lead to violent reprisals by the betrothed husband, but there was always a chance that he would be open to a deal; for example, by giving an option on one of the women in whom he had an interest, he would seek to hasten the appearance of the girl in his own household or seek to clear whatever shadow upon his title to her the step-father sought to cast. Even the last husband of an elderly widow who had already passed through the hands of six or eight husbands and all of whose daughters were grown up and married two or three times already, gained some shadowy rights in the future remarriages of those daughters by marrying their ancient mother. And the validation of these shadowy rights was the fact that as their mother's new husband he had renamed the daughters and he who named them could bestow them. The only catch was, that while he could wipe out all the names bestowed by his predecessors, he could not equally readily wipe out their commitments. All he could do was maneuver within the network created by their

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

commitments so as to try and advantage himself as much as possible by a skillful use of whatever shadowy right in the daughters he had obtained by becoming their current "father." 584 592 768

It is within such a context that the apparent swapping of mothers by Dominico and Antonio must be viewed. By marrying Bongdadu in her dotage, Dominico had acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters, the sisters of Antonio, but since his marriage to her had been, partly at least, arranged by Antonio and her other sons, he would have to share with them his disposal rights to their sisters. Similarly, the marriage of Dominico's ancient mother to Antonio (part, so to speak, of the same "package deal") meant that Antonio as current father had some say in the future disposal of Dominico's sisters when they became widowed, since he had the power of renaming them. 587 584

What in effect occurred in this, as in many other cases, was that men of different clans and of about the same age formed a partnership or close alliance wherein "sons" and "husbands" cooperated in arranging the remarriages of their "mothers" and "sisters" by acting as quasi-fathers and treating their mothers and sisters as "quasi-daughters." The partnership or "firm" of Dominico (of the Crane clan) and Antonio, Mariano, and their brothers (of the Red Paint clan) had already arranged the remarriages of Bongdadu (Red Paint clan) and of Dominico's mother (Crane clan), and stood ready to take care of all future remarriages of any of Bongdadu's daughters (Red Paint) or Dominico's sisters (Crane) whenever any of these women became widowed. Each member of the firm was trying to maximize his own self-interest in this and all the other alliances he had a share in, but operations had to be carried out in this partnership form because the marriage of any woman had to be arranged by her "father," and the father, in the Tiwi rules, had to be a nonclansman of the woman whose marriage he arranged. Hence the Red Paint men needed Dominico, a Crane, as a front man to arrange the remarriages of their sisters, and he in turn used Antonio, a Red Paint man, to arrange the remarriages of his sisters. When clansmen made decisions about the remarriages of their sisters, they could only do it by using agreeable nonclansmen as nominal "fathers" and cooperating with them—and the agreeable nonclansmen would of course only come in on the deal if there was something in it for them, as there was for the obscure and unimportant Dominico in the present case. In return for acting as a front for the Red Paint brothers, he got himself a second wife, an excellent food provider though no longer beautiful; he became the ally, even if junior, of some men with assured futures; and he acquired some shadowy residual rights in the future remarriages of several potential widows. Dominico did himself a lot of good by marrying Bongdadu; if he hadn't married her, he would never have attracted much tribal notice and hence would not have warranted mention in these pages. 571 584 587 614

We find that the whole complex situation makes most theoretical sense if we see it as essentially an institutional struggle between clan rights and the father's rights in women. Tiwi fathers, as suggested above, had taken away from the clan the right to make marriage decisions for newly born female members of the clan. As mechanisms validating this success of father's rights 584 592 614

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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As mechanisms validating this success of fathers' rights

584 against clan rights there existed two rules: he who bestowed the name had
592 the right to dispose in marriage; and all names given by a woman's previous
604 husband were cancelled by his death and a new set of names given to all her
[553] children by her new husband. Strictly and universally enforced, such rules would put *all* control over the marriages of *all* women, of every age, in the hands of their mother's husbands—that is, men from outside the clan of the women being disposed of, in other words, fathers in the Tiwi sense. But the Tiwi system failed to achieve such a result though their rules are pointed toward it. They achieved something close to it as far as infant or even young girls were concerned, since the fellow clansmen of such girls were either (as brothers) too young and unimportant to have any power to resist this alien control over their sisters' hands, or (as mothers' brothers and hence older men) too involved and absorbed in their own activities *as fathers* to take any position asserting clan rights as against fathers' rights. To be successful in
581 tribal life, an ambitious young Tiwi male was best advised to forget his mother
557 and his sisters' daughters (all members of his clan) and concentrate on getting
584 wives for himself. Only by getting wives could he have daughters, and only
[614] by having daughters could he build alliances and obtain influence, power, and more wives. To get wives for himself, he could not use his mother or his sisters or his sisters' daughters, since their disposal was in the hands of the men who had named them—that is, their fathers. But there came a time in the life of an older man when his mother was old, and *her* mother was dead, and therefore the rights of the last man to name his mother had lapsed. And a similar situation would arise in the case of his sisters when their mother's last husband died. By this age, a man so situated was likely to be powerful enough and skilled enough in the rules of the game to exert some control over the late remarriages of his elderly sisters and even of his mother, were she still alive.
592 Whenever this occurred, although the resulting situation might have the super-
584 ficial appearance of clan solidarity—with sons, mothers, brothers, and sisters
587 all acting and planning together as a partnership—such a surface appearance was illusory. The motivations involved in it were scarcely altruistic desires on the part of the brothers to look after their mothers and elderly sisters, but rather efforts by the brothers to use to advantage, in their intricate political schemes, some women of their own clan (their mothers and elderly sisters). Earlier in life these men had been prevented from such manipulation by the control over those women exercised by nonclansmen (their husbands or fathers) through the naming rules. Put another way, we might say that Tiwi men as a group had acquiesced to the system wherein "the father" had control over all marriages of his "daughters," because every Tiwi man hoped to be a "father" himself; but having acquiesced, every Tiwi male tried to beat the system, especially as he became older and more influential, by intriguing in the remarriages of his mother and elderly sisters—matters in which, according to the strict letter of the law, he had no right to interfere, since bestowal rights resided with the "father" or "fathers" of these women. One factor which
[582 greatly contributed to the setting aside of the rights involved in the naming
582] system was the fact that since, on the whole, old men married young women

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

and young men married old women, in many cases the nominal "father" of an elderly woman was very much younger and less influential than were her brothers, or her sons by an earlier husband. The brothers and/or sons, therefore, were able to override the wishes of their sisters' nominal father since the seniority system was on their side in such contests, even though the renaming rules were not. 582 582 584 587 592

Although it was very rare indeed for any Tiwi male to have a resident young wife until he was nearly forty, long before that age he was likely to acquire an ancient widow or two. In at least ninety out of every hundred cases a man's first resident wife was a widow very much older than himself. According to a complete genealogical census carried out in 1928-29, nearly every man in the tribe in the age group from thirty-two to thirty-seven was married to an elderly widow. Many of them had two elderly widows and a few had three. But very few of them, and certainly not more than one out of five of them, had a resident *young* wife. About half of them had bestowed wives, but these were mostly toddling infants who would not come into residence with them for another ten years or more. Even for the most promising and rapidly rising young man, the first young bestowed wife was not likely to arrive until several years after his marriage to a widow. 582 587

To get a start in life as a household head and thus to get his foot on the first rung of the prestige ladder, a Tiwi man in his thirties had first of all to get himself married to an elderly widow, preferably one with married daughters. This was the beginning of his career as a responsible adult. The widow did several things for him. She became his food provider and housekeeper. She served as a link to ally him with her sons. As her husband, he acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters when they became widowed. And she, as the first resident wife in his household, stood ready to be the teacher, trainer, and guardian of his young bestowed wives when they began to join him after they reached puberty. [593] [595]

Levirate, Sororate, and Cross-Cousin Marriage

We have emphasized infant bestowal and widow remarriage because it was the elaborate development of these two matrimonial mechanisms that brought about the unusual, perhaps unique, character of the Tiwi household. Other matrimonial mechanisms, more usual in preliterate societies, were also used by the Tiwi but always in combination with or as minor adjuncts to the two basic mechanisms. Thus, a man often remarried his dead brother's wives, or at least some of them, within the institution of widow remarriage. Such a practice is known to anthropologists as the levirate, and tribes are said "to have" the levirate or "not to have" it. The Tiwi, with their pluralistic approach to the whole area of marriage relationships, can hardly be said to fall into either category. To them, every widow had to remarry and among the many possible candidates for her, the brothers of the dead husband were recognized as having a reasonable, but far from automatic, claim. Whether the brothers 587

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 jointly, or any one of them singly, were able to translate that claim into marriage depended on the other claims. Brotherhood in itself gave no exclusive right to widows, but of course a brother, being necessarily of the same clan and frequently of the same band as the deceased husband, was well in line to assert a claim to the widow if he could make the claim good. Cursory inspection of the genealogies reveals, however, a surprisingly small number of cases of men taking over the widows of their deceased brothers. At best it was a very minor factor in Tiwi marriage customs.

The parallel custom of the sororate—that is, of sisters being married to the same husband—was more common. It occurred both in connection with infant bestowal, by a father promising *all* his daughters by a particular wife [595] to the same husband, or in connection with widow remarriage, whereby two or [584] more full sisters, previously married to the same husband, passed together on his death to the same new husband. The sororate occurred more frequently in the first form than in the second, largely because, as already mentioned, widows had more say in their own marriages than baby girls had, but there was nothing obligatory nor required about it, as is shown by the frequent cases in which a father bestowed all his daughters by one wife on the same man but on the early death of that man rebestowed them *seriatim* on several different husbands. One got the impression, though no Tiwi ever made the point explicit, that within the Tiwi bestowal system the prevailing high rate 165 of infantile and child mortality was an important factor in sustaining the sororate principle to the extent that it did exist. A father who bestowed upon a 182 587 man the first daughter borne by a certain wife was almost obliged to bestow upon the same man the second daughter of the same wife if the first one died in infancy. Moreover, since most fathers bestowed their daughters with an eye to their own advantage, it was clearly desirable if he wanted to cement the goodwill of a prospective son-in-law, to promise him *all* the daughters produced by a certain wife, so that even though most of them died in infancy, at least one or two would be delivered in good condition at the age of puberty. [557] The aim of bestowal was to win friends and influence people, and a bestowal of a child who died before she reached the son-in-law did a father little good. A shrewd father could avoid this risk by following the sororate principle; a stupid or feckless father who scattered his daughters widely could well end up with as many disappointed sons-in-law as friendly ones, as the infantile and child mortality took its heavy toll of his young daughters. In the genealogies, sororate marriages in some form occur much more frequently than levirate marriages, but nonetheless their incidence is such as to indicate that they were a relatively minor feature in Tiwi marriages and that their occurrence was most frequently due to careful fathers trying to insure sons-in-law against disappointment, and themselves against charges of nondelivery.

No account of marriage in any Australian tribe can go very far without 171 raising the difficult matter of the kinship system, since all the accounts we have 582 of mainland Australian tribes tell us that all marriages there took place within a rigid kinship framework which required everybody to marry somebody who was automatically his or her cross-cousin (for example, a man and a daughter

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of his mother's brother).[10] Enough has been said already to indicate that in Tiwi marriage nothing was automatic. Females were given in marriage by their fathers, or (to a lesser extent) by their brothers, or (to a still lesser extent) by their sons. But fathers died and were succeeded by the men their widows remarried, and these men renamed all the widow's children, and by renaming them established some rights to make marriage decisions for the females. Therefore, cross-cousin marriage in Tiwi was merely part of the total system of marriage and had to adjust itself to the rest of the system. In theory, fathers could only bestow their infant daughters on men who stood to them in the relation of sisters' sons. Conversely, every man who received a bestowed wife received her from a man who was technically his mother's brother and of course the girl's father. To this extent the Tiwi were a tribe who practiced cross-cousin marriage and their kinship system belonged to one of the commonest Australian types, that which Radcliffe-Brown called Type I, having investigated it among the mainland tribe called the Kariera.[11] But a kinship system of the Kariera type could not accommodate all the complexities that had been introduced into Tiwi life by the emphasis on infant bestowal and widow remarriage. In particular, the generations kept getting badly mixed up, as for instance in the very common case of old men bestowing their infant daughters on other old men of their own age group, and in return receiving as infant wives (or wards) daughters of those old men. With this happening constantly, it was difficult to maintain the kinship principle that recipients of wives were always sons of the donor's sister and donors were always brothers of the recipient's mother. Which was mother's brother and which was sister's son in the case of two old men busily swapping daughters was a problem that put a severe strain on a Kariera-type kinship system. And widow remarriage introduced further complexities. We have already mentioned the case of two young men, Antonio and Dominico, who through a judicious use of widow-remarriage had ended up married to each other's elderly mothers. This was no isolated case; many pairs of men of like age were married to each other's mothers. Who called whom "father" and who called whom "son" became an insoluble riddle in such cases.

To avoid further involvement in the labyrinthine complexities of Australian kinship organization, all that we need say here is that the Tiwi had unscrambled the potential confusion introduced into their kinship categories by inventing a few new terms which, superimposed upon their Kariera-type system, kept everything straight. In Kariera, and generally among all the mainland tribes, no kinship distinction was made between potential wife and actual wife or between potential "in-laws" and actual "in-laws." A Kariera male called all the girls who were eligible for marriage to him by the same term (*Nuba*, usually translated mother's brother's daughter); all the fathers of such girls

[10] The definitive work on Australian kinship systems is Radcliffe-Brown 1930-31, and there is a large technical literature on the subject. See also Elkin 1951; Berndt 1955 and 1957; Murdock 1949.

[11] See Radcliffe-Brown 1913.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

601 by the same term (*Kaga*, usually translated as mother's brother); and all the mothers of such girls by the same term (*Toa*, usually translated father's sister or mother's brother's wife). When he married one of these girls he still called her *Nuba*, he still called his wife's father *Kaga*, and still called his wife's mother *Toa*. But not in Tiwi. For them, all potential wives were, in theory, mothers' brothers' daughters and all potential wives' fathers were mothers' brothers. But when a man married any such girl, he immediately called her by a new and different kinship term which can only be translated as "wife," and corresponding new and separate terms were used for the actual wife's father, actual wife's mother, and even for the actual wife's father's sister. Thus marriage introduced for a Tiwi a new set of relatives with new kinship terms different from those he used toward his general run of cross-cousins, mother's brothers, father's sisters, and so on, and these "relatives by actual marriage" terms, being based on actual marriages rather than kinship categories, were capable of handling in a fairly orderly manner all the complexities introduced into Tiwi domestic life by such customs as old men exchanging infant daughters or young men marrying each other's mothers. We may sum it up briefly by saying that Tiwi marriages operated within a general framework of cross-cousin marriage kinship categories identical with the 182 categories of the Kariera, but that females had become such important assets 582 in power and prestige relationships among the senior men—marriage had be- 601 come, so to speak, such a political affair—that a new set of kinship terms based on actual marriages had to be superimposed on the terms geared to cross-cousin marriage; in cases of conflict or anomaly or confusion in the cross-cousin terms, the terms based on actual marriages were controlling or took precedence. Which is only another way of saying that in theory all Tiwi marriages were rather idealistically approximated to marriages between cross-cousins, but in practice they departed quite far from such an ideal; so far, in fact, that extra kinship terms had been introduced to take care of the relationships created by such departures.

"Disputed" Wives

588 There is still one more category of wives to be mentioned, a category for which the Tiwi had no name in their own language but which in pidgin English they referred to as "stolen" wives. A few women so labeled were likely to turn up in the "list" of the wives of most big men, but analysis of the circumstances in each case makes it clear that "stolen" was an unsuitable label and that wives so designated were most often in a status that should be called either "disputed" or "shared." In legal terms they were wives in which there was or had been a divided interest. To explain fully the nature of these cases would carry us over into both the Tiwi legal and sexual systems, and here we are trying to confine our analysis to those aspects of marriage that have consequences for household organization. Since these disputed or shared wives had

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to at least reside in some household and had at least a nominal current husband at any given moment of time, all we need to note about them at this point is that in any listing of a man's wives we have to include "disputed" wives in addition to all the other categories of wives mentioned previously. 588

The Household: An Overview

In the discussion so far we have selected only those aspects of the Tiwi family complex that had close bearing on the nature of the household. These aspects can be briefly summarized as follows: 582 592

1. the high number of wives per husband that a successful man was likely to acquire if he lived long enough.

2. the two distinct mechanisms by which wives were acquired—infant bestowal and widow remarriage.

3. the operation of the bestowal system in such a way as to prevent even the most promising young man from achieving coresidence with a bestowed wife until he was at least nearly forty years old.

4. the tendency for success to lead to more success, whereby *some* astute men received into their households a number of young wives in rapid succession after the age of forty. [554 595]

5. the tendency of younger men and of nonbetrothed younger men in particular to marry elderly widows while waiting for betrothed wives to grow up or, in the case of those with no bestowals in sight, to enable them to start a household of their own.

6. as a result of the integrated operation of all these customs, the strong tendency in Tiwi households for husbands to be very much older than their wives (as a result of infant bestowal) or very much younger than their wives (as a result of widow remarriage) or—what was commonest of all in the bigger households—some combination of both. Hence many a Tiwi husband had some wives much older than himself, including some already dead (but still counted), and some very much younger than himself, including some who were still babies in their mothers' wombs (with their sex still undetermined). All these dead wives, current wives, nominal wives, "disputed" wives, not-yet-joined-the-household wives, and not-yet-born wives were still counted in a husband's list, and the length of his list was a measure of his influence, power, and importance as a household head. [554 595]

It is now perhaps clear why we chose to begin our account of Tiwi culture with some discussion of Tiwi marriage. Compulsory marriage for all females, carried out through the twin mechanisms of infant bestowal and widow remarriage, resulted in a very unusual type of household, in which old successful men had twenty wives each, while men under thirty had no wives at all and men under forty were married mostly to elderly crones. This unusual household structure was the focal point of Tiwi culture. It linked together in an explicable unity the kinship system, the food-gathering system, the political 592 182 592

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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592

and prestige system, the totemic system, the seniority system, the sexual system, and the legal-moral-religious system of the tribe. Or perhaps all these should be labeled as subsystems under the household structure, the master system which unified them. We turn therefore to consider the Tiwi household as it affected the food-gathering and leisure-time activities of the people.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Life in the Bush

Organization: Band and Household

THE PRECEDING CHAPTER should convey something of what a Tiwi band really was. The casual way in which people left one band and joined another shows that the band was in no sense a tight political or legal group. Old men preferred, on the whole, to bestow their daughters on men in other bands, but far from this indicating any tendency towards patrilocality, there was at the same time a strong tendency on the part of such selected sons-in-law, especially if they were young and mobile, to move into the band of the father-in-law, partly, at least, to ensure that the donor did not change his mind. Even the faint prospect of a wife was sufficient to cause young men to change bands, and change of band residence by senior men was not at all rare.

The emphasis on widow remarriage was another factor that influenced band residence and made the whole matter of band affiliation extremely fluid and arbitrary. For widow remarriage not only caused elderly women to move perhaps several times in their lifetimes, but also caused their younger sons to move with them. Such unmarried sons preferred home cooking and followed their elderly mothers outside the band if remarriage required the widows to move. Almost invariably the question "Why is So and So (a youth of 15-25) living in Turupi if he is really a Malauila?" evoked the response (obvious to a Tiwi) "Because his mother is there." Conversely, mothers often followed their sons, especially when the son began to acquire young wives who needed senior female supervision. Such mothers divided their time between the household of the son (or even several sons) and the household of the nominal husband, and if such part-time residence in two (or more) households involved part-time residence in two (or more) bands, the arrangement did not provoke any comment, nor was it thought to be in any way odd.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

621 The fluidity of band affiliation was so constant a feature of Tiwi life that almost the only firm generalization that can be made about it is that when "a big man" with a large household had lived most of his adult life in the territory of a band, and had been up to the time of his death one of the dominating elders of that band, his children, both male and female, would be regarded as "really" members of that band during *their* lifetimes, regardless of where marriage took the girls, or where their own life careers or the remarriages of their mothers took the boys. Thus in 1928 the three oldest men of Malau—Ki-in-kumi, Enquirio, and Merapanui—were regarded as core members of the Malauila band. Reference to their family trees reveals that the latter two had been born in Malau to a big man of that band in the previous generation and had resided in Malau all their lives. Ki-in-kumi, however, always thought of as equally a Malauila, in fact had been born in Rangu to a Rangwila father and had moved to Malau as a youth when his marriage prospects had seemed to him best in that district. This move had happened so long ago that only old people remembered it, and as a result all three old men were generally regarded as "real" Malauila and the children of all three would so be regarded all their lives. Such identification would hardly carry over for more than one, or at best, two generations. In explaining the matter, we have had to use the English word "really" in quotation marks because the Tiwi themselves had no corresponding concept. If one asked "Why is he a Malauila when he never seems to live there?" the answer would be "Because his father was, and he grew up there." It was only in pidgin English that one could talk of a "real Malauila" or a "real Rangwila." In Tiwi language and thought, Malau or Rangu was a firm, fixed, unchanging piece of country; the Malauila or Rangwila were the households, of constantly changing personnel, who hunted there, and a man had to belong to one of those households practically all his life and have his father before him also a permanent resident of the same district before his identification with that district was sufficiently close to approximate the degree of identification that is implied in the European concept of a "real" Malauila or "really" a Rangwila.

592 [621] The crux, then, of Tiwi territorial organization was not the band but the household.[1] A band was merely the temporary concentration in one district of semiautonomous households which were the food-collecting, living-together, and sleeping-together units of Tiwi life. People were not members

[1] There has been a prolonged argument in the anthropological journals about the Australian territorial unit, especially as to whether it was patrilineal or matrilineal. For the Tiwi, such a problem could not arise. A father bestowed his daughters where he wished and at puberty they joined their husbands. Where his sons found wives was no concern of the father, and hence where they established their households was of no interest to him either. The father would wish, however, that they would establish their households as far away from his as possible since then he would not have to worry about them interfering with his young wives. On the other hand, it was thought to be "unfatherly" actually to throw sons out. See G. P. Murdock and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and A. P. Elkin in *American Anthropologist* (*passim*) for the main contributions to the mainland argument, which we think becomes pointless when dominance of the household tie over band ties existed, as it did among the Tiwi.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of bands as part of any political or legal system; they were members of households as part of a domestic system. What held the unit together was the central position and dominance of the father or husband, and hence the life of a household was only as long as his lifetime. When he died, the household broke up and the surviving members joined other households, perhaps in the same district, perhaps in some other band territory. Such change of household was carried out by the individuals concerned, not quite at will, but certainly not with sufficient uniformity for any political or legal label to be put upon it. 592 [621] [768]

Uniformity was derived from the fact that every Tiwi had to live in a household. The universal prohibition on unmarried females was obviously one expression of that requirement. For men, the requirement was less firm, and if a young man wanted to live entirely alone he was free to try—although there is no record of any man having tried it for more than a few weeks at a time. Even if his mother were dead and his father or step-father did not welcome him, he attached himself to some household since, apart from any question of loneliness, this was the only way by which he could eat regularly. For Tiwi households were primarily autonomous food-producing and food-consumption units. A household made its own decisions, camped where it saw fit to camp, moved on when the food quest made it advantageous or necessary to move on. A large household, such as that of Ki-in-kumi or any other big man, was a complete community in itself, with the old man as executive director. He laid down the daily, weekly, and monthly work and travel schedules for the women, the young men, and the children. Most of the time the work went automatically because all the adults and the older children knew their jobs.

Daily Activities

By shortly after dawn each day, the household was up, and after a light breakfast, usually of leftovers from the previous night, everybody left camp to go to work. The women and children (except perhaps the five- to ten-year-old boys, who were rather useless at that age) scattered in every direction from the camp with baskets and/or babies on their backs, to spend the day gathering food, chiefly vegetable foods, grubs, worms, and anything else edible. Since they had spent their lives doing it, the old women knew all about gathering and preparing vegetable foods, and they supervised the younger women. This was one important reason for men marrying widows, and even a man with many young wives was quite likely to remarry an elderly widow or two nonetheless. A husband with only young wives might have a satisfactory sex life, but he still needed a household manager if he wished to eat well. The supervision of the female members of the household was left to the old women and, provided the returns were good, the husband did not attempt to interfere nor to give orders concerning the details of women's work. 512 [857] [482 854] [222] [592]

After the women had scattered out in a wide circuit from the camp, the husband might hunt, but only if he were not too old. In hunting kanga- 224 887

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

224 roos,[9] wildfowl, and other game, keen eyesight is essential, hence Tiwi men
[887 did very little hunting once they were past about forty-five, though they hated to admit their hunting days were over. The meat, fish, and game provided for the large household of an old man was obtained by the young men, and this was about the only thing an old man thought his sons or his step-sons were good for. Typically the young man, when he returned at nightfall with
[592 a kangaroo which he had spent most of the day tracking down and spearing, would ignore the old man and dump the carcass at the feet of his mother as
888] if to say, "I brought this back for you, not for that old So and So."

As the women straggled back to camp toward sundown with the results
512 of their day's gathering and the young hunters brought in their bags, cooking
595 began and the main meal of the day (usually the only hot meal) was eaten. The Tiwi themselves had no doubt about the close relationship between plural marriage and good eating. "If I had only one or two wives I would starve,"
[797] the head of a large household once told the missionary who was preaching against plural marriage, "but with my present ten or twelve wives I can send them out in all directions in the morning and at least two or three of them are likely to bring something back with them at the end of the day, and then
262 we can all eat." This was a realistic appraisal of the economic situation and it is to be noted that he put the emphasis on the food obtained by the women
[222] gatherers rather than that supplied by the male hunters. Based on the observations of 1928-29, it would appear that the Tiwi ate pretty well, especially in the larger households. Kangaroo and other marsupials, and some of the larger lizards (for example, the goanna) were very plentiful in the bush, as were fish and turtles and dugong on the coasts and wild geese in many districts. But all these were extras or dividends; the staple everyday foods were the vegetable foods gathered day after day in apparently unending quantities by the women. For most months of the year there was always plenty of *kwoka*,
[252] a porridgelike dish prepared by soaking and mashing the small nuts of a native palm. These nuts grew in such quantity that in every large camp baskets or dishes of *kwoka*, at various stages of preparation, were always available, even for midnight snacks if anybody woke up hungry. *Kwoka* was about as dull and tasteless as Scotch porridge, but equally filling, and naked small boys full of *kwoka* had stomachs distended like balloons. In the wet season the place of *kwoka* was taken by *kolema*, a yam whose ripening and growing season was much shorter than that of the nuts from which *kwoka* was made. It was
[796] on the abundance of the *kolema* yams during January and February that the Tiwi supported the more elaborate of their collective ceremonials.

The abundance of these and other vegetable foods, plus the ample supply of game and fish in many places, meant that under aboriginal conditions the Tiwi lived at a food-consumption level much further above the near-

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[9] Actually there are no kangaroos on Melville and Bathurst Islands; the chief meat animal is a slightly smaller species of marsupial technically called the wallaby. As the distinction is important only to zoologists, and as many of the so-called kangaroos in American zoos are in fact wallabies, we prefer to use the more familiar word.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

starvation level than was the case with many of the mainland tribes.[3] Even to talk about the Tiwi in near-starvation terms seems quite incongruous, for there was an abundance of native food available the whole year around and their only problem was to collect or catch it. We regard the development of their large multiple-wife household as essentially their own evolutionary solution to the problem of finding the most efficient unit of food production. Abundant food was there in the bush in its raw state; the most efficient way to extract it was by a work unit represented by such households as those of Ki-in-kumi, or Tu'untalumi, with the old remarried widows directing the young women and the hunting and fish spearing being done by the younger males.

Even the smallest households nearly always contained at least one old female veteran of the food quest who knew the bush like the palm of her hand and could wrestle some food out of the most inhospitable district. The only households that ever went hungry—and they only overnight or at worst for twenty-four hours or so—were the small households of only one or two wives, especially if both wives were young and inexperienced or young and flighty or both. Such households were uneconomic and were rare. On the other hand, the apparently absurd households such as those in which two young men shared their respective elderly mothers as wives, made good economic sense. Any attempt by two such young men to substitute two young wives or even four young wives for the two old ladies would have drastically reduced the standard of living of the household. When young wives arrived in Tiwi households they were not regarded as replacements for the old crones but joined as reinforcements and apprentices to the skilled workers—the veterans. The sexual aspects of marriage were necessarily subordinated to the housekeeping or food-production aspects, which is why in the previous section we spoke of every young man laying the foundation of his household by marrying an elderly widow usually long before there was any young wife in sight.

Since the bigger the household the more food it produced for its own consumption, there was a tendency for the smaller and therefore hungrier households to hang around the fringes of the bigger ones. Though every household was autonomous and could camp and collect food anywhere in the band territory in which it roamed, it was rare to find all the households in a band distributed evenly over the available territory. In Malau, Enquirio's household and that of Merapanui were usually to be found camped together, since the two men were full brothers and not in competition with each other. Also camped with or near them on any given occasion would be a few other small households. Such a combined group as this would, all told, amount to between forty and fifty people camping at the same spot and remaining together for weeks at a time. Under mainland conditions in most areas, a gathering of forty people for ten days at a time in the same locality was unheard of, except on

[3] As was pointed out earlier, the best-watered and most fertile areas of the mainland were the areas attractive to white settlement, and the tribes who inhabited such areas (for example, Victoria or coastal Queensland) were wiped out quickly. Most of the mainland tribes who survived long enough to be studied by modern anthropologists were tribes whose habitats were unfavorable both for native and for white occupation.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

361 special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply.
592 The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general
[171] thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably
592 smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during
574 supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger
[593 household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece
602] of meat or a dish of *kwoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the
[561 general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through
578] all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all
512 resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated
517 with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive
[562] work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the
[513] shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an
[578] argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

578 Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion
182 with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit
837 that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic
592 efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

he was at the same time the executive director of a work unit which he expected 578
to work for him, and the husband of many of its members whom he expected 182
to be faithful to him. The young wives were willing, under supervision, to 837
meet his first expectation, but found it difficult, even under the strictest supervision, to meet the second. Successful supervision of the morals of young wives 592
was easy to achieve at night because each camp was then gathered together and it was relatively easy for the husband and his senior wives to guard the young wives closely. But during the daytime matters were different. Then the 837
young women of the household were widely scattered through the fairly dense bush and it was impossible for the old wives to watch them every minute of the day. And the young men of other households, or even of their own household, were hunting game in the same neighborhood. Encounters, whether by chance or by previous arrangement, were likely to occur and probably occurred with a high degree of frequency. We say "probably" because no anthropologist working with a tribe which has neither courts nor written records can ever know how often casual extramarital offenses take place. (There is even some difficulty in obtaining reliable statistics on such matters in our own society, as the attacks on the late Dr. Kinsey's statistics indicate.) We therefore make no statement about how common the act of adultery was in Tiwi culture, but we can say that, judging by the public accusations of adultery, its practice must have been widespread indeed. In any Tiwi camp comprising more than 578
two households, few weeks went by without an outraged and angry old husband shouting accusations at one of the younger men sitting by another camp 837
fire a few yards away. The young man accused would (usually) deny it; the old women of both households would enter the argument, the young man's [595]
mother protesting his innocence, the old man's elderly wives (who had of course been the informers) giving details of time and place and circumstance; the young man would produce, or try to produce, an alibi and appeal to a friend to bear him out; the old man would call the friend a liar and the youth's mother an old witch; the youth's mother would retaliate by shouting things she knew (but had never before revealed) about the private lives of everybody in the old man's household, including the old man himself when he was a young bachelor. A good time would be had by all, including the listening anthropologist, but nobody would get much sleep. Such nocturnal uproars, always starting with accusations hurled by an older husband against a younger man and always involving incidents that had allegedly occurred while the young wife was somehow left unchaperoned for a short period during her daytime wandering in search of food, were a commonplace of nightlife among the Tiwi; but no case was ever reported, observed, or hinted at in which even the most adventurous and enterprising bachelor had succeeded in seducing, or had even attempted to seduce, a young wife when she was back in camp [833]
after nightfall. The deeds were always done in the secrecy of the bush during the daytime; it was the recriminations and accusations that occurred in the public glare of the campfires at nighttime.

Sometimes these disputes or accusations went no further than the noc- 578
turnal shouting of charges. Often the young man accused the previous night 684

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

578 quietly slipped away to some other camp and was not seen the following
684 morning. The matter might then die, depending largely on whether the old husband wanted to carry it further or was content to drop it. If the young
[627] man was still in camp the following day, the old man might insist on a duel then and there, but it would take place only if the camp were large, since Tiwi duels were essentially legal actions and as such needed a sizable audience for their correct staging. Disputes between men, of which old men accusing young men of seduction were by far the most common type, usually remained at the verbal level until a large body of spectators was available. Since such large
[527 concentrations of many households were necessary for the performance of the
627] main collective ceremonials, it was at the time of these ceremonials that most verbal arguments were pushed by the aggrieved party to the action level.

554 During the dry season (April to November) when travel was easy, the
764 only collective ceremonials sufficiently important to draw together a large number of households were those held for the funerals of big men. In the wet season (November to March) when the grass and bush were high and travel was difficult, the main collective phases of the male initiation ceremonies were
[881] held (see Chapter 4), and these brought together for a few weeks at a time large numbers of households. The funeral ceremonies for adults were always held some considerable time after the death and burial of the deceased. How long a period elapsed between the death and the funeral ceremonies depended on the expected size of the gathering, and this figure correlated, at least roughly, with the importance of the deceased. Here again the overriding considera-
574 tion was food supply, since the chief mourners (that is, the deceased's closer
764 relatives) had to feed everybody who came to the funeral while the ceremonies
433 lasted, which might be almost a week. The more important the dead person the bigger the crowd at his funeral, and hence the greater the amount of time
182 needed by the mourners to arrange the catering. As much as a year might elapse between the death and the time when the mourners felt that the funeral arrangements—especially the food supply, but also the ceremonial preparation—were sufficiently well in hand to permit them to set a date and send out invitations for the funeral ceremonies. Funerals, therefore, were not held at regular times but were individually scheduled at times fixed by the chief mourners. They were always held in the dry season, however (except those of
[627] young children, to which nobody came in any case), and therefore an old man who had a dispute to settle or a case to try publicly could always depend on a few big funerals being held in the not very distant future which would provide the large audience necessary to make the settlement of the dispute legal. During the wet season the *kolema* phases of the initiation ceremonial
[881] always drew a large attendance; the annual time of these was pretty definitely fixed by the ripening of the *kolema* yams.

578 Hence the verbal wrangles in the small scattered encampments at night,
684 about seduction during the day, could have any one of three outcomes, depending largely upon the determination of the old man-accuser and the demeanor
627 of the young man-accused. If by the following morning the young man had disappeared and showed no further interest in the old man's menage, the

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

matter might end there. Or the old man might let matters rest until the time of the next big gathering of people at a funeral or at the *kolema* rituals, and then revive the issue under such public circumstances that the accused young man could not slip away unpunished. If he followed this second course, the old man went to the gathering covered from head to foot in white paint, the Tiwi uniform for anybody who came in anger and intended to pick a fight with somebody. The decision between these two lines of action lay, of course, with the old man, and while that decision was to some extent determined by how vindictive and revengeful he felt, nonetheless it was also influenced by how this dispute was related to all the other feuds, disputes, deals, marriage exchanges, and so forth, in which both parties were already involved. Like a good lawyer in our own culture, the old man had to consider, before he took the matter to court, who the young man was and who his friends and relatives were, and had to ask himself whether in seeking vengeance for the blow to his pride he might not be doing himself more political harm than the injury was worth.

In arriving at his decision, the old man was influenced to some extent also by another variable, the attitude of the young man. If the alleged offense occurred only once and the young man denied it and thereafter kept his distance, the accuser would probably let the matter drop. Offenders were very rarely caught *in flagrante*, and the evidence of seduction was almost always circumstantial or hearsay. In every case there was some element of doubt as to whether the right young male was being accused or whether the whole story had not been invented by some of the old wives out of sheer spite toward a young wife. The old man had to take such factors into consideration, not out of any abstract sense of justice, but because, naturally, he didn't like to be made a fool of, either by young men or his own spiteful old wives. But he was most suspicious and unbelieving of his own flighty young wives, and sometimes the accused young man was defiant and persistent in his attentions to the same young wife, or wives. In effect, such a young man was daring the old husband to do his worst. Such continued defiance of the seniority system could not be permitted; it became a case not of simple seduction but of subversive activity, since it was a threat to the whole social structure of the tribe, centered as that was around the marriage of old men to young women. When confronted by such action, a Tiwi elder said (as people of other cultures might), "What would happen if everybody did that? We'd have complete anarchy and free love." Hence an old husband, so defied, was almost duty bound not just to seek satisfaction for the private injury done to himself, but to defend the public weal by hauling the offender before the bar of public opinion and denouncing him before as large a crowd as possible, as a public enemy. If the situation became so flagrant that he could not wait until the next big funeral or the next *kolema* gathering, he began calling in surrounding camps or going himself, dressed in white paint, to summon them to assist him in meting out public justice to the violator of the system. When a sufficient number of upholders of the right (that is, senior heads of households) had been collected together, the usual one-sided duel (see below, Chapter 4) was

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

staged and this was usually sufficient to incapacitate the offender and make him decide to move—at least for a while—into some other district. The group thus hastily convened to mete out public justice seldom numbered more than sixty or seventy people (seven or eight households) and having been convened *ad hoc* would remain camped together only for the forty-eight hours or less needed to deal with the emergency.

Joint Activities

This discussion of the alternative lines of action open to an outraged household head enables us to specify the relatively rare occasions during the year when the dull, quiet, day-by-day, food-gathering routines of the dispersed household camps were interrupted by events that required many households to gather together in one place and indulge in joint action. Foremost among these occasions were big funerals and the *kolema* ceremonial, both of which were mentioned above. These were the main religious events of the year, full of dancing, singing, wailing, and excitement. The excitement was the psychological result of so many people being together at the same time, a rare experience in the life of any Tiwi. Since the *kolema* ceremonial was an annual event and even the most enthusiastic funeral goer did not attend more than three or four really big funerals in the course of a year, we may reckon that even an old and important man, much concerned with ritual observances, would probably find himself a participant in such crowd activities on not more than some six occasions per year. For less important men and for women and children the number of such occasions was less than six. The *kolema* ceremonial lasted two weeks or more, big funerals, even when they became the occasion for carrying on other public business, did not last more than four or five days each. Hence we may reckon an average of about a week each for the half-dozen times a really big man spent in the company of a sizable crowd of fellow tribesmen, giving a total annual average of about six or seven weeks at most out of every fifty-two—or a little less than 10 percent of the year spent by an old important man in large ceremonial activities or what Durkheim calls the collective life of the tribe.

In addition there were the smaller gatherings, such as the funerals of younger men and most women, and the calling together of a number of households to settle a dispute in the manner we have described above. These were collective occasions also but they brought together a considerably smaller crowd. A really big man's funeral was likely to draw over three hundred people or even as much as one-third of the whole tribe.[4] Not only did many

[4] Tamboo's funeral in May, 1929 (he died in the previous August) drew practically the full band membership (men, women, and children) of the four Bathurst Island bands; almost all the Munupula; many Mandiimbula; and large delegations from the remaining three bands. With such a crowd, an actual head count was difficult, especially of the children, but there must have been over four hundred people present. Needless to say, excitement was intense; more fights occurred, more insults were exchanged, more ancient feuds revived and new ones started, and more food consumed than at any funeral in living memory. At least that was the opinion of Tamboo's chief mourners, but since it was they who threw the party and had to pay for it, they may have been biased.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

Not only did many people come to such a funeral to express their kinship with, and pay their respects to, the deceased, but as mentioned above, many men with disputes to settle or fights to pick let such matters ride until the next big funeral was called and then took advantage of the large crowd to provide the necessary witnesses for the transaction of the outstanding legal business. Gatherings of many households for purely legal affairs, without funerals or *kolema* ceremonial as the main *raison d'etre* for the gathering, were comparatively rare and when they did occur they were usually called by one man, to settle one case only, and hence did not promote the attendance of very many households. Similarly, the funerals of most women and of younger and therefore less important men drew together at most ten or twelve households and a few other individuals, so that the crowd was usually not above one hundred people at the most. A single *ad hoc* legal duel, even when an episode in a long-drawn out and notorious dispute, seldom drew more than this number. Duels always attracted some spectators who came for the excitement, even though not personally involved, provided of course they were camped somewhere in the vicinity. 527 571 619 764 627

This second type of collective gathering, of which the smaller funerals and the single duels were the main occasions, might then require the attendance of a household head, accompanied by some or all of his household members, perhaps five or six times a year. These gatherings would each last less than forty-eight hours, and since the people the household head met at them would mostly be people of his own band or of closely adjoining bands, the excitement of seeing unfamiliar faces—people not seen for over a year perhaps—would be absent. We may reckon that attendance at these smaller, more localized gatherings, and the participation in group activity which they entailed, took up two more weeks, all told, out of the yearly round. When these two weeks are added to the six or seven already estimated for the time spent by a busy public man at the large gatherings, we find that even the busiest and most gregarious senior elders spent less than ten weeks out of the fifty-two in collective activity outside their immediate households.

To complete the list of occasions which called for joint activity by the members of several households, we must include the joint kangaroo hunt. This activity was very localized and very spasmodic, occurring only when and where conditions were right and somebody felt sufficiently energetic to organize it. Much of the Tiwi country is a mixture of dense scrub and relatively open savannah; kangaroo are relatively easy to hunt in the latter but very hard to get near in the denser types of vegetation. The native method of hunting was based on getting as close as possible to the animal before it saw or heard the hunter. If it detected the hunter, it fled, and no Tiwi in his senses ever threw a spear or a throwing stick at a moving kangaroo.[5] Only when the animal was standing still and the hunter was close enough to aim carefully at a vital part was the spear thrown. At certain seasons of the year, particularly after the end of the wet and early in the dry season, many sections of good kangaroo country gave very poor hunting returns because the grass had become 224 [137] 221 224

[5] The up-and-down movement of a hopping kangaroo in flight makes it an extraordinarily difficult target even for skilled white hunters armed with shotguns or rifles.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

221 so high and rank that the hunters were unable to get near the kangaroo. In
224 this event, a senior man of the district might decide to convene a grass-
[554] burning posse. To it he invited more or less whom he pleased, so long as he included other household heads of the same band and other senior men from outside it whose ancestry gave them some claim to be invited. At the appointed time the hunters assembled, perhaps ten or fifteen adult men, with younger ones doing the actual hunting and the older ones supervising. The women and children acted as beaters; the grass was set on fire over a big area, and the kangaroos rounded up and killed while dazed by the smoke and the noise. The bag of animals killed in such a concerted hunt sometimes ran higher than one kangaroo per participant, so that every man, woman, and child present was able to gorge himself on kangaroo meat for a day or two. This sudden glut of meat was not, however, the main object of the burning, but a dividend. Even though few kangaroos were caught in the smoke and confusion, the burned-over area would provide good visibility for kangaroo hunting during the rest of the dry season, since the new tender shoots that sprang from the burned-over grass were a favorite food of the kangaroo and served to lure them out of the denser scrub areas and the mangrove swamps where hunting them was always difficult.

224 These occasional joint hunts, like the occasional small fights and the
57 funerals of unimportant people, usually brought together only the members
619 of households who lived relatively close to one another, so that while they are included in the list of events which interrupted household isolation, they did not, as a rule, involve any interaction between members of any wider group than the neighboring households. Perhaps the whole matter of activity beyond the household and the band can be illustrated best by an actual case.
159 We have already mentioned the venerable Tu'untalumi, an old man resident
888 among the Tiklauila, who as late as 1929, and despite the fact that by then the Tiklauila were the band most subject to mission influence, nonetheless had a list of twenty-one wives. In other ways besides his record of polygamy, Tu'untalumi was a pillar of the old culture. Though past seventy and much too old to hunt, he was a most enthusiastic and indefatigable song and dance composer, and in his zest for ceremonial he made a point of attending every big festival and as many smaller ones as he could get to. The whole tribe respected Tu'untalumi as a big man, liked him as a person, admired him for his steadfast support of Tiwi traditions, and most of all accepted him as a sort of leading authority on ritual matters. When dubious or disputed points of ceremonial were submitted to him, his decision, given clearly and firmly and with much citation of precedent and the distant past, was accepted without demur. His presence at a gathering located outside his own district was always a source of gratification to the household which had convened the gathering. The fact that Tu'untalumi had seen fit to attend not only made that household feel important but also provided its members with a technical guide and arbiter for unofficial help in running the rituals. The old man loved going to parties—and he was always a welcome guest—and years of such activity had given him such a sturdy, wiry constitution that despite his near-seventy-five years he could

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

outdance and out-sing and out-party most of the men fifty years younger than himself.[8] 159 888

Since Tu'untalumi was a senior Tiwi household head who spent more of his time attending festivals, funerals, fights, and other collective occasions than did most of his contemporaries, it is instructive to examine his movements over a full year. If he had kept an engagement book during 1928-29, it would have looked something like this: 159 887

Early April (end of wet season): Leaves his home base in Tangio where he has spent most of the wet season and visits the Mission station to attend a few small funerals (children who have died at the Mission in the preceding months). During these funerals a series of fights and duels also takes place. Total people present: perhaps fifty or sixty. Time thus spent in helping to wind up public business: five days. Returns home to Tangio and remains there for rest of April. [797]

End of April: Goes to Rangu with a big party of other Tiklauila for a funeral (junior elder). Fairly big funeral, lots of people, lots of disputes. Time away, including leisurely journey to and from Rangu, about two weeks. Gets back home about middle of May. [764 166]

Middle of May—end of June: Lives quietly at home with his household in Tangio.

About July 1st: Goes to Mission for a few days, "visits" with whoever is there. Tries out a new composition of his own (song and dance) on group camped at Mission. Returns home for rest of July. [533 535]

Last week of July: Taking his younger wives and their children with two senior wives in charge of them, sets out for Malau for a big funeral with lots of people and fights. There he performs his new dance; is much consulted on ceremonial matters by the Malauila; gets into a few fights himself but handles them with dignity and honor; remains in Malau two weeks; stops off to visit and attend a small funeral with the Munupula on his way back; has a fight with a Munupula while there; returns to the Mission; stays there a day or two dispensing all the news from Malau and Munupi to those camped there; issues invitations for a grass burning in some sections of Tangio which were not burned in April or May. Goes on home to Tangio where some of his older wives have remained during his absence. Total time away: about three weeks. [166]

End of August: Is joined in Tangio by several other Tiklauila and Rangwila households whom he has invited. Grass burning and joint kangaroo hunting goes on for four or five days. Dancing and partying at night. After five days most of visiting group leave and he and his household remain alone in Tangio until well into October. [224]

[8] There is no suggestion that Tu'untalumi was in any way an official ritual leader. All old men, by virtue of their years, were to some extent ritual leaders; he had merely worked harder and longer at it than most of them. His tirelessly joyful personality had a good deal to do with his success in the self-established role. In a culture that might be thought likely to make all its men gloomy, anxiety-ridden introverts, he was a warm, happy, dignified old extrovert and he was widely admired. [156]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 887 [166]

Middle of October: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[7] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing.

[578 764]

[881 574]

End of October: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

[881]

End of January: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

End of February: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

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[7] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeimpi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.

[77] [548]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

The mobility of people other than household heads was much less. 562
Women and children could move only with the permission, and usually in the 571
company, of their lord and master. Occasionally old and trusted wives might
be sent, unsupervised, on a journey by their husbands or their brothers, [203]
usually to carry messages and bring back gossip, but young wives were never
trusted to be out of sight either of the husband or of elderly female supervisors. Young men were less subject to their fathers' orders and hence were fairly free to come and go as they pleased, but the universal suspicion which all husbands bore toward wandering young men put severe restrictions on their mobility and prevented them attaching themselves to any household or camp in which they did not have some close relative.

The fact, then, that a man like Tu'untalumi was (in Tiwi terms) very 159
mobile did not necessarily mean that members of his household shared his 222
degree of mobility. When he took most of his large household with him on his 462
journeys away from home, as he often did, it was always because he was going 527
a considerable distance and was traveling slowly, living off the country as he
went. In such cases he liked to have a large retinue to feed him on the way
and also to permit him to entertain in fitting style when he arrived. For
while it was true that at a funeral or at an initiation the relatives of the de-
ceased or of the novices were supposed to take care of the feeding of all the [574]
visitors, nonetheless, wealthy and generous men like Tu'untalumi believed in
taking along with them a bevy of young wives, with a couple of efficient
elderly widow-wives in charge of them, to contribute to the food-getting and
food-preparing activities. Of course the supervision of the young wives' morals [837
in the strange environment was often difficult, especially in the hectic at- 593]
mosphere of a big ceremonial, but this worry was compensated for by the fact
that the visitor who came so attended was contributing a number of extra
food providers to the labor force of the harassed hosts and thus making a
generous gesture, and also by the fact that such a visitor was not dependent
upon the hospitality provided by the hosts. Having his own food-producing
unit with him, he could live better and stay longer than if he had come alone
or only as one of a party of men. In this respect, as in so many others, a Tiwi
household head's decision had to be reached by balancing against one another
the two competing motives of, on the one hand, the desire to eat well and,
on the other, the desire to keep his young wives safe from prowling bachelors.
Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest man of the Malauila band, usually decided not only
to leave his wives at home but also not even to go himself. But Ki-in-kumi was
a gloomy, pessimistic old man. Tu'untalumi usually decided to do the thing
in style, travel with a large retinue, have all the comforts of home while in
strange districts, and take his chances on the strange bachelors. He clearly
believed that a good booming ceremony with lots to eat and himself in the
center directing the dancing was well worth the risk of a few of his young
wives being seduced off-stage. Men like Ki-in-kumi thought Tu'untalumi an [184]
old fool for not leaving his young wives at home, and Tu'untalumi probably
thought that old Ki-in-kumi might as well be dead, especially since his death
would be the occasion for a really magnificent funeral.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 The matter of men traveling to distant camps for ceremonials illumi-
595 nates again, and from a new angle, the great value of elderly widows in the
587 household. Tu'untalumi, during his visit to Malau in August, was able to split his household efficiently by taking a couple of old wives with him to supervise his young wives on the journey and leaving other old wives at home in Tangio to begin storing up food for the grass-burning project which he intended to stage on his return. It will be noticed in the account of his movements that he began issuing invitations to the grass burning on his way home from Malau,
[324 showing his confidence that the elderly wives he had left at home would
251] have the preparations well in hand during his absence. A big man with a big household really needed three or four elderly widows because these enabled him to split his work force in various ways as his various political and social obligations required and to be sure of trustworthy supervision of each of the segments. A man without widows in his household, or with only one, could not do this; in fact, it was hard for a man without widows to attend ceremonials at all, or even to receive a large party of visitors to his household. And, as we have already pointed out, since such a man would probably go hungry very often because he would not dare to send his unsupervised young wives into the bush to gather food, there were practically no such men nor such households. Widows were indispensable to a senior Tiwi, both in his public and in his private life.

Making Things

592 Throughout this chapter we have been stressing the contrast between
887 the dull routine of life in an isolated Tiwi household during the greater part of the year and the sort of life typical on those relatively rare occasions when something special—a festival, a funeral, a fight, a grass burning, a naming ceremony, some collective phase of men's initiation—required the assembling together of several households for joint activity. Before leaving the daily life of the isolated camp, we should mention one other area of activity—namely, the manufacturing activities of the tribe. The Tiwi did not manufacture much,
[32] but spears, throwing sticks, canoes, digging sticks, baskets, bodily ornaments, graveposts, and all the miscellaneous paraphernalia used in ceremonials had to be made in whatever leisure time people could find during the long weeks and months when each of the households lived more or less in isolation from the others. Crude and simple as these artifacts were, their construction required time, and only the older men had the time and the skill based on experience to make the more important of them.

[147] Largely because of their failing eyesight, the older men hunted very little and hence tended to remain in camp all day while the young men were hunting and the women were gathering. There were, of course, some old men who took advantage of this time to do little except doze in the shade, but
182 most of the household heads spent a fairly active day in camp engaged in
511 making things. Here we find another aspect of Tiwi culture that results from
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the relatively favorable food supply. Some of the Tiwi artifacts, particularly the highly decorative graveposts and ceremonial spears, are unique among Australian tribes, and the carving and painting of these graveposts and spears were skills possessed only by the senior men. They were provided with the leisure time necessary to develop and use these skills by the efficiency in food production of the large household which all old men were expected to accumulate with age, and which many old men did succeed in accumulating. We said earlier that the bigger the household, the better its members ate. We now add the further correlation that the bigger the household, the more leisure time was provided for its head to engage in manufacturing and artistic production. Tu'untalumi has been cited as an example of a large household head (twelve resident wives and thirteen children at home in 1928-29) who loved ceremonial affairs. It would be wrong to infer from this that Tu'untalumi only loved going to parties. He also loved preparing for them, and this preparation (for him as for all other senior men) included the manufacture of ceremonial spears, the preparation of graveposts, and the composition of songs and dances. In the long dull periods between trips outside his home district, he spent most of the days and many of the nights in the creation of these ceremonial necessities. He was not a full-time specialist in the sense that he made spears or posts to exchange with other men who had neither the time nor the skill—the rules of kinship required that every senior man make his own ceremonial spears and contract for his own posts. Tu'untalumi manufactured his graveposts to meet his own ritual obligations, but he took a more magnanimous view of those obligations than did most men. Put in our terms, we might say that he was wealthy enough (in the size of his household) to be generous with his own productions. One example of this attitude was his attendance at funerals that other men of equal kinship to the deceased did not find it necessary to attend; his frequent contribution of an extra gravepost to those provided by the chief mourners of the deceased was a similar gesture. "Tu'untalumi not only came to our mother's funeral, he also made a gravepost for it" was a very gratifying reflection for an obscure group of mourners to cherish among their memories, and of course it was acts of this sort that made the old man so well liked and admired. The economic point of the matter, however, is that only a man with as large a household as his could afford the gesture of giving away, in a situation where kinship obligations did not demand it, a gravepost that required about a week's full-time work.

It was, however, sad to observe that as an artistic producer Tu'untalumi, like many intellectuals in other cultures, tended to operate in too many media. His work as a composer of songs and dances was universally admired, but his graveposts, while appreciated, were not regarded as being as outstanding, technically speaking, as those of another old man, his crony Timalarua. In personality, Timalarua, a successful household head (eleven living wives, ten children at home), was quiet spoken, placid, and only mildly gregarious, and he is mainly of interest because in his leisure-time activity he paid but routine attention to song and dance compositions and concentrated rather single mindedly on making canoes, ceremonial spears, and graveposts. Fre-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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517 887 quently, on the banks of some creek or river in Tikiauila territory, a party wanting to cross would scout around and find a canoe hidden in the weeds. Everybody would use it to cross, and the question "Whose canoe is it?" would elicit the reply, "Oh, it's always there and everybody uses it who wishes to cross." But if the question were "Who made it in the first place and put it there?" the answer would be, "Probably Timalarua. He likes making canoes; he makes them all the time." He also liked making spears and posts, though he was not as generous with them as Tu'untalumi. When one of his posts appeared at a funeral, people would point it out admiringly saying, "Timalarua made that one" and the speaker would trace the lines and designs on it with his finger, using much the same gestures as an art critic in a modern gallery. When a post by Tu'untalumi was identified and admired, however, the admiration was for Tu'untalumi the generous person rather than Tu'untalumi the [554] artist. One was a wonderful craftsman, the other was a wonderful man. But acclaim given to the song and dance performances of the two men was just the reverse: the dances of Timalarua were adequate but not outstanding, those of Tu'untalumi were in a class by themselves.

Comparison of the activities of these two old men illustrates the impossibility of drawing any line, in the simpler cultures at least, between artistic production and technological production. The canoes and the posts manufactured by Timalarua and the posts manufactured and the new dances created by Tu'untalumi were all, so to speak, in the same category, as far as the Tiwi were concerned. The distinction we might make between the canoes as "useful" products and the posts and dances as ceremonial or artistic products never occurred to them. All were objects or products which only successful old men had the required skill and leisure to make. The fact that one old man liked to make canoes and leave them around for other people to use, and another old man liked to compose dances and perform his compositions widely for other people to enjoy, to them merely indicated individual taste and choice; it did not make the first a craftsman and the second an artist. This point has been overlooked in most of the theorizing about primitive art; perhaps a necessary first step in the development of primitive artists is for a society to be able to provide a few men with enough leisure time to be able to cultivate what might perhaps best be called hobbies, since a hobby can equally well be something "useful" to society, like canoe making, or something personally satisfying, like dancing or decorating graveposts.

[411] 531 556 The huge, heavy, painted spears made by these old Tiwi men were mainly used only for display, and even the oldest men were positive that this had always been the tradition. In fact, they seemed a little shocked at the implication that such beautiful and valuable objects could ever have been used for such mundane purposes as hunting or warfare. The cutting and painting of such spears took time and skill—more time than a gravepost—and no important man went to the smallest gathering without bearing on his shoulder at least half a dozen of these symbols of his importance. If on his way through the bush he sighted a kangaroo, he dropped his painted spears and stalked [224] the animal with an ordinary spear, or more probably left it to the young men in the party who carried only ordinary ones.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

291 observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission,
[797] automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for
177 the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst
[20] of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their oppo-
578 nents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark
834 aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi cere-
174 monies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We
291 think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were
535 needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households
511 enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

433 1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were econom-
595 ically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to
182 produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

[556] 5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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3

The Prestige and Influence System

TO BECOME a really big man, or even a minor figure among the elders, a Tiwi had to devote all his adult life to that goal. Careers were built up and influential positions gained not by executing spectacular coups at any one time, but by slow, devious maneuvering and dealing in influence throughout adulthood. Men in their early thirties invested their very small assets in the hope of large returns twenty years later, and if the anthropologist witnessed the initial investment he was not around to witness the final return; or if he witnessed the return he found it difficult to reconstruct all the relevant details of the initial investment. A man in 1928 bestowed his daughter in a certain direction because of some deal back in 1900, arranged by men many of whom were now dead. And the bestowal in 1928 was done in such a way as to bind the hands of men negotiating in 1960, some of whom were infants in 1928.[1] 557

The Tiwi influence and career patterns can best be compared to a sort of nonstop bridge game wherein the scores were never totaled up nor a new game ever started on a clean slate.[2] Whenever an observer came in, he always

[1] A typical illustration of this situation arose during the writing of this book. In 1928-29 Hart had observed Padimo beginning to acquire a number of bestowed wives. Being interested in the status of Padimo twenty-five years later, he included Padimo in a list of inquiries to Pilling. Pilling's reply: "Re Padimo. I am almost certain that he was the 'Paddy' who died leaving several widows, in February, 1953, about three months before I got to the Islands. The natives did not like to talk much about him while I was there (because of the taboo on dead men's names) and his widows were still being fought over. The fights over his widows did not end until the week I left (if they really did then)." Thus the deals which Hart saw in 1928-29 were having delayed repercussions when Pilling was there in 1953-54. 124 768 551 578

[2] We use bridge rather than poker as our analogy because nobody ever "went broke" in Tiwi influence competition and nobody ever "won the pot," because there was no pot to win. The scoring was always, so to speak, on a comparative basis and everybody, even the most unsuccessful man, had some score relative to his competitors.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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557 entered in the middle of the game and found the current hands being played with all the old scores back for at least two generations influencing the play of the present hands. The game never had a beginning or an end; every new player had to start in the middle and make the best of whatever assets he had by way of kinship, clanship, household membership, and help from older players. Similarly, any attempt to describe the operations involved or the "rules" of the game must perforce start in the middle.

The "game" was one of trying to win friends and increase prestige and influence over others. The "assets," in a tribe with such minimal material possessions as the Tiwi, were mostly intangible ones such as friendship, "help," goodwill, respect of others, control over others, importance, and influence. 557 562 Even in our culture such things are difficult to express in concrete or tangible symbols. The most concrete symbol of Tiwi success was the possession of surplus food, for this not only permitted its possessor to make gifts to others and throw large parties for which he picked up the check, but also gave him lots of leisure time to devote to social and political life. Since a man required a large number of women in his work force if he was to build up a surplus of food, in the final analysis it was control of women that was the most tangible index of power and influence. Women were the main currency of the influence struggle, the main "trumps" in the endless bridge game.

It should be noticed that we stress the value of women as women rather than as wives or bestowable daughters. To a smart Tiwi politician, wives or daughters were assets but so was his mother—if submissive to her son's wishes. So were his sisters—if amenable. A bachelor at the age of thirty who had several sisters was a lucky young man, especially if those sisters already had daughters to their current husbands. As successful old men used their infant daughters to gain influence and buy satellites, so young men used their mothers and their sisters—if they could.

Thus the psychological line between the attitude of a man toward a wife and his attitude toward a sister or a daughter was a very thin one. A Tiwi elder had many women related to him in some way—as wives, as daughters, as step-daughters, as sisters, as sisters' daughters, as wards, and as mother—and all of these were part of his assets or capital. The fact that he had sexual rights to the wives and not to the daughters or the sisters was only of minor relevance. What was of major relevance was that they were all women whom he could use—or try to use—as investment funds in his own career of influence seeking. The devious details of Tiwi prestige and influence operations are much easier to follow if one keeps in mind the crucial fact that the Tiwi men valued women as political capital available for investment in gaining the goodwill of [593] other men more than they were interested in them as sexual partners. Some of the more senile elders were quite vague about the young girls in their household; such an old man was sure only of the fact that a girl, by being in his household, was part of his capital. Which were his daughters and which were recently joined young wives was a question that had to be referred to the old wives who kept track of such academic details.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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Women were, however, a form of capital that possessed the power of talking back to the investors. As daughters or as wives they were quite thoroughly subordinate to the wishes of their fathers or husbands, and Tiwi wives were as frequently and as brutally beaten by their husbands as wives in any other savage society. But as mothers and as sisters the women were not coerced by their sons and their brothers. On the contrary, sons or brothers wishing to use their mothers or their sisters in their political schemes (typically when those mothers or sisters became or were about to become widows) could only do so with the active collaboration of the women concerned. Tough-minded young widows could drive a hard bargain with their brothers as to where they remarried, since each needed the other to make the remarriage acceptable to the tribe at large and to beat down the other competitors (the dead husbands' brothers, for example) who wished to control the remarriage of the widows. Young girls thus had no bargaining power but young widows had a good deal. Old mothers with influential senior sons were extremely powerful. Any affront to an old woman was an affront to her sons, and some of the strongest influence networks were alliances of several senior brothers, in which their old mother seemed to be the mastermind and the senior sons largely the enforcers of what the old mother and her middle-aged daughters (their sisters) had decided among themselves. 562 593 [587]

Thus, for women, as for men, age and political skill were the crucial factors in determining their position. Young girls were chattels and as such were passed around from husband to husband. But with increasing age, smart young women, especially in alliance with their smart young brothers, could control their own fate with some firmness, and if they and their brothers had a shrewd old mother (also with powerful senior brothers still alive) to advise them and support them, then the decisions of such a group as to where the girls remarried were very difficult decisions for anybody else to combat or oppose. Not as independent operators, but as behind-the-scenes allies of their sons and brothers, Tiwi mothers and sisters enjoyed much more essential freedom in their own careers as often-remarried widows than would appear at first sight in a culture which ostensibly treated all women as currency in the political careers of the men. No matter how males, both old and young, might connive, they were constantly aware that no remarriage of a widow could ever be arranged and made to stick unless the widow herself was agreeable. 562 888 553 [587]

In the limited space available, all we can offer are a few samples of how the influence game was played by a few selected individuals of various ages. Age was of great importance in Tiwi careers and therefore we select our samples from all the adult male age-groups. We have selected them all from the same band—the Malauila—so as to show as clearly as possible the interplay between one career and another for men of the same band. And finally we select men of the Malauila band for our examples because in 1928-29 it was a band little affected as yet by the outside influences—Catholic missionaries and Japanese pearl divers—which were beginning to modify Tiwi marriage customs among some of the other bands. 557 888 [177 797 121]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

162 [621] The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

561 [858 882] [591] Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

561 589 884 [582] [177] The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

561 884 557 [582] The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

159 554 [584] In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was still a bachelor and why Banana had acted so impulsively and thereby 159
gotten himself in the bad graces of the elders. The two men were the eldest 554
of four brothers without any full sisters and as such they were necessarily
handicapped in their career struggle. Elders seeking satellites or contempo- [557]
raries seeking allies looked askance at men without sisters, for such men could
have no sisters' daughters to use in the marriage-arrangements struggle.
The mother of Tiberun and Banana was dead, but even were she still alive, [582
few men would have been interested in marrying a widow whose only living 581]
children were sons. Widows without daughters and bachelors without sisters
rated very low in the scale of desirable assets sought either by elders or by
contemporaries.

Tiberun was thus the only bachelor in the 30-42 age group. Of the 169
remainder we select Teapot as an example of another man who failed to get 554
started. Teapot was at least 35, and about seven years previously he had "stolen" 626
a wife from an elder. This wife was no ancient and shop-worn widow like
the wife Banana had "stolen," but a young girl who had been betrothed in
due form to an elder by her father. How Teapot had managed to get away with
her is too complicated an incident to unravel here, and in any case it hadn't
done Teapot much good. After presenting Teapot with a baby boy the young
woman died, and Teapot, with a now six-year-old son, was more or less an
outcast among the Malauila. No elder wanted him as a satellite and none of
his contemporaries wanted him as an ally. His mother was dead and his only
sister was married to a Munupula elder. This sister in Munupi was his only
asset and one which a different man might have used as a means to better
himself. But Teapot, instead of using this small asset to get started on a
career, had chosen to defy the rules and "steal" an elder's bestowed wife.
"Stealing" an old widow was reprehensible conduct in the eyes of the elders;
stealing a young bestowed wife was unforgivable. Hence Teapot, since his
crime, had received no bestowal, had been able to marry no widow, and was
wanted by no one as an ally.

A complete contrast to these two unsuccessful men in their thirties was 159
provided by the case of Gitjara, who was about the same age as Tiberun. 557
Gitjara, it is true, had sisters, and that was always a help. Using his sisters 562
(already married and bearing children to an elder) as bait, Gitjara when he 584
was about 28 proposed an alliance to L. F. B., a rather feeble man about five
years older than himself, who was not doing very well in the influence race.
The gist of the proposal was that, since both their mothers were still alive and
each married to an old man who could not last much longer, Gitjara should
marry the ancient mother of L. F. B. when she became a widow, and L. F. B.
should marry Gitjara's mother when that old lady became a widow. Perhaps
the idea originated with the two old women rather than with either of the
young men. Since such arrangements were essentially plots or schemes, it is
impossible to determine who conceived them in the first place—old women
ambitious to aid their sons or young men ready to use their mothers as long-
term gambits to ultimately provide themselves with young wives. Mother-
exchange operations were probably first conceived at high-level strategy con-

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 [562] ferences in which smart mothers and dull mothers, smart sons and dull sons were all present, and the final plan emerged from consensus.

In this case the former husbands of the two old women both died conveniently soon and within about three years of each other and, according to plan, there came into existence a household of two men in their thirties each married to the elderly mother of the other. Gitjara and L. F. B. thus set up jointly the foundations of their households and began their careers as a joint enterprise.

Gitjara had two sisters, both married to White Man, an elder, and already the mothers of daughters to him. By marrying Gitjara's mother, L. F. B. automatically became the nominal father of these women, and in the event of White Man's death would have, as such, some say in where they remarried. But the right of the step-father to redispose widowed step-daughters was always disputed by the brothers (or even sons) of the step-daughters, provided those brothers (or sons) were old enough or influential enough for their wishes to be taken seriously. Thus we may say that in putting L. F. B. into position as his own step-father, Gitjara's main object had been to get a satellite or henchman of his own into the position of step-father of his sisters (the wives of White Man) so that when they became widows there would be no conflict between the wishes of their brother and the wishes of their step-father as to whom they should remarry. L. F. B. as step-father was, so to speak, a stooge for Gitjara the brother.

Conversely, L. F. B. had two sisters both married to Ki-in-kumi, the most powerful elder in Malau. By marrying the mother of L. F. B., Gitjara [606] became the step-father of two of Ki-in-kumi's wives, thus immediately (despite his youth) becoming technically the father-in-law of that powerful old man, and a man with some say in where those two wives of Ki-in-kumi would remarry on Ki-in-kumi's death. As step-father of such widows, Gitjara would have to make his wishes prevail as against the wishes of their brothers, but the only brother was L. F. B. and his vote was obviously in Gitjara's pocket.

By engineering this double shuffle of two elderly widows, each with daughters, Gitjara had launched his career as a marriage manipulator. Almost before it was concluded he became involved in another widow operation. We will omit the intricate details, but can say that he emerged from this with a second wife for himself, this one (naturally) also a widow but quite a young widow. This woman had already borne four sons and one daughter to her previous husband but was still young enough when Gitjara took her over in 1926 to bear him a son (her last) in 1927. In Tiwi terms the acquisition of this widow by Gitjara was a real achievement for the young man, not because of her comparative youth nor because of the son she bore him but because among the children by her previous marriage was a daughter aged about nine [554] at the time she remarried Gitjara. To become the step-father of such a young girl was a real asset for the young operator. Her dead father had bestowed this child on Summit, another of the same Malauila age group of 30-year-olds and hence one of Gitjara's rivals and competitors in the influence struggle.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

This created an intriguing situation since Summit, having had this child be- 159
stowed on him at her birth some nine years previously, had thus acquired a 557
bestowed wife at about age 27; Gitjara now 33 or so still had not received 584
a bestowal. By remarrying the mother of Summit's young bestowed wife, Gitjara had turned the tables on one of his chief competitors among his age group. He could not, of course, alter the bestowal; in five or six years' time the girl would take up residence with Summit. But as the step-father who renamed the girl and the head of the household in which she would live for the next five years, Gitjara was in an excellent position to make Summit enter into a deal or two with him. He could drag his feet as to the time of the delivery of the girl to Summit; he could drop hints that there was something irregular about the bestowal to Summit in the first place, and so on; but whatever form of pressure he chose to exert on Summit, the latter well knew that all Gitjara wanted was to be cut in on some of Summit's deals and to be included in the network of Summit's alliances. The next move was now clearly up to Summit.

If Summit wished the nine-year-old girl now in Gitjara's household to be transferred promptly and without argument, he would be well advised to give some consideration to Gitjara, perhaps even the promise of one of his still-to-be-born daughters either as a wife or as a ward. Although not necessary, it would be a politically wise gesture. If he did so, both men would be gambling in futures. Since Summit's young wife was now nine years old, it would be at least six or seven years before she could produce a daughter (if at all) and another fourteen or fifteen years before any such daughter (if she lived) would be old enough to join Gitjara's household either as a wife or ward. Hence, under any such arrangement between the two young men, Summit would be giving something to Gitjara but in such a way that the latter could not collect for at least twenty years and might never collect.

Anthropologists will note that such arrangements still conformed to 159
the patterns of cross-cousin marriage. Gitjara as *de jure* father delivers his 602
"daughter" to Summit and thus becomes technically Summit's mother's brother [582]
or wife's father. Twenty years later (if all goes well) Summit delivers his
daughter (by Gitjara's daughter) to Gitjara, thus becoming technically the
mother's brother or wife's father of Gitjara. Gitjara himself might marry this [584]
daughter of Summit by his own step-daughter or treat her as a ward given to
him by Summit and bestow her on some other man selected by himself; in the
latter case he would be acting as father to his step-daughter's daughter. There [614]
were no clan barriers to such an arrangement, since fathers had to belong to
clans different from those of their wives and of their daughters, step-daughters
and daughters' daughters.

There were, of course, alternative actions or "deals" open to Summit 159
and also to Gitjara, depending upon their plans in other directions. The 557
pattern described above, however, was extremely common in Tiwi marriage 584
arrangements, and often it was the reason why some very old man would receive some female infant as a wife: an agreement of this type had been made twenty or thirty years before, when the now senile old man was in his

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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159 557 584 thirties and when the mother of the baby he was now receiving was married to some man long since dead. The circumstances were certainly right for such an arrangement in the Gitjara-Summit case of 1928.

159 557 582 If we now pause and look at the marriage career of Gitjara at the point it had reached by the time he was 33, we can separate out three distinct types of operation in which this admirable young man had engaged. His first marriage, with L. F. B.'s elderly mother, had brought into existence a joint household of young men and elderly widows which not only was a very satisfactory housekeeping arrangement but also put Gitjara and his ally, L. F. B., in a position to exert some influence on all the subsequent remarriages of their respective sisters.

Gitjara's marriage a few years later to a second widow put him in a position to enter into marriage arrangements even more directly, since the second widow had a daughter promised to Summit but still too young to take up residence with him. By dragging his feet on the fulfilment of this promise, Gitjara could put pressure on Summit and extract from the latter some sort [584] of consideration to facilitate the delivery of the girl. Gitjara was thus well in the marriage-broker business before he had any children of his own and indeed before he had received any bestowal. This was the second type of operation for an up-and-coming young man, and it was one wherein a shrewd and aggressive operator would use the daughters of other men (that is, of a widow's previous husbands) in such a way as to attach all sorts of codicils and contingent interests and second mortgages to the original bestowal of those daughters, many of these collectable in full only in the far distant future, after all prior interests had been satisfied or had lapsed.

The third type of operation engaged in by Gitjara was, of course, to try and attract bestowed wives of his own. His vigorous operations, by age 33, in the widow remarriage field, were not only ends in themselves but also were the type of operation that attracted the approval of older men with daughters to bestow. Hence it is not surprising to find that by 1929 Gitjara, married to the two widows already mentioned, had received two bestowals. The older of these was a girl of ten rebestowed on Gitjara in 1927 when the man died upon whom she had been bestowed at birth. The second was a baby born in 1927 whose father was Tomitari of the Rangwila. (The choice of Gitjara as a son-in-law by Tomitari was so interesting that we shall discuss it later in this chapter.) Both these bestowals were made *after* Gitjara had engineered his remarriage of the two widows and as far as kinship was concerned had no connection whatever with these widows or their close relatives. We conclude, therefore, that widow remarriage could be used by alert and aggressive men in their early thirties for three purposes: (1) to establish households and obtain elderly housekeepers; (2) to establish low-priority rights in the daughters of the widows' previous husbands; and (3) to attract attention to themselves as smart operators and gain the attention and approval of older men. As an outgrowth of the third purpose, they were likely to attract bestowals. Hence we may say that among the Tiwi the best road to obtaining a [587] young wife or several young wives was for a young man to be first successful

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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in the manipulation of the remarriages of elderly widows, who were always in large supply. If a man showed skill and know-how in his early thirties among the widows, then in his late thirties and early forties young wives would be bestowed upon him in abundance. Such a lesson could not have a better exemplar than Gitjara. By age 33 he had done so well among the widows that his first *young* wife would be joining his household by the time he was thirty-eight or thirty-nine, and another was already a year old. Clearly he was a young man of promise and one to be watched—and cultivated. 159 557 582 587

Summit, a man slightly older than Gitjara, must be dealt with very briefly, since the reasons for his success would take us too far afield. In 1929 he had a list of six wives, the only resident one being an elderly widow. The other five were bestowals and the eldest of these was the girl of ten whom we have already mentioned as being in the household of her step-father, Gitjara. Two more, younger than the ten-year-old, were in the household of Padimo (see below) and the remaining two were in the household of one of the elders of the Rangwila band. Summit, in Tiwi reckoning, was a Rangwila himself and had only moved to Malau a few years before. Some four years previously he had been a young Rangwila with no less than five bestowed child-wives. Three of these had been given him by an elder in Malau, two by an elder of his own band. The Malauila girls were older than the two Rangwila girls and his Malauila father-in-law was older than his Rangwila father-in-law. Summit therefore moved north to supervise personally his interests in Malau. He had, however, been out-maneuvered when the Malauila father-in-law died, since Gitjara had then been able to remarry the mother of Summit's eldest child-wife and Padimo had been able to remarry the mother of the other two little girls. Having thus moved to Malau to be near to and a satellite of his elderly Malauila father-in-law, Summit now found himself the technical son-in-law of two young men of his own age group who were among his keen competitors in the influence struggle. To ensure that his three promised Malauila child-wives joined his household when old enough, he now needed to make some arrangements with Gitjara and Padimo. Summit had gotten his bestowals rather early and rather easily but he still had the problem of nailing them down. 159 584 [557 587]

While thus engaged in acquiring five bestowed young wives and trying to promote their safe delivery when ready, Summit had married a widow not much more than forty years old but childless by her two previous husbands.[8] Such a widow at least provided him with a food-getter and housekeeper and enabled him to establish a household into which his five bestowed wives would enter as they successively reached the proper age. Thus Summit's household in 1929 consisted only of himself and his *palimaringa* wife. Within the next fifteen years it would be increased by the addition of at least five young wives, 159 587 592 592 159

[8] Such women who had reached middle age without surviving children were called by a special term, *palimaringa*, in Tiwi and the term referred to childlessness rather than barrenness. Summit's widow, for example, had borne two children, both of whom had died in infancy, and she was classified as a *palimaringa*. When a *palimaringa* became very, very old indeed, the word changed to *timaringa*. [842]

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 plus any new bestowals, plus any further widows Summit might find it to his interest (and power) to remarry.

159 Padimo, who thus enters our story as one of Summit's rivals and one of his nominal fathers-in-law, was also a Rangwila who had moved to Malau
584 at the call of an elderly father-in-law. He presents another pattern of Tiwi
557 upward mobility and one that was statistically more frequent than the rather tortuous road followed by men like Gitjara. Padimo had been chosen as a nephew worth supporting by old Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest of the Malauila. The earliest proof of Ki-in-kumi's patronage of Padimo had come in 1925-26 when an old man died, leaving eight widows of very diverse ages. Three of these "widows," aged respectively 17, 13, and 9 at the time of the death of their first husband, were daughters of Ki-in-kumi. Being so young and their brothers being equally young, their father's right to arrange their remarriage was unchallenged and Ki-in-kumi reassigned[4] them as wives to young Padimo, then aged about thirty-three. The eldest of the three girls had already borne two female children to the dead man, these being the two girl babies mentioned above as having been promised to Summit.

As well as the three young widows, Padimo had also obtained at the same redistribution the oldest and most haggish of the dead man's eight wives. It was at the same redistribution that Gitjara had obtained his second widow (the mother of the girl promised to Summit). Thus through Ki-in-kumi's influence, Padimo had obtained four "widows" of the eight left by the man who died in 1925-26; Gitjara, working without a powerful patron, had been lucky to obtain one.

159 Ki-in-kumi had subsequently followed up this initial selection of Padimo
595 as a favored sister's son by giving further daughters to him as they were born. Consequently, by 1929 Padimo's wife list consisted of the following:

[604]
A. One extremely ancient widow.
B. One wife aged about 20, daughter of Ki-in-kumi, mother already of two daughters by a previous husband who, before his death, bestowed these daughters on Summit.
C. One wife aged about 17, daughter of Ki-in-kumi; had just had her first child (who lived only a week); had previously been bestowed on the dead husband of wife B, but was too young to join his household before he died.
D. Three more girls, daughters of Ki-in-kumi, the eldest about 12 and hence old enough to have been bestowed on the same previous husband as wives B and C; the other two aged 2 and 1 and hence born since his death. All three of these were still resident in their father's household.

[584 [4] It is difficult to decide whether such reassignments of female children by their father, on the death of the man to whom he had first betrothed them, should be called
587 "rebestowals" or "remarriages." We prefer the first word since such "child-widows" were usually reassigned by their fathers (if still alive) without any challenge to his rights to do so. They therefore do not differ from original bestowals at birth except for the awkward semantic fact that the man to whom such a "child-wife" was reassigned was technically her second husband.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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With a lineup such as this by the time he was thirty-six, Padimo was clearly in process of going places in Tiwi society. The only weakness one could see in his position was that it all derived from the favor of one patron, and no old man with daughters, other than Ki-in-kumi, had seen fit to bestow a girl upon him. It should be noted that in 1929, though Padimo had two young wives resident in his household, he still had no children of his own. His first child, born that year, lived only a few days. The only children in residence were the two girls promised to Summit by the previous husband of their mother. Their bestowal on Summit was a matter beyond Padimo's control though he could use them to force some concessions from Summit just as Gitjara could with the girl in his household. But as Padimo's young wives began to bear daughters of his own, his bestowal of them would be less encumbered by the commitments of any predecessor. While Ki-in-kumi lived, Padimo would have to consider his obligations to that old man and at least consult with Ki-in-kumi as to how he should bestow his female children, since any such children would be the daughters' daughters of the old man. Nor would the death of Ki-in-kumi leave Padimo entirely free to bestow his own daughters anywhere he wished. Many of the girls already given to him as wives by Ki-in-kumi had mothers who possibly, and brothers who certainly, would outlive Ki-in-kumi. On the old man's death, all of his numerous wives would remarry—some of the older ones probably to ambitious younger men—and these new husbands of the widows of Ki-in-kumi would begin interfering with and trying to alter the arrangements made for his daughters by the old man during his lifetime. Thus Padimo would find himself stuck with a group of new and antagonistic fathers-in-law in place of the old, indulgent father-in-law who had been responsible for his success so far. Padimo's problem was basically how to hold, after Ki-in-kumi's death, the favored position he had gained during the old man's lifetime through the old man's favor.

In the meantime, with Ki-in-kumi still alive and powerful, Padimo had the biggest and fastest expanding household among the Malauila men in their thirties. The only remaining man in this age group was Boya who was the oldest of them all, being at least 42 years old in 1928. As might be expected, his career illustrates some new facets of the Tiwi influence struggle.

Structurally the position of Boya was simple but politically it was complex. His father had been a henchman and satellite of Ki-in-kumi in the early career of that old operator and roughly had had somewhat the same relationship to the young Ki-in-kumi as L. F. B. had to Gitjara. Boya's father, the satellite, left only two widows (an indication of his mediocrity) and these two widows had been remarried by Ki-in-kumi, the patron. One of these widows was Boya's mother, and Boya was too young at the time to have any say in where his mother remarried. Ki-in-kumi's interest in marrying Boya's mother was not of course because he thus acquired Boya as a step-son, but because he acquired Boya's sisters as step-daughters. Step-sons were liabilities which new husbands had to take over in order to get rights in the real assets —the step-daughters.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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159 Some years later, when Boya had reached a reasonable age like 30,
593 Ki-in-kumi had arranged for him to marry a very ancient and childless widow
(*palimaringa*) more than twenty years older than himself. This was all that
[587] Ki-in-kumi considered he needed to do for his step-son, and in Tiwi terms
it was almost a gesture of contempt and an open indication that Ki-in-kumi, by
providing him with an old woman who was childless but could cook, was not
interested in helping Boya toward a career. Since the joining up of Boya to
[768] the crone took place shortly after the death of Boya's mother, who had lived
with her sons in Ki-in-kumi's household, Ki-in-kumi by producing the old
widow for Boya was telling him in effect to get out and start his own household
now that his mother was dead.

159 In 1928 we found Boya aged about 42 married to the crone of 65.
584 But he, she, and Boya's younger brother of 24 were still living in Ki-in-kumi's
593 household. Ki-in-kumi's detestation of him was notorious and yet Boya had by
now no less than four young bestowed child-wives growing up elsewhere. No
[592] one of these bestowals had come from Malau but were bestowals from different
fathers of baby girls in other bands. At first sight this presented a curious
situation. Within his own band Boya appeared a complete failure, suffering
[554] so severely from Ki-in-kumi's hostility that he had received no bestowals and
at age 42 did not even have a separate household of his own. But how could
this judgment be squared with the four bestowals from elders of other bands?
Clearly none of the causes of success so far analyzed fitted the case of Boya.

159 Further research into who lived with whom as distinct from who was
591 married to whom revealed that not only was "the household" of Boya, his
592 elderly wife, and his younger brother an integral part of the Ki-in-kumi
"establishment," but also that Padimo with his "household" was part of that
establishment. Padimo, like Boya, had one elderly wife but he also had five
bestowed wives, all daughters of Ki-in-kumi. We said above that the two eldest
of these five girls being now aged 20 and 17 respectively were in residence
with their husband, while the three youngest, not having reached puberty,
were still "with their father." Actual observation showed that this was an
academic distinction, since the households of Padimo, the son-in-law, and Ki-in-
kumi, the father-in-law, were parts of the same establishment. When one of
Ki-in-kumi's daughters bestowed on Padimo became old enough to "leave her
father and join her husband," she did not have to move her residence or even
change her daily work routines. She merely sat at night around the campfire
of her older sisters (Padimo's wives) instead of around the campfire of her
younger sisters (Ki-in-kumi's daughters). She remained part of the same es-
tablishment.

Padimo, it will be remembered, was the young man whom Ki-in-kumi
had attracted from Rangu to Malau by liberally bestowing him with child-
wives. Padimo had thus moved into the northern band and by 1928 had
moved right into Ki-in-kumi's camp, where he functioned as a sort of executive
officer and heir apparent to the old man. In the same camp, though in a very
different capacity, was Boya, the 42-year-old despised step-son. Many roads thus
512 led to Ki-in-kumi's household, but before discussing the large establishment

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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of that wealthy elder, we will first summarize, in Table I, the marital conditions of the eight young men we have been discussing. 592

TABLE I
THE MALAUILA YOUNG MEN IN 1928-29

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Name	Age	Resident Old Wives (Ex-widows)	Resident Young Wives (Bestowals)	Promised Wives (Under 14)	Own Children
Tiberun	33	0	0	0	0
Banana	28	1	0	0	0
Teapot	35	0[a]	0	0	1
Gitjara	33	2	0	2	1
L. F. B.	38	1	0	1	0
Summit	36	1	0	5	0
Padimo	36	1	2	3	0[b]
Boya	42	1	0	4	0

[a] Teapot's "stolen" wife was dead.
[b] Padimo's first child, born in 1929, lived only a few days.

This table presents a summary of many of our earlier attempts at generalization. The only Malauila under the age of 43 who had a bestowed young wife old enough to live with him was Padimo, who was thus exceptionally lucky. Leaving out young Banana, five of the seven men between the ages of 30 and 42 had young females promised to them, but these were mostly babies or children who would not come into residence for several years. Six of the seven had married widows, mostly elderly widows, well in advance of the arrival of young wives and before any father had bestowed a daughter on them. Finally, and a point not made before, men of this age group rarely had any children of their own. The only entries in the last column of Table I are the irregularly born son of Teapot; Padimo's first daughter who died virtually at birth; and the 1-year-old son of Gitjara who was the last child born to his second ex-widow. Tiwi men rarely had young wives until they were around forty; they even more rarely had any children of their own before that age. Padimo's dead baby and Gitjara's 1-year-old son were exceptional; the zeros in the last column against the names of Boya (42), L. F. B. (38), and Summit (36) represent the normal situation for Tiwi men of such ages. 561 582

In terms of success (as measured by bestowals) Padimo and Summit (largely through the patronage of elders) and Boya and Gitjara (largely through their own operations) were the coming young men among the Malauila. Of the others, L. F. B. was approaching forty with few assets and no influence, and the other three, Tiberun, Banana, and Teapot, had not even got started in the influence race. 554 584

A Very Successful Elder: Ki-in-kumi

The most influential man in Malau and the head of the biggest household was Ki-in-kumi. Since he had been born around 1863-64 and had been 159 559

159 a "young operator" somewhat before 1900, the deals by which he got his
557 career launched were difficult to reconstruct. The results of them, plus the fact that he lived long enough to draw full dividends from them, gave him by
159 1928-29 a wife-list of twenty-one. These had been accumulated as follows:
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When around 30 years old he remarried two elderly widows and a year or two later received his first bestowal. Thus by age 33 he had three wives. On that foundation he went ahead thus:

		Total
At age 33		
Had two widows and one bestowed wife		3
Between age 33 and age 43		
Remarried two more widows and had three more bestowed wives join him	+5	8
Between age 43 and age 53		
Three more bestowed wives came into residence	+3	11
(During these twenty years at least five bestowed wives died in infancy or childhood)	+5	16
Between age 53 and age 65		
Two more bestowed wives joined him and he married 2 more widows (one the mother of Boya)	+4	20
Now at age 66 there is still one more bestowed wife, aged about 9, in her father's household	+1	21

Thus his list of twenty-one wives was made up of six elderly widows and fifteen bestowed or rebestowed young wives.

By 1928-29 five of his bestowed wives had died before puberty and one was still with her father. Three of his six widows were dead. Subtracting these nine women, we find that his current household contained twelve resident and active wives: the oldest about sixty, two in their fifties, four in their forties or thirties, three in their twenties, and the two youngest around seventeen or eighteen years of age. Almost all of them had borne children since joining his household, but the death rate had been high among Ki-in-kumi's children and from all of his wives he had only eight living children of whom six were girls. Five of these six daughters he had bestowed or rebestowed on Padimo (see above) and the sixth on a middle-aged Rangwila. His oldest living daughter was the girl of 20 married to Padimo. His oldest living son was a boy of 18, despite the fact that Ki-in-kumi had been "a married man" for over thirty-five years. This was a situation which many Tiwi elders found themselves
159 in at the close of long and successful lives. With numerous wives, numerous
592 step-sons, large households to be managed, and large estates to be liquidated after their deaths, their oldest real sons (as distinct from step-sons) were still boys or youths and as such quite unsuitable as executive assistants while the old man lived or as heirs or executors after the old man died. Quite apart
[882] from kinship considerations, the Tiwi emphasis on age and seniority made it
888 impossible for Ki-in-kumi to utilize in any capacity his 18-year-old son. A youth of that age was a nonentity, whoever his father.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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TABLE II
KI-IN-KUMI'S ESTABLISHMENT
(Ages in brackets)

		Males	Females
Head (Ki-in-kumi	66)	1	0
Oldest step-son (Boya	42)	1	0
Sister's son (Padimo	36)	1	0
Old wives (of all three adult men)		0	5
Young wives (including Padimo's 2)		0	11
Young males (sons and step-sons)		8	0
Young females (daughters and step-daughters)		0	5
	Totals	11	21

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Confronted by this situation, Ki-in-kumi in his advancing years had summoned Padimo, a sister's son in his early thirties, to come from Ranga and become his chief lieutenant. The youth of his own son had been a factor in his selection of Padimo. The presence in his camp of an older step-son, Boya, had been another factor. Boya, the step-son, was more than twenty years older than the son, and at least six years older than Padimo, the chosen instrument. Padimo, as we have seen, moved right in, fused his own small household with Ki-in-kumi's large one, and became Ki-in-kumi's Man Friday. Boya, the step-son, though married to a widow, refused to move out. Thus, among other things, we have to distinguish between Ki-in-kumi's household of twelve resident wives enumerated above, and Ki-in-kumi's establishment which contained Padimo, Boya, and the various people attached by marriage or kinship to them. Padimo had an old wife and two young wives (daughters of Ki-in-kumi). Boya had an old wife and a younger brother. There were a number of younger step-children of both sexes also resident with Ki-in-kumi. The full size and make-up of his establishment is given in Table II.

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The Establishments of Malau

There were, besides Ki-in-kumi, six other elders of the Malauila band. Two of these, the brothers Enquirio and Merapanui, were well over sixty and deserve, both by age and by success, to be labeled senior elders. The remaining four ranged in age from about 45 to nearly 60 and since none of them were particularly successful we call them the junior elders. In Table III we have listed the seven "establishments" in which lived all the members of the band. We mean by an establishment a food-production and food-consumption unit. Ki-in-kumi's establishment contained three married men—himself, Boya, and Padimo—and therefore contained three households. Economically it was one establishment, since the sixteen wives it contained worked

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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162 as a team and the food they produced was consumed by the thirty-two total
592 members of the establishment. For comparative purposes in Table III we list
621 Ki-in-kumi's establishment as Unit I and give the personnel breakdown of the other six establishments that made up the total population of Malau. Unit II is the joint enterprise maintained by the other two senior elders, the brothers Enquirio and Merapanui. To this we have added the pathetic and ostracized Teapot and his motherless son, since when they ate at all they ate as hangers-on of the Enquirio-Merapanui menage. Unit III is the establishment jointly maintained by the brothers White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua. Since the oldest wife of Ku-nai-u-ua was Summit's mother, that young man, together with the elderly ex-widow who was so far his only resident wife, lived in this establishment. Units IV and V present no difficulty; they are the small households of the other two junior elders Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai respectively. Unit VI is the joint enterprise of Gitjara and L. F. B., containing largely old ladies and young men. Unit VII is the remarkable menage that had gathered round the elderly widow whom young Banana had illegally "married." To this couple

TABLE III
THE FOOD PRODUCTION UNITS OF MALAU

Unit	Married Males	Unmarried Males[a]	Old Wives[b]	Young Wives	Girls Under 14	Total Persons
I	3	8	5	11	5	32
II	3	9	1	7	11	31
III	3	2	2	3	5	15
IV	1	5	0	1	1	8
V	1	2	0	1	2	6
VI	2	5	3	0	1	11
VII	1?	4	1	0	0	6
Total	14	35	12	23	25	109

[a] Unmarried males include all males from male infants to men around 30, or more.
[b] The division between old wives and young wives is arbitrary. Several of the young wives were 40, others only 14 or 15.
? The question mark in Unit VII refers to the difficulty of deciding whether Banana should be classified as married.

had attached themselves Tiberun (Banana's unmarried older brother), two younger brothers, and another male orphan who had apparently moved in
736 for want of some better place to eat. The Banana menage thus had somewhat the appearance of a case of economic polyandry and somewhat the look of a fraternity house with an elderly housemother in residence. We include it as Unit VII since by so doing we are able to include in Table III all the hundred and nine people who made up the Malauila band in 1928-29 and allocate all of them to the economic units in which they functioned as food producers and food consumers.

The data in Table III merit close study. These seven establishments illustrate in capsule form several of the more significant emphases in Tiwi career patterns; indeed each might be said to illustrate some time point in the life careers of adult men and/or some degree of success or lack of success in becoming an influential man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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The Politics of Widow Remarriage

Ki-in-kumi's large establishment was the sort of set-up that every Tiwi sought to achieve but few accomplished. An establishment such as his meant wealth, power, prestige, and influence for its head, and, in Malau, Ki-in-kumi was the only man with such a household. With eleven males, many of them food producing; sixteen women, all of them food producing; and several of the girls under fourteen able to assist the older women, the amount of food this unit could collect in a day provided an ample food surplus for the establishment. A man whose household was a surplus food producer was a successful man. Moreover, since the large work force that produced the food surplus contained numerous young wives who (usually) could be relied upon also to produce numerous female babies, he was doubly blessed with both the requisites—surplus food and surplus daughters—necessary to increase his influence and make more people beholden to him or dependent on him. Of the thirty-five married women in Malau, sixteen, or over 45 percent, were in this one establishment. 162 554 592 [511]

By comparison, the other old men of Malau were less successful.[8] Through pooling their work forces, Enquirio and Merapanui had achieved an establishment (Unit II) almost as big as that of Ki-in-kumi, and probably its members ate almost as well as the members of his, but their effort was a shared effort and their influence and prestige had to be divided between them. They had been lucky with daughters but, divided between the two fathers, the eleven daughters in their establishment were less impressive than Ki-in-kumi's eight, and the total of seven young wives between them was quite overshadowed by Ki-in-kumi's nine. The two old brothers were successful men and headed a successful operation, but their prestige and success must be rated at least one whole degree below that of Ki-in-kumi. [511]

Another pair of elderly brothers, White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua, had also joined forces (Unit III), but the results can be judged as only fair. They were at least the best off of their age group, the 45- to 55-year-olds, but the competition in that age group was weak, as can be seen by comparison of their establishment with Units IV and V, the households of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai. Perhaps the best indication of the respective success in life of the seven oldest men is that given in the column of Table III headed "young wives." Of the twenty-three such women in the band, eighteen were in the establishments[9] of the three oldest men (Units I and II); the next five men in age shared the remaining five (Units III, IV, and V).

It might be thought that the small establishments of the unsuccessful junior elders like White Man, Ku-nai-u-ua, Pingirimini, and Tipiperna-gerai could be expected to increase sharply in size and these men to grow in relative prestige and influence when death removed the three old men at the heads 554

[8] It will be noticed that as we move into the older group of men we have to use their native names, since most of them had no "whiteman" names. [177]

[9] Two of these eighteen were of course actually married to Padimo, but still part of the establishment of their father, Ki-in-kumi, since Padimo's wives all lived with Ki-in-kumi's wives. [551]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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554 of Units I and II and made their wives available for redistribution. The working of the Tiwi system made this possibility unlikely. Unsuccessful junior elders could not expect to step into the shoes of successful senior elders merely by [888] outliving them; nor could one rise to power in the gerontocratic system [555] merely by living past fifty-five. What was necessary was age *plus* ability, and the time to demonstrate the ability was in one's thirties. If it was not demonstrated and recognized by then, a man could not forge ahead in his middle forties and early fifties, for by then it was too late. This fact gave a certain cyclical quality to the transfer of influence in Tiwi. The influence of successful 557 senior elders, to the extent that such an intangible thing was transferable at 587 all, tended to skip a decade and bypass the men currently in the junior elder category in favor of the men in the current "young operator" category. Since Ki-in-kumi was already quite old, there was in 1929 a great deal of political maneuvering going on in Malau and elsewhere in anticipation of his death, and it was clear that the people most likely to profit by his death and the redistribution of his twelve resident wives (one-third of all resident wives in [561] the band) were the men aged from thirty-two to forty-two such as Padimo, Boya, Summit, and Gitjara, all of whom were jockeying for position to take advantage of the death of any old man, especially such a wealthy elder as Ki-in-kumi. Some of the widows would undoubtedly remarry into other bands, but these younger Malauila, living with or near the old man's establishment, were already taking advantage of their strategic location to make some preliminary deals and marriage arrangements for the old man's widows even before his death. Neither Padimo, as Ki-in-kumi's son-in-law, nor Boya, as his nominal "son," could themselves marry any of the widows, but as resident members of his establishment and the only two men so situated, each was in an excellent spot to act as an honest broker in the disposal of Ki-in-kumi's large estate. Anybody interested in obtaining a widow or two at the death of Ki-in-kumi was well advised to have a few quiet words with either Padimo or Boya well ahead of time. Both of them had wives who lived and worked every day alongside Ki-in-kumi's womenfolk and thus they each had ideal communication systems to the women's side of the band. This was why they had held off setting up their own separate establishments though they were both married men. Neither were "heirs" of Ki-in-kumi in any strict Western use of that word, but it was obvious that it was their careers that would be promoted and their spheres of influence that would be enhanced by the death of Ki-in-kumi. The junior elders, all approaching or past the age of fifty with only small establishments and small spheres of influence, were being bypassed in the transfer of the old man's assets.

Every Tiwi anxious to obtain a Ki-in-kumi widow recognized the strategic positions of Padimo and Boya; the problem was to decide which broker to retain, since the positions of the two men in relation to Ki-in-kumi were so different. For the past four or five years Padimo had been the right-hand man and trusted lieutenant and undoubtedly it was he upon whom Ki-in-kumi was relying to carry out his own wishes about the distribution of his widows. We said earlier that old men found it difficult to control the remarriage of their

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

widows with the same unchallenged authority with which they bestowed their daughters. Nevertheless they tried hard in many cases to do so. Ki-in-kumi was one who tried hard to make the decisions for his widows, by selecting Padimo as his trusted executor. If Padimo faithfully carried out the old man's wishes after he died, then the widows were not likely to come on the open market; they would be redistributed in accordance with the terms of Ki-in-kumi's will (in both senses of the word "will").

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Though, of course, Padimo might prove to be a dishonest executor of the estate, there was a safeguard provided in that the new husbands whom Ki-in-kumi had selected for his wives were all aware of his wishes and hence if Padimo tried to depart from those wishes the cheated heirs would bring charges of double dealing and broken promises against him. But regardless of Padimo's honesty after the death, his position as Ki-in-kumi's trusted lieutenant clearly made him an unsuitable agent before the death for those numerous men who wanted some of Ki-in-kumi's future widows and who had not seen any indication that Ki-in-kumi had included them among his beneficiaries. The obvious young man for such men to use as their go-between and agent was Boya. Ki-in-kumi was hostile to him and had given him nothing willingly. Boya's presence in the old man's establishment was based on the nominal tie of Ki-in-kumi being the last husband of his mother to rename him before she died. Viewed thus, the two young men in Ki-in-kumi's household can be said to have become agents for two different networks of intrigue. Padimo was the manager and agent for all the men, including Ki-in-kumi himself, who wanted to perpetuate and continue the existing alliances and arrangements that Ki-in-kumi had built or helped to build during his long and successful career; Boya was the natural agent for all the men who, being outside that set of alliances, had nothing to gain from Ki-in-kumi's death unless his death dissolved the network of alliances and arrangements of which Ki-in-kumi had been the main architect. Padimo's responsibility was necessarily a sort of holding-together and preserving operation as the executor of an existing estate; Boya's clients were men hoping for fragmentation and subdivision not only of Ki-in-kumi's widows but also of the alliances and deals of which the widows were a part.

It is incidentally amusing, and also indicative of how the ever-present kinship ties affected all such deals and redeals, to note that if some of Boya's clients succeeded in grabbing off some of Ki-in-kumi's widows—despite the opposition, before his death, of Ki-in-kumi and the presumed opposition, after the death, of Padimo the executor—they were very liable thus to become automatically fathers-in-law of Padimo, since several of Ki-in-kumi's wives already had daughters who were bestowed on Padimo.

The question then of which agent was employed by the numerous men yearning to acquire one or more of Ki-in-kumi's widows was fairly well settled by the respective roles which the two young men occupied in the household. Men already well inside the Ki-in-kumi-centered alliances were relying on Padimo; men outside those alliances were relying on Boya to engineer a field situation and a more open market. In choosing an agent in this as in any other "deal," there was also the question of fee. Neither Padimo nor Boya

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

557 would become involved or make any soundings among the widows unless there
587 was something in it for them. Hence the client had to find out whether a promise of general goodwill and friendship was all that Boya (or Padimo) would ask in return for his services or whether the price would be much
[584] higher—perhaps as high as the bestowal of the client's next baby daughter. It was in such ways that widow-remarriage arrangements and infant bestowals were intertwined; a much-delayed bestowal to an apparently unrelated individual would be the ultimate pay-off to the broker or agent who had engineered a widow remarriage for the bestower years before.

[561] This role of agent in the disposal of a dead man's widows was a type of operation best suited to men in the first stages of their own married lives —that is, to men in their middle thirties or very early forties who had perhaps married their first or second widows and who had as yet no young wives of their own in residence. Having no young wives to guard, they were able to get around easily on diplomatic missions and they had their own listening posts inside the world of women in the person of their own mothers (if still alive) and in the elderly widows whom they themselves had married. The ambitious young brokers were tipped off by their mothers and elderly wives as to how the young wives wished to be distributed and what the competing young brokers were trying to arrange. Thus when a wealthy old man like Ki-in-kumi died, the redistribution of his wives through remarriage was a matter that had been decided beforehand by an extraordinary complex tangle of semisecret arrangements and deals and promises, but the people most influential in arranging the redistribution were the young brokers who usually got few, if any, of the young widows for themselves but who collected their rewards in reputation, influence, alliances, and future bestowals from the men for whom they had acted as agents.

[768] Thus the death of Ki-in-kumi or of any other old man with many wives tended to disperse the wives all over the tribe, with only one or two, or at most three, going to any one new husband. A large estate was almost always fragmented by the death of the old man who had built it up, and any one of his contemporaries was able to take over only a very small fraction of it at best. The levirate and sororate principles, though present, worked very feebly. The men who benefited most—not immediately, but eventually—were the young operators.[7] In such a manner Padimo and Boya were sure to be the long-term beneficiaries of Ki-in-kumi's death though neither of them could remarry any of his widows. The real heirs of the wealthy old men of sixty and over were the young men who happened to be between thirty-two and forty-
554 two when those old men got near to death. The men between forty-five and
557 fifty-five whose brokerage business ten years earlier had not been very skillfully
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[7] At least some of the so-called "stolen" or disputed wives were widows who had insisted on marrying the younger agent instead of the older client, which put the young broker in the embarrassing position of saying to his client, "I cannot make delivery of the widow I acquired on your account; she insists on marrying me instead." Such an incident did not do his agency business much good but tended rather to frighten off clients.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

handled, or who happened to be at the brokering age when no big households were being liquidated, found themselves in the position that Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai occupied in 1928-29. We know they had not been successful dealers in their thirties because we found them around the age of fifty with only one resident wife each and relatively few bestowals in prospect. Their earlier dealings in widows had not laid the right foundations for successful careers as elders. Even before he was forty, Padimo had five or six bestowed wives either in residence or in prospect, and Boya, not much over forty, had several already promised. The death of Ki-in-kumi in the near future would bring both of them more reputation and ultimately more bestowals in return for their skill (if they showed it) in the disposition of the estate. The inferiority of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai to these younger men in the marriage and influence struggle was already apparent and would be even more accentuated by Ki-in-kumi's death. 554 557 587

The Politics of Bestowal

The above discussion of how younger men were indirectly benefited by the deaths or impending deaths of wealthy older men does not pretend to give an exhaustive list of all the considerations that went into the reallocation of a dead man's widows. We built our analysis around those factors which were paramount in the case of Ki-in-kumi's household. Other cases were different to the extent that there were real adult sons involved in them rather than a nominal "son" like Boya, or because in them the old man had not chosen a clear-cut executor as Ki-in-kumi had chosen Padimo, or because an old man had surviving brothers close to him in age and alliance who would emphasize the levirate principle and seek to have it followed in the relocation of their dead brother's widows. The few points we are seeking to emphasize among the many that might be emphasized in any exhaustive treatment of Tiwi widow remarriage are: 1) that widow remarriage was a very flexible area in which the ultimate disposition of the widows was decided by the manipulations and wishes of a wide range of individuals including both relatives and nonrelatives. The dead man himself; the fathers of the wives, if still alive; the brothers of the widows, if adults; the widows themselves, if strong minded; the executors of the dead man, if clearly nominated; and the numerous dealers and brokers on behalf of remote clients or even on their own account—all tried to make their own wishes prevail. The result was that no two cases were ever alike, but on balance 2) it was younger men rather than older men who were most likely to enhance their reputations and increase their assets in the long run as the results of these widow redeals, even though in the short run it was the older men who remarried most of the widows, especially the younger widows. 587 [561]

We have briefly discussed what we have labeled the politics of widow remarriage before discussing the politics of infant bestowal, although logically it might appear that infant bestowal should be taken up first. We have fol- 584 163

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

584 lowed this order because, in Tiwi life, infant bestowal was reserved for fathers,
163 and a Tiwi was at least a middle-aged man before he became a father at all. Before he could have a daughter to bestow, he had to be the father of one; and before he could become a father, he had to have a baby girl bestowed upon him and wait for her to grow up to child-bearing age. The much-married Ki-in-kumi did not have his first actual daughter (as distinct from wives' daughters begotten by previous husbands) until he was forty-five, and Enquirio was closer to fifty than to forty when his first real daughter was born. We are inclined to call such daughters free or unencumbered daughters since the step-daughters brought into a man's household by widows, even young widows, were already bestowed by act of the widows' previous husbands and the new husband's control over their marriage was therefore encumbered by the dispositions made by his predecessors.

Thus most men did not have and could not expect to have any free or
584 unencumbered daughters to bestow until they were well into their forties. By that time a man was a prisoner of his past. When at last he had free daughters he was no longer a free man but a junior elder with a mass of obligations both to older men and to younger men, which he had contracted in the previous twenty or thirty years. Even his initiation, which had started when he
[881] was only about fifteen, left him under obligation to the older men who had initiated him. Any bestowals he had received had almost necessarily come to him from older men. In his thirties, it is true, he had operated in the widow remarriage area and put some older men under obligation to him by acting as their agent. But in his agency activities he had also contracted debts, usually in fee-splitting or log-rolling agreements with other agents of about his own age. Thus all his past activities, from his initiation at fifteen until the arrival of his first free daughter at (let us say) age forty-five, were on balance a story of obligations contracted and debts of gratitude assumed in his career of upward mobility. The more successful he had been up to now, the stronger the pressure on him to begin paying off those who had helped him, since it was assumed that his very success was a clear indication of how much obligation he must have to other men, especially older men and contemporaries.

If this line of reasoning had been the only relevant one, a Tiwi of age
584 forty-five just presented with his first free daughter would have had problem
557 enough deciding which of his many obligations to liquidate first by his bestowal decision for that daughter. Unfortunately he was at the age when he had to consider the future as well as the past. Some of his old obligations were to men who were very old and unlikely to live much longer. Others were to men of his own age with whom he had been partners ten years before, but by now it was clear that some of these would never amount to much and paying them
[554] off would reap no dividends for the future. Failure to meet the obligation might incur their enmity, but in view of their lack of success, perhaps their hostility was a lesser evil. In 1929, Gitjara, who had needed L. F. B. to get his own career launched, was ready to drop him as a partner now that Gitjara had attracted favorable notice in the form of two bestowals. The junior elders, though obligated to older men like Ki-in-kumi, were not bestowing their scanty

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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free daughters on the older men but upon each other while waiting for the power alignment in Malau to change with Ki-in-kumi's death. Perhaps the clearest case of the pull between the obligations of the past and the planning for the future in the bestowal of free daughters was provided by Merapanui. He was a man who owed or thought he owed very little to his elders. None of them had ever bestowed a girl on him, and he reached fifty with nothing but an ancient widow. The fortunate death of an elder brother had suddenly provided him with bestowable daughters rather later in life than the average. By 1929 he had been able to bestow no less than four, and every one of them went to men much younger than himself and in other bands. Merapanui, being relatively free of old debts, was investing his daughters in young men with a future, but unlike Ki-in-kumi who had invested most of his daughters in one younger man, Padimo, old Merapanui believed in diversifying his investments. 557 584

Thus the politics of bestowal marriage were just as complicated as the politics of widow remarriage but, since a man was ten or more years older when he became involved in the former than when he became involved in the latter, a rather different set of motivations prevailed. At thirty-five as a mobile operator in the widow field, a man was trying to launch a career, and if he had no obvious assets—no living sisters or mother or important mother's brothers—he was often trying to launch it on a shoestring. By forty-five the same man was well along in his career and was a junior elder—the head of a household with at least one young wife in residence and a man beginning to have bestowable daughters of his very own. He now saw tribal politics and reputation building in different perspective from the way they had looked to him ten years earlier. Then he had put his services and his wits and his diplomatic skills at the disposal of older men in order to gain favorable notice from the elders. But now that he was an elder himself, albeit still low in the pecking order of elders, he was no longer their satellite but rather one of them and therefore in competition with them. Now he no longer wanted to build up his client's business; he wanted to build up his own household and his own influence. With the arrival of his first free daughters he was no longer content to work for and accept the leadership of older clients; he was in business as an elder for himself. His free daughters were therefore bestowed not as acknowledgments of his obligations to older men but as inducements to younger men to accept him as their patron. With his first free daughters a man was in position to become emancipated from the dominance of the elders because with the arrival of those daughters he could start bidding against them for the allegiance of men younger than himself.

One of the neatest examples of the switch in life career was provided in 1928 by the case of Tomitari. All Tiwi life careers and marriage arrangements were so tangled that one was delighted to find a relatively open and shut case. Some of the principals involved were relatives of Padimo, who was originally a Rangwila before Ki-in-kumi, his patron, lured him to Malau. Padimo and three sisters were the children of a Rangwila man and woman whom for simplicity's sake we will call Padimo's real father and real mother. The father bestowed the three girls on another Rangwila named Inglis who was 159 557 584

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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159 557 584 about the same age as himself. (If we tried to answer *why* he did, the case would no longer be simple.) Padimo's father died while the four children were still young, and their mother remarried a relatively young man named Tomitari. This occurred in about 1914 and the situation then was as follows:

GENEALOGY I
THE INGLIS-TOMITARI RELATIONSHIP 1914
(Males are in italics; ages are in brackets)

Padimo's Father (just dead) — 1. =

Padimo's Mother (40) = 2. *Tomitari* (30)

Inglis (44) = Sister I (21) | *Padimo* (20) | Sister II (13) | Sister III (10)

Fifteen years or so later, all parties were still alive; the two youngest sisters had joined Inglis as wives and all three sisters had borne children to him, including girls. Thus the situation in 1928-29 was:

GENEALOGY II
(1928-29)

Padimo's Mother (55) = *Tomitari* (45)

Padimo

Sister I wife of *Inglis* (59)
Sister II wife of *Inglis*
Sister III wife of *Inglis*
↓
Daughter A (11)
Daughter B (8)
Daughter C (5)
Daughter D (2)
Daughter E (1)

The three sisters of Padimo had borne five daughters to Inglis and as they were successively born Inglis had bestowed the first three on Tomitari. He did not bestow the fourth or fifth nor any of his daughters by other wives.

The master clue to the whole matter was the marriage in 1914 of Padimo's widowed mother to Tomitari, then little more than thirty. His function had been to act as trustee or stand-in for Inglis' interest, not in the [58] widow but in her daughters who had been bestowed on Inglis by their dead father. The young Tomitari as step-father of the girls had to ensure their safe delivery to Inglis' household. (One was there already but the other two were not.) Tomitari accomplished his mission, acquiring the widow, of course, as a wife in the process; the girls arrived safely in Inglis' household and Inglis paid off handsomely by bestowing their daughters on his honest agent who had held off the competitors.

But by 1923 or thereabouts Inglis had stopped paying off. Tomitari by then had received three bestowals from Inglis. (Actually he had received about six, but three died in infancy). Moreover, he was no longer a young man but

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

was entering the junior elder class and, having received wives from other sources than Inglis, was getting to the point where he would soon have free daughters of his own. He had no intention of performing any more services for Inglis who was now nearly sixty. Hence Inglis had not bestowed any daughters on Tomitari since 1923; those of his daughters who had been born since that year were bestowed on men other than Tomitari and men who were younger and less successful than he. 159 584 557

As we see it, the deals involving widows, particularly the pay-offs to young agents for acting to promote the interests of older men, had distorted what might be called the pure theory of Tiwi bestowal. According to the pure theory, mothers' brothers bestowed their daughters on selected sisters' sons, and the older man who gave a young man a wife and became his wife's father, was performing a kindness toward a favorite nephew for which the nephew should be grateful. But the Inglis-Tomitari operation shows how the theory had become distorted in practice. In order that Inglis might have some young daughters whom he would be free to bestow on his favored young nephew, Tomitari, in 1914 he had had to arrange the young man's marriage with an elderly widow to ensure safe delivery to him (Inglis) of some young wives who would bear him those daughters. Everything went smoothly and no slip-up occurred, yet by the time Inglis was in a position to give a wife to his favored young nephew, he found that the latter was no longer a dependent young man but a successful junior elder competing with him in his own field of identifying and using talent among the younger men. Tomitari's first daughter, born in 1927—not to any daughter of Inglis but to an older wife—was bestowed by its father on the distant but very promising Gitjara, a man of thirty-two. Gitjara was thus selected by Tomitari as a promising satellite at about the same age as Tomitari in 1914 had been selected by Inglis. Moreover, Tomitari by this time, far from being the grateful nephew of old Inglis (as the theory stipulated), was looking forward with anticipation to the old man's death, since when that occurred, among the widows of Inglis would be the three sisters of Padimo of whom he was still the nominal father. It was by acting as their step-father when they were children that he had got his own career started. They were indeed the foundation stone of his own career and, having profited so much from them as children, he was keenly interested in their redisposition whenever Inglis' death should put them on the market again. Thus he was simultaneously the husband of some of Inglis' daughters and nominal father of some of Inglis' wives. In the first status, he was expected by the theory to be a grateful son-in-law of Inglis; in the second status, the facts of Tiwi life required him to see Inglis' death as providing him with an opportunity to derive some new benefits for himself from his position as nominal father of the three wives of Inglis whose delivery to Inglis' household he had himself engineered. 183 581 604 159 183 584 604 [557 593]

Thus the politics of bestowal cannot be separated from the politics of widow remarriage. Every case of one had endless repercussions in the other. Sisters' sons who were promised young wives by their mothers' brothers were always too old to be grateful by the time the bestowal occurred or by the even later time when the bestowed child was old enough to come into residence. 182 557 584 604

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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182 Mothers' brothers, in turn, were unable to endow their nephews any earlier
557 because they as younger men had been caught in the same trap. The only way
out was by deals in which older men and younger men collaborated. Ideally
584 such collaborative efforts should always have been between mothers' brothers
604 and sisters' sons, but amid such fierce competition and endless log rolling
this was not possible, and in many cases the mother's-brother—sister's-son
relationship was a *result* of collaboration between older man and younger man
rather than a cause. The bond arose from the deal rather than from their
original kinship, particularly when the two men involved were very close in
age.

The collaborative deals between older men and younger men were essentially designed to compensate for the older man's inability to bestow a young wife upon the younger man at a reasonable age. As was stated before, not until he was about forty-five would the older man have a free or unencumbered daughter. By then his younger collaborator and satellite had attracted the attention of older and wealthier men with many unencumbered daughters. After
159 performing all his services to Inglis, young Tomitari had not had to depend
557 on him for his first bestowal. A wealthier man than Inglis had reached over
571 Inglis' head, so to speak, and bought Tomitari's allegiance by the bestowal of
584 a young wife who provided Tomitari with a free daughter several years earlier than any child the daughters of Inglis could provide. With this first unencumbered daughter, Tomitari promptly bid for the allegiance of Gitjara. Put in terms of allegiances, Tomitari had from 1914 until about 1923 been the henchman of Inglis. During those years he passed from about age thirty to age forty, and his main patron was Inglis, who passed from about forty-four and on the fringes of the elder group to about fifty-four and accepted among the elder group. Then—and this was typical of the shift of allegiance that occurred in most life careers—a senior elder more wealthy in wives and daughters than Inglis bid for Tomitari's allegiance, and Tomitari became his henchman. Five years later, in 1928, Tomitari was a coming junior elder in Rangu and a man of influence in his own right. His oldest bestowed wife had already borne him a daughter whom he used to make Gitjara *his* henchman. The three wives (daughters A, B, and C) of Inglis were nearing the stage when they would join his household and he had other bestowals from other quarters. His relation to Inglis was no longer that of henchman but of rival, since they were now both successful elders in the same band and competitors in the struggle to make younger men dependent on them. Far from bestowing any more daughters on Tomitari, Inglis was bestowing his daughters (now plentiful) on men of Gitjara's generation (though not on Gitjara). Having more free daughters than Tomitari, he had more men of that generation to patronize, but since Inglis was sixty and Tomitari only forty-five, time was obviously on the side of the latter.

557 Thus the crux of the Tiwi system of influence-satellite-ship-marriage ar-
571 rangement-wealth centered around what happened to a man in his thirties. This
584 is what we meant when we said earlier that old men with many daughters bestowed them on young men who looked to them like "comers." Old men

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

with many free daughters were usually men well over fifty. "Comers" were 557
men in their thirties. In so choosing the "comers," the old and wealthy men 571
reached right over the junior elders and the forty-year-old group down to the 584
ranks of the young operators. In this way we may say that the real power [888]
group, the successful old gerontocrats, chose their own successors. They chose
young men twenty or more years younger than themselves (as Ki-in-kumi chose
Padimo) because men at such an age were not rivals or competitors. A man so
chosen in his thirties could be already powerful and fairly wealthy by his
middle forties (like Tomitari in 1928) and very wealthy in his fifties. Such
men went up fast because of their selection by the group in power. Those not
so chosen had to go up the hard way by accumulating what position and in-
fluence they could by manipulations of the few available females not con-
trolled by the wealthy old men. The "haves" left a small minority of women
available to the "have-not" men to keep them quiet, but the great majority of
females were concentrated in the hands of a few old men and these old men
chose their own successors. Thus the Tiwi system actually deserves to be called 561
a primitive oligarchy as much as it deserves to be called a gerontocracy. It was 887
run by a few old men who ruled it not so much because they were old but
because as young men they had been clever and then had lived long enough
to reap the rewards of their cleverness. These rewards made up Tiwi wealth—
many wives, much leisure, many daughters to bestow, many satellites and
henchmen, and much power and influence over other people and tribal affairs.

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The Collective Life

Legal Affairs

THE MOST SATISFACTORY overall view of Tiwi culture is that, within the general framework of mainland patterns, it had developed along its own distinctive lines. Some of these distinctive lines of development are traceable to the relatively favorable food and rainfall situation; others are traceable to the absence of neighbors. The unusually large polygamous households are, we think, attributable to the good food supply. But the large households of the Tiwi, economically efficient as we judge them to have been, involved certain social costs, the most obvious of which was the enforced celibacy of the younger men. This compulsory celibacy did not, of course, mean chastity. Not only were there the endless charges of seduction against young men, but there was also the more objective fact that most young wives continued to become pregnant with monotonous regularity, no matter how ancient and senile their husbands. (The Tiwi belief that babies came from spirits prevented pregnancies from being used against young wives as proofs of unfaithfulness.) Despite the numerous cases of seduction or alleged seduction, few young men ever took the most straightforward way of escaping from their state of compulsory celibacy—namely, abducting a young wife and running off with her. Here we encounter the other factor of the Tiwi natural environment that explains so much about their cultural development—and that is the absence of neighbors. Young men did not elope with young wives because there was no place to elope to. On the mainland such elopements were common, and the couple sought refuge with a neighboring tribe. But an eloping Tiwi couple could only take refuge with other more remote Tiwi bands where the system was the same as that which they had rebelled against back home, and the people with whom they sought shelter were interrelated with those whom they had defied back home. Hence, no matter where they fled, the Tiwi system, embodied in a war party of the girl's husband's friends and

182 [837] 182 583

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 relatives, soon caught up with them. Several cases of such elopements occurred
583 during the period of fieldwork, including the case of one young couple (Peanut and Jumbo's wife) who made repeated attempts to elope over a period of several years. But despite the relaxation of standards that white contact had
[624] brought, as long as they remained on the islands these violators of the system were soon forced back into conformity by outraged public opinion and its punitive sanctions. Unless he fled to the mainland with his girl, the young bachelor who stole an old man's young wife had to restore her sooner or later to her rightful husband. Under pre-white conditions they could not flee to the mainland; if they tried, they both probably drowned on the way or at least were never heard of again.

Thus the isolation of the Tiwi made the rule of the gerontocracy much
182 more absolute, and the enforcement of it much more effective than was possible
691 for any of the mainland tribes where violators of the rules could skip across the border. Tiwi bachelors had to be satisfied, by and large, with casual and temporary liaisons and even in these, because of the constant suspicion of the old husbands and the constant spying and scandalmongering of the old wives, they had to be prepared to be often caught and, when caught, to be punished.
[578] Thus we come to another of the main emphases in Tiwi culture—the enormous frequency of disputes, fights, duels, and war parties arising directly or indirectly out of cases of seduction. If we may call this area of life the legal area, then over 90 percent of legal affairs were matters in which women were in some way involved.

THE DUEL The Tiwi formula for handling seduction was very
627 straightforward and clear-cut in its formal outline. Since senior men had young
684 wives and young men had not, seduction was necessarily viewed as an offense by a young man against a senior man. Hence the charge was always laid by the senior and the younger man was always the defendant.[1] At night in camp the accuser hurled his charges at the offender. We described earlier the alternatives available at this stage to both parties. Two of those alternatives were for the old man to press the matter to a public "trial," either the next day, if the camp was already a large one, or else on the next occasion when both men were present in a big gathering.

The basic shape of all Tiwi trials was standardized in the form that we have been calling the duel. Everybody present—men, women, children, and dogs—formed a rough circle in an open space, sitting or standing according to their degree of excitement at the moment. At one end stood the accuser,
[302 the old man, covered from head to foot in white paint, with his ceremonial
411] spears in one hand and a bundle of the more useful hunting spears in the

[1] Under pre-white conditions this had to be so. After the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, some young men through Mission manipulation got a young wife at an age that would have been impossible earlier. This resulted in an occasional case around the Mission where a *young* husband charged a man older than himself with seducing his wife. The resulting duel, with an older man as defendant, was regarded by the Tiwi as both embarrassing and ludicrous, perhaps analogous to the average American's attitude toward female professional wrestlers. (See Hart 1954 for a case of this sort, the duel of Bob v. Louis.)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

other. At the opposite end stood the defendant, with little or no paint on him, perhaps holding a hunting spear or two in his hand (a sign of insolence), perhaps holding only throwing sticks (less defiant, since the stick was an inferior weapon more appropriate to young men), or perhaps entirely weaponless (a sign of proper humility and the deference to his seniors that all bachelors ought to show in such situations). The accuser, with many gestures, particularly with much stamping of the feet and chewing of the beard, told the young man in detail precisely what he and all right-minded members of the community thought of him. This angry, loud harangue went into minute detail, not only about the actual offense, but the whole life career of the defendant, and paid particular attention to occasions in the past when the old man even remotely, or some of his relatives, even more remotely, had performed kindnesses toward either the young man or some of his relatives. It is difficult to summarize briefly one of these harangues, but the general formula, subject to much variation by each individual accuser, appeared to be the building up of as much contrast as possible between the criminal or antisocial character of the young man's actions and the fact that he was a member of a network of interpersonal relationships in which mutual aid and reciprocal obligations were essential. The Tiwi orators, of course, did not put the matter in such abstract terms. They listed the long catalogue of people who had done things for the young man since his birth, and for his ancestors and relatives, until the catalogue took in practically the whole tribe—past, present, and future. And what had he done to repay his obligations to all these people? "Why, the miserable, ungrateful wretch spends his time hanging around my camp, etc., etc. And not only my camp, but last year it was widely believed that he was indulging in similar actions around the camp of my esteemed fellow-elder, So and So." We do not think that we are overintellectualizing the content of these harangues if we say that they involved the old man's reminding the young man of his debt to society, and his attempting to convey the idea that social life needed mutual aid and trust between all its members.

After twenty minutes or so of this sociological abuse and blame pinning, the old man threw aside his ceremonial spears and began to throw his hunting spears at the defendant. This active phase of the duel conformed to a stereotyped pattern which in some respects resembled baseball. The old man stood about ten feet farther away from the young man than the pitcher stands from the plate. The young man had to avoid being hit by the spears. To do this he was permitted to jump from side to side or into the air, or to duck, but he was expected always to land on approximately the same spot as he had been standing on when the first spear was thrown. Thus there was no marked strike zone, but an implied one. If the accused jumped well away from the strike zone, he was jeered by the crowd. If the old man was wild, he was jeered too, but more respectfully. Under such rules a modern baseball hitter, having no bat in his hand to worry about, would almost never be hit by a pitched ball, and the Tiwi young men were similarly never likely to be hit by an old man's spears. The main danger was the spear that pitched in the dirt. Although clearly outside the strike zone and hence an indication that the old man was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

627 really wild, such a spear was apt to carom off the ground at an unexpected angle
684 and inflict a severe wound before the spectators (as collective umpires) had time to call it—in which case the duel was over and the accused was punished.[2]

Apart from those that unpredictably deflected off the ground, or even off a neighboring tree, the young man could dodge the old man's spears indefinitely if he wanted to. He was much younger and hence almost invariably in much better shape than the older man. But if he did this, the old man soon
[626] began to look a little ridiculous, and Tiwi society thoroughly disapproved of
[888] young men who made old men look ridiculous in public. Continued dodging and jumping and weaving of the body, no matter how gracefully they were done, were not prolonged by any young man who hoped in time to become a respected elder himself. The elders in the last analysis controlled bestowals, and holding one of them up to public ridicule was sure to antagonize all of them. So the young man, having for five or ten minutes demonstrated his physical ability to avoid being hit, then showed a proper moral attitude by allowing himself to be hit. This took even greater skill in bodily movement. Trying to lose a fight without making it too obvious to the crowd and without getting hurt too much oneself is a problem that confronts some professional athletes in our own culture, and few of them do it with as much skill as the younger Tiwi in the same situation. A fairly deep cut on the arm or thigh that bled a lot but healed quickly was the most desirable wound to help the old man inflict, and when the blood gushed from such a wound the crowd yelled approval and the duel was over. The young man had behaved admirably, the old man had vindicated his honor, the sanctity of marriage and the Tiwi constitution had been upheld, and everybody went home satisfied and full of moral rectitude. Seduction did not pay.

This was the Tiwi duel as it ideally should be conducted, and in per-
183 haps as many as two-thirds of all such disputes it was so conducted. Divergences
627 from this form clearly arose from the unpredictability of human beings and
684 their fondness for trying to exercise choice instead of following a set pattern. Though the dice were heavily loaded against them, some Tiwi young men chose defiance instead of repentance. There were various avenues of defiance open to them. The mildest was to refuse to allow the old man's spears to hit
627 the target. Slightly more brazen were the young men who turned up at the
684 beginning of the duel with throwing sticks or hunting spears in their hands, even though they used these not to throw but to knock aside contemptuously the spears of the old man. More brazen still was the young man, rare but not unknown, who went so far as to throw missiles back at the older accuser. All such attempts to defy the traditional pattern of the duel met with the same response, and that very quickly. The duel began as usual with the two antagonists facing one another inside the circle of spectators. As soon as it became apparent that the young man was not conforming to the normal pattern of meekness and nonretaliation, there would be immediate activity on the

[2] Two cases of broken legs below the knee within six weeks of each other in 1928 give some indication of the force with which such badly aimed spears would bounce off the ground.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

sidelines. Two or three or four senior men would leave the spectators and range themselves alongside the accuser, spears in hand. Other senior men would quietly leave their seats and sit down in the audience alongside close relatives of the young defendant, particularly his full brothers or his father, if they were present, and gently lay restraining hands upon them. Within a few minutes there was no longer an old man facing a young man but as many as four or five old men facing one young man, and no sign of support for him. His close male relatives would keep their seats or (more often) allow themselves to be led away as if they did not want to witness what was coming next. Never, in any of these cases, did any supporter of the young man step into the ring and line up with him. He remained an isolate, faced by several older men, and of course he had no chance. It was easy to dodge the spears of one opponent, since they had to be thrown one at a time; it was impossible to dodge the spears of more than one, since they could be thrown more or less simultaneously. 627 684

Usually this baring of its teeth by society-at-large was enough. The group of elders did not need to throw many spears simultaneously. The accused capitulated by throwing aside his spears or throwing sticks, or if the defiance had been only of the mildest form—namely, an undue prolongation of the dodging—he allowed his accuser to score a direct hit and the duel ended in the normal way. In the rare cases of the accused refusing to give up, even when confronted by a menacing line of several elders, a concerted volley or two from them quickly knocked him out, and in pre-white days, usually killed him.[3] Crime thus paid even less for the accused who chose defiance than it did for the accused who allowed himself to be wounded in a duel by a doddering ancient three times his age. The greater the amount of defiance, the more clear it became that the doddering ancient, acting ostensibly as an outraged husband, was the responsible agent of society dispensing public justice. If he needed help, all responsible elders went to his aid, and the kinsmen of the accused stood aside and let justice take its course.

Warfare Apart from the occasional castaways and the very occasional other visitors such as "Malays," the Tiwi in pre-white times had nobody to fight with except each other. Duels of the type we have just described were their only formula for settling disputes, and these occasionally became sufficiently broadened to warrant being called warfare. The expedition of Tiklauila and Rangwila to the country of the Mandiimbula which was listed in Chapter 2 among the travels of Tu'untalumi in 1928 was an example of this sort of activity. At least half a dozen senior members of the two first-named bands had disputes with various individuals among the Mandiimbula. Some of these were seduction cases but some of them involved charges by elder against elder, 628

[3] Since the coming of white administration, the Tiwi have found that when a man is killed in a native duel, there is a strong likelihood that white policemen will appear and will bring some of them off to Darwin where incomprehensible proceedings called murder trials then take place. To avoid such nonsense, since about 1925 they have tended to use throwing sticks rather than spears in their fighting. Throwing sticks, while dangerous, seldom kill people outright and as long as nobody is killed, the police in Darwin show no interest in native fights on the islands. 177 648

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI29

628 of nondelivery of bestowed daughters, or other types of broken promises. Some of these cases had been going on for years, and settlement of them at the level of the individual duel had failed. The aggrieved individuals in the two Bathurst Island bands therefore pooled their grievances, persuaded many of their relatives and friends who were not aggrieved to join them, and a large party of men of all ages set off for the Mandiimbula territory.

This party, comprising about thirty fighting men all heavily armed and [302] all wearing the white paint indicative of anger and hostile intent, was a "war" party, and its coming to their territory was recognized as such by the Mandiimbula. On arrival at the place where the latter, duly warned of its approach, had gathered, the war party announced its presence. Both sides then exchanged a few insults and agreed to meet formally the next day in an open space where there was plenty of room. After a night mostly spent by both sides in individual visiting and renewing old acquaintances, the two armies met next morning in battle array, with the thirty Tiklauila-Rangwila warriors drawn up at one end of the clearing, and about sixty local warriors at the other end. Immediately the familiar patterns of the duel imposed themselves. 537 A senior individual on one side began a harangue directed at an individual 628 on the other. When he ran out of breath, another individual began his complaint. Since each accused Mandiimbula replied individually to the charges made against him, the whole proceeding remained at the level of mutual charges and replies between pairs of individuals. Angry old men on both sides often seemed to be trying to find a basis that would justify or provoke a general attack by one group upon the other, but always failed to find it because of the particularity of the charges. The rules of Tiwi procedure compelled the accuser to specify the sources of his charges and his anger, and these always [619] turned out to be directed not at the Mandiimbula band, but at one, or at most two or three, individual members of that band. And when another old man took the center of attention, his anger would be directed at quite different individuals. Hence when spears began to be thrown, they were thrown by 628 individuals at individuals for reasons based on individual disputes. Unlike the seduction duels, however, these duels occurred mostly between two senior men, and the danger of a direct hit was much reduced because of the poor marksmanship of both parties. On the other hand, the danger of somebody getting hurt was increased because a fight between two old men was likely to spread as other old men were drawn into it to support one or the other side—in which case, a wild melee occurred with badly thrown spears flying in all directions. This was probably a good thing, because soon somebody was bound to be hit, thus ending the fight. Not infrequently the person hit was some innocent noncombatant or one of the screaming old women who weaved through the [147] fighting men, yelling obscenities at everybody, and whose reflexes for dodging spears were not as fast as those of the men.

As soon as somebody was wounded, even a seemingly irrelevant crone, fighting stopped immediately until the implications of this new incident could be assessed by both sides. For the crone was never really irrelevant; she was somebody's mother and somebody else's wife and somebody else's sister and

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

therefore the question of who threw the spear that wounded her gave rise to a new series of wrangles which had to be integrated into all the old ones. A man who had been quietly sitting, minding his own business and having no quarrels with anybody, would suddenly leap into the center of the stage and announce that the damaged old lady was his mother and therefore he wanted the hide of the rat that had damaged her, and a whole new argument was in progress. 628

If the person wounded in the first flurry of spear throwing was a senior male, that similarly led the arguments off in some new direction since his kinsmen in *both* war parties felt compelled to support him or revenge his wound or inflict a wound on his wounder. Frequently it appeared that the original matters of dispute, which had brought the two war parties together in the first place, were forgotten and lost in the new disputes and fights that originated on the field of battle. Such a view was supported by the frequency with which one found at the end of the day that the main casualties and the main headline performers had been people who had gone to the field of battle in the morning with no quarrel with anybody, and not even wearing white paint. Even the most peaceful spectator in the most remote corner of the gallery was likely to find himself in the center of the ring before the day was over at a Tiwi "battle." 578 628

Despite this apparent confusion and near anarchy of procedure, however, the main outlines were quite clear. The bands were not firm political entities and therefore could not do battle, as bands, with each other. Everybody, on both sides, was interrelated in the same kinship system. An angry old Tiklauila, abusing and throwing spears at an angry old Mandiimbula, might have as the basis of his complaint the fact that the Mandiimbula father had promised but not delivered one of his daughters. Since Tiwi bestowals were from mother's brother to sister's son, the spear throwing was patently a case of a sister's son abusing his mother's brother, and the fact that the two men belonged to different bands was not germane to their dispute. The angry Tiklauila elder could not demand support from other Tiklauila *as Tiklauila* in the case at issue for it involved a dispute between kinsmen whose band affiliations were irrelevant to the subject matter. Mainly for this reason the so-called war party of one band against another band turned out to be only a loose collection of individuals, each with his own case to argue, who found it convenient, and safer, to travel together into the territory of another band and argue all their individual cases on the same day at the same place. Tiwi interpersonal relations were primarily kin relations between members of all bands; territorial loyalties were shifting ones, temporary and necessarily quite subordinate to kin loyalties. Hence warfare, in the sense of pitched battles between groups aligned through territorial loyalties, did not occur and could not occur among the Tiwi. 621 628 602 619

The confusion of the so-called battle itself was also due to the primacy of kinship and friendship ties. When a man with a grievance started his harangue on a battlefield, he was never quite sure of what support he would get or where it would come from. He was pretty much on his own, even though 602 628 571

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

571 he had arrived there as a member of a large war party. This situation stemmed
602 from the coexistence, on the one hand, of the intricate web of kinship that
628 united everybody present and made the problem of who would support whom unpredictable enough, and, on the other, the intricate network of deals and promises and personal alliances and obligations that every senior Tiwi man had woven inside the kinship system. A Tiwi elder did not, for example, have one category of relatives called his mother's brothers; he had at least three different categories of mother's brothers. There were those mother's brothers who had given him nothing, those who had given him wives, and those who had promised him a wife but were dragging their feet on delivery, or even trying to renege on their promise. In pressing a case against one of this third category, an elder might quite conceivably alienate some of his mother's brothers of the second category. Nor could he be sure of the support of even his own brothers, since they were certainly cultivating, and possibly undercutting him with, the same donors of daughters as he was involved with. Perhaps the nondelivery, which was the whole basis of his case against the mother's brother, had been instigated by his own brother trying to engineer a rebestowal of the girl to him. Because of the two networks, that of formal kinship obligations and that of marriage deals, two Tiwi seniors engaged in a dispute had no impartial body to whom they could submit their arguments about breach of contract. Disputes between a young man and an elder could
[674] be submitted to the publicly witnessed duel, since these were not breaches of contract but cases of trespass by the young men, and as such were crimes.
[626] Impartial public opinion upheld the old men and punished the young men every time. The old men's arguments with each other, however, could not be
[686] so adjusted, since they involved marriage deals (as distinct from seduction) and in marriage deals everybody was involved and nobody was impartial. Where any senior stood on any marriage deal in dispute depended on how that
[557] deal fitted into his own conniving. In that area of life, every adult man had his own axes to grind and a disinterested group of umpires was impossible to find.

Thus Tiwi battles had to be the confused, disorderly, inconclusive
628 things they always were. They usually lasted all day, during which about
578 two-thirds of the elapsed time was consumed in violent talk and mutual abuse between constantly changing central characters and satellites. The remaining third of the time was divided between duels involving a pair of men who threw spears at each other until one was wounded, and brief flurries of more general weapon throwing involving perhaps a dozen men at a time, which ended whenever somebody, even a spectator, was hit. As a result of this full day of violence, perhaps a few of the cases would be settled that night—by a father handing over his delayed daughter, or a man with a disputed wife relinquishing her to her rightful husband—but when the war party left next day to return home, the number of cases settled was likely to be less than the number of new feuds, grievances, and injuries that had originated during the day of battle. For not only did the participants carry away from the battlefield a vivid memory of all the physical wounds, intended or accidental, inflicted by whom

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

on whom, but they also brooded long and suspiciously upon who had supported whom and why, either verbally or with spear in hand. In addition, all the incidents of the battle, in minute detail, were relayed to the rest of the tribe who had not been present, and many of these absentees would discover, among the proceedings, things they did not like or suspicious-looking actions on the part of some of their competitors or putative friends. These they would weave into their own strategies and store up for future use. An elder frequently found some basis for a new grievance against somebody in the events of a battle at which he had not even been present. 628 578

Finally, through all these disputes and hostile actions between senior men ran their united suspicion of bachelors. The only "battle" in two years between large groups drawn from distinct bands that had a clear-cut and definite final act was one fought in Rangu in late 1928. On that occasion, after disputing and fighting among themselves from early morning until mid-afternoon, all the old men present from both war parties gradually channeled all their anger toward one unfortunate young Mandiimbula bachelor whom they finally accused of going around from band to band creating misunderstandings between various elders. Several elders on both sides testified publicly that their mistrust of each other had started shortly after the bachelor in question had begun hanging around their households; whereupon the senior warriors of the two opposing armies had no difficulty in deciding that most of their suspicions of each other "were all his fault," and with great unanimity ganged up on the bachelor and quickly clubbed him into unconsciousness for being a troublemaker and a suspicion spreader. In the midst of battle the gerontocracy had reasserted its solidarity by finding a bachelor scapegoat upon whom to unload all their mutual suspicions and aggressions. 54 578 628

Religious Activities

If by religious activities we mean those beliefs and practices which pertain to unseen or supernatural forces, including rituals whose performance somehow affects those forces, then Tiwi religion readily crystallized around three focal points. These were: 1) their elaborate system of day-to-day taboos; 2) the elaborate set of beliefs and rituals pertaining to death; and 3) their complicated initiation ceremonies for young men. Add to these their myths and folklore about creation and their tribal past, and the whole of Tiwi religion has been covered. Space permits only brief mention of these three focal points. 771

TABOO In earlier chapters we have pointed out several aspects of life in which Tiwi culture diverged sharply from what anthropologists have come to regard as Australian mainland norms and we have suggested that these differences from the mainland are most reasonably to be attributed to either Tiwi isolation or favorable food supply, or some combination of both factors. In their religious life this same line of explanation continues to have validity. To those familiar with the cultures of Australian tribes, perhaps 171 789

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 789 [754] nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation. 13 [182] [789] Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life—for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals [164 731] (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws) scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago. [761 764] Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their 101 131 182 754 cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature, though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

784 The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; gravepoets were *pukimani*

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

once erected on the grave; the names of dead people immediately became *pukimani* on their deaths and could not be used, and the same was true of all the names bestowed by a dead man on the children of his household and all the other words in the language that sounded similar to the name of the dead man.[4] All ceremonials and rituals were *pukimani* as were the main performers and the armlets, neck ornaments, and other ceremonial objects. People in a *pukimani* state had to observe all sorts of avoidances of and abstentions from everyday actions, particularly with regard to food and sex. Close relatives of dead people could not touch food but had to be fed by nonmourners. That pillar of rigid orthodoxy, Tu'untalumi, was virtually never able to feed himself but was in a *pukimani* state almost the whole year round and needed one of his wives to feed him. (Another advantage of a large household.) Certain spots in the bush or on the banks of streams were *pukimani* places; the dimly seen outline of the Australian coast was *pukimani* as was the ocean near Cape Keith where the Tiwi ancestors had first created the Tiwi world; and finally, the violation of a *pukimani* restriction rendered the violator *pukimani*.

Pukimani as thus applied to people, places, things, names, words, restrictions, and avoidances, meant both sacred and taboo, and was clearly one of that widespread class of words and concepts that is almost standard among the simpler societies. The only noteworthy thing about its Tiwi form is that *pukimani* was a state which people did not actively seek to enter but which happened to people regardless of their wishes. Furthermore, when a man found himself in a state of *pukimani*, his behavior was automatically prescribed for him and for the duration of his *pukimani* condition he observed his avoidances and his abstentions just as automatically as he dropped them when his *pukimani* period expired. When he became *pukimani*, he punctiliously fulfilled the requirements because if he did not, he was likely to be unsuccessful in his enterprises. Big men simply did not dare to be casual about the requirements lest their reputations suffer and they lose face and influence. Less successful men were occasionally explained as probably being secret violators. "His wives and daughters all seem to die young; he must have broken some *pukimani* restrictions sometime" was a reason often given for somebody's failure to be as successful as he might have been. It was noticeable in such explanations of misfortune that the failure, or in our terms the bad luck, was attributed to the violation of the taboos, never to the active displeasure of the spirits. The spirits simply did not figure in the picture.

Apart from the big ceremonial occasions, a Tiwi did not have much contact with religion in his everyday life except through some aspect of the *pukimani* system. It was only through *pukimani* that the sacred world impinged upon him at all for most of the year. Since *pukimani* was a condition that could not be actively sought but "just happened" to a person every so often by such common events as the death of a relative, his wife giving birth, or his

[4] When a man named Tibuki died in 1930, a crisis occurred at the Mission where the natives were supposed to make their requests in pidgin English. How could they now ask for tobacco, since that word was now *pukimani*?

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

771 sister's son being initiated, the attitude of a Tiwi toward the whole *pukimani*
784 step was essentially a passive attitude. *Pukimani* behavior was something one accepted and conformed to when required; it was in no way an active attempt to change nature, people, food, gods, spirits, or anything else in the universe.
[181] It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that since their *pukimani* system offered them no handle by which to seek actively to alter the universe in which they lived, the Tiwi found that universe to their liking as it was. Unlike the tribes of central Australia who lavished a lot of thought upon magical methods of improving the food supply or the rainfall, the Tiwi believed and acted on the belief that as long as they observed their *pukimani* taboos, the food would continue to be as abundant and the rains as regular as they had always been.
[171] The central Australians, by seeking to coerce nature through magic, suggest that they found nature unsatisfactory; the Tiwi, by relying upon passive taboo-observance alone, suggest rather that their relationship to nature was an acceptable equilibrium that they wanted to preserve, not change. And if everybody observed his *pukimani* taboos when required, that equilibrium would remain undisturbed. Hence the antisocial man in Tiwi was not the maker of individual magic (he was unknown, anyway) but the nonobserver of taboo. By his nonobservance he threatened to upset the normally satisfactory equilibrium between man and nature.
[626] For a senior Tiwi male to be charged publicly with breaking *pukimani* rules was a disgrace and a blow to his prestige and his position in public opinion. His behavior was possibly a sin against the spirits but it was certainly a shame in the eyes of his fellows. *Pukimani* observance was thus a matter of respectability to a much greater degree than it was a matter of pleasing the spirits.

765 DEATH As was mentioned above, death is the natural phenomenon around which the Tiwi had woven their most elaborate web of ritual. The most frequent and most important Tiwi ceremonies were the mourning ceremonies,
[554 and they came in three sizes—small, medium, and large—depending on the
561 age, sex, and importance of the dead person. The mourning ceremonies which
562 drew the crowds were not held until some time after the death and burial.
764 All bodies of dead persons were buried within twenty-four hours of their death by digging a hole near the camp where the death had occurred and placing the body, wrapped in bark, in it. Near most well-used camping spots there was already a graveyard marked by old graveposts, and the latest corpse was buried there or near there. Seldom was the body carried any distance for burial. If a person died even less than a mile from an old burial ground, there was little inclination to carry the body that far. He would be buried, instead, within perhaps a hundred yards of where he died. This had certain awkward repercussions for social organization, since occasionally a person died while away from his home district and, being buried where he died, his ceremonies were held and his posts erected in a district in which his immediate family
[591] did not live. Young men often used this to validate a change of residence, giving as their reason for living in a band territory in which they had not grown up, the location there of their father's graveposts.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

To avoid constant use of the awkward phrase "mourning ceremony," we refer to it as the funeral though it took place some considerable time after the burial of the body. How long a time elapsed between the burial and the funeral depended upon the importance of the dead person. The more important the deceased, the longer it took after his or her burial to prepare for the funeral, both ceremonially and practically. Babies frequently had no funeral ceremonies at all, especially if they died very young and unnamed. Children were given small funerals, held within a month or so after the death, and the people present were merely the members of the local households. Young adult men and all adult women had funerals of medium size, and old men had the biggest funerals of all. Big funerals were rarely held in the wet season because of the height of the grass and bush and the consequent difficulty of travel. The season after the end of the rains (April-May-June) was a favorite time for funerals since by then people were moving again and there was then an accumulated backlog of funerals to be held for people who had died late in the previous dry season or during the wet. The mourning ceremonies of two or more people were sometimes held together; this obviously required that they be buried close together, although they need not have died at the same time. Seeking as usual to increase his importance in the public eye, a man might hold the medium-sized funeral of one of his children at the same time and place as the big funeral of an important elder—provided their graves were close together—even though two or three months had separated the two deaths.

The actual burial of the body immediately after death was usually a small affair attended only by whatever people happened to be in the vicinity. But some Tiwi ancients were on their last legs for months before they finally expired, and it was typical of Tiwi psychology that people should maneuver to be present when a death occurred. Until the anthropologist understood that even death had its political aspects, he could not understand why the Tiwi were always so anxious to hang around the camp of an old man who was taking an awfully long time to die. Since so very little happened at the actual time of death, this desire to be on the spot seemed merely morbid curiosity.[8] But it was not. A death immediately divided the whole tribe into two groups: a small group of relatives who automatically became mourners and therefore in a state of strict taboo, and the rest who were not sufficiently close to the deceased to have to assume a state of *pukimani*. The mourners, being *pukimani*, could do scarcely anything except weep and wail and gash their heads with stone axes. They could not touch the body or wrap it in bark; nor could they dig the grave, nor put the body in, nor fill in the hole. They had to ask non-mourners to carry out these tasks and thus became obligated to those non-

[8] How else was one to interpret the reluctance of Hart's party to move on, after spending three weeks waiting for old Tamboo to die, and the old man still lingered on? "Let's wait another day; maybe he'll die tomorrow" was the invariable response to suggestions that we move. "And if he does die, what will happen?" "Nothing; we'll move on then." But this was early in the fieldwork period, before Hart realized the all-pervasive character of Tiwi opportunism.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 557 571 764 mourners for their services. Death, in other words, incapacitated the relatives, so the nonrelatives swarmed in to "help" them—that is, take advantage of their incapacity. A man who could say, "I helped to dig your mother's grave" had a hold for the rest of his life over the man or men to whom he could say it. Such a hold was not as strong, of course, as that of a man who could say, "I helped you get your first bestowed wife," but the difference of obligation was only a difference of degree. The Tiwi were always "helping" each other, but the man who was "helped" therefore "owed" something to his helper. At deaths, mourners mourned and nonmourners did the work; therefore the mourners "owed" the nonmourners, and such debts were carried on the same mental ledgers as other debts, such as marriage debts.

182 571 765 [764] When deaths occurred suddenly and unexpectedly, the mourners had to choose their helpers for the burial from the relatively few people present at the time, and were thus often forced to become obligated to men they did not much relish being under obligation to. At the funerals the same bookkeeping mentality prevailed, but since these were not held until months after the death and burial, the chief mourners had time to select their helpers with care and political finesse. Satellites were very useful in this connection, since a man could ask his satellites to perform the necessary ceremonial services and thus get a return from them for the debts of gratitude they already owed him. This was one reason why a skillful Tiwi politician did not by any means select only close kinsmen for satellitesship. A death which made him *pukimani* was likely to make his close kinsmen *pukimani* also, hence he needed some satellites who were not close kinsmen.

182 557 571 765 [462] In the interval between the burial and the funeral, the chief mourner, on behalf of all the mourners but fairly independently if he were a big man, allocated all the jobs that had to be done in preparation for the funeral. Everybody who came had to be fed by the mourners, and the collection and hoarding of the necessary food devolved on the women of the mourning households. Thus the mourners provided the food, but everything else necessary had to be prepared by nonmourners. The chief item among the ceremonial necessities was the graveposts. The prohibition on mourners approaching the body and the grave extended to the posts, and therefore the cutting, carving, erecting on the grave, and painting of these central features of the funeral ceremonies had to be carried out by nonmourners, "asked to cut the posts" by the chief mourner. Here there was much room for influence maneuvers. A big man acting as chief mourner for a dead relative wanted the funeral to be as lavish as possible, to show his own importance. But the more important the [554] nonmourners he selected to cut the posts for him, the more he owed them for their services. Such a request was in the nature of asking a favor, and to ask a favor was to put oneself in a subordinate position, in terms of influence. The Tiwi power orientation was so ingrained that, even when acting as chief mourner, an elder could not avoid making his requests and allocating the ceremonial tasks so as to gain ground if possible, or at least not lose any ground, in the influence and prestige race.

765 The mourning ceremonies, though prolonged for several days of con-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus. Most of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony, when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners' state of *puhimani*.

765 535 765 [424] 765

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious occasions. The connecting link was the state of *puhimani* in which death put the relatives. Men in a state of *puhimani* were at a disadvantage in social and political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and thus their own *puhimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to them for many months, came to an end.

182 557 571 765 [571]

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the status of *Mawkumani*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests. The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems; indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

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The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to marry the boy's sisters, an easily met requirement since girls were "married" so much earlier than their brothers. Very senior and successful men did not bother as a rule with initiation sponsorship because it took too much of their valuable time. Hence in practice, most boys at the *Marukumarni* age were taken in hand by a group of men around 40 years of age who were at least betrothed to, if not already married to, the boys' sisters. Such men justified or rationalized their actions by stating that, as the husbands of the boy's sisters, they wanted their little brother-in-law to be made into a man in proper form. In fact, they were usually given the job by the boy's father, who, having bestowed daughters upon them, regarded it as a legitimate request to make of them. It was the duty of male cross-cousins to initiate their wives' little brothers, but in true Tiwi style the father had to request them to do it, and they counted it in their tallies of what they owed him and what he owed them.

Though the father instigated and stage managed the whole affair, he and his household were always thunderstruck when the cross-cousins—armed to the teeth and painted like a war party—arrived at his camp one evening and proceeded to carry off forcibly the yelling 14-year-old.[6] He had to be dragged literally from the bosom of his family, with his mother screaming and trying to hide him and the father pretending to resist the invaders of his household. From then on, until the final stage (*Mikingula*) at age 24-26, the boy was completely under the authority of the men who carried him off. During these approximately ten to twelve years, he spent much of the time alone with them in the bush where the group lived a monastic existence, as a small band of isolates, speaking to no one (especially not to females) and obtaining their own food. During these phases the tutors guarded the boy as if he were literally a prisoner and taught him all the things—chiefly ritual matters—that grown men should know. At intervals the youth was allowed to go home, on week-end leaves so to speak, but when at home he had to observe all the silences, the modest demeanor, the taboos and the austerities of the isolated life. In monastic language, he was under a strict rule of obedience to his tutors.

Breaking in on the long years of austerity, spent either in seclusion in the bush or in *pukimani* at home, were periodic collective ceremonies when the youth was ritually advanced from one stage of initiation to the next.[7] These were public ceremonies, witnessed by large crowds, and the more important of such transition ceremonies took place in January and February when the *kolema* yams were ripe. At these ceremonies the youths were handled in batches or classes, all the boys of one grade being ritually advanced to the next grade, and the top grade or final class being formally graduated as fully initiated men. The crucial grade—when the pubic hairs were forcibly pulled out and he was at last allowed to talk back a little to his tutors—was usually reached by a youth somewhere between his eighteenth and twentieth years, but

[6] See Hart 1955 for some further details of the tearing away of the boy from the bosom of his family.

[7] A full list of initiation grade names and their duration in years is given in Hart 1951.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he still had six years to go after that, not finishing the final grade of *Mikingula* until somewhere past the age of 24 or 25.

In contrast with the mainland initiation ceremonies, we think the most interesting point about Tiwi initiation resides not in the formal ceremonies but in the removal from the food-production units, for long periods of the year, of all the young males between the ages of 14 and 25. It is true that they did not spend *all* their time in seclusion and that after the age of twenty they remained mostly in their household camps, where they contributed to the household food production. Nonetheless, it remains clear that only a very well-off tribe could afford to allow so much time off from food production to all its young hunters. Tiwi fathers, it would seem, in arranging for the initiation of their sons to begin just when they were becoming productive hunters, were willing to sacrifice that productivity for less tangible advantages. The youths secluded and guarded in the bush while getting an education, were not only out of the work force but were also out of the predatory-bachelor force. A Tiwi elder made sacrifices to "send his sons to college" but he breathed easier to know that the sons of the other elders were all there too.

All males without exception had to go through the full initiation cycle, and from the time of their first forcible seizure at the age of 14-15 to their final graduation at 24-26, they were in a state of *pukimani* and their personal names were strictly taboo to everybody in the tribe. Each youth was referred to only by his grade name, *Marukumarni* for the first year, *Mikingula* for the last four years, and so on. And here we return finally to a point which was mentioned much earlier—namely, the complete unimportance in tribal eyes of all males below the age of twenty-five. Until they had completed the final stage of initiation, Tiwi males were still boys; they did not even have names. Occasionally, when collecting genealogies and coming upon a reference to a young man, the innocent anthropologist would ask, "Is he married?" In tones of the deepest contempt the informant would reply, "That kid, how could he be married? He's still *Mikingula*." Though *Mikingula* was the stage typically reached by a man at about 20-21 and lasted for the next four years, to the Tiwi it was still a stage in the life of a boy. Not until he had finished as *Mikingula* could he step out into the world and life of men. How he spent the years immediately after finishing initiation decided how soon some senior man would think sufficiently highly of him to aid him in acquiring his first ancient widow.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Friend and Foe
(1600-1928)

ON NEARLY ALL SIDES, the emptiness of a great sea surrounded the Tiwi; 131
to the south, the only path which might have led to the outside was blocked by the hostility of their nearest mainland neighbors. The Tiwi retained this isolation until the very end of the last century, even though for several centuries outsiders had been seen by them; ships passed along the coast and occasionally strangers landed or were cast ashore. Changes in the 177
life on the islands were few, however, until about 1900, when the Tiwi began their integration into the modern world.

Hostility toward Outsiders (1600-1900)

Although in June of 1636 the sailor Pieter Pieterszoon in command of 175
the ships *Cleen Amsterdam* and *Wesel* sailed along the western twenty miles of the north coast of Melville Island and named the region Van Diemensland,[1] our first real knowledge of the natives of Bathurst and Melville islands was gained by the Dutch expedition to this region in 1705 under Maarten van Delft. Men from his three ships spent about two weeks in surveying the north coast of Melville Island, the northern two-thirds of Apsley Strait between Bathurst and Melville islands, and the entire west coast of Bathurst Island.[2] They met natives several times and even allowed them aboard their ships.

Following this meeting between islanders and Europeans was a period 648
during which the natives became extremely hostile to outsiders. Tiwi distrust of 175
foreigners probably stemmed from these decades when the Portuguese on Timor were raiding Melville Island for slaves. Although very little has been

[1] Heeres 1899.
[2] *Ibid.* See also Mander Jones 1948 for some further data concerning Dutch knowledge of Melville Island.

[p. 96 blank]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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published concerning this era, such lack of information should not be taken as a refutation of such practices; the Portuguese archives remain today the only major block of libraries concerning a European colonial power important in the East Indies which has not been examined for material relevant to the history of Australia. From what little is known we may conclude that the Portuguese stopped capturing Tiwi as slaves about 1800.[8]

Even before the Portuguese made their last raids on Melville Island, another type of stranger, the "Malays" (or as we would call them today, the Indonesians), began to have encounters with the Tiwi. It was the search for the Chinese delicacy, the trepang or sea slug, which annually caused the Malays to sail past Melville Island eastward to Arnhem Land and the Gulf of Carpentaria. Neither the free-lance trepangers nor those sailing out of Macassar in the fleet of the Radaj of Boni wanted to stop at Melville Island, and they considered their misfortune to be great if their proas happened to be wrecked on its coast. They, like other Indonesians blown in to the homeland of the Tiwi, had little chance of surviving, for the Tiwi normally speared such poorly armed intruders and asked questions later.

The nineteenth century was an era of decreasing isolation for the Tiwi; during it, the outside world was knocking hard and often on their door. In 1802, a French expedition under Baudin mapped the southwestern tip of Bathurst Island, although its members apparently did not make a landing. In 1818, a British ship under P. P. King made a detailed coastal survey of Bathurst Island and all except the southeastern coast of Melville Island. Then on September 26, 1824, the British founded Fort Dundas on northwestern Melville Island, the first European settlement in the tropical part of Australia. The British and the Tiwi did not make friends. The imaginative commander of this outpost of empire, Major John Campbell, tried to capture a Tiwi and teach him sufficient English so that he could tell his tribesmen that the British would shoot them if they did not stop spearing the Englishmen and their buffalo imported from Timor. One Tiwi was captured but escaped within a fortnight under cover of darkness; meanwhile the British mourned for their doctor and storekeeper who had gotten in the way of well-aimed Tiwi spears. No native learned English. The British, disillusioned by their perpetual battle with the Tiwi and with tropical decay, abandoned Fort Dundas on March 31, 1829. Four and a half years of exposure to the British had affected the Tiwi little.

But the Tiwi were not to remain without external intruders. Shortly before 1844 a Dutch ship was wrecked on their coast. In 1858, an English vessel was lost on Melville Island. In 1869, the city now known as Darwin was founded and ships began to pass Bathurst or Melville islands almost daily. In the 1880's two ships, the *Afghan* and *Northern*, went aground off the

[8] The following statement from George Windsor Earl's *The Native Races of the Indian Archipelago: Papuans* (London: Hippolyte Bailliere, 1853, p. 210,) is probably the most significant passage concerning the Portuguese relations with Tiwi: ". . . According to . . . the older inhabitants of Timor, Melville Island was only less a source of slavery than New Guinea, in proportion to its smaller extent of surface, at the period in which the slave-trade was encouraged or connived at by the European authorities . . . ."

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

southern coast of Bathurst Island. In 1886, the Australian government tried to erect channel markers on the southern shore of Melville Island, whereupon the Tiwi immediately "salvaged" both cloth and iron from them. During June and July of the same year the ship *Jane Anderson* was stranded on the shoals of first Melville and then Bathurst Island. Also in 1886, two Malay proas were wrecked on the north coast of Melville Island. That year was a great one for looting. 175 648

Occasionally visitors came ashore on the islands. The Stokes' survey party landed in the late 1830's, but saw no natives. A government party crossed Melville Island in 1887; the Tiwi speared its leader. In 1895, a government tourist party went to look over the ruins of old Fort Dundas; they kept their eyes open and no one was injured. In 1897, Joe Cooper, a buffalo shooter, tried to make a living from the Melville Island buffalo; he was speared and retreated to Darwin.

Tiwi treatment of outsiders prior to 1900 had been to rob them, spear them, kill them. This is not, however, the picture painted by modern Tiwi when talking of their past. They claim that their ancestors greeted each new group of strangers with the cry: *"Pongki! Pongki!"* (meaning, "Peace! Peace!"). But then it should be noted that before 1900 many a Tiwi peacemaker carried a spear between his toes. Yet under these circumstances the Tiwi world view did alter. First there were those changes which came from an attempt to understand the new objects which were suddenly thrust into the Tiwi world: the trade knives and axes given by Dutch navigators, the matchlock guns used by the Malays and probably the Portuguese, the rice given to Tiwi by the surveyors under P. P. King, the Indonesian water buffalo introduced by the British at their short-lived settlement, the coconut palms the English left behind them, the cups and plates from shipwrecks in the 1880's, and the flour tossed overboard to lighten foundering vessels. The Tiwi cherished iron knives and axes, readily recognizing their greater efficiency. The Tiwi begged for them; they stole them; and, when a spar washed ashore bound round with iron bands, the natives burned away the wood and took the iron away to grind into axes. The matchlock gun, and even the later flintlock, could be coped with; when one saw the flash, one ducked flat, just in case the weapon worked, and then rushed in to impale the stranger with a spear. Rice was useless; it looked like the larvae of the termite, which was not good for anything anyway. Buffalo were to be killed; they kept wallowing in the best waterholes. Coconut palms were a great disappointment; they were bigger than the local cabbage palm, but when cut down, did not have the same succulent interior. Plates were too much bother to carry around, but cups were worth saving for a while. Flour could be used for white paint, but it was not as good as the best white pigment near at hand. [173] [411] 175 177

Other modifications took place in Tiwi life before 1900 as a result of action by outsiders. Probably the greatest of these alterations came as a result of slave raiding, or "black birding" as it is called in the South Seas. The Tiwi always kept their young women hidden from strangers, even if they were just visitors from other bands. The old men rarely left camp. Therefore, it was the 175 648 [609]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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young males who went, or were sent, to try to satisfy their curiosity and to get iron from the Portuguese—and it was these young males who would make the best slaves in Timor. The anthropologist is left to wonder to what extent the removal of a disproportionate number of young men from a group might alter the form of the society. Is it possible that such happenings might be a factor which contributed to the dominance of the old Tiwi men and their near monopoly of wives? Could it be that the politics involved in wife trading were an indirect result of the Portuguese slave raiding? The possibility at least exists, and perhaps research in Portuguese archives will give us some clearer idea of how many young Tiwi men were carried off to Timor during this period. Present-day Tiwi, of course, remember nothing about it.

The Beginning of Friendly Contact (1900-1928)

Today the Tiwi have been incorporated into the modern world as a part of the Australian nation, yet they came to understand outsiders, including Australians, through persons with many national backgrounds. Individuals who have helped to shape Tiwi views of non-Tiwi have been Indonesians, Filipinos, mainland natives from the Cobourg Peninsula, Frenchmen, and Japanese, as well as Australians from the southern parts of Australia.

The Tiwi were first drawn out of their hostile insularity by curiosity and the desire for iron, the same factors which had attracted them toward the Portuguese a century earlier. Iron looted from shipwrecks, channel markers, and the camps of casual visitors to the islands was not sufficient; the Tiwi desired a permanent avenue by which they could obtain the metal. The oldest Tiwi in the early 1950's stated that during the 1890's the Tiwi began to feel that opportunity was passing them by as they noted ship after ship sail in and out of Darwin; the islanders therefore came to the conclusion that they wanted a permanent European settlement in their midst, like the earlier Fort Dundas, for only in this way could they be guaranteed an uninterrupted source of iron.

About 1895, events began moving toward the establishment of a long-term European center on the islands. The vanguard of the movement was not European, however. In 1885, mother-of-pearl shell of commercial value was found on the bottom of Darwin Harbor. A few years of intensive diving by "Malay," "Manila," and Japanese pearlers soon worked out the Darwin beds, making it necessary for the growing fleet of pearling luggers to go further afield. They stripped the coast north of Darwin, moved on to the south coast of Melville Island, and finally began working the great shoals at the south end of Apsley Strait. Cautiously at first, the pearlers went ashore for water and firewood, Young Tiwi men became curious and paddled out to visit the luggers hove to just off the southern beaches in the neap tides. Aboard the luggers Tiwi youth had occasional meals, smoked tobacco, and were given iron tools. The Mandiimbula of southern Melville Island in particular began to look

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

forward to the periodic visits of the luggers, for they brought a new source of iron and trinkets. 175 648

Joe Cooper, the Australian buffalo hunter who had been chased out of the islands on his first attempt in 1897, returned again a few years later having first kidnaped two Tiwi women so that his mainland native helpers of the Yuwatja (Iwaidja) tribe near Cape Don could learn the language. When they had, he returned with a strong mainland detachment and well equipped with guns and horses. By 1900, European firearms were efficient weapons and a Tiwi spearman no longer could expect to kill a man armed with a modern rifle. Cooper is said never to have gone unarmed in his fifteen or so years (from about 1900-1916) as "King of Melville Island."[4]

In retrospect it is apparent that the agent through whom the Tiwi learned of the outside world was not Cooper, the white man, but his companions the Yuwatja (Iwaidja). They were more numerous and more approachable than Cooper, and several of them even had Tiwi wives whom they had captured. Tiwi accounts of these captives are noteworthy. It was the young Tiwi men hanging around Cooper's camp who suggested to the Yuwatja that they go and capture, by force of arms, Tiwi females who had recently become widows. The young men were thus performing their customary role of agents in widow remarriage—but in this case for foreign clients.

Cooper and his Yuwatja camped at various localities on Melville Island until about 1916 when their last base, at Paru opposite the site of the Mission, was abandoned and he and his mainlanders withdrew from the islands. It was this last camp at Paru that was made headquarters by Sir Baldwin Spencer, the well-known Australian anthropologist, when he visited the Tiwi in 1912.[5] [114]

While Cooper was at Paru he was also visited by a young Alsatian priest, Father Francis Xavier Gsell, M. S. C., who was contemplating establishing a mission on adjacent Bathurst Island. Cooper tried to discourage Father Gsell by telling him that the Bathurst Islanders had guns and were dangerous; apparently Cooper did not want any missionaries around his rough-and-ready establishment. But Father Gsell did not scare easily; in June 1911 he returned and built his mission station on the southeast corner of Bathurst Island, where it still stands today. Cooper left Paru permanently about five years later. 175 797

By 1916, five years after its founding, the Mission had two French priests, several French nuns and some Filipino workmen, and a lugger which ran to and from Port Darwin once a month. It was not until the nuns came that the local Tiwi put any trust in the missionaries; they could not understand why a man who claimed to be as important as Father Gsell claimed to be did not have any wives. When the nuns arrived, the Tiwi were more ready to accept the priest as "a big man" and began to bring their women around.

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[4] Hardly a year goes by without a newspaper in Australia running a Sunday supplement article on Cooper's stay at Melville Island. Such stories often are titled "The King of Melville Island" and are normally extremely romanticised.

[5] Spencer 1914. Spencer's account of the Tiwi is remarkably inaccurate and confused. On this trip to the Northern Territory in 1912 he was without his usual collaborator, Gillen.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

439 175 [177] [197] Thus Cooper with his well-armed retinue of mainlanders had made the islands safe for white men and introduced a desire for white men's goods, particularly tobacco. His retirement from Melville Island left the newly established Mission on Bathurst Island as the only source of supply for these goods. After World War I, however, another influence began to grow in importance. Large numbers of Japanese pearling boats came and anchored off the coasts of southern and southeastern Melville Island, where they traded with the local bands—the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula. These bands got tobacco and European-type food (flour, rice, tea, sugar) from the Japanese in quantities which the Catholic missionaries could not afford to provide; all the Japanese asked in return was access to young native women. Men who controlled many women—as fathers, as husbands, or as brothers—were thus in a favorable position to profit by the traffic with the Japanese.

177 197 Whereas the demands made by the Japanese on the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula for women were quite straightforward and uncomplicated, Father Gsell's demands on the bands of south Bathurst Island were somewhat more complex in their consequences. Many aspects of the old pattern of Tiwi life had to be abandoned to make them into Christians. To the missionaries, polygamy was sinful and could not be part of the new Tiwi life. Prenatal and infant bestowal had to be abolished. Marriages should be between agemates and should be arranged freely and solely by the couple involved. Such changes were the crux of Father Gsell's program, and the story of how he went about it has run in many a Sunday supplement in the cities of Australia under the title "The Bishop With 150 Wives."[6] Father Gsell did not try to convert or drastically change the behavior of the older Tiwi; he believed that they were too set in their ways. Rather, he built toward a distant day by working among the younger generation. When infant girls became widows, he purchased them from their fathers. Men with young widowed daughters and those with spare young wives sold such girls for axes, flour, tobacco, cloth, and trinkets. Such "Blackies," as they became affectionately called,[7] lived in the convent with the French (and later Australian) sisters. When such a girl reached the age of about 18, she was asked to choose one of the young single men for her husband. For his part in this excellent deal which provided him with a wife long before he would get one under the old tribal system, the young man had only to promise that he would never take another wife. Such a wedding was not a Mass, for neither party was Catholic. However, the children born of this new union were baptized and reared as Catholics. Later, a few of the girls who had been sold to Father Gsell before they were ten went through confirmation as did their youthful fiances. The first nuptial Mass between two such Tiwi took place in 1928.

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[6] Father Gsell became Bishop of Darwin in 1938. He lived on in retirement to 1958, having seen in his lifetime the fulfilment of his dream of the Tiwi as a Catholic tribe.

[195 551] [7] The Tiwi today strongly resent being called "African," "Negro," or "nigger," but they do not seem to mind being called "Blacks." The term "Blackie" for a young female is in general use by Mission school girls for themselves; it is in no sense derogatory.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

When between the mid-1920's and the early 1940's the Japanese began to give trade goods to men for sexual access to their wives, Father Gsell's missionization program ran into competition. The Japanese gave the old Tiwi males a much better deal than did Father Gsell. The Japanese with their continuous payment for access to women poured into the households of these old men the same sort of goods which Gsell provided. But in the case of the Japanese, the goods were paid time and again over a matter of years and the old father or husband was kept permanently in tobacco and food. Thus, oddly indeed, the two chief outside influences which came to bear upon the traditional Tiwi system of marriage, after about 1920, were both agencies which were anxious (for entirely different reasons and ends) to "buy" young girls and pay their ancient husbands or fathers for relinquishing them; temporarily in the case of the Japanese, permanently in the case of the missionaries. The Tiwi could scarcely be expected to cease putting a high value on women, and upon control over women, under these conditions.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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The Tiwi Today

Changes since 1930

THERE WERE in 1929 only two year-round settlements of outsiders which were significant to the Tiwi. One was Bathurst Island Mission, by then nearly twenty years old, the only permanent white-man establishment on the islands. It acted as the main exit point for travel to Darwin, the other focus of Tiwi life. There was also the large camp of Mandiimbula and Yeimpi on the south coast of Melville Island, which owed its existence to the sexual arrangement between the Tiwi and Japanese pearlers.

In the 1930's, the centers of Tiwi activity shifted somewhat. The Australian government successfully broke up the camp located on the south coast by transporting nearly all of the Yeimpi to Darwin and by sending patrol boats out to discourage the Japanese from frequenting the area. In about 1935, the Japanese moved their base for contact with the Tiwi north to the region of Garden Point, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, just beyond the ruins of old Fort Dundas. Around the great fresh-water pool on the beach at that locality there developed a Tiwi camp like that which formerly had existed on the south coast; however, the native bands involved were no longer the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula but the Malauila, Munupula, Wilrangwila, and Turupula of northern Bathurst and Melville islands. The government again attempted to control sexual activities between Tiwi and Japanese, but to get to this spot a patrol boat from Darwin had to travel along forty miles of indented coastline which amplified and seemed to project every throb of an engine toward the ears of the Japanese miles away. The patrol boats found that they could not sneak up on the pearlers unannounced and, therefore, could not catch them in the act of cohabiting with native women.

By the late 1930's, pressure from missionary and other humanitarian circles in the southern part of Australia forced the government to attempt to terminate, or at least to control, the trade pattern which had become estab-

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648 lished between the northern Tiwi and the Japanese. A government ration depot was founded at Garden Point about 1939 and many of the local Tiwi females were taken by the government to Darwin in order to stop their use by Japanese pearlers. However, by that time many Japanese half-castes had been born to the women.

797 In 1940, a new Catholic mission was established at Garden Point to care for these half-castes. This Melville Island Mission brought together not only the island part-aborigines, but also other Catholic half-castes from all over the Northern Territory. By late 1940, it became clear that the existence 648 of a government depot for aborigines at Garden Point was incompatible with a policy aimed toward educating the adjacent half-caste children for life as members of the white Australian community. The government ration cen- [164] ter was removed to Snake Bay. Also, by 1940, the government had begun to remove lepers from both Bathurst and Melville islands to a leprosarium on Channel Island in Darwin harbor. Here, over the following years, developed a community of Tiwi which often numbered as many as forty persons. At Channel Island they found themselves forcefully confined amongst natives from many mainland tribes. Tiwi who returned from Channel Island after [177] years of residence there were more sophisticated in European ways than their fellow-tribesmen and found themselves agents of white Australian culture.

The winter (our summer) of 1941 was the last in which the Japanese came to Garden Point. The Catholic brothers who were there at the time viewed at least one extraordinary event in those months before Pearl Harbor. On this occasion, a man in the uniform of a Japanese naval officer was seen aboard the mother ship of the Japanese pearling fleet which called in at Garden Point; under Australian law neither ship nor officer were allowed within the three-mile limit. Pearl Harbor occurred a few months later.

The year 1942 brought modern warfare to the Tiwi. An American plane running out of the Philippines lacked enough fuel to get to Darwin; it landed on the small airstrip at Bathurst Island Mission. Then on February 19, 1942, Darwin was bombed. Japanese planes flew over Bathurst Island Mission on their way to commit what became "Australia's Pearl Harbor." Father McGrath, the local priest, recognized the raiders as Japanese and radioed his warning into Darwin twenty minutes before the horror commenced. The message went unheeded and the loss of life and property was great. Bathurst Island Mission was itself strafed, possibly for the attempt to warn Darwin. The bombing of Darwin left the Northern Territory in chaos. The white residents evacuated southward by any means at hand; in one case, two men drove a road grader seventy miles "down the track" before they felt safe enough to stop.

The disruption of the Tiwi community was as great as that of the white settlement at Darwin, although no Tiwi were killed in the bombing and strafing by the Japanese. The Catholic authorities realized that they could not [797] guarantee a food supply to the natives, and the Tiwi families at the Mission were sent to the bush to support themselves. Tipperary, a Tiwi who was by 1942 an old hand in Darwin, told Pilling (1954) of the privation he had [177] endured when he had taken to the bush and had not had a smoke for four months after the attack on Darwin.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

months after the attack on Darwin. Many of the older Tiwi who were in Darwin during the bombing did not survive the war; the psychological strain and lack of sufficient food was too much for them. Genealogies show that an unusual number of deaths occurred among Tiwi between 1942 and 1946.

When Western food supplies again became available, the old Tiwi bush living seems to have departed. The Tiwi suddenly realized their full dependence upon the products which only the whites could provide. As the war came to an end and one after another of the temporary military bases were abandoned, the missionaries and the Tiwi salvaged what they could, transporting large amounts of corrugated iron to Bathurst Island Mission for native huts. The Tiwi were drawn together around the Mission in larger numbers than ever before, their camps ranging in a line along the Mission beach. The majority of the Tiwi, about 600, considered Bathurst Island Mission their home, although some of the young adult males spent most of the year in Darwin. About 90 islanders lived adjacent to the half-caste Melville Island Mission at Garden Point. Another 150 were permanently located at the government settlement at Snake Bay. The remaining Tiwi, about 150, were year-round residents of Darwin; over one hundred lived at Bagot Native Compound and at an unsupervised native camp at Point Gunn directly opposite the southernmost tip of Melville Island; the rest were inmates at the leper colony. The resulting total population of about 950, in 1954, is only about a hundred less than the figure of 1062 which Hart obtained in his census of 1928-29.

Marriage Arrangements

We have discussed how, under the traditional Tiwi pattern of life, the greatest energies of mature males were expended in bargaining with each other for new wives. The old social system was one which had as normal features prenatal and early childhood engagements for females, remarriage for all widows, considerable age difference between marriage partners, and polygamy. The new Catholic system introduced by Father Gsell outlawed, or at least discouraged, polygamous marriages, nuptial unions between persons of greatly differing ages, and all prenatal or childhood betrothals. As indicated, Father Gsell initiated his new policies by purchasing young females and then allowing them to choose their own partners from among their single agemates.

It is of interest to inspect the actual circumstances surrounding one of the earliest unions which took place under Father Gsell's supervision. About 1914, Polly, an attractive young female who had already had a rather checkered career, having been stolen by a Yuwatja male from her rightful mate, was "stolen back" by another Tiwi, Timalarua of the Rangwila. Polly, however, decided that she did not want an old husband like Timalarua, so she ran away to the sisters and Father Gsell. In time, old Timalarua allowed Father Gsell to buy this wife who did not want to live with him. Shortly afterward, Father Gsell asked Polly whom she wanted to marry. Polly named Cabbagee as the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

159 177 584 797 mate of her choice and the couple soon set up housekeeping with Father Gsell's blessing. This was, at least, how the missionary saw it.

But what were the real circumstances surrounding this "free choice" by Polly? Her real father—that is, the husband to whom her mother Rita was married when Polly was born—had promised Polly to Kardu. Timalarua had "stolen" Polly from Kardu, her rightful husband. Nor is this the whole story. Rita had been "stolen" by Puti from Polly's father Turimpi. After several fights between Puti and the aging Turimpi and after Rita's complete refusal to return to Turimpi, Turimpi allowed Puti to keep Rita as his wife. Polly, however, was ultimately to go to the man to whom she had been promised, Kardu. But Puti, as the potential next father of Polly, had promised Cabbagee that as soon as Kardu died Polly was to be Cabbagee's wife. That is, when Polly chose Cabbagee as her mate she was only bypassing Kardu and taking as her husband the next normal alternative open to her.

When one considers what parts of Father Gsell's reform were significant in this case, one finds that only late consummation of marriage, monogamy, and marriage between agemates were important. A female did not actually have a "free choice" of her mate as Father Gsell had hoped and, in fact, had specified. She selected a youth to whom one of her relatives had at least tentatively promised her. Or (to put it in Hart's terms) she married—under Mission auspices—a young man who had at least a second or third mortgage on her.

159 177 595 797 Let us follow the case of Cabbagee's marriage further. He married Polly when he was about 23; he was too young to be married in the old pattern and was, therefore, happy to get a wife and be on his way up the social ladder. But when the next female promised to him (before her birth) came of age and he collected her, Polly made a terrific row. She did not want any younger female around her household as a second wife and told the priest at the Mission so. He in turn deprived Cabbagee of all gifts of tobacco and food and sent him and his family to the bush to think over the matter. After a few months, Cabbagee decided that he wanted tobacco and that after all the only place he could get it was at the Mission. He and his family returned and he gave up his second wife to Father Gsell, for a payment of food.

Younger men who were getting wives from among Father Gsell's convent girls thus found that they were unwise to accept a second wife from any other source. But such a young man, married under Catholic auspices, soon 584 557 found that he could enhance his prestige without invoking criticism from the Mission if he gathered around him his own female relatives, the younger of whom he could give away later, one at a time, to men of his choice. A married man like Cabbagee, who gave another man his sister or sister's daughter, was in a position to ask all sorts of favors from the recipient, especially gifts of food, tobacco, and trade goods, and support in politics.

177 583 By the end of World War II, even these newer concepts of marriage agreement had begun to alter. There were many young Christian females desiring to have husbands whose fathers and brothers were not asking further wives as repayment. The fathers began to ask for new types of concessions

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

from their future sons-in-law and demands which look very much like bride price and bride service developed as a basis for marriage arrangement. A young girl had a relatively "free choice" of her future spouse. But following this selection, her father let it be known to the young man what he expected. The desired payment was often stated in Australian money by the 1950's; some men were asking as much as a hundred pounds for a daughter. (This was a very high sum, since Tiwi males working for the Army received four pounds a week as normal wages.) Other men were asking that their sons-in-law live with them, thus leaving their own parental home, and contribute regularly to the upkeep of the household of the father-in-law. This was, indeed, quite a practical arrangement, for when such a young man went to work in Darwin his wife had to be supervised at home and, further, his employer was supposed to send home to the Mission part of the young man's wages.

Thus, by 1954, the following type of marriage agreement was initiated by the great majority of Tiwi with marriageable daughters, specifically those who centered their activities at Bathurst Island Mission and Garden Point. A young girl chose her future husband from her single, male agemates, sometimes with a suggestion from her father. Her father informed his future son-in-law of the obligations incumbent upon him, which normally included matrilocal postmarital residence and a bride price. An older woman with children, or even one without any offspring, who became a widow, was discouraged from remarrying by her father, if he survived, and by her brother after her father's death. The father or eldest brother of a widow with a daughter reaped the benefits of allowing that daughter to marry the young man whom she desired. The widow herself did not remarry but stayed in the household of her father or brother.

Residence Patterns

By 1953, traditional Tiwi residence patterns had undergone major modifications, some of which have already been mentioned. The old residence areas of the bands had been depopulated; in fact, nearly all the Tiwi were located around one of four European establishments—those at Darwin, Bathurst Island Mission, Garden Point, or Snake Bay. In each of these areas a centralized village pattern had developed. Within the Tiwi communities at Snake Bay, Garden Point, and Bathurst Island Mission there remained a few of the old large households with a polygamous base. But in all these camps the household heads were well past sixty and in most cases past seventy. Polygamous households were dying out by 1953.

But what was replacing them? One might assume that the European pattern of the single family household based upon neolocal residence would have emerged as the new Tiwi system. This was not the case, however. Just as Hart found in 1928-29 that successful Tiwi men were the heads of large establishments, so in 1953-54 the younger male leaders had gathered around

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 592 them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that 159 177 592 his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few uncomfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose [736 968] deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased [584 589] younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Carmel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were [607] two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1] [602] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

177 162 571 We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a listing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent. [766] Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had 604 584 177 daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

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riage with a boy who was willing to become the "worker" of the girl's controller.[8]

From the economic standpoint, the large household has much the same function as before the days of the Mission. The younger women go out together and gather food; the old women stay home with the young children. The younger men bring home choice items, which now are trade goods and money from Darwin. The "boss" of the great household is wealthy; today, he has food, tobacco, clothes, and usually sufficient money to gamble. The composition of the great households has altered, but their function is very much the same. The establishment of the monogamous Catholic Cabbagee is even larger than that of the polygamous old pagan, Ki-in-kumi, described in an earlier chapter; Cabbagee, with only one wife, has more women under his "control" than ever Ki-in-kumi had, despite his list of twenty-one wives. The Tiwi have thus been able to retain their large households even under the Mission-imposed system of monogamy.

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The Change from Patriliny to Matriliny

In the pre-Cooper era of feuding, the largest significant units among the Tiwi were the bands; the Tiwi never, in that by-gone day, acted as a tribe, even in their attacks upon such outsiders as the British. In the 1950's, when informants talked of the old days they commonly mentioned that male members of old bands came together as units to go on war parties. These old bands did not have a strict rule of descent. But, as has already been indicated, the majority of the males were regarded all their lives as members of the band to which their father belonged. That is, the major unit of the old Tiwi social structure was patrilineal in emphasis.

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There also existed in the old Tiwi pattern a strictly matrilineal clan organization, related primarily to totemism. One of the totemic animals of a clan stood for a member of that clan in the song composed to commemorate his death; for instance, the first line of the mourning song for a deceased male of the Red Paint Clan might be "I am red paint." Occasionally, several members of a clan helped one of their number in a fight, but this was apparently not very common before the Mission era. This clan-organization pattern prevailed among the Tiwi through about 1930. Then major and most unpredictable changes began.

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What does one expect to happen when a society which has a patrilineal emphasis, like the old Tiwi one, comes into contact with a European society where, if there is any emphasis, it is a patrilineal one? Although one would ordinarily expect a strengthening of patriliny, such was not the case among the Tiwi. The old social unit which was predominantly patrilineal was a territorial group with its major functions in the system of feuding. When the

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[8] By 1953, the terms "boss" and "worker" had come into the local Tiwi dialect to indicate superordinate and subordinate status interrelationships.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 feuding system departed and the Tiwi community became more centralized,
611 especially around the Bathurst Island Mission, the utility of the old band
614 organization diminished and the underlying clan organization dominated. Sud-
621 denly, fighting was no longer in terms of band membership, for the matrilineal clan had become the only social unit of significance.

Today young Tiwi often deny that they have any band membership. But it is not unknown for teen-age Tiwi males to lie awake at night counting
[578] up the members of their matrilineal clan. According to informants, in the 1940's and 50's the major fights which occurred at Bathurst Island Mission were interclan skirmishes.

177 Thus, among the Tiwi, we have an example of how a society with a patrilineal emphasis under strong influence from another society with a
611 patrilineal emphasis may, if there is an underlying matrilineal organization, become a society which is for all practical purposes solely matrilineal. The introductory student of anthropology is thereby warned that characterizations of societies as matrilineal or patrilineal are rarely adequate to form the basis for reconstructing past or predicting future forms of such societies.

Tiwi and the Australian Nation

648 Finally, let us consider those aspects of modern Tiwi life which attract national attention in Australia. What do the newspaper-reading members of the Australian public know about the Tiwi?

Probably the best known Tiwi is a male in his thirties, formerly known to other Tiwi and local residents of Darwin as Bobby Wilson. About 1953, an Australian movie producer, Charles Chauvel, went hunting for a "full-blood" aborigine who could act well enough to portray an aboriginal male in what became the Australian movie "Jedda." In Darwin, the producer found a football star from the Darwin group of Tiwi who could fill the part. Bobby Wilson soon was billed as Robert Tudawali.[3] He went "on location" at several spots in the Territory and finally traveled to Sydney for the studio shooting. The Sydney papers caught his story and spread his bearded face over the country. Bobby Wilson's photo from the local newspaper was hung up in several native huts at Bathurst Island Mission. After much publicity, he ultimately returned to his wife and their hut in the Bagot Native Compound in Darwin. Again the newshounds caught his story. According to them, he had returned to a life of degradation. The Australian public was shocked that a star of one of their best films should be discarded to live again like every other aborigine in Darwin. Tudawali was "rescued" and given a second role in another Australian film.

177 Bobby Wilson was only one of a large number of young Tiwi who are
526 recognized as fine athletes. There are two football teams in Darwin which have
648 Tiwi members: the Catholic team, St. Mary's, which often takes the local

[3] The last name Tudawali is an attempt to spell the Tiwi word for shark.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pennant, and the Wanderers, which draws from the permanent native population in Darwin and includes such Tiwi as Bobby Wilson. It is normal for one of these Tiwi players to be considered among the top three in Darwin football circles. 177 526 648

For a while, Edmund, a Tiwi from Bathurst Island Mission, was one of the players on the newly organized St. Mary's basketball team; other Tiwi have played on the Bagot Compound basketball team. Billy Larrakeyah, a Darwin Tiwi, was thought to have Olympic potentialities as a javelin thrower, but strained his arm in the try-outs.[4] Most recently, a group of young Catholic Tiwi has been organized into a water polo team called the Seals. National magazines suggest that they may be the best water polo team in the country, but so far they have not gone south to play any non-Darwin group.

Tiwi carving and painting have had recent popularity in Australian art circles. Traditional Tiwi graveposts are finely carved in geometric designs and painted with precise and complex networks of cross-hatching and other simple, but effective, motifs. The first modern innovation in Tiwi art occurred about 1945 when a native known as Katu (or Short Katu) made his first attempt to carve a human figure atop a mourning post. When Pilling later asked Katu why he had carved this post, he said, "Me see 'm along Darwin. Me savvy." That is, Katu transferred the concept of Western realistic statuary in the round into the Tiwi art form. He carved a second realistic post for presentation to Queen Elizabeth II in 1954. More recently, Tiwi carvers at Snake Bay have taken to realistic carving. Two figurines, both carved by Tiwi at Snake Bay, were given to the Perth Museum in 1958. Sixteen mourning posts from Snake Bay were purchased by the National Art Gallery in Sydney the same year. An art display of Tiwi carving has been held in the United States in Philadelphia. 177 532 322

Tiwi have received recognition in the Northern Territory for other art forms. One of the thirty-year-old female Tiwi at Bathurst Island Mission usually takes first prize for embroidery at the annual Territorial fair. There has also been interest shown by outsiders in the double-barbed ceremonial spears. Male Tiwi skill in dancing has attracted wide attention in Australia. When natives from all over the Territory were sent to dance before Queen Elizabeth in Queensland during her 1954 tour, three Tiwi were among the delegation. The Tiwi contingent, directed by the innovator Short Katu, made every news story covering this part of the Royal Visit. In Darwin, when Bagot Compound needs to raise money for native participation in sports, the Tiwi, usually led by Katu, present a public dance. As a result, Katu's clan under his direction has invented many new dances for white Australian audiences. 177 [531] 177 535 648

Perhaps we may look forward to the day when American television audiences can enjoy such a Tiwi dance, one of Australia's best native products. Yet only sixty years ago, and therefore in the lifetime of many people still living, very few Tiwi had even seen a white man, and white men who set foot on Tiwi soil, like Cooper in his first attempt in 1897, were ferociously chased out.

[4] He was killed in a brawl in Darwin in the spring of 1959.

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GARDINER, LYNDSAY, 1957, *Pacific Peoples*. London, Melbourne, New York: Longmans, Green.

The Australian Aborigines

BERNDT, R. M. and C. H., 1952, *The First Australians*. Sydney: Ure Smith.

A short, simple, and very sound attempt to summarize the life of the aborigines for the general reader. Written by two professional anthropologists (a husband and wife team) with extensive fieldwork experience in Arnhem Land.

DARK, ELEANOR, 1941, *The Timeless Land*. New York: Macmillan.

Written in novel form but draws heavily upon documentary sources, both of history and anthropology. Concerned with the impact of the early white settlers upon the culture of the aborigines.

HART, C. W. M., 1954, The Sons of Turimpi. *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 56, 242-261.

Brief article that uses five Tiwi brothers to show that "personalities" in simple cultures differ as much as among ourselves and therefore disputes the theory that people in simple cultures are standardized.

MOUNTFORD, CHARLES P., 1948, *Brown Men and Red Sand*. Melbourne: Robertson and Mullens.

The author has traveled extensively in the most barren and isolated areas of Central Australia and therefore among the most isolated and primitive surviving tribesmen. Excellent pictures of native life in the deserts.

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By an Australian newspaperman who writes in very superior journalistic style about the "primitive areas" of the Pacific. Very informative and up-to-date. (The same author has two other books, *Adam with Arrows* (1954) and *Adam in Plumes* (1955), describing the natives of New Guinea.)

SPENCER, BALDWIN, and F. J. GILLEN, 1927, *The Arunta* (2 vols.). London: Macmillan.

Usually regarded as an anthropological classic. Deals with the Arunta as they were about 1910. Written by a professor of zoology, who visited, and a policeman, who lived with, the Arunta. Gives much space to ceremonials and little to interpersonal relations and everyday life.

WARNER, W. LLOYD, 1937, *A Black Civilization*. New York: Harper.

Very good account of the Murngin of eastern Arnhem Land. Much more modern than Spencer and Gillen and strong at the points where they are weak. The author later used the same fieldwork methods to study Yankee City in New England.

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THE TIWI
THEIR ART MYTH AND CEREMONY

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1944 THE ART OF ALBERT NAMATJIRA

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1956 THE ART, MYTH AND SYMBOLISM OF ARNHEM LAND

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FRONTISPIECE

Wurarbui, the Pukamani Leader, decorated for the Ceremony

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[FRONTISPIECE]

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THE TIWI

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their Art, Myth and Ceremony

CHARLES P. MOUNTFORD

with 64 plates, 2 in colour
15 line drawings and a map

PHOENIX HOUSE · LONDON
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CONTENTS

Illustrations 7
Acknowledgments 12
Introduction 13

000

I. THE ART OF THE TIWI 19
1. The Art Forms 19
2. Mediums of Expression 19
3. Techniques 20
4. The Artists 21

II. THE CREATION PERIOD 23
1. The Creation of the Land of the Tiwi 24
2. The First Inhabitants 25
3. The Death of Purukupali 29
4. The Pukamuni of Purukupali 30
5. The Close of the Creation Period 35
6. The Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places 38

III. THE PUKAMUNI CEREMONY 60
1. Beliefs in the Spirits of the Dead 61
2. Death and Burial 63
3. Customs associated with the Grave 67
4. The Preliminary Ceremonies, the Ilanias 68
5. The Final Pukamuni Rituals 81
6. The Facial Decorations 92
7. The Pukamuni Dances 95
8. The Ceremonial Objects 97
9. The Message Sticks 98
10. The Burial Poles 107
11. The Carved and Painted Figures 118

IV. THE KULAMA CEREMONY 122
1. The Mythological Origin 123
2. The Preliminary Rituals of the Kulama 128
3. The Final Kulama Ceremony 130

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

000 V. THE SPIRIT PEOPLE OF THE TIWI 144
1. The Meteor-men, the Papinjuwaris 144
2. The Spirit Children, the Pitipituis 146
3. The Paramanuas 150
4. The Sea-dogs, the Wankuis 154
5. The Rainbow, Maratji 154

VI. THE SECULAR BARK PAINTINGS 160
1. Topography 160
2. The Sea and the Swamp-lands 163
3. The Fauna 165
4. The Flora 166
5. Miscellaneous and Unidentified 168

VII. THE ASTRONOMY OF THE TIWI 170

Conclusion 178
References 181
Index 183

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

ILLUSTRATIONS

Plates

000

Frontispiece Wurarbuti, Leader of Pukamuni Ceremony

facing page 20

Plate 1. Artists of the Tiwi: A Pulanimbuwi, B Inbidjarmeri, C Tjamalampua, D Malumerinita

between pages 32 *and* 33

Plate 2. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A D E Pukamuni of Purukupali; B C Death of Purukupali

Plate 3. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B Journey to Pukamuni of Purukupali; C Decorations at Pukamuni Ceremony; D E Designs for Pukamuni Poles

Plate 4. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B C D Honey-eater, Murupianga

Plate 5. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B C D Sun-woman, Wuriupi

Plate 6. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B Sun-woman, Wuriupi; C D Honey-eater, Murupianga

Plate 7. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A Honey-eater, Murupianga; B C D Sun-woman, Wuriupi

Plate 8. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B C D Turtle, Murupianga

Plate 9. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B Eucalyptus Tree, Panindu; C D Fresh Water, Wailu

Plate 10. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A Crocodile, Mundinju; B Frog, Wailu; C Cat-fish, Pirilou; D Pakadringa, Wailu

Plate 11. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B Crocodile, Wilindu; C D Fish, Arangu

Plate 12. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A Eucalyptus Tree, Mandumpi; B D Red Ochre, Numanira; C Turtle, Jutapinta

Plate 13. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A C Spider, Rungani; B D Eucalyptus Tree, Alaparima

Plate 14. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B Eucalyptus Tree, Putawini; C D Eucalyptus Tree, Patuapuru

Plate 15. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B C D Eucalyptus Tree, Putawini

Plate 16. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A Eucalyptus Tree,

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000 Putawini; B Crocodile, Cape Fourcroy; C White Cockatoo, Milapuru; D Bush-fire Woman, Turiturina

Plate 17. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B Sand-fly, Murninini; C Sand-fly, Cape Fourcroy; D Sand-fly, Tallau

Plate 18. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A Eucalyptus Tree, Rulijunga; B Pandanus Tree, Primadua; C March-fly, Kudjatumpi; D Yam, Primadua

Plate 19. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B Blow-fly, Muranapi and Waitbak; C D Eucalyptus Tree, Buchanan Island

Plate 20. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B Fork-tailed Kite, Arunumpi; C D Flying fox and Bamboo, Muranapi

Plate 21. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B March-fly, Bonkaitji

between pages 44 *and* 45

Plate 22. Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places: A B Lightning-woman, Wailu; C Ningauis, Imaluna; D Ningauis, Imaluna

Plate 23. Pukamuni Rituals: A Pulanimbuwi decorated for Burial Rituals; B Pulanimbuwi Mourning; C Rite of Wandiatapinda; D Final Scene at Grave; E Washing Pulanimbuwi

between pages 72 *and* 73

Plate 24. Pukamuni Rituals: A Feeding Pukamuni Man; B Rite of Wandiatapinda; C The Grave; D Belongings of Dead Man

Plate 25. Pukamuni Rituals: A Young Girls and Men Dancing; B Feeding Pukamuni Workers; C Women and Boys Dancing; D Ceremonial Fight at Ilania

Plate 26. Final Pukamuni Rituals: A Erecting Poles on Grave; B Arranging Gifts for Workers; C The Basket Dance; D Urumatjina's Dance

Plate 27. Final Pukamuni Rituals: A Chief Woman Mourner; B Scene at Burial Poles; C Mourning at Burial Poles; D Presentation of Gifts

facing page 92

Plate 28. Ceremonial Facial Decorations: A Wadjeniati Initiate; B Water-snake, Tuluma; C Shark, Tuduwala; D Fish, Mungumini; E Thunder-man, Pakadringa; F Salmon, Kumuninu; G March-fly, Kudjatumpi; H Boobook-owl, Purutjikini; J Barn-owl, Pintoma; O Ningaui; K L M N P Q R S T U unidentified

between pages 88 *and* 89

Plate 29. Totemic Dances: A Jabiru, Tjalati; B Owl, Pintoma; C Lizard, Kilpuruni; D Frog, Kwouk-kwouk

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0120 Tiwi 0120

Plate 30. Totemic Dances: A Moon; B Rain; C Flying fox; D Wild Honey; E Crocodile; F Amburu; G Shark; H Skinny Fish; J Sea-eagle; K Ningaui

Plate 31. Ceremonial Decorations: A D G Chest Ornaments, Pukabinda; B Goose-feather Ball, Tokwianga; C False Beard, Baludi; E F Arm Ornaments, Palmatjinas; H Cane Arm Bands, Jairinis

Plate 32. Ceremonial Objects and Burial Poles: A Male Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaringa; B Female Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaguni; C Forked Throwing Stick, Miluanta; D Plain Throwing Stick, Muruguna; E G Tool for Body Painting, Porta; F Scratching Stick, Murubunga; H J Pukamuni Burial Poles

between pages 120 *and* 121

Plate 33. Carved and Painted Burial Poles: A Poles at Old Grave; B Painting Burial Poles; C Cutting Burial Pole

Plate 34. Carved and Painted Burial Poles

Plate 35. Carved and Painted Burial Pole

Plate 36. Carved and Painted Burial Poles

Plate 37. Carved and Painted Burial Poles

Plate 38. Carved and Painted Burial Poles: A B C Carved Pole on an old Grave; D Old Grave

Plate 39. Carved and Painted Burial Poles

Plate 40. Carved and Painted Burial Figures

Plate 41. Carved and Painted Burial Figures

Plate 42. Body Decorations of Kulama Initiation: A B C D E F Marukumuni; G Kilipaniati; H Wadjeniati; J K Mikinatrina; L Kulama Design; M Mikinatarima, Mikintara and Mikingula

between pages 128 *and* 129

Plate 43. Bark Paintings of Kulama Ceremony: A B Kulama Ceremonial Ornaments; C Kulama Ceremony; D Food Baskets at Kulama Ceremony

Plate 44. The Kulama Ceremony: A Chanting Kulama Songs; B Placing Kulama Yams in Oven; C Ritual before collecting Kulama Yam; D Kulama Yam

between pages 144 *and* 145

Plate 45. The Kulama Ceremony: A Building Kulama Fire; B Placing Kulama Yams in Water; C Pressing Heated Sand against Joints; D Deserted Kulama Oven

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0120 Tiwi 0120

between pages 154 *and* 155

000 Plate 46. Bark Paintings of Spirit People: A Pitipituis at Wulrungku; B Pitipituis at Cape Fourcroy; C D Pitipituis at Purapundili and Unakumbi

Plate 47. Bark Paintings of Spirit People: A B Spirits of the Dead, Mopaditis; C F Meteor-men, Papinjuwaris; D Sea-dogs, Wankuis; E Caves, Homes of Wankuis

Plate 48. Bark Paintings of Spirit People: A B The Rainbow-spirit, Maratji, at Kulimbini; C Maratji at Maundu; D Maratji at Goose Creek

between pages 160 *and* 161

Plate 49. Secular Bark Paintings: A B Topography, Cape Van Diemen; C D Topography, Imilu

Plate 50. Secular Bark Paintings: A Sea-floor; B Mangrove Swamp; C Fish-man, Kumunga; D Topography, Bathurst Island

Plate 51. Secular Bark Paintings: A B Topography, Garden Point; C D Topography, Snake Bay

Plate 52. Secular Bark Paintings: A B Sea-coast, Cape Van Diemen; C Lagoons and Swamps; D The Sea-shore; E Jungle Scene

Plate 53. Secular Bark Paintings: A Forest, Curtis Haven; B C Topography, Snake Bay; D Fresh and Salt-water Streams; E Topography, Goose Creek; F Sea-scape

Plate 54. Secular Bark Paintings: A Maratji, Goose Creek; B Sea-shore; C Sea and Sea-coast; D Marine Creatures; E Topography, Snake Bay; F Jungle

Plate 55. Secular Bark Paintings: A B Sea and Shore Creatures; C Sea-going Turtles; D Barramundi; E Sea-snakes

Plate 56. Secular Bark Paintings: A B Creatures of the Sea; C Jelly-fish; D Saw-fish

Plate 57. Secular Bark Paintings: A Edible Fruits; B Poisonous Yams; C Goanna; D Sea-snakes; E Sponges

Plate 58. Secular Bark Paintings: A Chevron Body Scars; B Wet-season Sky; C Honey-bearing Trees; D Unidentified

Plate 59. Secular Bark Paintings: A B C D Unidentified

Plate 60. Astronomical Bark Paintings: A B The Sun and the Moon; C Unidentified; D The Milky Way

Plate 61. Astronomical Bark Paintings: A B The Sun, Moon and Stars; C D The Moon

Plate 62. Astronomical Bark Paintings: A The Milky Way; B Orion and the Pleiades; C The Night Sky; D The Moon and his Wives

Plate 63. Astronomical Bark Paintings: A B Sun-woman; C The Milky Way; D The Sky and the Upper World

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

FIGURES

1. Totemic Map of Melville and Bathurst Islands page 14 000
2. Methods of Holding Brushes 21
3. Spear-throwing Contest of Pipinjawari 34
4. Ceremonial Ground, Waniamperi's Pukamuni 82
5. Message Sticks: A Numanira; B Puntubu; C Muranapi; D Pirilou; E Secular; F G H Pukamuni Ceremonial 99
6. Message Sticks: A E Imilu; B Ceremonial; C Wurlupi; D Secular; F Kudatumpi; G H Invitation to Secular Ceremony; J Muranapi 101
7. Message Sticks: A B Buchanan Island; C Notification of Death; D Buchanan Island 105
8. Burial Poles 109
9. Carved and Painted Burial Pole 113
10. Ningaui in Mangrove Swamp at Imalana 125
11. Ningauis performing Kulama Ceremony 127
12. Meteor-man, Papinjuwari 145
13. Spirit Children, Pitipituis, at Purapundili 148
14. Paramanua Man and his Family 151
15. Paramanua Man and his Camp 153
16. Rainbow-spirit, Maratji 158

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

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INTRODUCTION

MELVILLE ISLAND (Fig. 1), the research field of the 1954 National Geographic expedition, is, with the exception of Tasmania, the largest of the Australian islands. Eighty miles from east to west, and seventy from north to south, it rises barely five hundred feet above the sea. Its level surface is covered with a monotonous grey-green forest of eucalypts and acacias, whose monotony is broken only by the steep cliffs and sandy beaches of the coastline, the salt-water creeks which cut deeply into the northern coasts, and the almost impenetrable mangrove swamps that line those waterways.

Between Melville Island and the mainland are the swiftly running tideways, the reefs and shoals of the Clarence and Dundas Straits, tideways so dangerous that, before the installation of a series of flashing light-buoys, no ocean-going ship would attempt to navigate their broken waters in the darkness.

Abel Tasman, in 1644, was the first European to sail along the east, north, and west coasts of Melville Island and the adjacent Bathurst Island,[1] naming Cape Van Diemen and Van Diemen Gulf after the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. As Tasman's account of that journey was lost, we do not know whether he actually landed on the islands, or only saw them in the distance.

Sir Philip King circumnavigated the two islands in 1818 and in 1824 the British Government, both to prevent the French from settling along the northern coasts of Australia and to protect British commerce from the rapidly expanding Dutch trade, established a military post at Fort Dundas, on the Apsley Straits. After five unhappy years the authorities moved the garrison to Port Essington, on the Coburg Peninsula, on the mainland, but not before both Sir Gordon Bremer (12th Nov. 1824) and Major Campbell (1834, pp. 135–60) had made some excellent observations on aboriginal graves, burial poles, bark paintings and canoes.

In the early days of this century, a buffalo hunter, Joe C. Cooper, having gained the confidence of the warlike people of Melville Island, known as the Tiwi tribe, established a camp near Cockle Point (Fig. 1) on the south-western corner of Melville Island. There he earned a living shooting buffaloes for their hides, buffaloes whose forbears had escaped from the settlement at Fort Dundas.

[1] Melville and Bathurst Islands, separated by the narrow Apsley Strait, are both a geographic and cultural unit.

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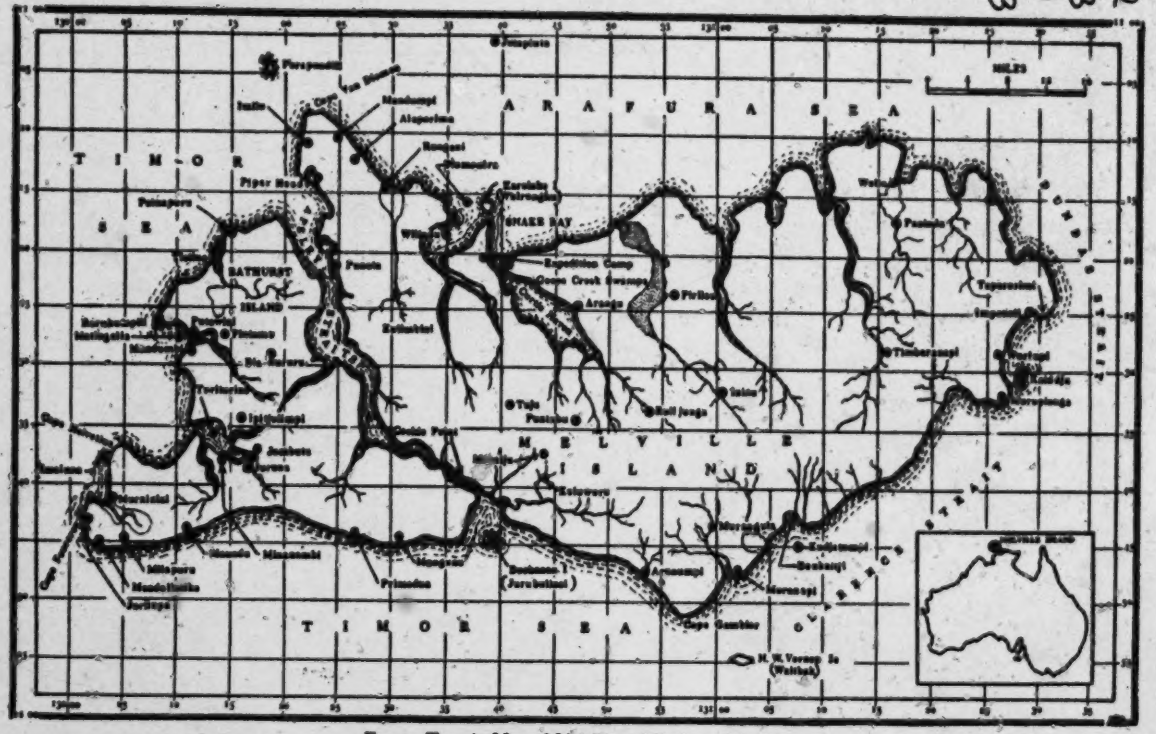
ARAFURA SEA
TIMOR SEA
MELVILLE ISLAND
BATHURST ISLAND
SNAKE BAY
Pirlico
Tiwi
Pularumpi
Nguiu
Milikapiti
Pikilakapiti
Wurankuwu
Tipungwuti
Tunkalilla
Cape Gambier
Cape Fourcroy
Cape Van Diemen
Dundas Strait
Clarence Strait
Apsley Strait
Dundas Point
Fish Inlet
Bathurst Island
Melville Island
Darwin
Port Darwin
Port Dundas
Port Cockburn
Port Bennett
Port Hurd
Port Langhorne
Port Essington
Port Patterson
Port Cooper
Port Mitchell
Port Keppel
Port Jervis
Port Bonpas
Port Bremer
Port Wellington
Port Leichhardt
Port Cambridge

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After Cooper had established himself a number of investigators, Brown in 1905, Klaatsch in 1906, Spencer and Basedow in 1911, and Fry in 1913, paid short visits to the Islands, and recorded valuable information on the aborigines and their ceremonial life. 175 114

Following their departure no research work was carried out until 1929, when Hart spent a year or more among the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands. But though Hart must have collected a great deal of data among the almost untouched aborigines of those times, he has published only two short papers on their customs. (Hart, 1930, pp. 167–80; pp. 280–290.)

Again there was a lag in time, except for a short paper by Harney and Elkin (1942, pp. 228–34), until Pilling in 1953, stationed at the Bathurst Island Sacred Heart Mission,[8] spent over a year studying aboriginal life and social organization.

In 1954 the National Geographic Society's expedition established a camp at Snake Bay on the north coast of Melville Island (Fig. 1), and for six months studied the ethnology, the geology and the ornithology of the area. 121 114 Although the National Geographic Society of America provided the bulk of the funds, Mr. John Bonython of Adelaide financed the geological survey of Melville and Bathurst Islands. [122]

The expedition party of American and Australian scientists was an excellent example of international co-operation. It was made up of Miss Jane Goodale, ethnologist, and Dr. Carleton Coon, Professor of Anthropology, both from the University of Pennsylvania; Mr. David Parsons, ornithologist from Yale University; Mr. Brian Daily, geologist from the University of Adelaide; Mr. William E. Harney, guide, Mr. George Joy, cook, and myself, as leader and ethnologist.

Our combined research covered a wide field. Miss Goodale concentrated on the place of the women and children in the community, Mr. Parsons collected and studied the birds of the island, Mr. Daily, by an examination of the outcropping rocks, established the geological history of Melville and Bathurst Islands, whilst I, apart from the duties of leadership, concentrated on the art, myth, and particularly the burial ceremonies.

During their visit, Dr. Carleton Coon and his wife made a special study of the physical characteristics of the aborigines.

I chose Melville Island as a centre of research, because it was evident from the scattered writings of Basedow, Fry, Hart, Harney, Spencer and 121 10

[8] The Sacred Heart Mission was established on Bathurst Island, opposite Cooper's camp, during 1911. [797]

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101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indi-
[175] cate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that
[177] time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and
[609] killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

in which they invariably succeeded. Their canoes and weapons were similar to the mainland."[4] 177 [114]

The probability that the Tiwi have been isolated from external influences for a long time is still further supported by their culture. Their artefacts are remarkably simple—they do not even possess a spear-thrower or small mounted stone tools—their art forms and ceremonial life are unlike those in any other part of Australia, there are no secret rituals, and the social status of the women is on a much higher plane than that of any other aboriginal women. 174 105

[4] From the evidence given above we can safely discard this writer's statement. Foelsche, who was a police officer in Darwin, probably quoted a rumour without checking its accuracy.

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CHAPTER I

The Art of the Tiwi

1. THE ART FORMS

ALTHOUGH Melville Island is separated from the mainland of Australia by the Dundas Strait, only fourteen miles in width, the art forms on either side of this swift-running tideway bear little resemblance to each other. That of the mainland, of which the bark and cave paintings of Oenpelli are typical (Mountford, 1956, pp. 112–264; Spencer, 1928, pp. 802–24), is representational, and among the most decorative art forms employed by the Australian aborigines, while that of Melville Island is highly formalized, and cannot be interpreted without the aid of the artist. In this respect (although they employ different motifs) the art of the Melville Islanders resembles that of the aborigines of Central Australia (Mountford, 1937, pp. 84–95). 171 531 [131]

2. MEDIUMS OF EXPRESSION

The aborigines of Melville Island,[5] like those on the mainland (Spencer, 1928, p. 793) painted designs on the inside of the sheets of bark that made up their wet-weather shelters. Basedow (1913, p. 320, Pls. 19–20) figured bark paintings he collected from bark shelters on Melville Island, and Campbell (1834, p. 151), referring to shelters he saw near Fort Dundas (Punata), in Apsley Straits, writes, "Some of them were ornamented with figures drawn in white pipeclay; one, in particular, was neatly and regularly done all over, representing the cross-bars of a cell."[6] 171 353 531

Under normal tribal conditions, however, it is in the carving and painting of the elaborate burial poles and the ceremonial spears, coupled with the decorating of the large bark baskets, that the aborigines of Melville Island find an outlet for their artistic efforts. 531

The effect of the *pukamuni* burial ceremony was evident in many of the bark paintings collected on the expedition. For example, Pl. 3D, Pl. 54F, and Pl. 54A, are essentially the same designs as a Melville Island artist would use to

[5] For the sake of simplicity I will, in future, use the term, Melville Island, or the tribal name, Tiwi, to indicate the Melville and Bathurst Island culture, both of which are part of the same tribal unit. [101]

[6] This would have been a design similar to that on bark painting (Pl. 52D).

[p. 18 blank]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

531 decorate a burial pole; and others, Pl. 2D, Pl. 10C, and Pl. 11A, similar to those he would paint on the ceremonial baskets.

I did not see or hear of figures being made in bark (Mountford, 1956, p. 443, fig. 65C, D); moulded in wax (Elkin and the Berndts, 1950, Pl. 21, Mountford, 1956, Pl. 143) or in the sands of the sea-shore (Mountford, 1956, p. 404, Pl. 91C, D), as is done in north-eastern Arnhem Land. Nevertheless, *[532] the men did carve large burial poles in the form of human beings and smaller full-length figures, associated with the *pukamuni* ceremonies. These figures bore some small resemblance to those recorded from north-eastern Arnhem Land (Berndt, 1948, Figs. A, B, Pls. 1, 2; Mountford, 1956, Pls. 130–40).

3. TECHNIQUES

386 (*a*) COLOURS. The pigments used for the decoration of the burial poles and the production of the bark paintings, were red, yellow and white ochres. As there was no suitable black pigment on the islands, the artists used crushed charcoal in its place.

[317] The source of the best ochres is a pit at Imilu on Cape Van Diemen (Fig. 1). This ochre, called *imilu*, is a bright yellow when collected,[7] but, when heated in the fire, it changes to a clear red. A soft white stone is common along the beaches. The ochres are not ground on a stone, as on the mainland (Mountford, 1956, p. 11), but, being friable, are crushed and mixed in a large cockle shell with water and fixative.

The aborigines often spoke of a superior ochre at Numanira, northern Melville Island (Fig. 1), which could be gathered only at low tide. I did not see any of this ochre in use.

(*b*) FIXATIVES. Three different types of fixative are used to ensure that the painted designs, both on the poles and the baskets, were as permanent as possible. They were: the sticky gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids [314] (*Dendrobium* sp.); the wax and honey of the wild bee, well mixed together; [237] and the yolks of the eggs of the sea-going turtle. The fixative was either mixed with the pigments or rubbed on the painting surface.

412 (*c*) BRUSHES. Simple brushes, made of strips of bark of varying widths, square across the bottom, chewed at one end, and held as in Fig. 2A and 2C, were used for the bulk of the work.[8] For making the dots, however, the artists used a

[423] [7] There did not appear to be any restriction on the gathering of this ochre; any aboriginal could go to Imilu and take as much as he wished.

[171] [8] The long flexible brush of the aborigines of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 12, fig. 3), was not used at Melville Island, although the bark brush (Fig. 2B) was often held in a similar manner.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

142
302

PLATE I. *Artists of the Tiwi*
A, Pulaninburwi; B, Inbidjarneri; C, Tjamalampua; D, Malumerinita.

[p. 20 A]

2: Mountford E-5- (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

412 short, cylindrical stick, about three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter. This was dipped in the colour and transferred to the painting surface with the brush held as in Fig. 2B.

FIG. 2. *Methods of Holding Brushes*

4. THE ARTISTS

531 As with other aboriginal groups with whom I have worked in Central and
[463] Northern Australia, there is no special artist class; all aboriginal men and
[302] women of the Tiwi, would, on occasions, be required to paint designs on the bodies of one or another of their relatives, or on objects, particularly those associated with the *pukamuni* ceremony.

Some men, however, were looked upon as being more skilled than others in some particular field, i.e., cutting and decorating the burial poles, or the ceremonial spears, painting the large bark baskets, or the bodies of men and women who take part in the *pukamuni* or *kulama* ceremonies.

On Pl. 1 are four men who were regarded as good craftsmen and artists.

Pulanimbuwi (Pl. 1A), hard-working and meticulous in all he did, produced the unusual *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 35); two other poles as human figures (Pl. 37A, B; 37E, F), and a number of bark paintings; Pl. 13B, D, and Pl. 14C, D, being typical.

Inbidjarmeri (Pl. 1B), being fully employed by the Superintendent of the nearby settlement, was unable to make bark paintings for me. He was most expert in carving and painting the beautiful, multi-barked ceremonial spears. Pl. 32B is his work. He was also in great demand for decorating the performers for the *pukamuni* and *kulama* ceremonies. Pl. 28K and Pl. 28R are examples of his craftsmanship in this field.

115 *Tjamalampua* (Pl. 1C) and *Malumerinita* (Pl. 1D) are two men to whom I

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

115 owe much, not only for the many bark baskets and paintings they made, but also for the wealth of information they so courteously imparted to me about the creation of their world, their totemic ancestors and the philosophies of their people.

These two old men are the storehouses of the tribal beliefs and philosophies. As the younger men are no longer taking a deep interest in their tribal lore, the passing of *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita* will be an irreparable loss to the aborigines of Melville Island.

[184] [178]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

CHAPTER II

The Creation Period

WHATEVER differences may exist between the Melville Island cultures and those of the mainland, and, in some aspects, those differences are considerable, the creation stories indicate that the two cultures sprang from the same source.[9]

At the close of the creation period, both on Melville Island and the mainland, the original creators, men and women, were transformed, or transformed themselves, into various creatures, plants, natural forces or heavenly bodies.

Although I would not claim that the list of totems is complete, I feel certain that the aboriginal artists pictured, on the bark paintings, most of the areas created by their mythical forbears. More detailed research may reveal additional totemic places.

The list of the thirty-four totemic ancestors illustrated on the bark paintings is curiously unbalanced in its distribution. More than a third of these are trees, almost all eucalypts. The remaining four groups are: the natural forces, creatures of the air, the sea, and one inanimate totem, i.e. red ochre. Neither land animals nor reptiles are referred to in the bark paintings of the totemic places, although they appear in the myths.

These facts contrast strongly with the Central Australian beliefs regarding their totemic creatures (Mountford, 1948, p. 23; Spencer and Gillen, 1899, p. 387), where almost every living thing, particularly the creatures, took some part in the creation of the topography; plant totems are uncommon in Central Australia.

The same Central Australian characteristics are also evident in the myths of Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 21), although in the adjacent Arnhem Land, the great creators, i.e., the *Wawalik* Sisters (Warner, 1937, p. 250), and the *Djunkgao* Sisters (Berndt, 1952; Mountford, 1956, p. 267; Warner, 1937, p. 336), made the bulk of the topography, plants and creatures.

Although the Groote Eylandt pantheon, like that of Melville Island, originated as men and women, they were, almost without exception, changed to non-human totems, whereas the great creators of Arnhem Land, the *Wawalik* and the *Djunkgao* Sisters, have always remained human.

[9] Little research has been carried out on the creation stories of the Australian aborigines; Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 387) giving the most detailed account.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

1. THE CREATION OF THE LAND OF THE TIWI

773 In the beginning there was no light, the earth was flat and featureless; no hills or valleys broke its monotonous surface, no trees covered its nakedness, no call of birds disturbed its quietness. It was a dead, silent world.

Then, at some period in those dim and far-off times, known to the Melville Islanders as the *palaneri*, an old blind woman, *Mudungkala*, rose miraculously out of the ground at Murupianga, south-eastern Melville Island, carrying in her arms three infants, two girls, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, and a boy, *Purukupali*.[10] No one knows from where she came, nor after she had finished the creation of the land of the Tiwis, where she went.

Clasping her children to her breast and crawling on her knees, *Mudungkala* travelled slowly northward, the fresh water, that bubbled up in the track she made, becoming the swift tideway of Dundas Strait now separating Melville Island from the Coburg Peninsula on the mainland (Fig. 1).

Mudungkala then turned westward, and, as she formed the northern shores of Melville Island as far as Cape Van Diemen, she made occasional journeys inland, creating the Johnson and Lethbridge Bays, Curtis Haven, the Tjipripu River, Shark Bay, and the northern entrance of Apsley Straits.

Mudungkala, still carrying her children, crawled along the west coast of Bathurst Island until she reached Cape Fourcroy, creating Port Hurd on the way. On Turiturina Island in Port Hurd, the mythical bird-men and women, and later, the *Ningaui* spirit people, performed the first *kulama* ceremonies.

At Cape Fourcroy, the old woman turned toward her starting place, Murupianga. One side of the wide channel she created became the southern shores of Bathurst Island, where, at Maundu, the dreaded *Maratjis* made their home.

But when *Mudungkala* reached the present Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island), she thought she was making the island too large. So, remembering the deep inlet near Cape Van Diemen, she crawled northward, her track becoming the winding Apsley Straits that now separate Melville from Bathurst Island.[11] She then turned back, felt her way to Jurubulinai[12] at the southern end of

[115] [10] Not all the informants mentioned *Purukupali*, although, in the creation period, it was *Purukupali* who brought the spirit children, the *Piiipiuis*, to their mothers.

[11] At this point in the creation story, some informants interpolated a myth that describes how *Mudungkala*, under a different name, was speared by *Purui* (sea osprey) and *Jirakuti* (sea-eagle). This myth, described on page 26, is obviously an accretion.

[12] In the last phase of creation, this island was the totem place of a woman of a similar name, *Mudungkala*, one of the wives of *Tukimkini*. At present we do not know the correct relationship between these two women; further research no doubt will clarify the situation.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Apsley Straits, continuing her journey eastward until she reached her starting point at Murupianga. On that last journey, *Mudungkala* created the Clarence Strait, thus completely separating the land of the Tiwis from the rest of Australia. 773

Before *Mudungkala* crawled southward, out of all knowledge of the Tiwi, she decreed that the bare land should be clothed with vegetation and inhabited with creatures, so that her children, whom she left behind at Murupianga, should have food.

2. THE FIRST INHABITANTS

The two daughters of *Mudungkala*, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, with their brother, *Purukupali*, established themselves in the new land.

The accounts of this period are vague and indefinite, the most consistent being that *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipinuis*, brought some back, and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, so that they could become mothers.[18] Thus the family at Murupianga multiplied, and, although many of the genealogies are confused and unreliable, those of the main personalities appear to be consistent.

Murupiangkala, whose husband the aborigines did not remember, had one daughter, *Tukumbuna*, who, in turn, married *Wilindu*.

Tukumbuna had two daughters, *Wilinduela* and *Numanirakala*, and a son, *Tukimbini*. *Tukimbini's* wife, *Waia*, gave birth to one daughter, *Bima*, who became the wife of *Purukupali*. It was the death of their son, *Djinini*, that brought the creation period to a close.

Wuriupranala, whose husband was *Andjalui*, had one son, *Wuriuprinili*. The aborigines did not know who were the parents of *Tjapara*, who later quarrelled with *Purukupali*.

In those early days there was neither light nor heat, so the descendants of old *Mudungkala* had to grope around in the darkness to find their food, and having found it were forced to eat it raw.

Once two men, *Jurumu* (later the wedge-tailed eagle), and *Mudati* (the fork-tailed kite), whose parents the aborigines did not know, were rubbing two sticks together, when they noticed a speck of light where the heat, caused by the friction between the two sticks, had ignited the powdered wood-dust. [372]

[18] The aborigines, who almost certainly do not understand physical paternity, believe that the *Pitipinuis* have always existed although they could not explain their origin. In the later period of creation, it was one of the duties of *Purukupali* to bring the spirit children to his wife, *Bima*, who gave them to the women. Before he died, however, *Purukupali* told the *Pitipinuis* to seek their mothers through the medium of their fathers. [842]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 Puzzled over this new phenomenon, *Jurunu* placed the smouldering wood-
[372] dust into the pith of a dead pandanus palm and blew upon it. To the surprise of both men the speck became larger and larger, finally bursting into a flame. This frightened the men so badly that they rushed to *Purukupali* and asked him to destroy the strange thing they had made. But when *Purukupali* saw the blazing wood and felt its heat he realized that *Jurunu* and *Mudati* had inadvertently discovered something that would give the aborigines not only light to dispel the darkness, but heat to cook their food and to keep them warm.[14]

Calling his sister, *Wuriupranala*, he gave her a torch of bark lit from the blazing log and told her that it was her duty to keep it alight always. *Tjapara*,
[821] who later became the moon, was given a smaller torch.

With the coming of light and heat, the descendants of *Mudungkala* spread over the island, hunting and camping in places which, at the close of the creation period, became their totemic country.

About that time, two men, *Puruti* and *Jirakati*, were spearing fish in Tiaupu, a freshwater swamp at Piper Head, near the northern entrance to Apsley Straits, when they noticed, by the movements of the stems of the water-lilies, some large creature moving about under the water.

Not knowing it was his mother, *Tipuru-undunga*, *Puruti* speared her in the
[823] neck. Screaming with pain and urinating in her fright, *Tipuru-undunga* rushed into the sea, which in those days was fresh water, polluting it so much with her blood and urine that it became as salt as the sea of today.

The wounded *Tipuru-undunga* changed herself into the tall, stately bird,
[825] the jabiru (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) which now lives on the edge of the fresh-water lagoons; while the fishermen, *Puruti* and *Jirakati* became the sea-osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and the graceful white-headed sea-eagle (*Haliaetus leucogaster*).[15]

During those early *palaneri* times, a man, *Jirakupai*, lived beside a fresh-water lagoon, *Jirininga*, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. He had married two sisters, *Kuraruna* and *Jaknia*.

Jirakupai was an expert in the making of both the large many-barbed, male
[411] spears, *tunkaringa*, which have a row of barbs on one side (Pl. 32A), and the female spears, *tunkaguni*, with their double row of barbs (Pl. 32B). Both forms are now used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

[14] The aborigines distinguish between light (*milajuka*) from the sun or burning wood, and heat (*ikwani*) from glowing coals.

[15] The large hawk-like birds, *Jirakati*, the sea-eagle, *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite, appear as men in a number of the myths. In each one they transformed themselves from men into birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Jirakupai had just made a number of these weapons, when a party of men from eastern Melville Island rushed into his camp and speared him in the back many times. But, as they struck, *Jirakupai* plucked the spears out and cast them at his opponents. Then howling loudly with pain and picking up the spears he had just made, *Jirakupai* dived into the water to escape further injury. 773

His wives, to avoid capture, changed themselves into birds, *Kuraruna* becoming the night-heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) and *Jaknia*, the brown heron that frequents the mangrove swamps (possibly *Butorides striata*). 773 825

The next morning his enemies saw *Jirakupai* floating in the water, no longer as a man, but as a crocodile. The spear wounds in his back had healed and grown into a spinal crest, his mouth, through shouting so much in his pain, had grown longer and larger, while his bundle of spears had been transformed into his t[illegible], on the extreme end of which was a male, *tunkaringa*, spear, with barbs only at one side.

The totem place of the crocodile (*Crocodilus porosus*) is pictured on the bark painting, Pl. 16a. 532 x

In this painting the central disc is the totemic lagoon, *Jirininga*, near which six crocodiles are resting on the mud. The light-coloured vertical panels are the nests of the crocodiles and the short transverse bars, their eggs.

On the mainland, south of Wulrungku (Karslake Island), three men, *Mudati*, his younger brother, *Pilibiliningi*, and *Jurumu* lived in the same camp as an unmarried woman, *Parabruma*. 773

Mudati and *Parabruma* were fond of each other, a fact which infuriated *Jurumu*, who wanted *Parabruma* for a wife.

One day, when *Jurumu* was out hunting, he saw a bandicoot[16] *tipapu*, run from his grass nest into a hollow tree for shelter. This suggested an idea to *Jurumu* as to how he could injure, or, perhaps, incapacitate his rival. Making a number of short, sharp sticks, he buried them, point upward, in the ground, rearranging the grass nest over them so that it would not show signs of having been disturbed. Then going to *Mudati* he suggested that they should hunt together.

Of course, *Jurumu* led his rival to the faked bandicoot nest where, gesticulating excitedly, he told his companion to jump on the nest before the bandicoot escaped. But *Mudati* demurred, saying that if he waited until the bandicoot showed itself, he could kill it with his throwing stick.

But *Jurumu* was so insistent that his was the better way that *Mudati*, not suspecting treachery, obeyed his instructions and jumped on the faked nest. [825]

[16] These bandicoots build flimsy grass shelters under which they hide.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 As the sharpened sticks pierced his feet, *Mudati* fell to the ground calling
825 *girik-girik* (his call today), then changing himself into the fork-tailed kite (*Milvus migrans*), rose into the air and flew away.[17]

Quickly *Jurumu* sought out the woman, *Parabruma*, and proposed marriage, but she, knowing of his treachery, angrily refused him. Incensed and disappointed, *Jurumu* struck *Parabruma* on either side of the head with his throwing stick, cutting her head so badly that long pieces of bleeding skin hung down on each side.

Screaming with pain (her present-day call), *Parabruma* changed herself into the masked plover (*Lobibyx miles*). One can still see those red flaps of skin hanging on either side of her face. Intent on revenge, *Mudati's* brother, *Pilibilininga*, crept up behind *Jurumu* and speared him in the back. Shouting "*gutli-gutli*" (his call), *Jurumu* changed himself into the wedge-tailed eagle (*Oroaetus audax*). When *Pilibilininga* saw this he became a small brown hawk (unidentified).

Jurumu appears in another early creation myth when he, his wife *Narina*,
773 and her brother, *Kilpuruni*, lived in the same camp. One day, when the woman was out in the forest collecting food for her husband, *Kilpuruni* came up and asked for some. *Narina* offered him an opossum, but he said he was not fond of that meat. After refusing wild honey and several other foods, *Kilpuruni* admitted that he really wanted *Narina* to go in the bush with him. *Narina* refused, saying they could not do so, because they were brother and sister. However, *Kilpuruni*, by persistence and cajolery, finally had his way.

On returning to camp, *Narina* confessed her misdeeds to *Jurumu*, who, although he was angry and punished his wife, did not mention the matter to his brother-in-law. Biding his time, he invited *Kilpuruni* to go with him to look for hives of wild bees.

They had both climbed a high eucalyptus tree, when *Jurumu* showed his brother-in-law a hive at the end of a long projecting branch. Waiting until *Kilpuruni* had climbed out to investigate the hive, *Jurumu* cut the limb, which crashed to the ground on the top of the unfortunate victim.

Kilpuruni, all flattened out, changed himself into the present-day blanket
[825] lizard (*Chamydasaurus kingii*); *Narina*, who, in spite of his misdeeds, was fond of *Kilpuruni*, became the black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksi*) and still mourns for her unfortunate brother, while *Jurumu*, now the wedge-tailed eagle, is always on the look-out to kill and eat his wife's seducer.

[171] [17] A myth, with many points of resemblance, except that the main actors were crows and a wedge-tailed eagle, was collected by the author from the Adnjamatana tribe of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia. (Mountford, 1937, field notes.)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

3. THE DEATH OF PURUKUPALI

While many of the people of the early creation period were spreading over the island, the original family, *Wuriupranala*, *Murupiangkala* and *Purukupali*, and their descendants, had established themselves on south-eastern Melville Island; *Murupiangkala*, with her daughter *Tukumbuna* and her grandchildren, *Tukimbini*, *Wilinduala* and *Numanirakala*, at Murupianga; *Wuriupranala* with her son *Wuriuprinili*, at Wuriupi; and *Purukupali*, his wife *Bima* and their infant son, *Djinini*, at Impanali (Fig. 1). 773

Purukupali was strongly attached to *Djinini*. Every morning, when *Bima* went out food-gathering, she would take *Djinini* with her, bringing him back to *Purukupali* at the end of the day, together with the food she had collected.

In the same camp lived an unmarried man, *Tjapara*, who used to persuade *Bima* to leave her child asleep under the shade of a tree and sneak into the forest with him. This intrigue had been going on for some time when, on one very hot day, *Bima* stayed away from her child too long, for, when she returned, the shade had moved and *Djinini* was lying dead in the hot sun. Distraught with grief, *Bima* chanted her song of remorse—

Bili wangia tingatia
(Evil woman am I to have caused the death of my son.)

When *Purukupali* heard of the death of *Djinini*, his anger knew no bounds.[18] Striking his wife on her head with a throwing stick, and hunting her into the forest, he decreed that death should come to the whole world. As his son had died, said *Purukupali*, so the whole of creation would die, and once dead, never again would come to life. There was no death before that time.

Tjapara remonstrated with *Purukupali*, and pleaded for the dead body of *Djinini*, promising to restore him to life in three days.[19] But *Purukupali* was so adamant that the two men quarrelled about this matter until *Purukupali*, losing his temper, threw a *muruguna* (Pl. 32D) at *Tjapara* who replied with the forked throwing stick, *miluanta* (Pl. 32C) known today as *Tjapara's muruguna*. Soon the two men were locked in a deadly struggle, each wounding the other severely in the face and body.

[18] My informant stated that it was not the intrigues of *Tjapara* and *Bima* that enraged *Purukupali*, but that, by their selfishness, they had caused the death of his son.

[19] This is a reversal of ideas. In the mainland myths it is the moon that brings death to mankind (Mountford, 1956, p. 503), but among the Tiwi, it is the moon who endeavours to prevent death coming to the world. This is one of the many factors that suggest that the Tiwi must have been separated from the effects of the mainland cultures for a considerable period. [171] [174]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 Still railing, *Purukupali* picked up the dead body of his son, which *Bima* had wrapped in a sheet of paper-bark, and walking backward into the sea, called out loudly as the waters closed over his head,

Mauliantanili awangtini tangini mu mu.

(You must all follow me; as I die, so must you all die.)

[823] The place where *Purukupali* died, adjacent to Impanali, on the east coast of Melville Island, became a whirlpool so strong that any aboriginal who approached it in a canoe would be drowned. When *Tjapara* saw what had 773 happened, he changed himself into the moon. But he did not entirely escape 821 the decree of *Purukupali*, for, even though *Tjapara* is eternally reincarnated, he has to die for three days. On any clear night, one can see on the face of the moon-man the wounds which he received in his fight with *Purukupali* so long ago.

× 532 One bark painting, Pl. 22, c, deals with the death of *Purukupali* and his son *Djinini*. At *a*, is the whirlpool off Impanali Point, eastern Melville 773 Island, where *Purukupali*, *b*, carrying his dead son, disappeared beneath the surface of the water.

The foot-marks of *Purukupali*, as he walked backward into the water, are the white dots at *c*; his arms, the two white bars, at *d*; and the dead child he carried is at *e*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, at *f*, is asking for the body of the dead child to restore him to life.

The moon in the sky is shown at *g*; the forked throwing stick, *mihuanta* at *h*; and at *j* are the plain throwing sticks, *muruguna*, which when thrown by *Purukupali*, caused the wounds on the face of *Tjapara*.

At *l*, *l*, are the goose-feather balls, *tokwianga* (Pl. 31B), of *Purukupali*; *n*, *n*, his cane armlets, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H); *s* (upper left) is his cockatoo-feather head ornament, *primitiki*; *k*, *k*, are his bark baskets, *wanatuna*; *u*, his firesticks; *o*, is his camp fire; and *r*, his water-hole.

Tjapara's fireplace, an unlocalized spot, *Oulini*, in the sky, is at *q*; his camp-fire is at *p*, and his firestick at *t*.

4. THE PUKAMUNI OF PURUKUPALI

773 When *Tukimbini*, who was living at Muruplanga, heard of the death of *Purukupali*, he sent a message stick to *Talinini* of the honey-people of central Bathurst Island, appointing him the ceremonial leader (*alouwia*) of the burial rituals.

At the same time, because they were near at hand, he told the people who lived at Muruplanga, Wuriupi and Wailu, that as they were the appointed

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

"workers" (*wunarus*), it would be their duty to cut the burial poles, *nulinis*, make and paint the large ceremonial baskets, *wunamus*, and the elaborate *pukamuni* spears, *tunkaringa*, as well as to clear the burial ground at Tapararimi, which was east of Impanali, the place where *Purukupali* died. As *Purukupali* had entered the sea and was drowned, there was no grave to cover and keep clean, as there would be at a usual *pukamuni*. 773

The "working party", who cut the poles with stone axes, consisted of the men, *Aufuhai* (fresh water), *Wuriuprinili* (fire), *Tukimbini* (honey-eater), *Jidini* (saw-fish), *Timalana* (mosquito), *Tadawala* (shark) and *Pulajerapi* (mullet). Two turtle women, *Garagalani* and *Ringa* made some of the large *pukamuni* baskets, and a honey woman, *Letungkala*, who was not one of the "workers", another basket, which was decorated by the honey-men, *Puruki* and *Kafiapini*.

While the "working party" were busy at their tasks, *Talinini*, the honey-man of Bathurst Island, sent specially carved message sticks, *purunkita* (Fig. 5F, G, H) to the various groups of men and women on Bathurst and Melville Islands, instructing them to assemble at certain places, then move eastward to Tapararimi, performing the *ilanis* ceremonies[80] on the way. [211] [532]*

A bark painting, Pl. 3A, B, deals with the assembling of the people for *Purukupali's pukamuni*. 532x 773

The black disc, *d*, at the bottom of the painting, is Bia-wururu, central Bathurst Island, where the leader, the honey-man, *Talinini*, with *Mauwini* and *Taperalili* performed the first *ilanis* ceremony. Pintamu, *g*, is the home of *Talinini* and Putawini, *h*, that of *Mauwini*.

The second *ilanis* was performed at Rarukumpili, *e* (western Bathurst Island). A fish-man, *Pulaugarani*, a participant of this ceremony, lived on an adjacent point of land, *f*. The "workers" from the east coast also performed *ilanias* at Ininu, *j*, central Melville Island,[81] as well as at three localities on the east coast, i.e., Wuriupi, *l*, Murupiangu, *m*, and Tapararimi, *n*.

The central disc, *k*, is Tapararimi, where the creation people, from all parts of the Islands, assembled to perform the final *pukamuni* rituals of *Purukupali*.

The many lines, *a*, *a*, at the top and bottom of the painting, symbolize the routes of the ancestral men as they walked to Tapararimi, and *b*, *b*, paths taken by the women, who always travel to a *pukamuni* ceremony by a different route from that of the men.

[80] The *ilanias* are performed every evening for some weeks before the final *pukamuni* dances (p. 68).
[81] Another account places this *ilanis* at Punaiku.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 Circles *a*, *a*, are places where the women stood at *Purukupali's* ceremony,
×[532] and lines *e*, *e*, the paths they made as they danced toward the central dancing ground, the *milimika*.

According to other informants, the honey-men from Bathurst Island and
[184] other groups from western Melville Island assembled and performed an *ilania* at Tuju, while the people from south and south-western Melville Island performed yet another *ilania* at Puntubu (Fig. 1).

At the conclusion of these *ilanias* the mythical people from the west met
+[532] at Rulijunga, where *Mantinuria*, one of the eucalyptus-tree women (Pl. 18A) had prepared a ceremonial ground for them. Here the assembled people performed another *ilania*, after which they moved off as a body to Timbaranapi, where the "workers", having cut the poles and prepared the *pukamuni* spears, baskets and other paraphernalia, had already assembled for the final *ilania*.

After a ceremonial fight[18] and the performance of the *ilania* ceremony, the men and women travelled to Tapararimi by different paths to carry out the final rituals.

×532 A simple bark painting, Pl. 2A, pictures the *pukamuni* ground of *Purukupali*
773 at Tapararimi.

The lower black space is the ceremonial ground (*milimika*) on which the participants performed their dances, and the white area on the top, the several honey-men, one of whom, *Talinini*, was in charge of the rituals.

The five upright vertical panels are the *tudinis* (*pukamuni* poles); the lower line of black horizontal rectangles represents the red ochre, and the upper line of rectangles, black paint, with which the performers decorated themselves.

The dots represent paint on the bodies of the caterpillar men, the *Maludaianini*,
[821] who, at the close of the ceremony, transformed themselves into the Milky Way.

The *pukamuni* rituals and those who mourned beside the poles at Tapararimi are illustrated on a bark painting, Pl. 2D, E.

The central black oval, *c*, is the swift whirlpool off Impanili, where *Purukupali*, walking along the track, *f*, *f*, with his dead son in his arms, drowned himself.

[18] In the ceremonies of the present day, the "workers" when they return from cutting
[764] the poles, which are adjacent to the grave, are looked upon as *mopaditis* (spirits of the dead). Before the *ilania* can proceed, the *pukamuni* men and the "workers" take part in a ceremonial fight (Pl. 25D), in which the "workers" (as *mopaditis*) are vanquished. During creation times, a similar fight took place at Timbaranapi, when the *pukamuni* people from the west coast met the "workers" from the east.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

X532

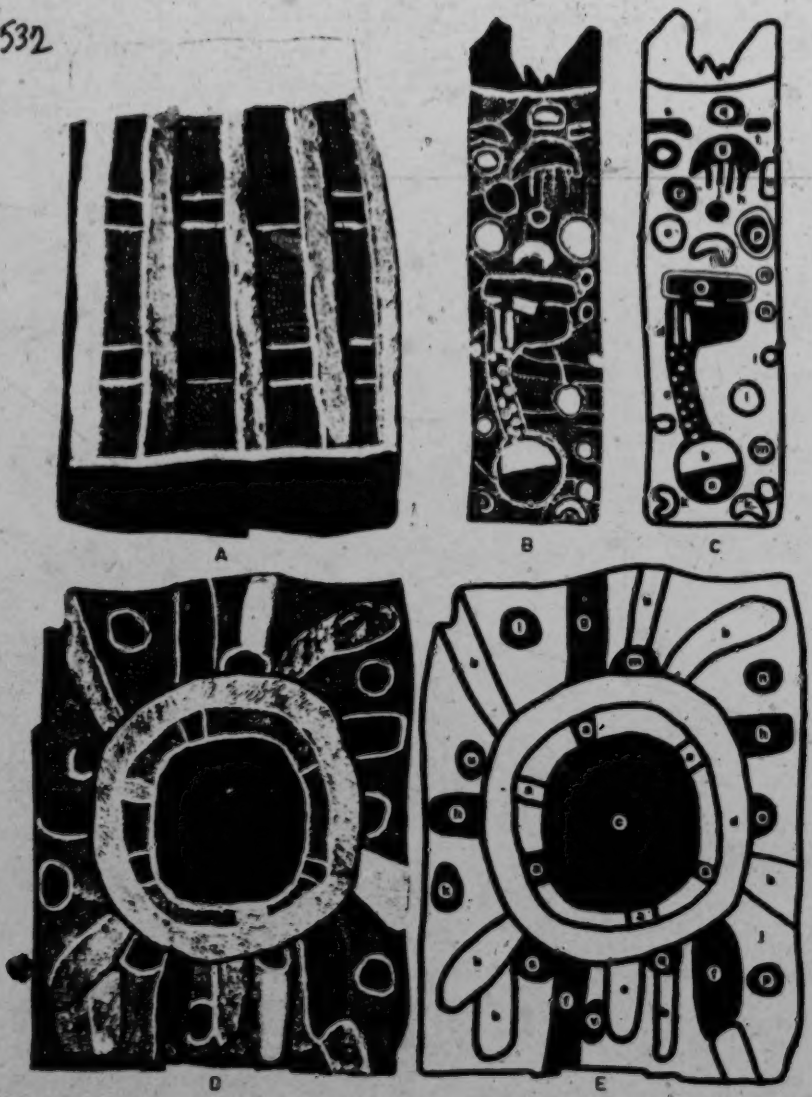


PLATE 2. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, D, E, Pukamani of Purukupali; B, C, Death of Purukupali.

[p. 32 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532

PLATE 3.—*Bark Paintings of the Tiwanic Plates*
A, B, Journey to Pukamani of Purukupali; C, Decorations at Pukamani Ceremony; D, E, Designs for Pukamani Poles.

[p 32 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x

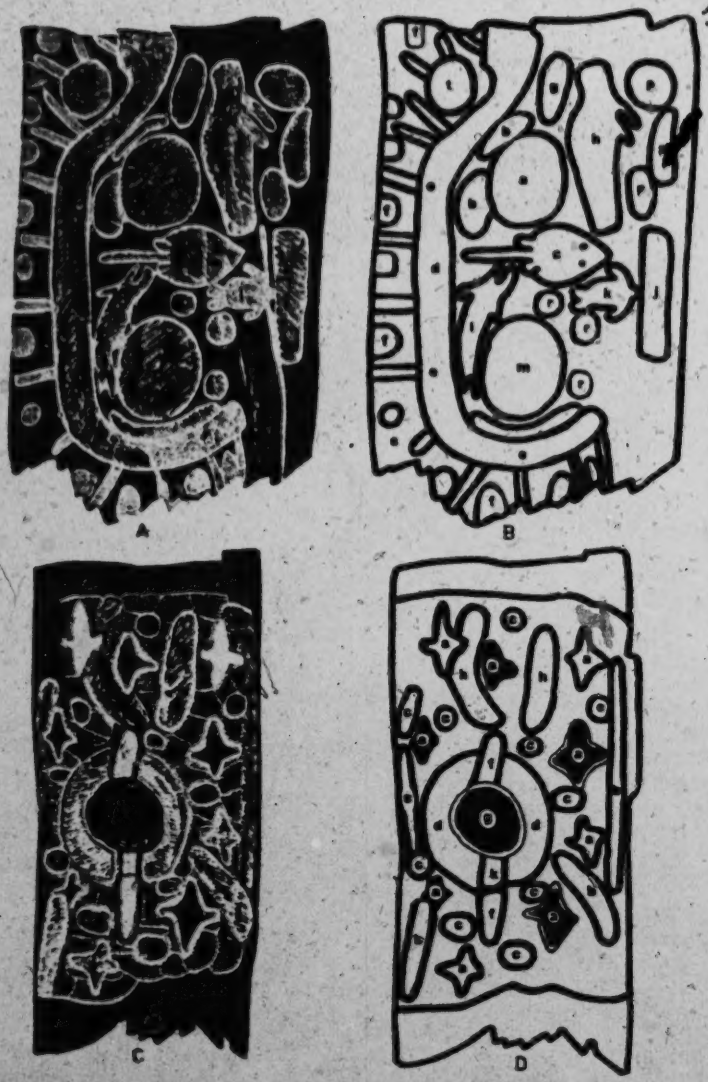
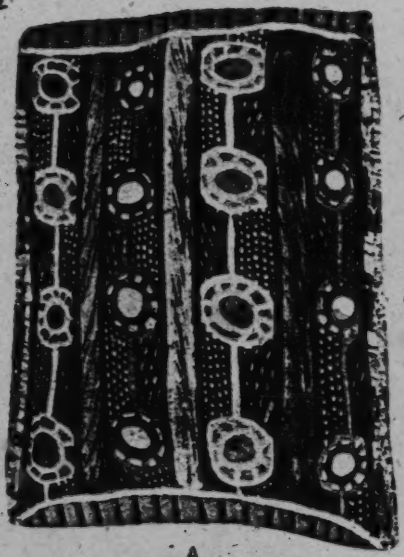


PLATE 4. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, C, D, Honey-eater, at Murupiringa.

[p. 32 c]

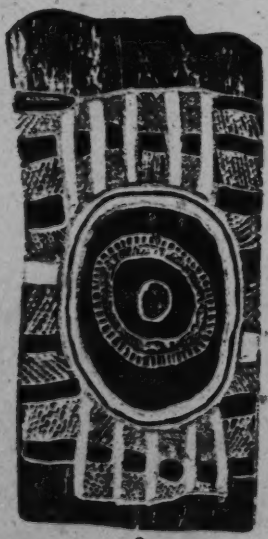
2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

x 532

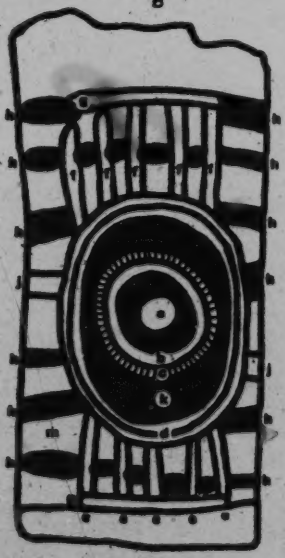


A

B



C



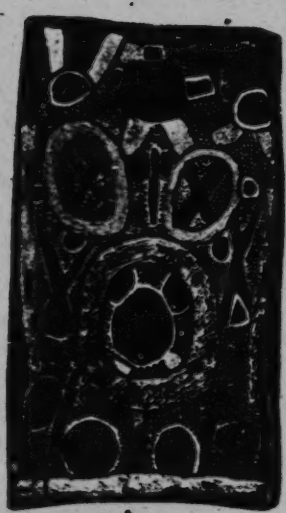
D

PLATE 5. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, C, D, Sun-woman, at Wuriupi.

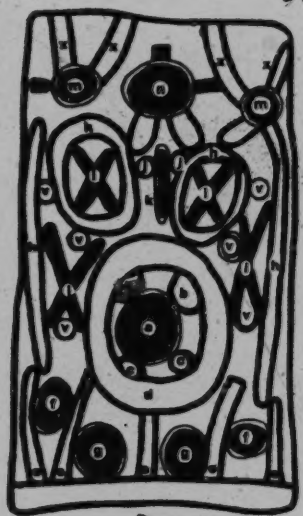
[p. 32 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x

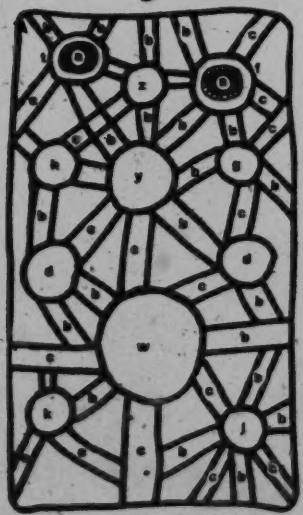


A



B

C



D

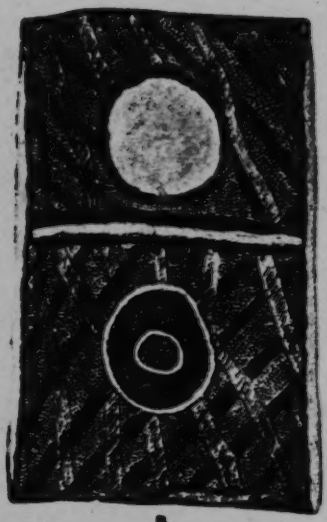
PLATE 6. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places.*
A, B, Sun-woman, at Wuriupi; C, D, Honey-eater, at Murupianga.

[p. 32 E]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

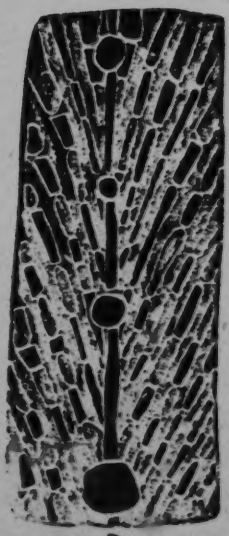
*532

A



B

C



D

PLATE 7. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, Honey-eater at Murupianga; B, C, D, Sun-woman at Wuriupi.

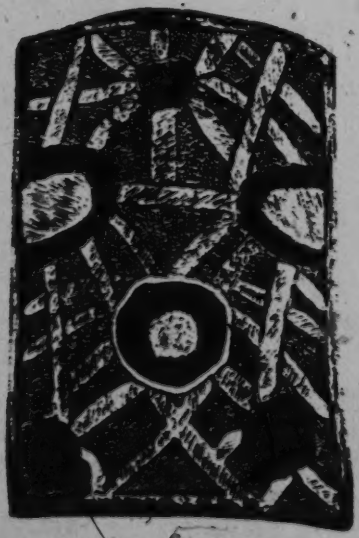
[p. 32 F]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

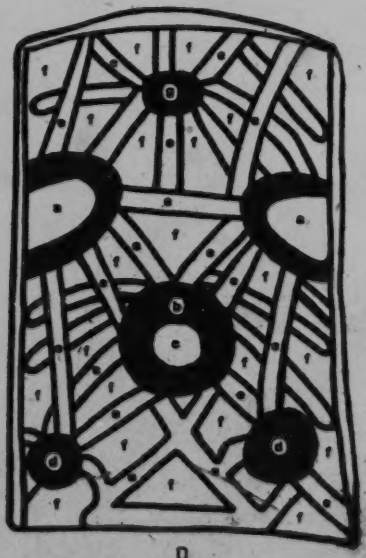
532x

A

B



C



D

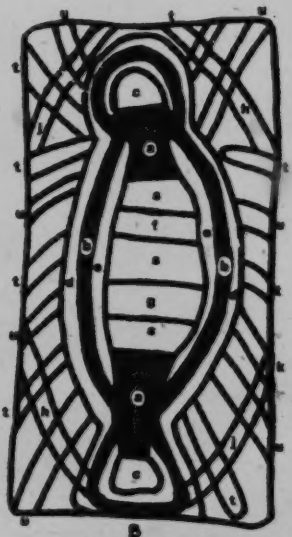
PLATE 8. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, C, D, Turtle at Murupianga.

[p. 326]

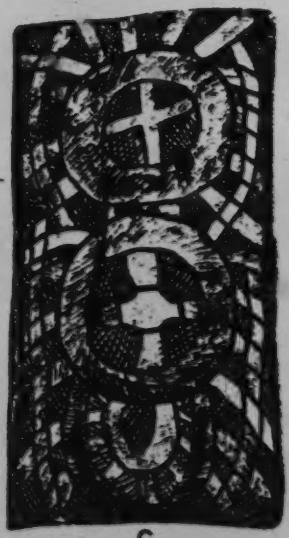
2: Mountford E- (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

*532

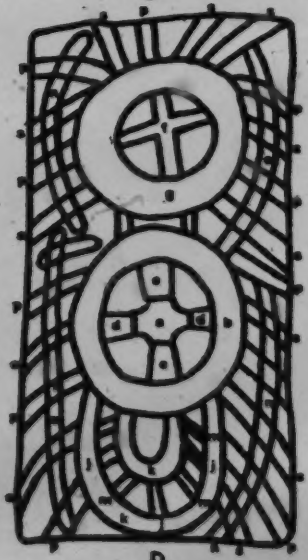
A



B



C



D

PLATE 9. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Eucalyptus tree, Panindu; C, D, Fresh water, Wailu.

[p. 32 H]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x

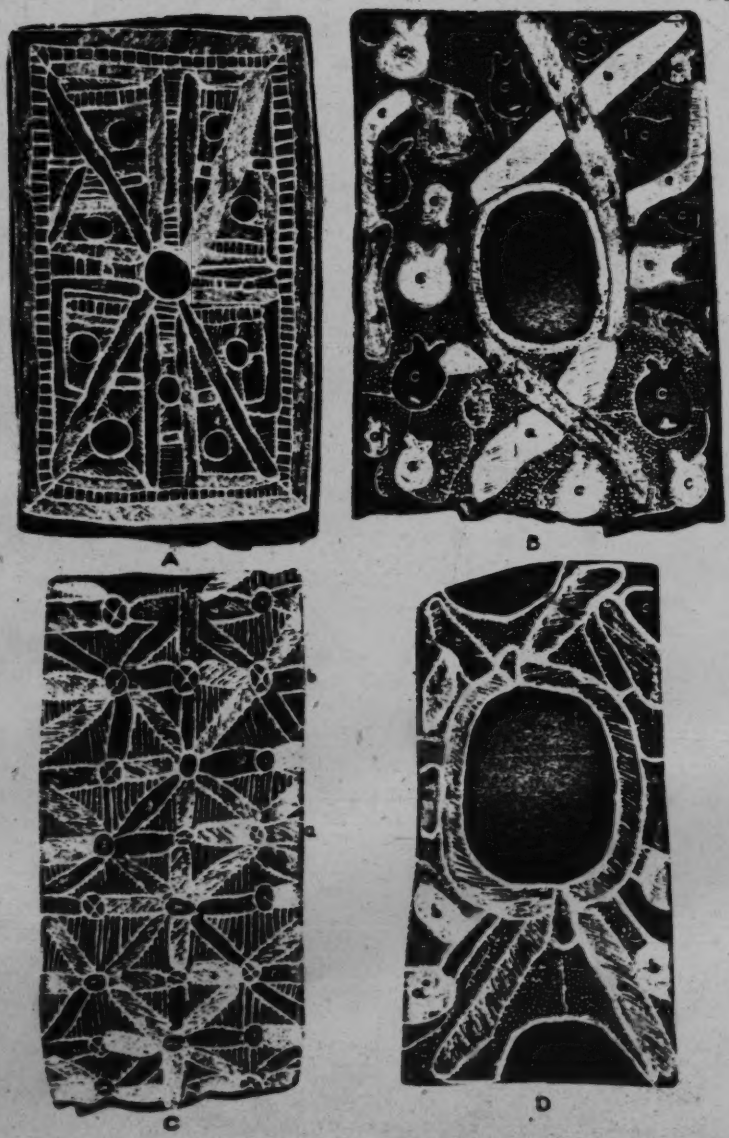
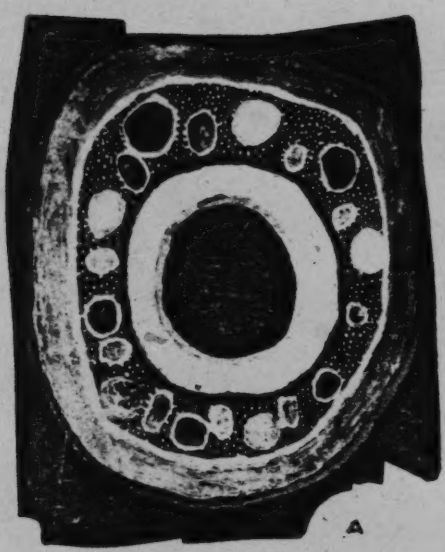


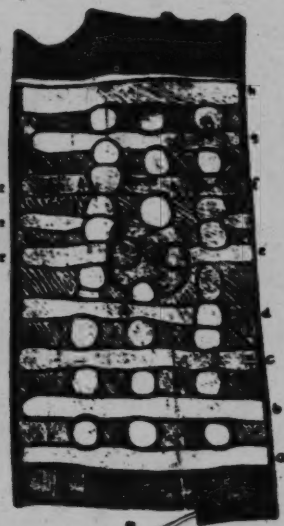
PLATE 10. *Bark-Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, Crocodile, at Mundinju; B, Frog, at Wailu; C, Cat-fish, at Pirilou; D, Pakadringa, at Wailu.

[p. 32 I]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

*532





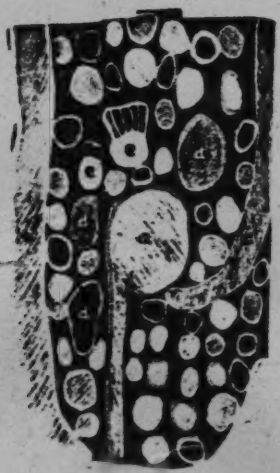


PLATE 11. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Crocodile at Wilindu; C, D, Fish at Arangu.

[p. 30 J]

2. Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x

PLATE 12. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, Eucalyptus tree at Mandumpi; B, D, Red ochre at Numanira; C, Turtle at Jutapinta.

[p. 32 K]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

+532

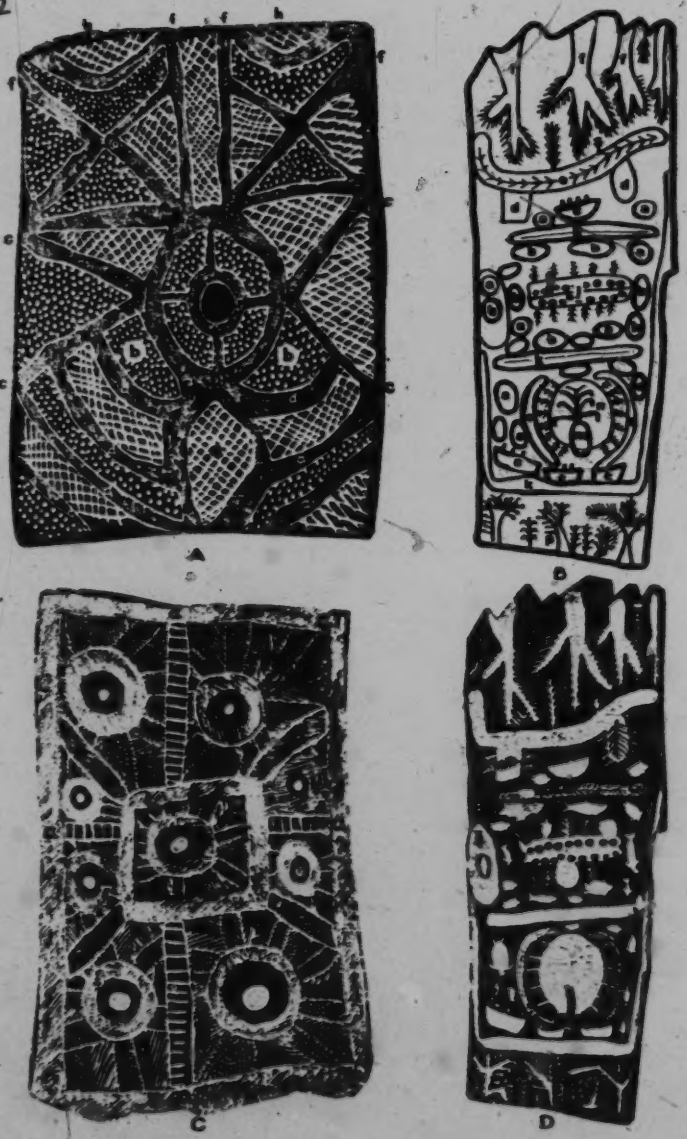


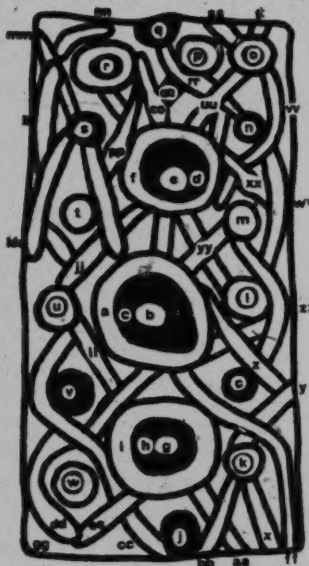
PLATE 13. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, C, Spider at Rungani; B, D, Eucalyptus tree at Alaparima.

[p. 32 L]

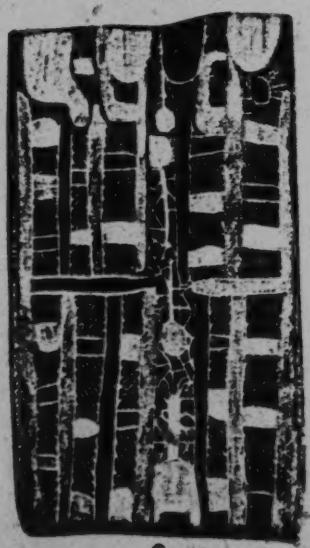
2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x

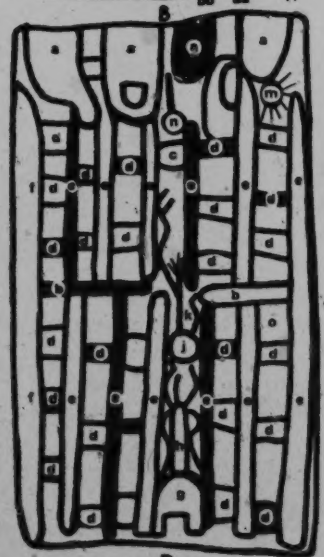
A



B



C



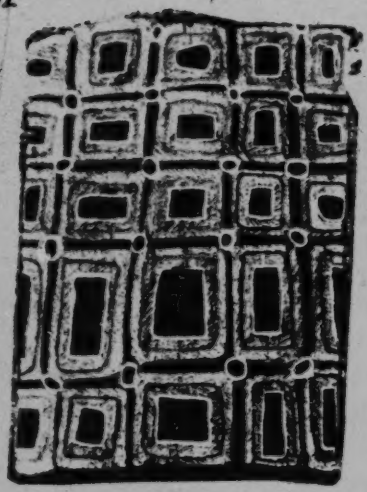
D

PLATE 14. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Eucalyptus tree at Putawini; C, D, Eucalyptus tree at Panapuru.

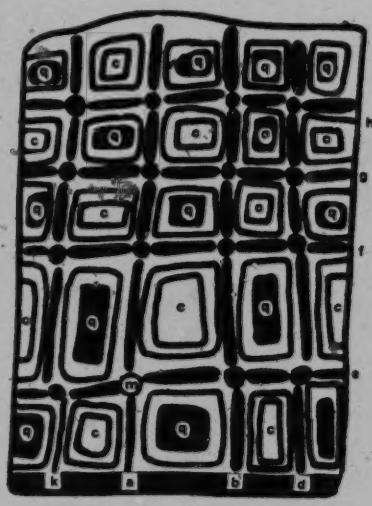
[p. 32 M]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

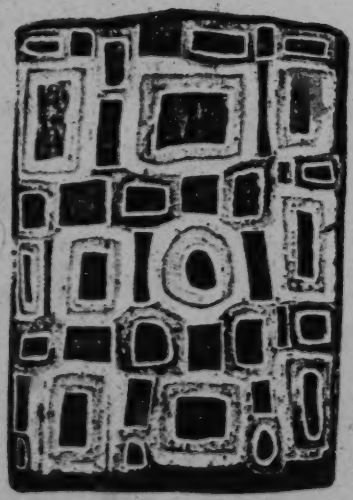
×532



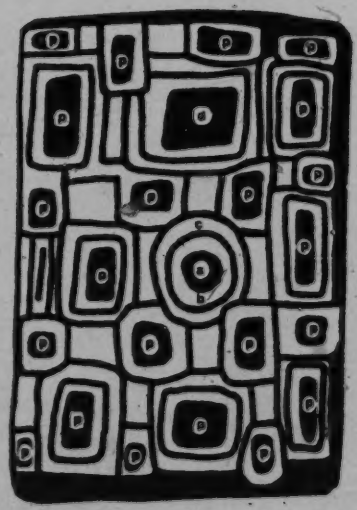
A



B



C



D

PLATE 15. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, C, D, Eucalyptus tree at Putawini.

[p. 32 N]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 ×

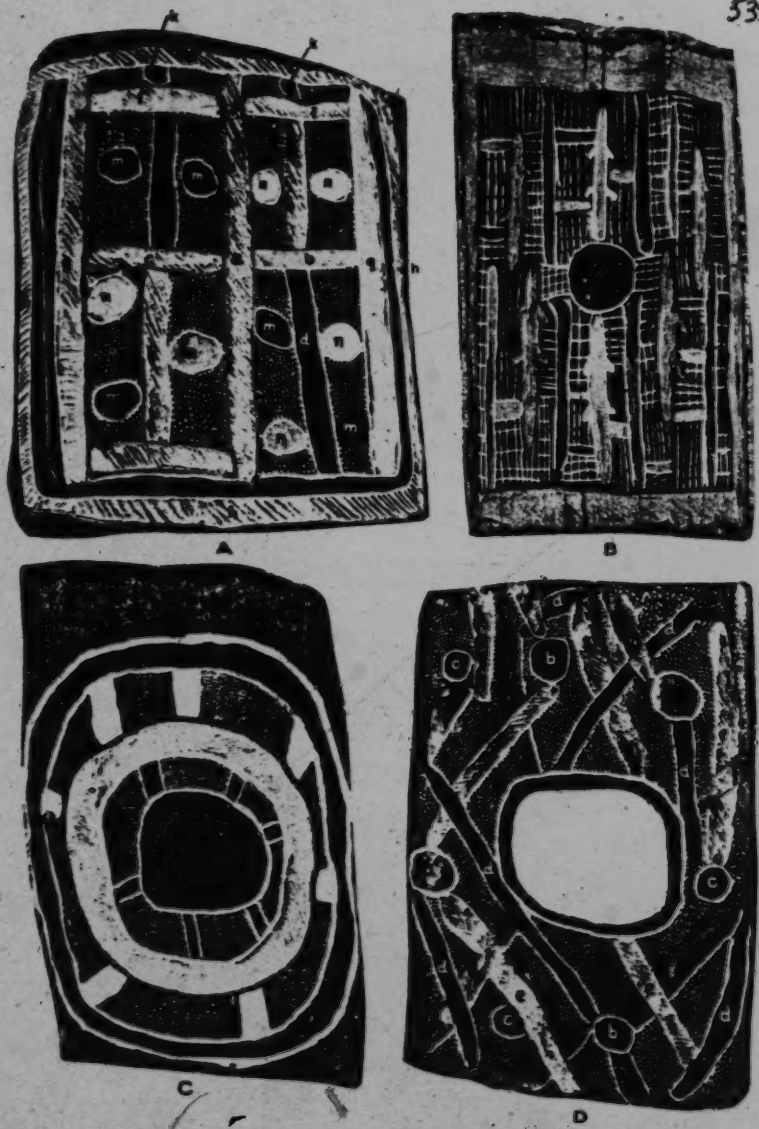


PLATE 16. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, Eucalyptus tree at Putawini; B, Crocodile at Cape Fourcroy; C, White Cockatoo at Milapuru; D, Bush-fire Woman at Turiturina.

[p. 32 O]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

x532

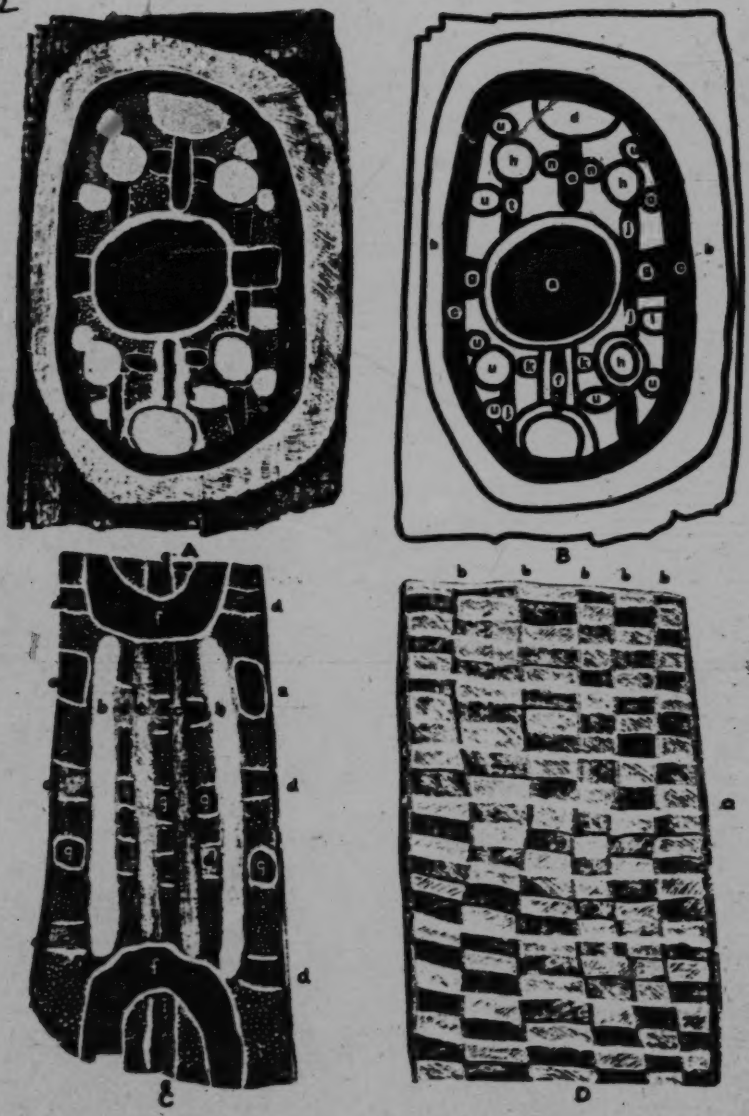


PLATE 17. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Sand-fly, Murtinini; C, Sand-fly, Cape Fourcroy; D, Sand-fly, Taliau.

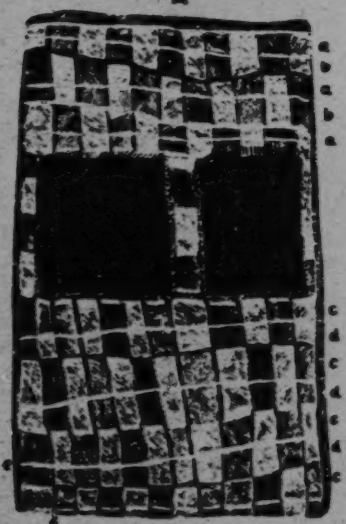
[p. 32 P]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532×

A

B



C

D

PLATE 18. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, Eucalyptus tree, Ruijungs; B, Pandanus tree, Primadus; C, March-fly, Kudjatampi; D, Yam, Primadus.

[p. 32 9]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532

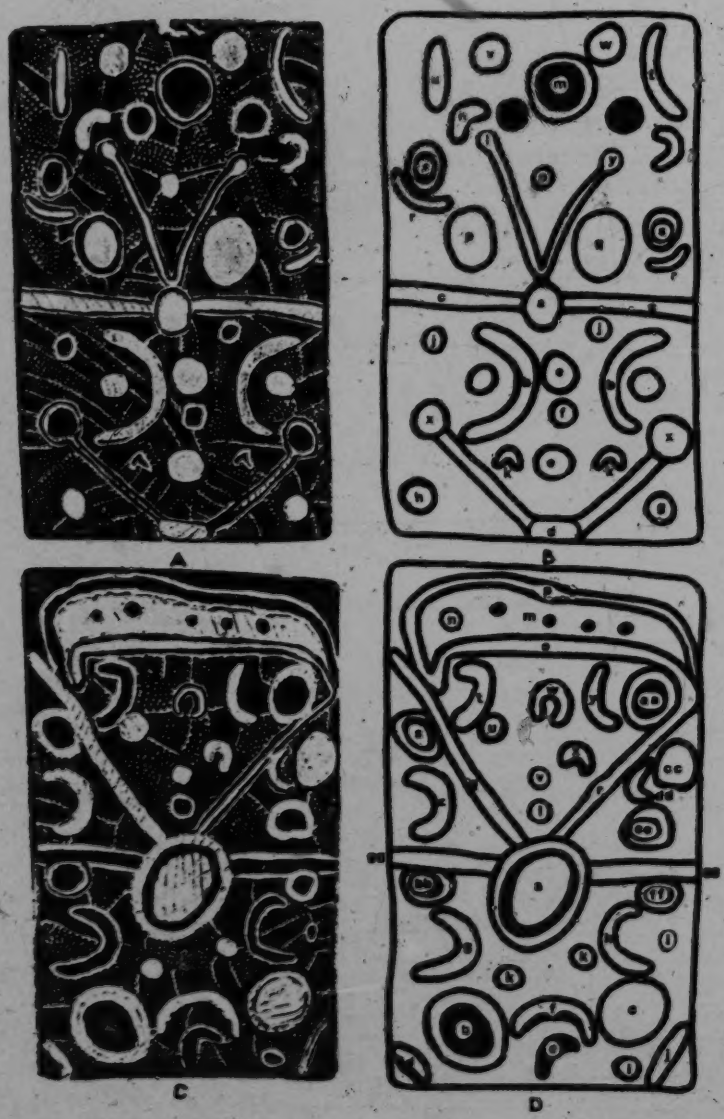


PLATE 19. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Blow-fly, Muranapi and Waitbak; C, D, Eucalyptus tree, Buchanan Island.

C p. 32 R.]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x

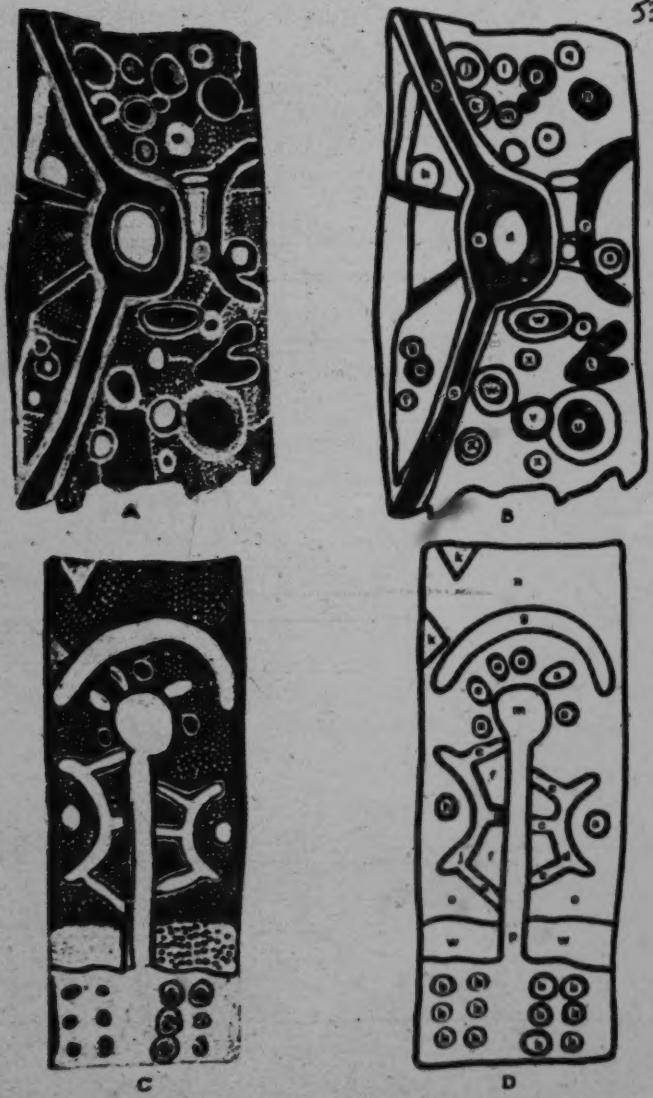
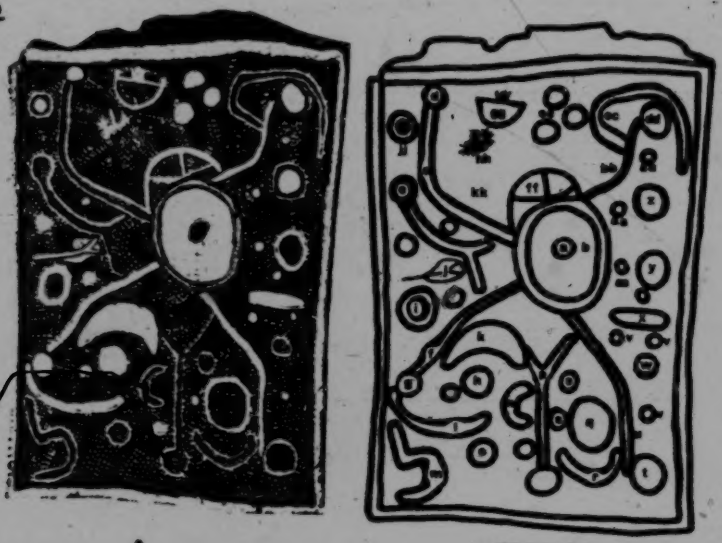


PLATE 20. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Fork-tailed Kite, Arunumpi; C, D, Flying Fox and Bamboo, Muranapi.

[p. 32 S]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532



A B

PLATE 21. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, March-fly at Bonkaitji.

[p. 32 T]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

The *pukamani* poles, *tulinis*, *a*, *a*, etc., and *b*, *b*, etc., are now parallel reefs of stone[50] on the sea-coast at Impanili; circle *d*, is a ring of white sand encircling the death place of *Purukupali*; and *e*, a large boulder at Taparurimi, once a stone axe, which the "workers" had used to cut the *pukamani* poles. 532 x 773 [823]

The remainder of the designs on the painting symbolize the people of creation times returning for *Purukupali*. The dots *j*, *j*, on the ground of the painting, represent the coloured ochres on the body of the ceremonial leader, *Talinini*; the black rectangle, *g*, *Waia*, the mother-in-law of *Purukupali*; and *h*, *h*, two bird-women, *Pungatili* and *Makungdili*.

At *k* (left) is a honey-woman, *Imbara*, the sister of *Talinini*; *l* (upper left), her mother, *Lasungbala*, who made a bark basket, and *m*, another honey-woman, *Irama*. *Mauwini* is at *n*, he, with *Talinini* and *Taparalili*, performed the first *ilania* at Biawururu, on central Bathurst Island. *Taparalili* is at *q*, and other honey-men, *Tupiringini* and *Maipuringa* are at *p* and *s*.

On Pl. 3C, the artist tried to show some of the decorations used in a *pukamani* ceremony. The series of cross-hatched, more or less rectangular panels, at the top, represent the painted bark baskets which are left on the grave; the vertical panels at the bottom, lines of colour in the hair of the performers, and the groups of chevron designs, the scars on the bodies of the men and women. The horizontal band across the centre of the painting represents the hair belts of the men.

Pl. 3D and 3E are designs which, the artists told me, would be similar to those painted on the burial poles of *Purukupali*.

The artist of Pl. 3D did not give me the meaning of his design, but on Pl. 3E, the four barred panels, *a*, *a*, etc., represent native roads; the plain bands, *b*, *b*, etc., on either side, horizontal lines of clouds, the diagonal bands, in the upper and lower panels, native fig trees, and the cross-hatched diamond-shaped panels, spider webs on the trees.

Before the rituals at Taparurimi began, the fish-men engaged in a contest to prove who could throw their spears the furthest. *Pipinjawari* was the most skilled of them all, for, even though he stood behind the others, his spears still travelled the greatest distance. Wherever the spears landed, there are now large eucalyptus trees, the largest of them, called *Warukumbi*, being once the spear of *Pipinjawari*. But in winning the contest, the fish-man strained his spine so badly that parts of the vertebrae were forced through the skin. 773 [824]

At the conclusion of the rituals, it was the duty of *Pipinjawari* to pay the "workers" for the labour of cutting and painting the poles, and for making

[50] Other informants state they are large trees. Probably both informants are correct.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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773 the ceremonial baskets. But he did not fulfil his obligations. This breach of faith so infuriated the other fish-men that they chased him through the trees to spear him. Thinking to escape punishment, *Pipinjawari* jumped into the sea, and transformed himself into the queen fish. But the other men, also transforming themselves into fish, continued the chase. Even now, on calm [825] days, the aborigines often see *Pipinjawari*, with his broken back-bone now a dorsal fin, jumping out of the water to escape his pursuers.[24]

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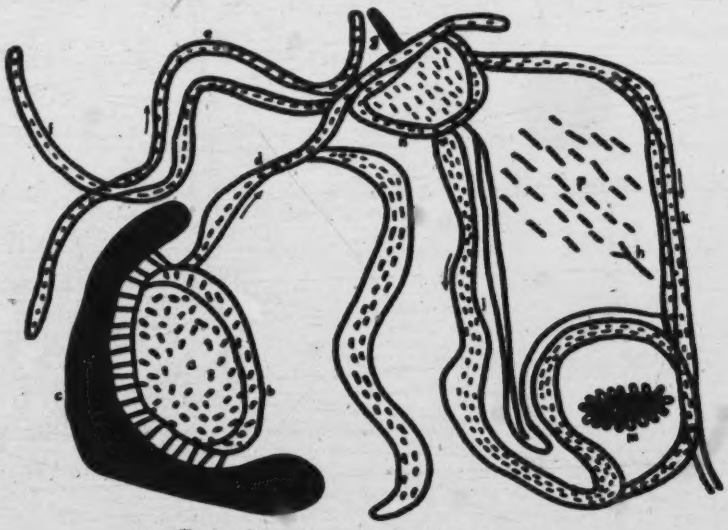

FIG. 3. *Spear-throwing Contest of Pipinjawari*

Fig. 3 is a crayon drawing of *Purukupali's pukumani* and the spear-throwing contest of the fish-people.

On the lower left is Timbaranapi, where all the mythical people assembled to perform the last *ilania* before carrying out the final burial rituals.

At Timbaranapi, the men danced in the *milimika*, *a*, and the women on the outskirts at *b*. The radiating lines on the edge of the *milimika* are many baskets filled with food for the "workers" (Pl. 25B), and crescent *c*, the ground cleared by the "workers". The men travelled by path, *e*, and the

[171] [24] This is the same fish as the *Tiwimbu* of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford 1956, p. 349).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

women by *d*, to a place, *n*, where they painted one another for the final *pukamani* rituals. 532x 773

Whilst there, the fish-men engaged in the spear-throwing contest mentioned in the myth.[88] Their footmarks are in circle, *n*, and the places where the spears fell at *p*. *Pipinjawari*, who stood behind the others at *g*, threw his spear the furthest, a large eucalyptus tree, *h*, being the transformed spear. The spears of the other fish-men at *p* are smaller eucalyptus trees.

When everyone had finished decorating themselves, both men and women moved to *m*, where the burial poles had been erected around the grave, the women again reaching their destination by a different path, *k*. It was at the completion of these rituals that the fish-men quarrelled with *Pipinjawari* because he refused to give the "workers" presents for their duties.

5. THE CLOSE OF THE CREATION PERIOD

The escape of *Pipinjawari*, which brought the *palaneri* (creation period) to a close, was the signal for the mythical people to return to their camps and to transform themselves into the various birds, fish, reptiles, heavenly bodies and inanimate objects of today. 773

Tjapara, the moon-man, rose into the sky, his face and body deeply scarred with the wounds he had received in his quarrel with *Purukupali*. [821] *Bima*, his lover, and the mother of the dead child, *Djinini*, still bearing the mark on her head where *Purukupali* had struck her with his throwing stick, [825] became the curlew (*Numenius cyanopus*) which still roams the forest at night, wailing in remorse for her misdeeds and for the child she lost.

Wuriupranala, one of the daughters of the original creator, *Mudungkala*, changed herself into the sun-woman, who travels across the sky carrying the [821] torch of blazing bark given to her by *Purukupali*. The *Mabudaianini* men, with the ceremonial paint still on their bodies, became that sparkling galaxy, the Milky Way.

Tukimbini, the grandson of *Murupiangkala*, instructed the mythical people (many of whom were his wives and relatives), to establish a totemic place at their old camps on Melville and Bathurst Islands to create the aboriginal foods belonging to each place, and then to change themselves into the particular bird, reptile, fish or inanimate object with which that locality is now associated.

[88] At a *pukamani* ceremony we witnessed at Melville Island, one of the Bathurst Islanders, *Jikunghakani*, impersonating *Pipinjawari*, threw sticks, as spears, over the men carrying the poles to the grave, chanting "*Kuniprak wanikali kurinari*", meaning "We throw spears to find out who goes furthest." [796]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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773 However, before all these changes took place, *Tukimbini* assembled the mythical people who had attended *Purukupali's* ceremony, and taught them the rules of behaviour, and the laws of marriage and tribal relationship they must always obey. *Tukimbini* also laid down the periods of light and darkness that still determine the daily cycle of aboriginal life.

512 821 [825] When the first light appears in the morning sky it is the melodious call of *Tukimbini*, now the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) that wakens the aborigines from their sleep.

The sun-woman, rising above the eastern horizon with her blazing torch, is a signal for the aboriginal men, with spears and wooden clubs, to go hunting, and for the women, with bark baskets hanging from the sticks over their shoulders, to gather their food from the forest and the swamp-lands.

About mid-day, the sun-woman, cooking the food she has gathered, makes the heat of the day unbearable. The aborigines then retire to the shade of the trees until the late afternoon when they continue their food gathering, returning to camp to cook their evening meal just as the sun-woman sinks below the western horizon.

Soon, darkness creeps across the sky, the stars, *tapalinga*, show themselves and the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, span the heavens. It is then that the dried perspiration which the *Maludaianini* rub from their bodies, [512] falls on the eyelids of the aborigines, making them so heavy that they cannot keep awake. Next morning, at dawn, *Tukimbini* wakes the aborigines to a new day.

776 778 The following is the list of the totemic places of Melville and Bathurst Islands, illustrated by bark paintings, the names of the totemic people and their relationships to each other.

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
Murupianga	Tukimbini (bird)	Great-grandson of *Mudungkala*
Wuriupi	Garagalani (turtle)	Not known
	Wuriupranala (sun)	Daughter of *Mudungkala*
Panindu	Paninduela (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Wailu	Andjalui (fresh water)	Husband of *Wuriupranala*
	Kwouk-kwouk (frog)	Not known

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
	Pakadringa (thunderstorms)	Son of *Kwouk-kwouk*
	Tomituka (monsoon rain)	Daughter of *Kwouk-kwouk*
	Bumerali (lightning)	Daughter of *Kwouk-kwouk*
Pirilou	Piriloukala (catfish)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Arangu	Wuringa (fish)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Junapinea	Ringa (turtle)	Not known
Wilindu	Wilinduela (crocodile)	Sister of *Tukimbini*
Numanira	Numanirakala (red ochre)	Sister of *Tukimbini*
Rungani	Baraka (spider)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Alaparima	Imburai-inga (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Mandumpi	Timarai-inga (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Patuapuru	Pungulu (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Putawini, Puntubu	Aragoutourina (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Matingalia	Matingalia (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Turiturina	Puruliangkala (bush fire)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Murninini, Cape Fourcroy, Taliau	Mandubuka (sand-fly)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Milapuru	Milapukala (cockatoo)	Not known
Primadua	Mistrina (pandanus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Primadua	Tililindigia (yam)	Not known
Primadua	Ubuna (yam)	Not known
Munguru	Inkaka (cockatoo)	Not known
Jurubulinai	Mudungkala (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Rulijunga	Mantinuria (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Arunumpi	Mudati (kite)	Not known
Muranapi	Murungimpili (flying fox)	Not known
Muranapi	Ksialili (bamboo)	Not known[36]
Muranapi	Mandubuka (blow fly)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Kudjatumpi	March-fly (Kudjatumpi)	Wife of *Tukimbini*

[36] There is little doubt that most, if not all, of the totemic women whose relationships I did not find out, would have been wives or relatives of *Tukimbini*.

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6. THE BARK PAINTINGS OF THE TOTEMIC PLACES

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[115] The aborigines of Melville Island produced forty-five bark paintings dealing with the totemic localities of Melville and Bathurst Islands. The assistance of the two aboriginal artists, *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, and Mr. W. E. Harney, who had spent many years on the islands, coupled with the aboriginal names on the official map of Melville and Bathurst Islands, and my increasing knowledge, enabled me to locate the approximate position of twenty-five totemic areas associated with the bark paintings.

The Honey-eater Bird-man, Tukimbini, at Murupianga

Four bark paintings deal with the myth of *Tukimbini* and the totem place he created at Murupianga, south-eastern Melville Island; Pl. 4A, B; Pl. 4C, D; Pl. 6C, D; Pl. 7A.

The circle *a*, on Pl. 4A, B, is a mangrove swamp on a low island adjacent to Murupianga, *b*, *b*, and *p*, *p*, *p*, being rocks on its shore. The long sandy beach at Murupianga is shown at *d*, and a shoal at *j*. At *e* is a stingray, *h*, a dugong, *k*, a turtle, and *l*, a diamond fish. At *f*, *f*, etc., are piles of dead leaves on the beach, and at *s*, *s*, *s*, and similar designs, stringy-bark trees growing along the shore. A freshwater spring is at *t*, with two trees growing from its banks. Bunches of sea-weed are at *g*, and *r*, *r*, *r*, and at *s*, on the left-hand side of the painting, are the tree-covered uplands at Murupianga. The totemic place, Wuriupi, created by the woman, *Wuriupranala*, and her son, is at *m*.

On Pl. 4C, D, a jungle near the shore at Murupianga,[87] is indicated by the central black disc, *g*, and the camps of the bird-man, *Tukimbini*, are shown by the symbols, *a*, *a*, etc. The circle, *d*, *d*, pictures high, white cliffs, adjacent to the totemic jungle; *k*, is a monsoon forest tree, and *f*, *f*, its limbs; at *h*, *h*, are living paper-bark trees, at *b*, *b*, *b*, dead jungle trees; and at *c*, *c*, etc., poisonous yams, similar to the *kulama* (Pl. 44D), which *Tukimbini* created for food. The dots on the painting indicate the red seeds of a jungle vine lying on the ground.

Pl. 6C, D, is one side of a *pukamuni* basket;[88] the holes at *a*, *a*, show that it is a female basket.

[87] In the companion bark painting, Pl. 4A, B, the totemic place is a mangrove swamp. Within the same area, as with *Mundubuku*, south-western Bathurst Island, several adjacent localities are associated with the same totemic being.

[88] Klaatsch (1907), p. 577, who saw this type of basket on an old grave, states that, according to the aborigines, it indicated the burial place of a woman. Though it may be
[114] that Klaatsch was correct, my informants simply referred to the *pukamuni* baskets as male and female, as they did to male and female *pukamuni* spears (Pl. 32A, B). No female baskets were used at the *pukamuni* of the woman, *Matapini*.

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Circle *y*, pictures the totem place of *Tukimbini* at Murupianga; *w*, a mangrove swamp not far from the coastline; circle *t*, a cliff with sand at its base (probably on the sea shore); and circles *f*, *j*, and *r* are the open sea. Circle *g* pictures a submerged reef at Murupianga; *d*, *d*, are two sandbanks off the shore, and *h*, *h*, patches of jungle on the land. At *c*, *c*, etc., are the sandy shores; at *b*, *b*, etc., the lines of driftwood and debris cast upon them, while the cross-hatched background represents the tracks made in the soft sand by the hermit crabs. 532x 778

Pl. 7A deals with *Tukimbini* and his many wives at Murupianga during the *palaneri* (creation) period.

The central figure is *Tukimbini*, the circles on either side of his face indicating the yellow ornaments he wore while he was a man. When later, he transformed himself into the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) he still retained those decorations. *Tukimbini's* penis is at *b*. The white oval, *c*, is his paper-bark shelter, the black oval, *e*, being the bough shed he built over the shelter to make it cooler. His camp fires, on either side of him, are at *d*, *d*, etc., and those of three of his wives at *n*, *n*, *n*.

The eight circles, *g*, *g*, etc., represent some of the wives of *Tukimbini*. Within the white circle, the dots, *c*, indicate *Tukimbini's* grass bed, and those over the remainder of the painting, the beds of his wives. The outer white circle, *m*, symbolizes the high ground at Murupianga.

The Hawk-bill Turtle-woman, Garagalani, at Wuriupi

The hawk-bill turtle-woman, *Garagalani*, and her husband, *Marakuni*, in company with the crocodile-man, *Jirakupai*, the wild honey-man, *Mauwini*, and many others, took part in the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*. It was the duty of *Garagalani* and the other turtle-women, to make the large folded bark baskets, and for their husbands to decorate them. 773

At the close of the creation period, when *Garagalani* and the other turtle-women were transformed into sea creatures, the baskets became their carapaces, and the painted designs on the baskets, the shell pattern on their backs.

Pl. 8A, B, two sides of a *pukamuni* basket, refers to the turtle-woman, *Garagalani*. On B, the circular designs symbolize turtle eggs; the vertical bands, lengths of turtle rope, made from fibrous bark, and the cross-hatched areas, patches of sea-grass, the food of the turtles. 532x 773

On the opposite side of the basket, Pl. 8A, the bands refer to the turtle rope, while the cross-hatching is the sea-grass.

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Although, in the interpretation of the paintings on this basket, gathered in the early days of the expedition, the designs were not given topographical meanings, there is little doubt that fuller inquiries would have shown that the designs and the topography were linked.

On Pl. 8c, D, *e*, pictures the body of the turtle-woman, *a*, *a*, being the front flippers, *d*, *d*, the hind flippers, *b*, the carapace, *g*, the head, and *c*, *c*, *c*, etc., the bones of the creature; the dotted background, *f*, represents the marks on the tortoise-shell of the carapace.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala, at Wuriupi

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Every morning, the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,[29] climbs a high mountain in the east, and, carrying her blazing torch of bark, travels across the sky, parallel to the earth. Sometimes, the sun-woman, to please her husband, powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which, flying into the sky, reddens the early morning clouds.

On reaching the western horizon the sun-woman extinguishes her bark torch, and, by the light from its glowing end, finds her way back to the east through the underground world, Ilara.[30] But, before setting out on that journey, *Wuriupranala* again decorates herself with powdered ochres thereby colouring both the western sky and the clouds.

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Nine bark paintings, i.e. Pls. 5A, B, C, D, 6A, B, 7B, C, D, illustrate the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, and the topography of Wuriupi. The remainder of the paintings dealing with the sun are described under Astronomy, Chapter 7.

Pl. 5A is a painting on a small bark basket, which deals with the myth of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

The circle in the centre of each disc, of which there are sixteen, symbolizes the sun-woman, the radiating lines being the rays of light at sunrise and sunset. The three wide vertical bands represent the track of the sun-woman as she moves across the sky, and the lines, linking the discs, the path in the underground world, Ilara, along which *Wuriupranala* returns to the east. The cross-hatched areas are rain, the dots, stars (*sapalinga*), and the short parallel lines, top and bottom, rain falling from the clouds.

The central dot on Pl. 5B, is the "eye" of the sun-woman seated in her paper-bark hut (the inner circle). The five radiating lines within the circle are the posts of her hut, the cross-hatching is her hair, and the five outer concentric circles are her hair-string belts.

[29] In one bark painting, Pl. 6OA, B, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala* alternately travel across the sky. This is the only time that *Muripiangkala* was referred to as a sun-woman.
[30] The moon returns to the east by a similar road.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

The vertical lines at the bottom of the painting symbolize the rays of the sun-woman as she rises in the east, and the groups of dots throughout the design, the stars, *tapalinga*, in the night sky. 532x 773

On Pl. 5C, D, the two concentric circles, *d*, indicate the surface, while *a*, is the *imunka*,[81] or life centre of the sun.

The painting shows a number of different clouds; a thin misty cloud at *b*, heavy rain clouds which temporarily obscure the sun at *h*, *h*, *h*, etc., a mackerel sky at *c* (indicated by the short radiating lines), and cumulus clouds at *j*, *j*.

The colours of sunrise and sunset are indicated by the horizontal bands, *g*, *g*; while the lines of light, which sometimes radiate from the sunset, are at *e*, *e*, etc., and those from the sunrise at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 6A, B, is a bark painting of Wuriupi, the totem place of *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman. Her body, now a patch of jungle, is at *a*; her head at *n*, and her abdomen at *k*. Her arms are at *b*, *b*; her legs at *c*, *c*; her breasts at *j*, *j*; her ears at *m*, *m*; the chevron scars on her arms and back at *e*, *e*, etc. 532x 778

The windbreak of her camp, *d*, is a sandy beach at Wuriupi, and the shelter, under which she rested, is a large yam, whose leaves, vine and blossoms, are indicated by symbols, *h*, *h*; *l*, *l*; *v*, *v*, etc. Tracks made by the sun-woman are shown at *x*, *x*; *x*, *x*; red rocks on the beach at *g*, *g*; and black rocks at *f*, *f*.

Pl. 7B, a painting on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, also refers to the sun-woman. 532x 821

The sun is represented by the black circle in the lower section of the design, while the disc in the centre of the circle is the torch of blazing bark which the sun-woman carries across the sky to provide the world with light and heat. The white, upper disc represents the large thunderclouds which, at the beginning of the wet season, often obscure the sun.[82] The surrounding concentric circles and the parallel lines across the middle of the design symbolize the colours on the edge of the clouds at sunrise or sunset.

The lighter coloured diagonal lines refer to groups of cirrus clouds, and the darker, to monsoon clouds of the rainy season. The dots are the stars of the night sky.

The vertical black line in the middle of Pl. 7D, is the track across the sky of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*. The black disc across the bottom is the sun in the morning; the one immediately above, the sun at midday; the next,

[81] The *imunka* is a universal life essence which permeates all living things, the plants, the creatures and man. It is situated in the solar-plexus of man. This is the same life essence as that of the Pitjendadjara tribe of the western deserts of Central Australia (Mountford, 1948, p. 111). [774] [171]

[82] When a thundercloud obscures the sun, the aborigines believe that *Andjahi* (fresh water) has taken his wife, *Wuriupranala*, to his camp.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532 821 the sun at mid-afternoon, and the disc on the upper edge, *Wuriupranala* at sunset.

The lighter coloured radiating bands are the lines of light from the blazing bark torch, carried by the sun-woman; the dark-coloured ovals between, a number of *tukimbinis* (yellow-eared honey-eaters), and the lighter coloured ovals, a number of *wuriuprinilis* (mistletoe birds).

In the centre of Pl. 7c, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, seated in her bark hut at Wuriupi. The central dark mark on her abdomen indicates body paint; the white lines, *a*, *a*, are her legs, *b*, *b*, her feet and *e*, *e*, her arms.

The dark-coloured oval, *g*, is the sun-woman's paper-bark hut; the light-coloured outer circle, *d*, is a bough shed built over the hut to keep it cool, and the short radiating lines between the two circles, the posts supporting the roof.

The Eucalyptus-tree Woman, Paninduela, at Panindu

773 The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Paninduela*, created the totemic country of Panindu, north-eastern Melville Island, the streams, fish, turtles, geese and other creatures, as well as water-lilies, spike-rushes and other plants that grow in the freshwater swamps.

778 Panindu is on the upper reaches of an unnamed river in north-eastern Melville Island; Wailu, the totemic place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at the mouth of the same stream.

×532 778 On Pl. 9A, B, *a*, *a*, are the Panindu waterholes; *b*, *b*, waterfalls which flow from upper to lower pools; and *e*, *e*, are lines of foam caused by the falling water. At *t*, *t*, etc., are *pubiaka*, and *u*, *u*, etc., paper-bark trees on the banks of the stream, and at *h*, *h*, and *j*, *j*, dead *pubiaka* and paper-bark trees lying in the water.

Two lagoons, or backwaters, are indicated at *c*, *c*; two sedge-covered swamps at *f*, *g*. Water-grass on the bottom of the swamp is shown by the cross-hatched areas, *s*, *s*.

The Freshwater-man, Andjalui

778 776 The totem place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island. At Wailu there also lived the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*,[38] her son, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms, and her two daughters, *Tomiuka*, the woman of the monsoon rains, and *Bumerali*, the woman of the lightning.

[38] Some aborigines thought, but were not sure, that *Andjalui* was the husband of both *Kwouk-kwouk*, and the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

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Five bark paintings, Pls. 9C, D, 10B, D, 22A, B, and 38B, deal with Wailu and its inhabitants. 532x 778

On Pl. 9C, D, the totemic lagoon, Wailu, is at *a*, the outer circle, *b*, symbolizing the broken water of the stream, *f* (in circle above) as it runs over the stony bed of a watercourse into Wailu. At *d*, *d*, are the paper-bark and *e*, *e*, *pubiaka* trees which grow on its banks.

At *j*, *j* (below), and *z*, *z*, etc., are living paper-bark, and *m*, *m*, and *p*, *p*, etc., *pubiaka* trees on the bank; *n*, *n*, are dead paper-bark and *o*, *o*, *pubiaka* trees in the swamp. The cross-hatched areas throughout the painting symbolize watergrass on the bottom of the lagoon.

Pl. 38B, which is associated with Wailu, deals with the rainbow-woman, *Maratji*, the thunderstorm-man, *Pakadringa*, and the monsoon rain-woman, *Tomituka*. 532x 776

The four black horizontal bands represent the dark-coloured clouds of *Tomituka* (monsoon rain); the lighter-coloured chevrons indicate large cumulus clouds, the home of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*; and the darker chevrons are the rainbow-women, *Maratjis*, who live at Maundu.

The Frog-Woman, Kwouk-kwouk, at Wailu

The frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, lives with her family, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka*, and *Bumerali*, at Wailu, the totem place of *Andjalui*. 776 778

The three children of *Kwouk-kwouk* always obey their mother, so when, in the wet season, the rain falls and thunderstorms rage, she croaks with joy over their handiwork. No aboriginal would dare to kill a frog; if he were so foolish, her son, *Pakadringa*, and daughter, *Tomituka*, would send down so much rain that everyone would be drowned. 821 825

Pl. 10B deals with the frogs at Wailu. The central black oval is the lagoon at Wailu. At *a*, *a*, are large paper-bark trees which grow in Wailu lagoon, and at *b*, *b*, another species of paper-bark which prefers the drier conditions of the banks. The frogs, which live in the lagoon, are indicated at *c*, *c*, etc.; a water-lily swamp is shown at *d*, *d*, and the white, broken water, running over fallen trees, at *e*, *e*. The groups of dots represent the water-grass, and the faint lines separating them, small streams of running water in an adjacent swamp. 532x 778

Pakadringa, Bumerali and Tomituka at Wailu

During creation times, before *Pakadringa* was transformed into the man of the thunderstorms, he was a hairy giant, huge in size, and repulsive in appear- 776

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776 ance, with a long black body, short, thick legs and arms, and a pendant abdomen, caused by continuous over-eating.

Pakadringa, with his sister, *Bumerali*, the lightning-woman, her husband, *Kilipatu*, and their many children travel together in the thunderclouds.

776 821 *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, has flaked stone axes, called *rikas*,[84] mounted on long crooked handles, which she carries in either hand. With these, while travelling in the clouds with *Pakadringa*, she strikes the ground beneath, destroying the trees and sometimes the aborigines.[85] *Bumerali* becomes angry when her children jump from cloud to cloud. The sharp crack of the thunder which immediately follows the lightning flash is the voice of *Bumerali*[86] reprimanding her children for their disobedience.

Tomituka, *Pakadringa's* other sister, is the woman of the monsoon rain. At the start of the wet season, the trees and plants become happy when they hear the distant rumblings of *Pakadringa* for they know that *Tomituka* comes with him, bringing rain for their thirsty roots.

×532 Pl. 10D illustrates the mythical *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms.

776 821 The black central oval and the semi-circles at the top and bottom of the painting are the dark-coloured thunderclouds of *Pakadringa*. At *b*, *b*, etc., are white thunderclouds, and *c*, *c*, etc., red-coloured clouds which appear in the sky after a storm has passed. The designs *a*, *a*, etc., indicate the rainbow-women, *Maraiji* (p. 154), and the dots on the background, the falling rain.

Pl. 22A, B, deals with the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. Her eyes are indicated at *a*, *a*; her breasts at *d*, *d*; her feet at *f*, *f*; her camps at *k*, *k*; and her nose is at *b*.

The crooked handles of her stone axes are at *c*, *c*, and the "road" of the lightning (the flash) is at *e*.

The upper crescent, *g*, is the thundercloud in which *Bumerali* and her family travel; *h*, a yellow cloud which forms after the storm has passed, *s*, *s*, *s*, are stringy-bark trees, and *n*, *n*, other trees killed by *Bumerali's* axe;

[84] Some of my informants said that the axes of *Bumerali* were made of a white stone which she had picked up at Moonga Hill, north of Turiturina, western Bathurst Island, where, I was told, there is an outcrop of quartz. Others said she made the axes from a white stone found in the upper world, Tuniruna, p. 171.

[85] There is a widespread belief throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and some of the [171] Indonesian Islands, that the prehistoric stone axes, found by the peasant people, were thunderbolts (Mountford, 1955, p. 1). At Oenpelli (Mountford, 1956, p. 208) a lightning man, *Mamaragan*, carries stone axes on his hands and knees. With these axes he strikes the ground. It is of some interest to find the myth of such a widespread belief among the Australian aborigines.

[86] The aborigines distinguish between the sharp crack of thunder (the voice of *Bumerali*) and the rumble of distant thunder, that of *Pakadringa*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

x 532

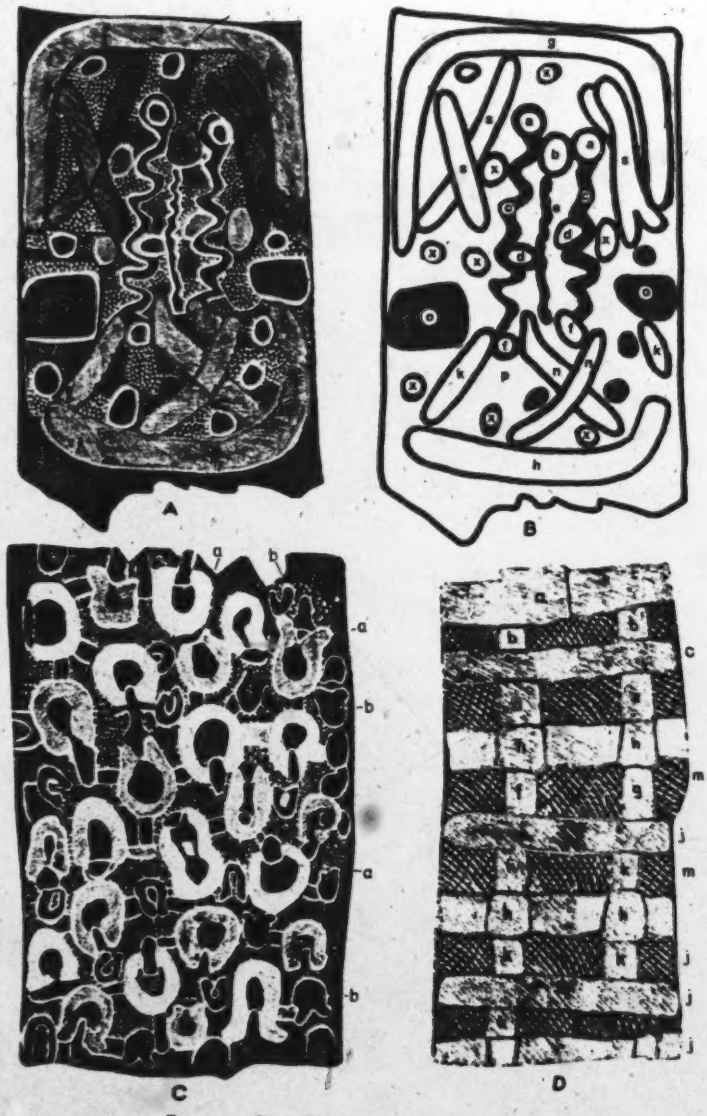

PLATE 22. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Lightning-woman, at Wailu; C, Ningauis, at Imaluna; D, Ningauis, at Imaluna.

Cp. 44A

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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516
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PLATE 23. *The Pukamuni Rituals*

A, Pulanimbuwi decorated for Burial Rituals; B, Pulanimbuwi mourning; C, Rite of Wandiatapinda; D, Final Scene at Grave; E, Pulanimbuwi being washed.

[p. 44 b]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

a, *o* (the black areas), indicate stony hills near her camp in the upper world; and the dots on the background, the stars, *tapalingas*, which live in the upper world with the lightning woman. 532 x 821 776

The Cat-fish Woman, Piriloukala at Pirilou

Pirilou, on the upper Goose Creek swamps, is the totemic place of a mythical cat-fish woman, *Piriloukala*. She was sent by *Tukimbini* to create both the totemic country and the food necessary for the natives to live on it, i.e., geese, brolgas, ducks, freshwater goannas, turtles, waterlily bulbs, red and white fruited *Eugenia* trees, and the various kinds of yams that prefer the damp soil. 778 776 [862]

On Pl. 10C, the darker crossed circles are the black, and the lighter, the white rocks at Pirilou. Panels, such as *a*, symbolize the trunks of the paper-bark trees growing in the swamp; *b*, the many waterlilies on its surface, and the white vertical lines on the background, streams of fresh water in the swamp-lands. 532 x 778

The Fish-woman, Wuringa, at Arangu

Tukimbini sent the fish-woman, *Wuringa*, to establish a camp at Arangu, in Curtis Haven, northern Melville Island. Later, *Wuringa's* camp was transformed into a group of flat rocks which are uncovered only at low tide. 773 [778]

Wuringa created the aboriginal foods of the area, turtles, crabs, fish of all kinds, yams, cabbage palms and hives of wild honey.

Two bark paintings illustrate Arangu and its surroundings, Pl. 11C and Pl. 11D. 532 x 778

On Pl. 11C, *a*, is a long submerged reef at Arangu; *d*, *d*, *d*, smaller submerged rocks; *b*, *c*, long sand-bars, while at *e*, *e*, are jelly fish. The remainder of the ovals are oysters on the rocks at Arangu.

On Pl. 11D, *a*, is the totemic place, Arangu; *b*, represents the soft friable boulders near by; *c*, a large rock on the coast; *d*, wave breaking over it; *h*, white sand on the beach, and *j*, the sand and gravel on the sea bottom.

Symbol *e*, indicates black trepang; *f*, *f*, white trepang; *r*, an especially large trepang; *n*, a jelly fish, and *m*, a bed of oysters. At *k*, are many pearl shells, and at *s*, *s*, conch shells. A deep channel in Curtis Haven is indicated at *p*, a yellow rock under the water, at *o*, and the seaweed growing on the rocks at Arangu, by the lighter-coloured dots on the background.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Logger-head Turtle-woman, Ringa, at Jutapinta

773 At the *pukamani* of *Purukupali*, *Ringa*, the logger-head turtle, with *Garagalani*, the hawk-bill turtle, were responsible for making the large bark ceremonial baskets.[87] When, at the close of the creation period, the men and women changed themselves into creatures or plants, the turtle-women, including *Ringa*, became the sea-going turtles.

×532 778 Pl. 12c deals with the totemic place of the logger-head turtle, a submerged reef, called Jutapinta, some miles north of Karslake Island. The central figure is the reef, the totemic body of the woman, *Ringa*, and the encircling dark-coloured area, *a*, the white sand on the sea bottom. At *b*, is the sea-water, and *c*, *c*, etc., are black rocks under the water, which today are frequented by the logger-head turtles. The yellow bands, *d*, *d*, etc., indicate the seaweed, and the white dotted areas, *e*, *e*, etc., the oysters that live on the reef. The dots, surrounding the central figure, symbolize the eggs inside the body of the logger-head turtle. Unlike the green or hawkbill turtles, the logger-heads do not lay their eggs on the sandy shore.

The Crocodile-woman, Wilinduela, at Wilindu

773 Toward the close of the creation period, the woman, *Wilinduela*, and her sister, *Numanirakala*, were sent out by their brother, *Tukimbini*, to establish totemic centres on northern Melville Island. When they reached Shark Bay, *Wilinduela* stayed on the high ground, i.e., Wilindu Island, while she sent her younger sister to Numanira, a reef uncovered only at low water. Before the two sisters separated, however, they camped together on the mainland at Mundinju (Pl. 10A).

×532 778 The black centre of Pl. 11A, is the totem place of the crocodile-woman on Wilindu Island, the surrounding white circle indicating the jungle around the totemic place. The small black discs are dark-coloured rocks on the cliffs, and the ligher-coloured, rocks on the sea beach. The outer circle is the sea.

On Pl. 11B the central disc is Wilindu Island, while the four circles on its circumference are freshwater springs.

The lower panel *a*, indicates black and *b*, yellow rocks on the coast; *c*, and *e*, *e*, etc., are areas of jungle; *f*, is a rock projecting from the sea, and *h*, the shores of Shark Bay. Poisonous yams, *kuku*, are indicated at *d*, and edible yams at *g*. The many circular discs are oysters on the rocks at Wilindu.

[462] [764] [87] At the conclusion of the present-day burial rites, these baskets, made by the women and painted by the men, are placed on the top of the burial poles as presents to the dead.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Pl. 10A pictures Mundinju, the place where the two sisters, *Wilindusla* and *Numanirakala* camped before the former made her home at Wilindu, and the latter at Numanira. 532x 778

The central black disc is Mundinju; the smaller black discs, throughout the painting, are holes in the cliffs from which seep streams of fresh water. The long, radiating panels are bands of red and yellow ochres in the cliffs, the groups of parallel lines, gutters formed in the cliffs, where *Wilindusla* urinated; and the groups of chevron designs, ferns growing among the rocks.

The Red-ochre Woman, Numanirakala, at Numanira

Numanira, created by *Numanirakala*, is a partly submerged reef a short distance from Wulrungku (Karslake Island), north-western Melville Island. 778

At low tide, the aborigines collect one of the best ochres in the country from this locality, even better than that from Imilu (Fig. 1), for, although Imilu ochres are brightest when used dry, those from Numanira are best when mixed with water. [317]

The central design on Pl. 12B indicates the flat rocks of the submerged totemic place at Numanira, while similar designs, above and below, are other rocks near by. The darker-coloured segments in these three designs indicate the red ochre, and the lighter segments the mud on the sea bottom. The white circles represent sea-weed, the darker, small rocks under the water, and the dots, the corals growing on those rocks. 532x 778

The central black disc of Pl. 12D is Numanira; the surrounding white circle, the sand on the sea floor, and the narrow darker line on the periphery, the red ochre, for which the island is noted.

The radiating black panels symbolize clams, the lighter panels, oysters, both of which are plentiful on the rocks of the island. The outer circle is the mud, and the dots are bunches of weed on the sea-bottom.

The Spider-woman, Baraka, at Rungani

During *palaneri* times, the spider-woman, *Baraka*, who lived at Rungani, made a bark basket for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*. She first stripped a sheet of bark from a eucalyptus tree, heated it over the fire to make it flexible, then, bending it double, sewed the edges together with split lawyer vine. From that day until now, the women of Melville and Bathurst Islands have made their baskets in the same manner. After the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* instructed his wife, *Baraka*, to establish a totemic place at Rungani, northern Melville Island. 773 285 [462] 773

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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The black oval in the middle of Pl. 13A is a mark on the spider-woman, whose body is indicated by the central oval.

The irregular oval *a*, is her abdomen, and *b*, *b*, is her thorax. At *c*, *c*, are her legs; *f*, *f*, etc., the hairs on her legs, and *d*, *d*, etc., her many knees and elbows. Semi-circles *h*, *h*, and the dotted sections, are spider eggs, and the cross-hatched areas, spider webs.

532
778

On Pl. 13C, the central black circle, representing an area of dry land at Rungani, was once the body of *Baraka*, and the surrounding lighter-coloured circle; the egg-case of the spider. The central square is the totemic place, Rungani, the radiating lines within the square being the legs of the spider.

The barred horizontal and vertical panels *a*, *a* (once roads made by the spider-woman as she travelled to and from her totemic place in search of food), are now high, red cliffs, and the diagonal panels leading from the central squares, additional tracks made by the spider-woman. These tracks have since been transformed into watercourses. The eight black concentric circles symbolize the daughters of *Baraka* and *Tukimbini*, and the dotted panels the legs of the children. The chevron designs indicate the faeces of both the spider-woman and her daughters.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Imburai-inga, at Alaparima

Pl. 13B, D, pictures the totemic place of a eucalyptus-tree woman, *Imburai-inga*, at Alaparima, north-western Melville Island.

This totemic place, *d*, *d*, is on the sea-beach, with high cliffs, *e*, to the north, and jungle trees, *f*, *f*, near by. At *h*, on the left-hand edge of the painting, is the island, Purapundili (Fig. 1), one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Piripinis*.

Rocks, near the shore at Piper Head, are indicated at transverse panel, *g*; and a small rocky island, with trees growing along its shore is at *j*. The long design, *k*, at the bottom of the painting, represents the Apsley Straits, which separate Melville and Bathurst Islands.

The oval, *n*, is the aboriginal locality, Punata, in Apsley Straits, which is near the old military settlement of Fort Dundas, *m*.[88] Designs around the edge of this section are trees on the high land, while at *p*, on the bottom of the drawing, are trees on the shore.

The two crescents, *o*, *o*, which practically encircle Punata (*n*), are aboriginal roads; *a*, *a*, etc., are turtles; *b*, *b*, etc., dugongs, and *c*, *c*, etc., dug-out canoes.

[88] Established in 1824, abandoned in 1828.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Timarai-inga, at Mandumpi

Pl. 12A pictures the totem place of a eucalyptus-tree woman, *Timarai-inga*, a small rocky island, near the coast at Mandumpi, north-western Melville Island. 532x 778

The black diamond shapes indicate bands of yellow ochre, and the light-coloured designs, *a*, *a*, etc., white ochres in the cliff face at Mandumpi. The barred panels, *b*, *b*, symbolize a freshwater stream which flows into the sea. The chevrons throughout the design picture ferns growing among the rocks.

Although I did not gather specific details of the totemic story, it is safe to assume that *Timarai-inga* was the creator of this totemic place. [114]

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Pungulu, at Patuapuru

The totemic place of the eucalyptus-tree woman, *Pungulu*, is at Patuapuru (Deception Point), northern Bathurst Island.

The horizontal lines *b*, *b*, on Pl. 14C, D, symbolize the open sea at Patuapuru, and *a*, *a*, etc., on the top of the painting, high light-coloured cliffs. At *c*, is another cliff of reddish colour, and *d*, *d*, etc., are the many rocks on the beach which are covered at high tide.

The long panel *f*, *f*, on the left-hand side of the painting, is the open beach at Patuapuru, and the vertical panels *e*, *e*, etc., are parallel lines of sand-ridges behind the beach.

In the centre line of the painting, at *h*, and *n*, are two casuarina trees, and at *k*, is a freshwater lagoon on the banks of which are many unidentified jungle trees. A high sandhill is indicated at *m* (upper right), and the marine grass on the sea-shore, by the cross-hatching on the background.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Aragoutourina,[39] *at Putawini*

The first camp of *Aragoutourina* was at Puntubu, at the headwaters of the Tjipripu River, central Melville Island, where she stayed for a while. She then travelled south-west over the watershed to Kuruwu River which empties its water into the Apsley Straits. After making this water-course, *Aragoutourina* walked to Putawini Point, western Bathurst Island,[40] where she created the topography and natural history of the surrounding country. 773

A jungle near Putawini is represented on Pl. 14A, B, by the central white 532x 778

[39] A red-flowering eucalypt locally known as the bloodwood.
[40] Called Mazloo Point on the official maps.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

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circle, *a*; a small adjacent island by symbol *b*; a large boulder in the sea by *k* (lower right), and the waves breaking over it by the black disc, *c* (above).

Putawini is at *d*, in upper circle; two adjacent freshwater lagoons are at *e*, *h* (upper and lower circles), the uplands are at *t* (upper left), and a spring in the cliffs is at *g*. Sharp-edged water-grasses grow in the lagoons, *a*, *l*; reeds at *n*, *o*, (upper right); red lotus lilies at *q* (top); and paper-bark trees at *p* (upper right).

A boulder at *u* (left), was once the small bark basket of this eucalyptus-tree woman, and a freshwater lagoon *v* (left), her large bark basket.

Putawini Point, *x* (lower right), where *Aragoutourina* left her *pukamuni* ornaments behind, is now one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*.

At *aa* (bottom), is a small watercourse with *bb* as its tributary; *y* and *z* are two paper-bark trees, *ff*, is one of their limbs; *cc* (bottom), and *vv* (upper right), are hibiscus trees; *ee*, *rr*, *xx* and *ww*, mangrove trees; *kk*, represents eucalyptus trees; *ll*, *nn*, pandanus palms; *mm*, stringy-barks; *oo*, kapok, and *qq*, grevillea trees.

The entrance to Putawini creek is at *ii*, with its sandy sea-shores at *gg*, *tt*, and *uu*. White cliffs are at *jj*; red cliffs at *pp*; and isolated boulders at *ss*. The mangrove swamps *zz*, are at the mouth of the Putawini Creek.

Both sides of a large *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 15A, B, C, D, refer to the myth of *Aragoutourina*.

On 15A, B, the vertical line of rectangles, *a*, represents the Kuruwu Creek that flows into Apsey Straits. This creek was created by the mythical woman. The track she made as she walked from this watercourse to Putawini Point is indicated by line of rectangles at *d*. Tributary, *b*, was created where *Aragoutourina* dug for red ochre, and tributary *k*, where she dug for white ochre with which to decorate herself.

Horizontal lines, *e*, *f*, indicate bands of red, and *g*, *h*, white ochres in the banks of the Kuruwu Creek. The lighter-coloured rectangles, *c*, *c*, etc., throughout the painting, represent deposits of yellow ochre and the darker panels, *q*, *q*, etc., red ochre. Pandanus trees, growing along the banks of the Kuruwu Creek, are indicated by the black discs, *m*, at the intersection of the horizontal and vertical lines.

Pl. 15C, D, describes the seacoast at Putawini. The central black disc, *a*, is a sandbank, once *Aragoutourina's* bark hut; the enclosing circle *b*, the surrounding ocean; and the outer circle *c*, the sea-weed growing on the rocky bottom.

The black square above, at *d*, is a mangrove swamp, and the lighter

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

border, the muddy floor. The other black rectangles, *p*, *p*, etc., indicate rocks in the sea, and their lighter-coloured borders, the waves breaking over them. 532x 778

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Matingalu, at Putawini

A eucalyptus-tree woman *Matingalu* created a rocky island of the same name at the mouth of Putawini Creek, western Bathurst Island. I was not able to gather further details of the mythical story. 773

The central vertical panel *a*, of Pl. 16A, is the open sea, and the outer surrounding white rectangle, *b*, *b*, the dry land of the island. Small hills are at *k*, *k* (top), a large hill is at *o* (top); and deposits of red ochre, *m*, *m*, etc., also form part of the island. 532x 778

A small branch of the Putawini Creek is indicated by the white band at *b*; another branch, Piriki, at *c*; another near Pintamu, at *d*; and still another (unnamed) at *f*, *f*. Timinindu and Dunkunaru Creeks (unidentified) are at *g*, *g*, and *e*, respectively. The eggs of a crocodile, *kulupiangu*, similar to those of *Jirukupui*, the dangerous, sea-going *Crocodilus porosus*, are indicated by the white discs, *n*, *n*, etc. [825]

The Bush-fire woman, Puruliangkala, at Turiturina Island

The totemic place of the woman of the bush-fires, *Puruliangkala*, is on Turiturina Island, in Port Hurd, western Bathurst Island, where the mythical bird-man and later the *Ningauis* performed the first *kulama* ceremonies (p. 123). 778 [773]

The central white circle on Pl. 16D, is Turiturina Island: the smaller circles, *a*, *a*, are low rocks in the sea, once the camp-fires of *Puruliangkala*; and *b*, *b*, freshwater springs that provided her with water. The black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., are deposits of red ochre, and *d*, *d*, *d*, etc., deposits of white ochre, used by both the mythical woman and the *Ningauis* to decorate themselves for their ceremonies during *palaneri* times. 532x 778

At *e*, *e*, etc., are many milkwood trees, the sap of which, like the ochre deposits, was also utilized by both *Puruliangkala* and the *Ningauis* for body decorations. This sap is still used in the opening rituals of the *kulama* (p. 131). The dots are white fruits, *mandikama*, which *Puruliangkala* created for food. [824] [386]

The Sand-fly woman, Mandukula, at Murninini

Mandukula, the sand-fly woman, established the totemic place of Murninini, south-western Bathurst Island. 773 778

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Pl. 17A, B, deals with the topography of Murninini. The central disc *a*, the transformed body of the mythical woman, is a large red-coloured cliff on the sea-coast, and the outer white oval, *b*, *b*, a band of white rock along the cliff's upper edge.

The black oval, *c*, *c*, is a stream, created by *Mandubuka* to provide herself with drinking water. This stream, which runs over the cliff, *a*, forms a small waterfall, and at *f*, the place where the stream, *c*, *c*, runs into the sea.

A large white cliff, *h*, *h*, *h*, is visible at sea for some distance. Piles of yellow stone, *u*, *u*, etc., were created by the mythical woman, so that she would have ochres with which to decorate herself.

Lururundu Hills, the black rectangles, *g*, *g*, were once the grass huts of *Mandubuka*; *j*, *j*, long rocks on the shore, her digging sticks; and the large boulders, *k*, *k*, her bark baskets. At *l*, is a piece of wood with which the woman pounded the cooked trunk of the fan palm; *t*, (upper left) now a hollow rock, was her palm-leaf (*tulini*) basket, and at *n*, *n*, are places where she once cooked her food.

Pl. 17D refers to another of the totemic places of Mandubuka at Taliau,[61] a salt-water lagoon adjacent to Murninini on Cape Fourcroy.

The light-coloured rectangles above the central horizontal line, *a*, picture the mangrove swamps that fringe the lagoon, and the darker, the sandy patches among the trees. The symbols below *a*, refer to a freshwater swamp, Maundu, about eight miles south-east of Murninini. The darker-coloured rectangles picture the many *Maratjis*, great and small, that inhabit Maundu, and the lighter, the clear water of the swamp. Lines *b*, *b*, etc., are streams of reddish water that flow from Maundu into the sea (myth, p. 157).

Pl. 17C deals with still another locality in the totemic area of *Mandubuka*, at Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island.

At *a*, *a*, the totemic places of *Mandubuka*, are large rocks in the sea. At *b*, *b*, the parallel lines represent a long sandy beach, and *c*, *c*, the waves breaking on that beach. The sea mist rising from the breaking waves is indicated by the dotted background.

The black semi-circles, *f*, *f*, at the top and bottom of the painting, are the cliffs at Taliau; *d*, *d*, etc., the light-coloured rocks; and *g*, *g*, etc., the red boulders on the sea-shore. At *e*, *e*, (top and bottom) is an old aboriginal road.

[61] Hart, 1930, p. 174, refers to the food-collecting rights of this area.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The White-Cockatoo woman, Milapukala, at Milapuru

A white-cockatoo woman, *Milapukala*, made a large freshwater lagoon at Milapuru, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. At the same time she created opossums, wallabies, carpet snakes, many kinds of lizards, hives of wild honey and many other foods so that she, and later the aborigines, would have plenty to eat. 773

The central black oval on Pl. 16c, is the lagoon, the totem place of the white cockatoo-woman, the short radiating lines between this and the white oval being groups of rushes on the edge of the water. 532 x 778

The large white oval represents the backwaters of Milapuru, and the outer black oval, the red soil of the surrounding uplands. The radiating lines between these ovals are pandanus trees growing along the shores.

The Pandanus-tree woman, Miatrina, at Primadua

At the command of *Tukimbini*, the *Miatrina* women and their children travelled to Primadua, southern Bathurst Island to establish a totemic centre. [773]

On Pl. 18a, the bark hut of the *Miatrina* women is shown as a black oval in the centre of the painting. This hut is now a submerged rock, called Purupatimu. The dark-coloured band, *a*, *a*, a red sandbar encircling Purupatimu, was once the grass and leaves which the mythical women pushed back when they were cleaning the ground for their camp.

The small white discs (the breasts of the *Miatrina* woman), are now black, submerged rocks; the series of vertical panels (once the children), sandbars in the shallow water; and the two meandering lines, *b*, *b*, (where the children played), salt-water creeks at Primadua. Mungunu, an adjacent locality, is associated with both the *Miatrina* woman and a white cockatoo-woman, *Inkaka*.

The Yam people, Tililindigia and Ubuna, at Primadua

This simple painting, Pl. 18D, about which I gathered but little information, deals with the totem place of two poisonous yams,[48] *Tililindigia* and *Ubuna* at Primadua.

The white oval, the totem place of the yam people, is now a hill at Primadua; the diagonals, outlined in white, are the large *ubuna* yams, and the dark-coloured diagonals, the smaller *tililindigia* yams. The dots represent trees of the Taulama jungle at the base of which trees the aborigines find these yams.

[48] In their raw state these yams are highly poisonous. If, however, they are husked, pounded out flat and soaked in water for several days, the yams are edible. [252]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mudungkala,[48] *at Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island)*

773 After the burial of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* sent his wife, *Mudungkala*, to Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island) to establish a totemic place and create the local foods.

*532 Pl. 19c, D, illustrates, with considerable detail, the topography of the island and the home of the little spirit children, *Pitipituis*.

778 The central design, *a*, is Jurubulinai; circle *b*, (lower left) depicts a small island nearby on which there is a freshwater spring where *Mudungkala* once urinated; and circle *c* (lower right) is a bed of cockles, one of the local foods created by the mythical woman.

On the lower left, a crescent, *d*, symbolizes a small salt-water creek in a mangrove swamp where *Mudungkala* quenched her thirst. At *f*, there is a large rock in the deeper water, a favourite haunt of the turtles. Here the mythical woman once collected white ochre to decorate herself.

Boulders, at one time the stone axes, *mungwanis*, of *Mudungkala* are at *e* (bottom); a stony point of land, the transformed bark basket, is at *g*; a pile of red rocks (her camp fire), at *h*; a sandbar (the cycad palm under which *Mudungkala* sheltered), at *j*; and a salt-water swamp (where she ground her stone axe), at *k*, *k*. The passage between Jurubulinai and Bathurst Island is indicated by the horizontal bands, *gg*, *gg*.

The white crescent, *m*, at the top of the painting, a large sand-bar, Unakumba, on the south of the island, is one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*. The aborigines claim that, when some distance from [776] Unakumba, they often see the spirit children, but, as they come closer, the little people disappear.

When the tide is out, the *Pitipituis* play on a sandbar, *p*, but when it is covered, the spirit children go to their camps at *o*, under the sand, where everything is dry and warm.

[787] Should one of the spirit children wish to visit an aboriginal man in a [842] dream, to ask for a mother, it walks along the road, *q*, and, if unsuccessful in its quest, returns by road, *r*. At *s*, on the left-hand side, is the waterhole from which the *Pitipituis* obtain their drinking water, and at *t*, is their diminutive bark canoe, less than a yard long, which, like the spirit children themselves, can be seen at a distance, but disappears when the aborigines come closer.

Red stones, *ee*, and yellow stones, *dd* (right), were once body paint used by the mythical eucalyptus-tree woman. Her nautilus-shell ornament is at *v*;

[48] Locally known as the ironwood tree.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

her camp, now a bed of oysters at *y*; her bark hut, a large boulder projecting from a sandbank, at *aa*; and her paper-bark water-carrier, now a large tree, at *ɣ* (left). 532x 778

The body and head of a carpet snake cooked and eaten by *Mudungkala* are boulders, *x*, *w*, on the coast of Jurubulinai. One of the spots at Cockle Point, in Apsley Strait, where *Mudungkala* camped when returning from *Purukupali's pukamuni*, is now a large rock, *bb* (lower left); a spring of fresh water, where she cooked her shell-fish, is at *ff*; while at *l* (centre), there is a patch of submarine grass, the favourite food of the turtles.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mantinuria, at Rulijunga

The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Mantinuria*, created a totemic place, Rulijunga, on the headwaters of the Tjipripu River. 773 778

At Rulijunga there is a large flat plain (central black design, Pl. 18A), which *Mantinuria* cleared so that the mythical people, travelling from Bathurst and western Melville Island, to attend the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, could perform an *ilawia* (p. 32). 532x 773

The circles on the periphery of the central black disc, are the roots, and the eight long ovals, the trunks and leaves of cabbage palms which the *Mantinuria* woman created to provide food for herself and the participants of the *ilawia* ceremony.

The outer dark-coloured oval, at *a*, *a*, is the level plain surrounding the ceremonial ground, the inner black line symbolizing the red clouds at sunset and the white outer line, the cumulus clouds of the day-time. The dots represent small shrubs and tufts of grass at Rulijunga.

The Fork-tailed Kite-man, Mudati, and his wife, the Dingo-woman, Kirijuna, at Arunumpi

During *palawari* times, *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite-man and his wife, *Kirijuna*, a dingo-woman, were travelling together near Arunumpi, southern Melville Island, when *Mudati* saw his wife's brother, *Jurumu*, the eagle-man, coming towards them. *Mudati* warned his wife, for her own safety, not to speak or even look at her brother, but the woman, who had not seen her brother for many years, took a quick glance just to see how much he had grown. Instantly, she dropped dead at her husband's feet. But even as he watched he saw her change into a dingo, rise to her feet and slink away. 773 825 593

Since then, the dingo, ashamed of her actions in those early times, keeps

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

825 out of sight, while, following the command of *Mudati*, aboriginal brothers
[593] and sisters, once they become adult, never look at each other, nor converse, except through a third person.

x532 Pl. 20A, B, describes the natural features at Arunumpi. A large rock, at *a*,
778 was once *Mudati's* camp; a boulder, *d*, his fire; and a path, *c*, made by the mythical man as he walked to and from his camp at *a*. Another path, *b*, was made by a mangrove bird-man, *Ulubingini*, whose camp is at *j*. *Mudati* is at *m*; his wife, *Kirijuna*, at *k*, and *Jurumu*, at *f* (lower left).

Nearby, at *e*, there is a deposit of yellow ochre, and another at *g*, of white, both of which *Mudati* used when he was a *wadjeniati* initiate at the first *kulama* ceremony held at Turiturina (p. 123). *Mudati's kulama* initiation ornaments, now unspecified natural features are: his cockatoo feather head-dress, *primitiki*, at *w*, *w*; arm ornaments, *palmatjinas*, at *x*, *x*, *x*; and cane arm ornaments, *jairinis*, at *v*. A *kulama* ground, *u*, where a ceremony was once held, is now a flat rocky surface, a half a mile in diameter, and the shelter, *t*, behind which the initiates rested during the ceremony, a large boulder.

At *h*, is a patch of jungle where *Kirijuna*, *Mudati's* wife, once collected yams. She left her palm leaf, *tulini*, basket at *l* (upper right); her small bark basket at *o*; and her larger bark basket at *s*. These are now outcropping rocks at the totemic site.

A turtle, once speared by *Mudati*, is now a submerged boulder at *m*; the sand-bank, on which he stood, is a high red cliff at *n*, and the large stream, in which he often caught fish, is indicated by the crescent-shape at *r*.

The Flying-fox man, Murungimpili, and Bamboo-woman, Kaialili, at the Kaialili lagoon

778 At the Kaialili lagoon, near the head of the De Vere creek at Muranapi, southern Melville Island, there are two totemic places, one belonging to *Murungimpili*, the flying-fox man, and the other to *Kaialili*,[44] the bamboo-
[773] woman. Together, these mythical people created many trees, plants, cat-fish, crabs and other sea creatures.

x532 Pl. 20C, D, deals with the topography of the area. At *m*, is the Kaialili
778 lagoon, the totem place of the bamboo-woman, at *p*, the Buliati (De Vere) Creek; at *c*, *c*, are other small watercourses, and *e*, *e*, etc., springs, all of which run into the Kaialili lagoon. The cross-hatching at *o*, *o*, is a swamp, at the source of Buliati Creek, and the cross-hatched area, *f*, *f*, the grass on its

[44] I did not find out the relationships between *Murungimpili* and *Kaialili*; it is likely that they were man and wife.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

bottom. Symbols, *d* (right) and *g* (top), indicate the red cliffs of the Kaialili lagoon. The rocky banks of the Bulisti Creek are indicated at *j*, and holes in the ground (once the camps of the man, *Murungimpili*) at *h*. 532 778

The open space on the bottom of the painting is the sea, circles, *b*, *b*, etc., being stones on the sandy bottom. Mangrove swamps *w*, *w*, are on the sea-shore; the dotted areas are jungle trees, *pintakinga*, and two species of eucalyptus trees, *ainingarina* and *ultisangira*. At *a*, *a*, etc., are places where the aborigines dig for ochre, which is similar to that at Imilu. Clouds as seen through the trees, are indicated by triangles, *k*, *k*, and eucalyptus trees by the dots at *n* (top).

The Blow-fly Woman, Mandubuka,[48] *at Muranapi*

Mandubuka, the blow-fly woman, established totemic places first in the mangrove swamps at Muranapi, then on Waitbak (N.W. Vernon) Island. [773] The lower part of the design on Pl. 19A, B, pictures the natural features at Muranapi, and the upper, those at Waitbak.

The horizontal white band, *c*, *c*, symbolizes the swift tide-way between Muranapi and Waitbak Islands, while the central circle, *a*, the camp of *Mandubuka*, is a rock in the mangrove swamps.

Salt-water creeks, *b*, *b*, flow first into the small lagoons, *x*, *x*, then into the sea at *d*.

Mandubuka brought her drinking water from a spring, *f*, in palm-leaf (*tulini*) baskets. These baskets were later transformed into white boulders in the mangrove swamps.

The two freshwater swamps at *g*, and *h*, filled with bamboos, belong to *Kaialili* (the bamboo-woman of upper Muranapi, Pl. 20C, D). In swamp, *g*, grow the thick-walled species which the aborigines do not use, and in *h*, much smaller bamboos. At the present time, the mainlanders use these smaller bamboos as the shafts of their hunting spears.

Two groups of red stones, *j*, *j*, were once the cooking hearths, while the white boulders, *k*, *k*, are the transformed stone axes of *Mandubuka*.

After the mythical woman created the natural features on the coast of Muranapi, she continued her work on Waitbak Island. Setting out from her camp at *a*, she travelled along the right-hand path, *y*, only to find that the way was blocked by deep water. So she returned to her starting place and, by using the left-hand track, *l*, succeeded in reaching her destination. These tracks have since been transformed into long sand-bars in the sea. 773

[48] This is also the name of the sand-fly on Bathurst Island. There is possibly a link between the two totemic places, or they may be the same totemic being.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 778 At *m*, is Waitbak Island, where *Mandukuta* established her second camp; *v* and *w*, being springs where she obtained her drinking water, and *p*, a place where she left one of her yam sticks. The larger stick is now a small island off the coast of Waitbak, and two smaller sticks, *r*, *r*, are rocks on the shore.

Mandukuta sheltered from the rain under a large pandanus palm, *t*, and at *u*, cut a branch from a mangrove tree to make her digging sticks. This locality is now a large mangrove swamp.

The dots, on the upper panel, symbolize tufts of grass and small plants at Waitbak; and on the lower, the tall annual grass of the high land at Muranapi.

The March-fly Woman, Kudjatumpi, at Bonkaitji

[773] The totemic place created by the March-fly woman, *Kudjatumpi*, is a low rocky island, Kudjatumpi, about three miles from the coast at Bonkaitji, southern Melville Island.

The central black dot, *g*, on Pl. 21A, 2, is the totem place of *Kudjatumpi*, and the surrounding white area, *b*, a bar of sand exposed at low tide. In the salt-water creek, Bonkaitji, *c* (upper left), which flows into the Clarence Strait, is a small rock, *d*. A fish, with stinging spines, called *puruidji* (probably the stone fish) is at *e* (upper left); and, an edible fish, since transformed into low rocks, on the edge of the waters, is at *j*.

Other natural features made by *Kudjatumpi* are: a small freshwater creek, Biriki, *f*, which flows into Bonkaitji; a lagoon, *h*, created by the mythical woman so that the freshwater turtles would have a place in which to live; a flat rock, *k*, in the deep water, where the present sea-going turtles gather their food; and a lagoon, *l*, which was once *Kudjatumpi's* permanent camp.

A hill, *i* (left) is her transformed bush shelter; a lagoon, *jj* (upper left), her temporary camp; a low rounded boulder, *q*, her fireplace; and a flat rock, *r*, a sheet of stringy-bark which she used as a roof. Long narrow stones at *p*, were once sticks that supported her bark shelter, and piles of stones, *t*, *s* (lower panel), places where she cooked her food.

Kudjatumpi's personal belongings, her paper-bark water carriers, *jurululu*, *w*, her crooked sticks, *m* (lower left), and *n* (centre), used to carry those baskets, her throwing sticks, *x* (right), and her stone axes, *o* (bottom), are now scattered piles of boulders on the uplands of Bonkaitji. Her head ornament of feathers, *kk* (upper left), on the other hand, has been transformed into a group of submerged rocks in the sea.

When the mythical woman painted her body, she created still more

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

natural features. At *v*, *v*, etc. (right), are her piles of yellow ochre; at *g* (left), her baskets of red ochre, and at *aa*, *aa* (upper right), the cockle shells in which she mixed the colours. These deposits of ochres are still used by aborigines to decorate themselves. 532x 778 [202]

Other natural features created by *Kudjatumpi* are: *u* (lower right), Bonkaitji Creek, on the banks of which she placed many trees as homes for the opossums; *ff* (centre) a reef under the water, made from the stones which the mythical woman threw away whilst digging for yams, and the dots on the background, the forests of trees growing on the highlands at Bonkaitji. A hill, *dd* (upper right), is the place where the March-fly woman stood when she created the watercourses, Bailai-intara, *cc*, and Pimaltji, *bb*. The latter is a tributary of Bonkaidji creek.

Pl. 18c, one side of a female *pukamuni* basket (indicated by the square openings), pictures the totemic place of the March-fly woman, at the Kudjatumpi lagoon.

The line of rectangles, *b*, *b*, and *d*, *d*, *d*, represents the water in the lagoon; *a*, *a*, *a*, the patches of sand on the bottom; and *c*, *c*, etc., are white cliffs on the adjacent sea-coast. The vertical lines, *f*, and the horizontal lines, *e*, indicate the water running from the Kudjatumpi lagoon over the beach, into the sea.

DISCUSSION

Although this research on the creation period and its related phases must be regarded as incomplete, the data gathered does provide a general picture of the beliefs of the Tiwi in their totemic heroes, and the relationship of those beliefs to the topography of their land. Not being able to visit any of the totemic places, their position on the map (Fig. 1), must also be regarded as approximate. 771 123

It is to be hoped that, before the Tiwi lose their culture, some ethnologist, with ample time, will both fully investigate their remarkable culture and visit each of their totemic localities to collect, in detail, the mythical story of the area and its associated natural features. 000

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER III

The Pukamuni Ceremony

765 THE burial ceremonies of the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands,
182 based on the *pukamuni* of the mythical man, *Purukupali*, are, by far, the most important events in their ceremonial life.

These ceremonies, which allow the aborigines full expression for their grief, provide, at the same time, a complete cultural outlet for their philosophical beliefs, their music, their art and their dancing. No one, watching these
[781] primitive rituals, night after night, could fail to be impressed by the obvious pleasure experienced by both the participants and the onlookers.

114 Spencer (1928, pp. 647–52), is the only investigator to describe and illus-
765 trate any details of the *pukamuni* ceremony. Although he saw but one day of the ceremonials, and that of the closing rituals, he records, briefly, many of the procedures which we witnessed in 1954, i.e., the rite of fire-jumping (p. 73), the spearing of the grave (p. 83), and (p. 89), the "spearing" of one of the participants and the erecting of the poles. This evidence shows
177 that, in spite of the disturbing effects of civilization and the complete
765 ecclesiastical ban on Bathurst Island, the *pukamuni* ceremony is still a vital force in the lives of the Tiwi people.

During the six months the expedition was on Melville Island, Miss Jane
123 Goodale, Mr. W. E. Harney and I witnessed some, or all of the rituals of four *pukamuni* ceremonies; one of a man, *Waniamperi*, who had been buried within half a mile of our camp; another of an old woman, *Makapini*, who, against the wishes of her relatives, had been buried in the mission cemetery on Bathurst Island; still another of a premature infant; and, only a few weeks before I left Melville Island, one of *Nulatini*, the deceased wife of our helper, *Pulanimbuwi*.

I will describe the burials of *Waniamperi* and *Nulatini*, and the final rituals
123 of *Waniamperi* and *Makapini*. However, as we saw, in all, twenty-seven
128 *ilanias*, the general pattern of which was similar, I will describe but five of them; three belonging to *Waniamperi*, one to *Makapini* and one to *Nulatini*.[46] The short rituals, associated with the dead infant, will be treated as a separate unit.

[46] The final rituals took place after my departure from Melville Island. These will be dealt with by Miss Goodale.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

I. BELIEFS IN THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

The fear of the spirits of the dead and the desire of the living to propitiate them are the bases for the complicated burial rituals, not only of the Tiwi, but of all Australian tribes. 769 765

The Tiwi spirits of the dead, the *mopaditis*, live in self-contained communities at the various totemic places on Melville and Bathurst Islands. The *mopaditis* have the same appearance as the aboriginal folk, except that their bodies no longer have substance, being but nebulous images of their former selves. 775 [778]

No living person has seen these *mopaditis*, for they are invisible by day, white in the moonlight and black in the darkness. Although, normally, the *mopaditis* travel on the surface of the ground in the same manner as the aborigines, they are able, when crossing a river, or an arm of the sea, to walk on the surface of the water.

In the spirit land, the *mopaditis*, who are eternal, retain their totems (*pukwi*), marry spirit women of the correct tribal relationships, and have children who grow to maturity.[47] They eat the same food as the aborigines, going hungry if the hunting is poor,[48] and use the same implements and weapons.[49]

At the death of an aboriginal, the *mopaditi* rises out of the chest of the corpse. If the corpse is that of an infant, or a very small child, its *mopaditi* stays in the immediate neighbourhood, sleeping with the bereaved mother every night, but leaving in the morning before she wakes up. This continues until the woman has recovered from her grief.

After some months, the spirit child, now called a *buda-buda*, re-enters the body of its previous mother through her vulva and starts life again as a human being. [842]

On the other hand, if the person has lived for some time, its *mopaditi* stays around the grave, mourning because it has to leave its old companions. But after three days have elapsed, the *mopaditi* calls out "*Nimbungi*" (good-bye), and sets off, unaccompanied,[50] to the locality where it was born, which, before

[47] The aborigines are not certain whether the children, like their parents, have eternal life.

[48] This is unusual; in most of the aboriginal heavens I have heard of, for example, north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 323), there is ample, easily-gathered food. [171]

[49] These days, the *mopaditis* have even the modern wooden canoes, although, up to fifty years ago, their canoes, like those of the living people, were made from a folded sheet of bark. [177]

[50] Some aborigines believe that the father, or some close relative, comes to the grave and guides the spirit to its birthplace.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

775 the white man came, would have been its totemic place. As the *mopaditi* travels, flocks of screeching black cockatoos fly overhead to tell the spirits [825] as its birthplace, that a new *mopaditi* is coming to live with them. The local spirits, on its arrival, rush out to welcome the *mopaditi*, beating themselves over the head and shoulders[61] with throwing sticks to indicate their pleasure. At its new home, no matter what its previous state, the spirit is transformed into a young person of good health and equable temperament, for, in the land of the spirits, everyone must be healthy, happy and at peace with each other.

Making its camp with the other *mopaditis*, many of whom were old companions, the new spirit goes out hunting and foodgathering with them until the beginning of its own burial ceremonies. Then, with all of its dead relatives, the new *mopaditi* returns to watch the living people perform the dances and chant the songs of its *ilania* and *pukamuni* ceremonies.

As the *mopaditis* are invisible to mortal eyes, the performers at the burial rituals do not see them, although they know the *mopaditis* are in the surrounding forest, watching all that is going on.

When the rituals of the day are over, and all the people have gone to sleep, the *mopaditis* themselves enter the ceremonial ground, carrying out the same dances, and chanting the same songs as those of the living. This happens at all ceremonies, whether they are the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni*, or the *kulama* rituals.

At the conclusion of its final *pukamuni*, the new *mopaditi* returns to its birthplace. There it is treated as a youth, and has again to pass through all stages of the *kulama* initiation, progressing at the same rate as when it was a living person.

Occasionally parties of *mopaditis*, especially if not long dead, will return to have a look at their living friends and relatives. But, although the aborigines regard these *mopaditis* as well-mannered and kindly, they still fear them.

Sometimes, particularly at night, a *mopaditi* will follow an aboriginal too [781] closely, making his skin clammy and his hair rise on end. To protect himself, [789] the affrighted person calls out loudly to scare away the spirit. If this is not successful, he will kindle a fire or carry a torch of flaming bark, knowing that the *mopaditis* fear the light. For that reason, the aborigines are safe from the attacks of the spirits of their dead so long as they keep their camp-fires burning.

[576] [61] This is the custom of the living when they meet someone they have not seen for a long while.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

A *mopaditi* has been known to hit an aboriginal on the head with a throwing stick, causing him to foam at the mouth and become stiff and rigid. The natives cure this *mopaditi* sickness by heating pads of paper-bark and pressing them against the sides of the face or over the sick man's ears until his muscles relax. 775 753 757

Once, when a young woman went hunting in the forest by herself, a male *mopaditi* took her away, fed her on a special bush food until she became, like the *mopaditis* themselves, invisible to human eyes. One evening, after many weeks, the *mopaditi* brought the girl back to a place near the camp, stood her against a tree, gave a loud whistle and left.

When relatives found her, she was demented and deaf, with cold, clammy skin and staring eyes. Quickly they lit a fire, heated her hands, and held them, palms inwards, against the sides of her face. When her body became a little warmer, her relatives pressed heated pads of paper-bark against the sides of her face and over her ears, until she went to sleep. After several days of such treatment, the girl recovered and was able to tell what had happened.

The old men warned her never again to go walking in the forest by herself because should the *mopaditis* recapture her, it might not be possible to bring her back to health.

The aborigines also told me about the time when some *mopaditis* stole an old woman, *Incampuna*, took her into the jungle and covered her with boughs. When her relatives found her, sick and unconscious, they brought her back to camp, shouting loudly to stop the *mopaditis* from following. As before, they applied heated pads of paper-bark to "open up" her head until she became well again.

Plate 47A, B, pictures the grave of the wife of the artist, *Muramajua*. At *a*, is the face of the spirit of the wife, the horse-shoe design, *b*, representing her hair. The oval *e*, is a small stringy-bark tree, *o*, a large stringy-bark tree, and *p*, are bloodwood trees near the grave. 532 x

At *k*, is a stony hill near the burial place, *l*, *n*, are areas of jungle near by, and *m*, is the forested uplands.

A long fighting-stick, *tumutukamuta*, *g*, and a throwing stick, *muruguna*, *j*, are used by the *mopaditis* to strike their human victims on the head, and make them insensible.

2. DEATH AND BURIAL

Although there were minor differences between the burial of the man, *Waniamperi*, the details of which I gathered from informants, and the burial 764

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife, *Nulatini*, which I saw, the general pattern was similar. I shall, however, describe both burials, that of *Nulatini* being the more detailed.

(1) *The Burial of Waniamperi*

On the day that *Waniamperi* died, *Marawani*, one of his near relatives, who wanted the dead man buried near his mother, paid a young "worker"[88] a sum of money and two loin cloths to dig the grave.

When the corpse was brought to the burial ground, a number of relatives had a last look at the dead man before he was laid on a series of logs, placed transversely across the bottom of the grave.

This act was a signal for concerted mourning, the women beating themselves with sticks and the men cutting their heads. For personal safety it is [753] imperative that each man and woman show excessive grief, real or feigned, [626] otherwise the *mopaditi*, annoyed at the lack of grief, will make the offending person ill.

After the mourning died down, the "workers" placed boughs on the body and filled in the grave, leaving a small mound on top (Pl. 24c).

[533] While this work was being carried out, the relatives stood on one side of the grave, either singing the *amburu*, the mourning song, or the rain song of Wailu, the totem of *Tiparawilimiri*, *Waniamperi's* father. To the chanting [535] of this song, the men acted the rain dance (Pl. 30B). The aborigines did not stage the totemic dances or chant the songs belonging to the fire totem of Wurlupi (*Waniamperi's* own totem), because, to have done so, would have especially attracted the attention of his *mopaditi*.

The "workers" laid *Waniamperi's* personal belongings at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tied his loin cloth and tobacco to the top of a thin sapling which had been driven into the ground at the head of the grave, made a large fire, and left a container of water.

The aborigines believe that the *mopaditi*, seeing his belongings near at [775] hand, water to drink and fire to warm himself and cook the food he gathers in the surrounding forest, will stay near the grave until the time comes for him to leave the locality.

While the "workers" were engaged on those tasks, the rest of the burial party quietly left, not looking behind, lest the *mopaditi* follow them to their camp.

[88] These "workers" or *wanaras*, being distant relatives of the dead, are in little danger [767] from the *mopaditis*. Therefore, it is safe for them to clean the site, dig the grave, handle the body, and carry out other tasks associated with burial. They are paid for their work by the chief mourners at the final *pukamani* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing.

768 [428] [783] [825]

(2) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulanimbuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers".

764

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[53] from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *tokwiange* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs.

302 751 775

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[54] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground

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[53] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[54] After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditis* fear the light.

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For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 and dug the grave, which was about six feet long and five feet six inches deep. But when, in the middle of the afternoon, four men appeared, carrying the body, in a fully extended position, and placed it beside the unfinished grave, a number of women, painted all over in white, sat beside the corpse and cried heart-brokenly until the grave was finished. There was a chorus of wailing [302] from both men and women when one of the "workers" painted *Pulanim-* [751] *buwi's* body entirely in white (Pl. 23A), as additional camouflage to confuse his wife's *mopaditi*.

The ceremonials associated with the burial started when first the husband, then a near relative, dancing astride the corpse, called out loudly, "*Yook, yook*". This ritual, called *wuramu*, was first introduced by the pelican-man at *Purukupali's* ceremony. At the present time it is performed by close relatives [775] of the dead, its object being to scare the *mopaditi* into the grave where it will not be a menace to the living.

After this ritual, two other men entered the grave and, standing, one either end, took the dead body from those above. Amid the sounds of wailing women and the clapping of men's hands on their buttocks, the corpse was gently laid on a bed of transverse logs on the bottom. Other "workers" cut green branches and placed them across the top of the grave.

The husband, carrying a lighted firestick, then entered the grave, burnt the hair on his legs and left immediately. The aborigines believe that the [775] *mopaditi*, smelling the burnt hair of her husband, and thinking he was beside her, stayed quietly in the grave.

The bushes were thrown into the grave, logs, about five feet long,[55] laid on top, and the hole was filled in, leaving a small mound which was covered with sheets of paper-bark (Pl. 24C). Short sticks were driven into the ground at the head and foot of the grave, on one of which the husband hung the meagre belongings of his wife.

764 Both men and women then performed a series of dances, the men danced 535 the flying fox, shark and crocodile, while both the elder and younger women moved in a line toward the grave, holding large green leaves in their hands, palm upward, symbolizing the dead woman when a small child, being carried by her mother.

A woman, holding her breasts, impersonated *Nulatini's* mother feeding her, while a near male relative mimed the mother carrying *Nulatini* as an infant.

764 At the conclusion, *Pulanimbuwi* seated himself at the head of the grave,

[825] [55] The aborigines explained that the logs kept the dogs from unearthing the body, but as, at the present time, the body is over five feet underground, this does not appear to be the reason. It may be that, when tools were more primitive and graves not so deep, these precautions were necessary.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint 764
from his body (Pl. 23E).

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly, while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial, [304]
and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real. [785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn, everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual, originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's pukamuni*, was supposed [775]
so to confuse the *mopaditi* of *Nulatini* that, should she leave the grave, she would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey, then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over.

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopaditi* to warm herself and to cook her [775]
food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanimbuwi*, who should have departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23 D).

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the 765
death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark, was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as instructed by *Jibunglialumi* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp could not see it.

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the 761
dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines, believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being, not the result of natural causes.

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby [825]
looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, [754]
having been responsible for the death,[66] had changed himself into a

[66] This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the meteor-man, *Papinjuwan*, to an enemy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

761 [825] [761] wallaby, so that he could see the grave of his victim without being recognised.

On one occasion, when I was travelling with *Pulaninkawi*, just after the death of his wife, he went to her grave, carefully searched the ground for tracks, then lifting up the sheets of paper-bark, examined the mound. Later, *Pulaninkawi* announced that a *Marauji* (p. 154) had killed his wife, *Nulaini*, by getting inside of her body. But, although still there when she was buried, the *Marauji* had escaped through the hole *Pulaninkawi* had seen in the mound.[87]

(2) *The Seclusion of the Grave*

769 The grave of *Waniamperi* was about a hundred yards from the road between our camp and the Snake Bay aboriginal settlement. Although aborigines, who were only distantly related to the dead man, walked backward and forward along this road, all the *pulamuni* people had to take a roundabout path from which it was not possible to see the grave site.

One night, *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, had to pass along the road to our camp. When he was approaching the position from which the grave site could be seen in the day-time, his wife, wrapping his head in a blanket, led him past the spot. This practice was only allowed at night; it was prohibited during the day.[88]

[775] [784] No aboriginal man hunted the creatures, or woman gathered the plant foods adjacent to the grave, so that, should the *mapadini* of *Waniamperi* return to his burial place for a while he would find ample food.

4. THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONIES, THE ILANIAS

(1) *The Ilanias of Waniamperi*

765 About two months after the burial of *Waniamperi*, *Wurarkuni*, the ceremonial leader of the Melville Island people, sent message sticks to Bathurst Island aborigines telling them that the *ilanias* (preliminary rituals) of *Waniamperi* were about to start.

[123] We saw eleven of *Waniamperi's ilanias*. But, as they were more or less the same, I will describe only three.

[765] [87] *Pulaninkawi's* action was viewed with considerable disfavour. He, as a near relative, should not have gone near the grave until the final rituals. Only the *wunawu* (workers) who cut the poles are allowed to do that.

[183] [88] Under the normal tribal conditions, these precautions would have been unnecessary, because the place of burial would then have been in some distant, unfrequented locality.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(a) One of the first series, when the "workers" were appointed, which was held in the main camp. 765

(b) One of the second series, held at a ceremonial ground mid-way between the first and the place of burial.

(c) An *ilania* performed by the Bathurst Island group who attended to take part in the final *pukamuni* rituals.

(a) *The First Ilanias*

The first series of *ilanias* was performed on a ceremonial ground, about forty feet in diameter, adjacent to *Wurarbuti's* camp. All stones and tree roots had been dug out so that the dancers would not injure their feet. In the centre of the dancing circle, or *milimika*, a fire was laid ready for the later ritual of *wandiatapinda*, or fire-jumping,[10] a ritual which was carried out at most but not all of the *ilanias* (Pl. 24B). At some of the later *ilanias*, particularly at the second *milimika*, aborigines, close relatives of the dead, performed a similar ritual by climbing a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and dead leaves (Pl. 23C).

Although I suspect that the ritual of jumping over the fire once had a deeper significance, the present day belief is that the fire, by burning the hair on the legs of the aborigines, protects them from stumbling over logs; from their limbs becoming tired on long journeys, or from dead trees falling on them as they travel through the forest. The smoke from the fire also brought them good health. No women took part in the *wandiatapinda* rituals, although the men often held their small children in the smoke. [751] [372]

Wurarbuti, the ceremonial leader or *alouwia* (frontispiece) of the *Waiampari's pukamuni* rituals, was an intelligent, sophisticated aboriginal, who had worked for long periods in Darwin, and, more recently, had visited the southern States to dance before the Queen of England. 765 177

Because of his knowledge of European ways and the goods of the white man, the songs and dances of this first series of *ilanias* were a curious mixture of the old and the new cultures. Although most, if not all, of the dances performed at the *ilanias* are traditional and totemic, it is permissible to modify them for the song of the moment. [176]

The ceremony opened when the assembled aborigines, about twenty of them, standing within the *milimika*, gave the low-pitched honey call, with the high-pitched mosquito call, which precedes and finishes all *ilanias*.

[10] Spencer (1928, p. 648), saw this rite at Cockle Point, on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), during 1911. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Parading around the unlit fire in the centre of the *milimika*, the performers
177 chanted a telephone song, the literal translation of which is, "Hallo, that
533 telephone there, hallo, yes, yes," some, as they did so, imitating the winding
[539] of the handle of an old-type magneto telephone.

When the fire, which had been started by a young man, was well alight, the men performed the ritual of *wandiatapinda* by jumping through flames and smoke, each shouting "telegraphy".

The men again assembled at the edge of the *milimika*, and, led by the *alowia*, called the localities on Melville Island where the white men had camped. As each name was called the aborigines shouted "*wia*" (yes).

One dancer held his hands high above his head, symbolizing a radio aerial, while his companions chanted the following words to the refrain of the telephone song:

[539] "The Queen sent a radio asking *Wurarkui* and other men to dance for her."

Then followed songs related to the radio and the telephone. These were usually performed with the traditional steps and gestures, except that, at the end, the actor mimed the ringing up with one hand, and the holding of the
[535] telephone to the ear with the other.[66] As the men danced, the women moved into the *milimika* from the side, performing their own dance, the *ambura* (Pl. 30F), some of them crying and endeavouring to beat themselves. They were, however, restrained by their companions.

765 After a number of dances came the ceremony of appointing the men to carry out the work near the grave.

At the death of any person the tribe divides into two groups: the *pukomunia*, near relatives of the dead, who are forbidden to touch food with
[616] their hands (Pl. 24A), or go near the grave, and the distant relatives, who can visit the grave site without fear of attack from the spirit (the *mopadia*).

At *Waniamperi's* first *ilania*, the ceremonial leader chose, from the latter group, ten men, the *wanaras*, colloquially called the "workers". It was their duty to cut and paint the burial poles (one each), help to clear the grave site and dancing ground of sticks and stones, and to carry out other menial tasks associated with the final rituals. For these tasks, the "workers" were paid on the last day of the rituals.

When "workers" were chosen, the aged brother, *Nalgui*, of the dead man,

[66] This mixture of the ancient and the modern, shows how a living culture gradually absorbs the characteristics of an adjacent people, particularly those from a culture as dominant as our own.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

announced that he had bought enough food from the store at the settlement to feed all the men who were to cut the poles.[61] 765

Following this announcement, the chief woman mourner, *Prupadau*, whose privilege it was to decide on the size of the burial poles, marked with her toe, in the dust of the *milimilu*, the length and thickness of a series of examined poles.

This led to a great deal of discussion between the leader, *Wurarbui*, and the woman, *Prupadau*, before he finally persuaded her to reduce the dimensions of the poles to a reasonable size. *Prupadau* wanted the poles for her relative to be as many and as large as possible.

This matter settled, the "workers" brought a number of steel axes into the *milimilu*. The *alawia*, painting the handles white and putting red cross lines on the blades, stood the axes in the centre of the dancing ground. Then both the *alawia* and the other performers walked around the axes singing the telephone song. [177] [531]

A series of traditional dances followed, representing *Jirakui*, the white-headed sea-eagle (Pl. 30j), *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Tjalati*, the jabiru (Pl. 29a).[62] Two women and two young boys performed the shark (*Tadu-wale*) dance (Pl. 25c), the ritual finishing with the honey and mosquito calls. The "workers" picked up their axes and walked away, accompanied by everyone except *Prupadau*, who remained behind, still chanting the *amburu* song of mourning. 535 765 [825]

(*b*) *The Second Ilanias*

The second series of *ilanias* was performed about halfway between *Wurarbui's* camp and the burial ground. 765

In this series, we were able to see the traditional pattern of the *ilanias* in operation, including the return and feeding of the "workers" after their day's labour of cutting the poles near the grave site. The songs and dances, too, instead of referring, as in the first *ilanias*, to the goods of the white man, his radio and his telephones, dealt almost exclusively with dances belonging to the locality of Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island, the country of *Waniamperi's* father and the totemic place of fresh water, *Andjalui* (p. 42). [533] [177]

This series of *ilanias* could be divided into five sections,

[61] At the present time, this is just a traditional gesture, reminiscent of the days when it was the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the workers while they cut and painted the poles (Pl. 25a).

[62] In a creation myth, the jabiru is called *Tjaru-undunga*. It is likely that the bird has several names. Hart (1930, p. 280), draws attention to the multiplicity of names among the Tiwi. [114]

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(i) The ceremonial fight between the *pukamani* men and the "workers" returning from cutting the poles which are near the grave.
(ii) The feeding of the "workers" by the *pukamani* men and women.
(iii) The totemic songs and dances.
(iv) The *punasi*, in which married men and women beat the relatives of their spouses with boughs.
(v) The rite of fire-jumping (*wandiaspinda*).

(i) *The Ceremonial Fight.* When, late in the afternoon, the "workers" were returning to the *milimika* from the grave site, where they have been cutting the burial poles, they announced their coming with the honey and mosquito calls.

The *alawia*, who had assembled the *pukamani* men in the *milimika* in readiness for this ritual, answered with the honey call.

The "workers" emerged from the forest in a body and, running toward the men in the *milimika*, cast short sticks, as spears, at the *pukamani* men, who replied vigorously with throwing sticks, neither group of contestants, however, trying to hit the other.

The "workers" having exhausted their spears, rushed into the *milimika*, where, to the accompaniment of much laughter and good-humour, they wrestled with the *pukamani* men (Pl. 25D), until they (the "workers") were pushed out of the *milimika*.[63]

(ii) *The Feeding of the Workers.* It is the duty of the *pukamani* group to feed the "workers" while they are cutting and painting the poles.

On the edge of the *milimika* were two baskets, both painted red, one made by a woman of the rain and freshwater totem of Waika, and the other by a woman of the fire totem of Wuriupi, the totemic place of the dead man, *Wunimpuri*. Food caught or gathered by the *pukamani* men and women was cooked and placed in those baskets for the "workers" only, it being taboo to all members of the *pukamani* group.

After the "workers" had been "vanquished" in the ceremonial fight, the *pukamani* men carried the baskets[64] into the centre of the *milimika* and there stood guard while the "workers" had their meal (Pl. 25E).

[63] There is no clear-cut belief behind this ritual. Some informants said that the "workers", having been adjacent to the grave for many hours, were inhabited by *mapadiis* who must be driven out before the "workers" are "safe" to associate with the *pukamani* group; others said that the *mapadiis*, following close on the heels of the "workers" had to be frightened away by what, to them, appeared to be a real fight, before the *ilamia* could start.

[64] These baskets, though they always stood on the edge of the *milimika*, were not often used in the *ilamia* we witnessed, as the participants were able to get most of the food they required from the settlement. If, however, the burial ceremony had been held at some remote place, the *pukamani* men and women would have had to spend the day in hunting in order to provide food for the "workers".

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PLATE 24. *The Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Feeding Pukamuni Man; B, Rite of Wandiatapinda; C, The Grave; D, Belongings of Dead Man, Waniamperi.

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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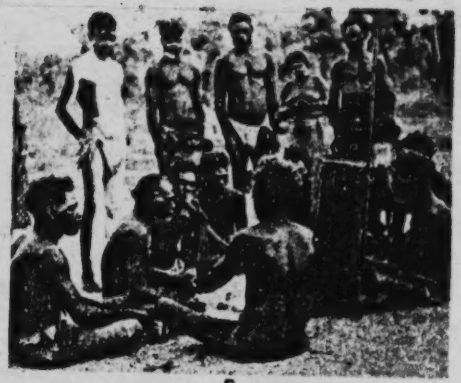

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PLATE 25. *The Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Young Girls and Men Dancing; B, Feeding Pukamuni Workers; C, Women and Boys Dancing; D, Ceremonial Fight at Ilania.

[cp. 72 B]

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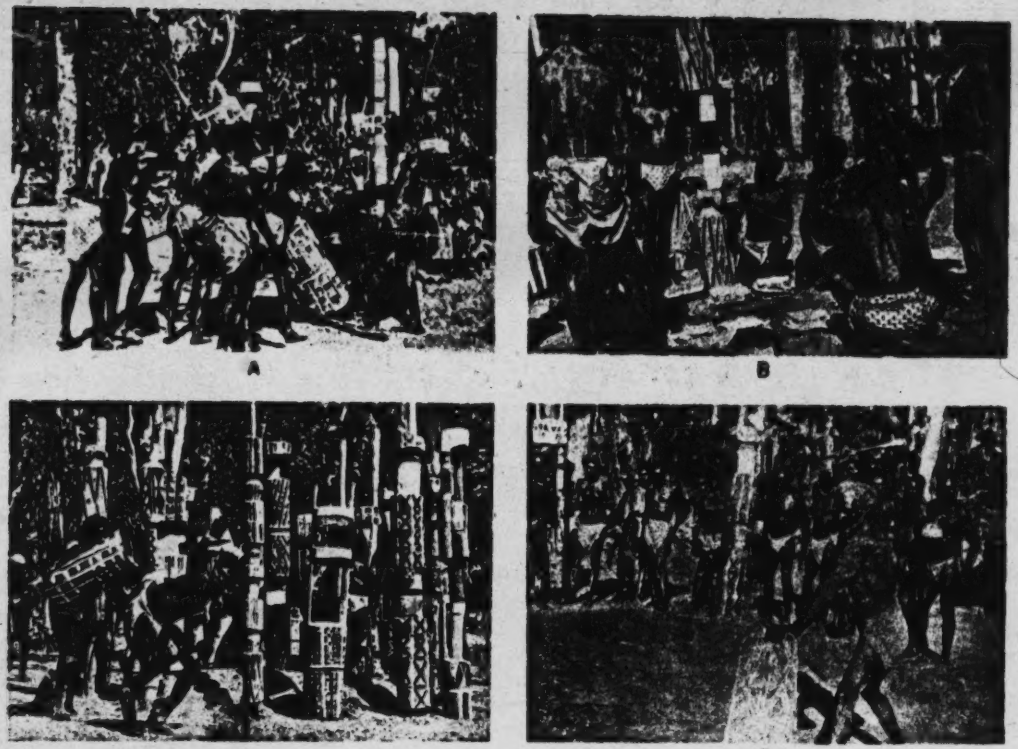

PLATE 26. *The Final Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Erecting Poles on Grave; B, Arranging Gifts for Workers; C, The Basket Dance; D, Urumatjina's Dance.

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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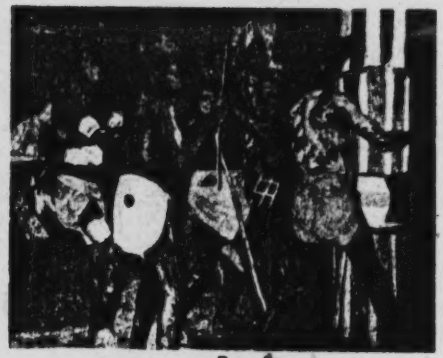

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PLATE 27. *The Final Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Chief Woman Mourner; B, Scene at Burial Poles; C, Mourning at Burial Poles; D, Presentation of Gifts.

[p. 720]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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(iii) *The Totemic Songs and Dances.* At the completion of the meal, both the "workers" and the *pukamuni* men and women performed a series of dances to the accompaniment of traditional totemic songs. 765

Almost without exception, these songs and dances belonged to the totemic beings of Wailu, the country of *Tiparawilimiri*, the father of the dead man, *Wanimperi*.

These rituals were opened by the leader, who, standing in the centre of the *milimika*, called out the names of the totemic beings of Wailu, *Andjaki* (fresh water), *Pakadringa* (thunderstorm), *Tomituka* (rain), and *Bumerali* (lightning). As before, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wis*" after each name was called.

The men then chanted the rain song, "The heavy rain falls and the frog calls, *poki, poki, puturuka*", while the men danced, with their fingers pointing to the ground, symbolizing falling rain (Pl. 30a), and the woman, *Prupadau*, hopped along the ground in imitation of the frog-woman,[65] *Kwuk-kwuk*. As the dance proceeded, the men and *Prupadau* all imitated the actions of the frog-woman by hopping along the ground on their hands and knees. [539] 765 535

While the dance was in progress, the leader called out "*Tomituka*" (rain). *Prupadau*, picking up a sheet of paper-bark, held it over her head and shivered, and the men, their hands clasped tightly over their heads, shouted, "*Batua, batua*" (rain finish). This completed the dance. *Pulanimbuwi* danced the white-headed sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), before the *pumuti* began.

(iv) *The Pumuti.*[66] The *pumuti* rituals, which are always carried out with much goodwill, friendliness and laughter, were performed at most, if not all, of the *ilanias*, and, in a restricted form, at the final *pukamuni*. 765

At some stage, usually toward the end of the *ilania*, sometimes more than once, each man and woman, taking a bunch of leaves, or a roll of paper-bark and calling softly "*Ooh, ooh, ooh*", beat the wife, or husband, sisters, brothers, and all the near relatives of that particular spouse.

(v) *The Rite of Fire-jumping and the sending out of the Message Sticks.* The rite of fire-jumping, or *wandiatapinda*, carried out in the second series of *ilanias*, differed from that in the first series. Instead of the participants stepping over a fire (Pl. 24a), a number of the close relatives climbed a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and leaves (Pl. 23c). As each man 765 372

[65] The frog-woman, whose totemic place is Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island, is the mother of *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*.

[66] This ritual would tend to reduce tensions between the spouse and his, or her, relatives, which is considerable in some communities. [593] [578]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 slipped down the tree and jumped clear of the fire, the other participants
372 called his totemic name.

Toward the end of this series of *ilanias*, the "workers" announced that they had finished cutting the poles. The leader, the *alowia*, hearing this, gave permission for the poles to be "cooked", i.e., burnt in a fire of blazing boughs, to provide a black ground on which to paint the designs. The leader
[202] also ordered that the *purunkinas* (message sticks, Figs. 5, 6, 7), be sent out to the various totemic groups. These sticks intimated that the final *pukamuni* ceremonies would take place in about twenty days.

(c) *The Bathurst Island Ilanias*

765 About a week before the final burial rituals of *Waniamperi*, a number of aborigines from Bathurst Island, accompanied by their wives and *Kasopi*, the son of the dead man, made their camp and cleared a ceremonial ground not far from the second *milimika* used by the Melville Island people.

The Bathurst Island *ilanias*, under the leadership of an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialuni*, followed the traditional form, except that the first two phases were omitted, i.e., the fighting and the feeding of the "workers".

Three groups of songs were chanted to the accompaniment of the appropriate dances.

(i) The *Ningaui* songs and dances.
(ii) The mission lugger songs and dances.
(iii) The jabiru (*Tjalusi*) songs and dances.

(i) *The Ningaui Songs and Dances*

533 The leader, *Jibunglialuni*, and his companions chanted the following
539 *Ningaui* songs. These are the literal translations.
765 "I am the head man of the *Ningaui*, I am, Eeh, Eeh."[67]

"I push aside the mangrove branches with my hands, Eeh, Eeh."

"The *Ningauis* are out hunting. The calls of the white cockatoos tell them that someone is coming, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* woman, having just given birth to a child, sings—

"The flies are looking at me, the flies are crawling on my shoulder, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* man, looking at his newly born child, sings—

"Little new-born man lying on the ground, Eeh, Eeh."

[825] [67] This is the call of the *Ningauis* which, the aborigines claim, they hear in the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. It is possibly the call of one of the swamp birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Neither *Jikungkaluni* nor any of the Bathurst Islanders performed spirited 765
dances to these songs. The leader, impersonating a *Ningaui*, walked round [534]
the *milimika* with awkward, bent gait, either beating his music sticks together or holding his hands tightly against his sides with his fingers outstretched (Pl. 30E).

Following the *Ningaui* songs, the men lit a fire at the base of a eucalyptus tree which *Katapi*, *Nangrinini*, and several other relatives of the dead man, climbed to perform the rite of *wundatapinda*. As each man slid down the trunk, the aborigines called the totemic place of Wailu, and the names of rain, thunder and lightning. Later, the men performed the rain dance (Pl. 30B) in [535]
the *milimika*, while the women, coming in from the side, danced the *ambura* (Pl. 30F).

(ii) *The Mission Lugger Songs and Dances*

765
The dances started with a long *ai*, *ai*, *ai*, which announced that the boat 533
had been sighted. Then, while the men danced the sail of the boat, with their 535
hands held above their heads, the leader chanted— 177

"The waves beat the sides of the boat, but it goes straight on."

With high prancing steps and hands rotating one over the other, the aborigines mimed the engines and the propeller of the lugger.

"The engines spark together as the waves hit the side of the boat."

Other songs, to which the performers danced the relevant actions, were—

"The wake of the lugger."

"The lugger is on the slips ready to be painted."

"We are scrubbing off the old paint and giving it a new coat."

Every time *Katapi*, the son of the dead man, took part in the dance, the women set up a wail.

At the conclusion of the boat songs, the men and women took part in the 765
pumuti, lightly beating each other's spouses and their relatives with boughs.

(iii) *The Jabiru Songs and Dances*

The last series of dances were given by a middle-aged Bathurst Island 765
man, *Nilituma*, who imitated, with humorous gesticulation and much 535
abandon, the antics of the long-legged jabiru, *Tjalati* (Pl. 29A), as it walked, fished and rested in the lagoon.

The words of the *Tjalati* song were— [539]

"When *Tjalati* lifts one leg, he is ready to fly."

At the conclusion of the *Tjalati* dance, the *ilania* ended with the honey [325]
and mosquito calls.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 (2) *The Ilanias of Nulatini*

[123] We were able to see the opening mourning rituals, *iramparini*[66] of *Nulatini* and six of her *ilanias*.

[128] Rather than deal with all of these ceremonies in detail, I will describe the *iramparini* rituals and a typical *ilania*, in which the aborigines carried out all phases of the rituals, with the exception of the appointment of the "workers". Although the rite of *punuti*, *wandiatapinda*, or feeding the "workers", did not take place at every *ilania*, they will be included in this description.

(a) *The Opening Mourning Ritual, Iramparini of Nulatini*

Ten days after the burial of *Nulatini*, the aborigines of Melville Island performed the ritual of *iramparini*. The function of that ceremony was to express [775] grief over *Nulatini's* death, and to tell her spirit that, as she did not now belong to the same realm as themselves, she must leave her grave and return to her totemic country.

The ceremony was held about thirty yards from the camp of the dead woman. Most of the aborigines were present, but two men, *Pulanimbuwi*, the husband, and *Tupiatira*, *Nulatini's* nearest relative, took the leading parts.

The rituals opened in the late afternoon with *Pulanimbuwi*, painted in [302] white, elaborately decorated and carrying a long stick, walking slowly to- [533] ward the assembled people, singing the *amburu*, the women's song of mourning (Pl. 23A).

Every now and again, the husband stopped, leaned on his stick and looked round (apparently for his wife's *mopadini*), before continuing on his way to the place of ceremony.

Coming out of the forest in an almost opposite direction was *Tupiatira*, also painted in white, waving green branches in his hands. About fifty yards from the old camp of *Nulatini*, *Tupiatira* called her name loudly, and, after listening for a while, announced that, as she had not answered, she must be dead.

As *Tupiatira* walked forward he continued to call, while *Pulanimbuwi*, now accompanied by his sister, *Kundi*, came in from the opposite direction, both singing the *amburu*. When the men were only a few yards apart the aborigines formed themselves into two lines, facing each other.

At a signal and a loud "*Book, book*" from *Pulanimbuwi*, an old man, [535] *Malunerinita*, accompanied by six to eight of the men, danced between the

[66] The *iramparini* of *Wanianpuri* was performed before our arrival.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

lines as flying foxes (the totem of *Nulatini's* father),[60] their arms moving alternately up and down and their little fingers pointed skyward (Pl. 30c). 765 [535]

The dance finished, the assembled men accompanied by *Pulanimbuwi* and *Tupiatira*, with their arms around each other's necks, mourned hysterically for the dead, while the women danced the *amburu* on the outside of the group. Several times, in his grief, *Tupiatira* collapsed to the ground only to be lifted to his feet again by the still mourning husband.

The sounds of mourning continued for some time, gradually becoming less until *Nangrinini* gave the honey and mosquito calls, and the ceremony was over.

(*b*) *The Ilania*

At one end of the *milimika*, which was situated at the camp of the dead woman, was a pole on which *Pulanimbuwi* had tied a piece of printed calico as a flag.

The *ilania* opened when seven of the "workers" giving the honey and mosquito calls, emerged from the forest, and, running toward the *milimika*, cast sticks and pandanus leaves, as spears, at the *pukamuni* men who awaited them. There was general fighting and much laughter before the "workers" were ejected.

In the centre of the *milimika*, as food for the "workers" a woman had placed nine large cooked crabs which the "workers" distributed among themselves. After this was done, the men performed the rite of *wandiatapinda* by either walking through or jumping over the fire which had been lit in the *milimika*. *Nulatini's* husband did not take part in this ritual but, with a flat fighting stick in either hand, wandered about the ceremonial ground, singing the *amburu*. [262]

Following these rituals, the aborigines chanted a number of songs and carried out the following dances, those of the flying fox being totemically related to the dead woman's father. 533 765

(i) The flying foxes and the sea-eagle.
(ii) The crocodile.
(iii) The shark and the stingray.
(iv) The flag songs.

(i) *The flying-fox and sea-eagle songs*

"The flying foxes are out late, eating the blossoms of the stringy-bark and eucalyptus trees." [539]

[60] As mentioned earlier, the totem of the dead person is never referred to in the *pukamuni* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 "The sea-eagle, *Jirakasi*, dives upon the flying foxes, catching them in
539 her claws and eating them. The rest fly away."
765 "The flying foxes call to each other, the sea-eagle is attacking us—let us go."

As these songs were being chanted, a number of men clustered in the centre of the *milimika*, like a group of flying foxes in a tree.

With a loud call, *Nangrinini*, his outspread arms symbolical of the wings of the sea-eagle, *Jirakasi* (Pl. 301), "swooped" down, scattering them in all directions.

As *Nangrinini* returned to the outside of the *milimika*, the "flying foxes"
[535] reassembled and, with prancing steps again danced with their little fingers pointing upward (Pl. 300).

The flying-fox songs continued—

"Cast your throwing sticks where the flying foxes are thickest and break many wings at one time."

"Hit the flying foxes so that they will drop in the mud."

"Cook the black flying foxes and dry them in the sun."[10]

Again the men assembled and danced the flying-fox while *Malumerinita* called the totemic places of the flying fox at Muranapi (p. 56), interspersed with calls of "*Wia*" from his companions. *Pulanimbwi* still wandered.

(ii) *The crocodile songs*

"You cannot cross the river because it is full of crocodiles."

"Beware, the crocodiles are in the mangroves waiting to catch us when we cross the river."

These songs were accompanied by the spirited crocodile dance (Pl. 302),
[535] while *Malumerinita* called the names of the totemic places of the crocodile, *Jirakupai*, on south-west Bathurst Island.

(iii) *The shark and the stingray song*

"Do not spear the shark, it is chasing a stingray."

To this song several men performed the exhausting shark dance (Pl. 300).

(iv) *The flag songs*

"The wind blows and the flag moves."

[177] "The Government Administrator gets his flag from the Queen."
535 To these songs, the man danced with their hands, as a flag, moving above
765

[10] This song suggests that the Melville Islanders stored or traded the cooked and dried bodies of these creatures.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

their heads. During these songs, the husband sat quietly at one end of the *milimika*, with his head in his hands (Pl. 23a). 765 [535]

The *ilania* concluded with *Nangrinini* calling *Aluprumani* (a mangrove bird); *Malumerinita* calling *Pjirinini* (the red-backed sea-eagle) and the assembled men, making the honey and mosquito call.

During one of the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, a near relative had his name changed from *Miralipaiwa* to *Tukuwuinganili*.[71] [533]

(3) *The Ilanias of Makapini*

At the same time as the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi* was being performed, an old woman, *Makapini*, was baptized at Bathurst Island by the priest, just as she was dying, and, although she had never accepted Christianity, was buried, against the wishes of her relatives, in the mission cemetery. 797

The aborigines of both Bathurst and Melville Island were distressed over this incident because as *Makapini* had always been a "pagan" (as the mission authorities call the unconverted), her spirit could not go to the white man's "heaven", and, as the *pukamuni* ceremonies were prohibited on Bathurst Island, the spirit of *Makapini* was doomed to wander, lonely and unhappy, for ever. To prevent such a calamity (for lonely *mopaditis* are a danger to the living), the aborigines of Melville Island performed a modified *pukamuni*, called the *aramatruni-nipungari*,[72] so that, at its conclusion, the spirit of old *Makapini* would travel happily to her future home. 765 [775]

The pattern of this ceremony differed somewhat from that of *Waniamperi*. At a *milimika* near the camp of the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, the Melville Island aborigines held five *ilanias* over a period of eight days. The final two days of the *pukamuni* were held among the poles.[73] I will describe a typical *ilania* and later the final *pukamuni* rituals.

The *ilania* opened with one of the "workers", who had been in the forest cutting the burial poles, running toward the *milimika*, stick in hand, giving the honey call. One of the *pukamuni* men rushed out to drive him away, but, after a sham fight with throwing sticks, brought him into the *milimika*.

The predominating songs and dances of this and other *ilanias* of *Makapini* were associated with the mythical wild-honey people[74] of Bathurst Island. 765 533 535

[71] Hart (1930, pp. 280–99) describes how the custom of altering the names of near relatives at death causes rapid changes in the language.

[72] This type of *pukamuni* ceremony is also held when aborigines are drowned at sea and their bodies not recovered. [766]

[73] This was a variation of the previous *pukamuni*, probably because the body was not at the place of ceremony.

[74] Although I did not inquire, it is certain from the songs, that the father or mother of the dead woman belonged to one of the honey totems of Bathurst Island.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 533 [535] Many of them referred to "creation times" when *Tukimbini*, of Murupiangu told the honey people of Bathurst Island to be the *pukamuni* men and women at the burial rituals of *Purukupali* (p. 30).

The following is a selection of the honey songs—

[539] "Let all the men who are *mandalini* (a eucalyptus flower, particularly rich in honey) come to this place (Tapararimi) and dance for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*."

"With all your ornaments, start walking (to Tapararimi)."

"Bring all your ceremonial ornaments to our place (Tapararimi) where we will hold a big ceremony."

Another man chanted a lengthy song describing the death of *Purukupali*, and another, which instructed the performers, at the conclusion of the rituals, to take the cane rings, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H) from their arms and leave them on the grave.

The songs and dances about *Purukupali*, the honey people of Bathurst Island, and their doings at the first *pukamuni*, were followed by another series which related specifically to the collecting of wild honey. In all these [535] performances, the men carried out the honey dance with high knee action, their hands held above their heads and their fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30D).

One man sang about a fly that lives in the hives of wild bees and about a large hive in a tree with a long snout (entrance) and much honey. Then, accompanied by several others, he mimed the action of bees flying in and out of a hive; the aborigines locating the hive, climbing the tree, cutting off the limb containing the hive, and eating the honey. These dances were followed by the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, calling out the totemic places of honey, most of them on Bathurst Island. As each name was called, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*".

A young man started to sing about a pearling lugger, but was told by old *Tjamalampua* to stop and use only the *palaneri* songs. The same man then [535] danced the actions of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, to the appropriate song (p. 73), and one relating to the buffalo,[78] to the accompaniment of "*Prr, prr, papringipali*" (go away big eye, prr, prr), then a song of *Aruni*, the poison fish: "*Aruni aruni, drr, drr, drr*", which referred to the sinking of a boat, the *W'anganui*, off south-western Bathurst Island.[79]

[825] [78] The aborigines believe that the buffalo, brought to Fort Dundas in 1824, belong to the *palaneri* (creation) period.

[79] The *aruni* is a spiny poisonous fish (possibly the stone fish), which was supposed to have sunk the *W'anganui* by driving its spines through the ship's bottom. The *drr, drr*, of the song represents the sounds of the spines as they were driven into the ship.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The two forms of fire-jumping (described earlier, p. 73) were also used in these rituals. 765

The *ilanis* closed with the performance of the rite of *pumui*, then the usual honey and mosquito calls.

5. THE FINAL PUKAMUNI RITUALS

(1) *The Pukamuni of Waniamperi*

For the sake of simplicity I will describe, under this heading, the rituals carried out during the last two days of the closing phases of the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*. These rituals took place about three months after burial and about a month after the performance of the first *ilanis* and the receiving of the message stick (Fig. 5F, G, H) from the Bathurst Island aborigines. [202]

During these final ceremonies, the aborigines divided themselves into two groups; the Melville Island men and women, under the leadership of *Wurarbini*, and the Bathurst Island men and women, with a few of the Melville Island aborigines linked with them totemically, under their leader, *Jibungfishani*. [616]

The "workers" had cleared two dancing grounds: one, Fig. 4A, about fifty yards south of *Waniamperi's* grave, belonging to the Melville Island aborigines, and the other, Fig. 4B, about thirty yards east, to the people from Bathurst Island.

There were seven decorated burial poles on *milimika*, A, and three on B (Fig. 4). The three poles, although cut and painted by the local men, had been given, with their permission, to the Bathurst Island group who were responsible for the payment of them. [432]

The final rituals extended over two days. After both groups had performed *ilanias* in the middle of the first morning, they spent about six hours decorating each other with elaborate facial and body designs, one of which, that of *Wurarbini*, is illustrated on the frontispiece. Other facial designs are illustrated on Pl. 28. In the late afternoon all the participants, men and women, moved to the two *milimikas* near the grave (Fig. 4A, B), where they performed a series of dances until dark. The aborigines camped nearby, most of them within a hundred yards of the grave. The next morning the final rituals started. [302]

These *pukamuni* rituals can be divided into five distinct phases—

(a) The opening rituals.

(b) The songs and dances.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 (c) The payment of the "workers".
(d) The erecting of the poles.
(e) The final mourning rituals.

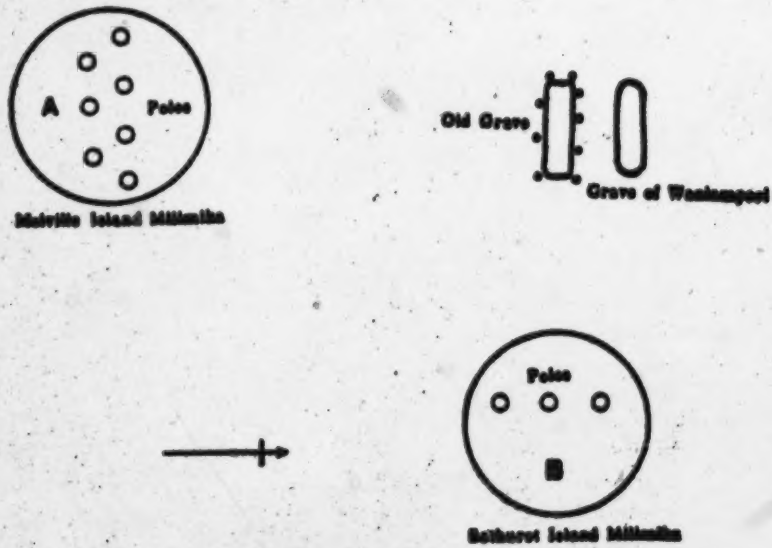

FIG. 4. *Ceremonial Ground, Wanampori's Pukamuni*

(e) *The Opening Rituals*

Early on the first morning, the men, women and children left the main camp and travelled to a temporary ceremonial ground, in the forest, about three hundred yards east of the grave.

The Melville Island group, under *Wurarbuti*, assembled straightaway and performed a small *ilania*, in which some of the men, after the usual honey and mosquito calls, started to chant the rain song of *Tomituka*, whilst others [533] either lit a fire and crouched over it, or sheltered under pandanus trees, shivering as if wet and cold.

As the song changed to the *impok, impok*, of the frog-woman, several men [535] and the woman, *Prupadau*, hopped around the *milimika* in imitation of a frog (Pl. 29D).

When the Melville Islanders dispersed to paint themselves, the Bathurst Island men, under *Jibunglialuni*, performed another *ilania* on the same spot.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The leader started a song describing a fight in which the dead man, *Waniampori*, had taken part. To this refrain, the performers mimed the action of men struggling together, beating each other with throwing sticks, or casting spears. 765 [539] [535]

In the middle of this performance, *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, rushed into the forest beating himself with a throwing stick, followed by his step-mother, *Dominao*, who forcibly disarmed him. At the conclusion of the dance, and when quiet was restored, *Nilituma* carried out the same jabiru dance we had seen at the Bathurst Island *ilania* a few days previously (Pl. 29A). At the conclusion of the jabiru dance the Bathurst Islanders retired to paint themselves for the final rituals. In general, the "workers" painted the leading *pukamuni* men, some husbands painted their wives, their children and themselves. [535]

In the late afternoon, the assembled men, women and children, their faces and bodies painted with the most elaborate designs, and decorated with colourful *pukamuni* ornaments (frontispiece), made their way along the road, calling continuously in the high-pitched mosquito call until within a hundred yards of the grave. At that point the two groups separated. Each group lit a fire and carried out, first the rite of *wandiatapinda*, followed by a basket dance (later to be performed at the grave side (Pl. 26C), then went to their respective *milimikas* (Fig. 4A, B). [302]

Pausing only to assemble at those places, both groups of people rushed across the open space and threw themselves on the bushes covering the grave, wailing heart-brokenly. *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, who fell on the belongings of his father at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tried to cut his head with a knife, but was restrained, as before, by his step-mother, *Dominao*, who led him back to the Bathurst Island *milimika*. This was a signal for everyone to return to their respective *milimikas* and perform the first of a series of dances.

In the Bathurst Island circle, *Nangrinini* danced a canoe dance, paddling and bailing a miniature bark canoe as he pushed it along the ground. [535]

As the Melville Island group were chanting their songs, five men sneaked up to the grave, one of their number peered among the bushes, crawled back to his crouching companions and whispered something to them. At this they all called out loudly, ran back into their *milimika* and carried out a vigorous, almost hysterical dance. [535]

The same performance was repeated, but on the second occasion *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, ran to the grave, speared it in several places,

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 then, with the group, returned quietly to their companions among the poles."

(*b*) *The Songs and Dances*[76]

On the return to *milimika* A (Fig. 4), *Wurarbuti* and his wife mimed, to the accompaniment of appropriate songs, paddling a canoe, with their hands around one of the poles. This was followed by a man and his wife, who acted, with considerable detail, the making of a bark canoe; stripping the bark from [396] the tree; holding the bark over a fire to make it flexible; folding the bark and sewing the ends together, and the final launching.

By the time this act was over, it was dark. The aborigines from both *milimikas* retired to the nearby forest, lit their fires and cooked their food. There were no ceremonies during the evening, except, occasionally, some woman left her camp and wailed among the deserted *pukamuni* poles.

533 About 8 o'clock on the morning of the last day, the *pukamuni* men opened 539 the ceremonies with the honey and mosquito calls. These calls were followed 765 by a number of songs, chanted by *Wurarbuti* and some of his companions, which referred to the mythical boobook owl-man, *Purugiikini*, and the instructions he gave to his fellow performers at the first *kulama* ceremony (p. 123). They were:

"Make the *milimika* large and clean for many people and when it is ready, sing first, then dance round the ring."

"You will paint yourself beside the *milimika*."

"When you decorate yourself for the *kulama*, put white on one side of your face, yellow on the other, and red down the middle of your hair. And as you dance, your wives will help you, as my wife, *Pinzoma*, the owl-woman, once did for me."

"You sing, *Mikinatrina*[77] (a *kulama* initiate), and we will follow."

"When you sing in a *kulama*, put the cockatoo feathers, *prinitiki*, in your hair, and the wind will shake them."

While those songs were being chanted, other men mimed the appropriate action.

[77] Although the aborigines did not explain the ritual, it is likely that the first man looked for and thought he saw the *mopaiti* of *Wuniampari*. On the second occasion, *Marawani*, a near relative, hunted the dead man's spirit away. This ritual, in a modified [114] form, took place at the two other *pukamunis* we witnessed. Spencer (1928, p. 648) mentions the same ritual.

[76] The songs and dances in this series were neither traditional nor totemic. They were composed usually by a number of performers, especially for the occasion, and quite an amount of thought went into their production.

[77] During the initiation of the *Mikinatrina* at the *kulama* ceremony, he performs his first dance amid general applause.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

During this performance an old man, *Nalauri*, *Waniamperi's* brother, reprimanded, in the native tongue, a group of young aborigines for not taking a more active part in the *pukamuni* rituals. 765 626

"Don't hang around there like a mob of whites," he said. "If you're standing while there's a dance, beat your buttocks, or if you're sitting, either clap your hands or beat the ground with a stick."

At the conclusion of the Melville Island performance, the Bathurst Islanders continued the songs and dances in their own *milimiks* (Fig. 42), about *Purujiikini* and the first *kulama*. 533 539 765

The leader, *Jibunglialuni*, chanted how, at the first *kulama*, *Purujiikini* said to his companions, "I'll give you the songs, then you'll dance about the things around you." As he did so, *Nangrinini* performed the dance of the turtle. "Then as the next song was being chanted," *Purujiikini* said, "you will cook the *kulama*." Another man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, and, calling "*krr*, *krr*, *krr*" (as they do in the *kulama* ceremonies), emptied the supposed contents on the ground in imitation of pouring out the *kulama* yams preparatory to putting them in the earth oven (p. 137). *Jibunglialuni* then followed with the dance of the owl man, *Purujiikini*, with his hands held around his eyes (Pl. 292), ending his dance with "*Ah*, *oo*, *ah*, *oo*", the call of the present-day boobook owl.

The Melville and Bathurst Island groups then moved from the distant to the grave side of their burial poles (Fig. 4) and performed the *pumuni* rituals. On this occasion, however, only husbands and wives beat each other.

The *pumuni* was followed by *Urumatjina* from Melville Island, chanting a song he had composed for the occasion which described how the dead man, *Waniamperi* had become involved in a fight at a *pukamuni* ceremony.[88]

Some men, listening intently to *Urumatjina*, joined in as soon as they had learned the song, while others performed the dance miming the action of men fighting.

Another part of the same song told how a woman, *Purpurangmio* (since dead) loudly abused the men because so many of them attacked her husband at one time. To add reality to the performance, *Urumatjina* pounded the side of a *pukamuni* basket with a stick to indicate the noise made by the angry woman (Pl. 260).

The theme of the songs then returned to the *kulama* ceremony. As some men chanted, others laid sheets of paper-bark on the ground, and to the *kulama* thunder-call they imitated the actions of rubbing the *kulama* yam on 765

[88] This is the same fight as the one enacted in the Bathurst Island *ilenis* on the previous day (p. 83).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 their bodies (p. 138). Again, a man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, symbolised the pouring out of the cooked *kulama* yam on a sheet of bark and patted it to the *kulama* call of "*Brr, brr, brr*". This action completed the dance.

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

431 While other dances, which I did not see, were being performed in the two
765 *milimikas*, the *pukamuni* men and their wives unpacked the gifts for the "workers", and spread them out on the ground (Pl. 26a). There was much good-natured discussion about their equitable distribution before the presents were finally separated into lots and placed one on the top of each pole.

177 *Wurarbuti*, resplendent in his body paint and coloured *pukamuni* orna-
533 ments, mounted one of the larger poles and chanted songs telling how he
765 became possessed of the great wealth which enabled him to buy the presents
[302] for the "workers".

[539] "I am a big Government man," he boasted, "so I was able to get plenty of money."

"I stole the money from the Government to pay for the presents and the police locked me up."

[535] While *Wurarbuti* chanted this song, *Marawani* and the women danced with their hands crossed as if in handcuffs.

As the song continued, *Marawani* ran after *Pulanimbuwi*, dragged him into the *milimika*, and struggled with him in imitation of a policeman making an arrest.

Other songs were chanted ridiculing a Government clerk at Darwin, while one of them "wrote" out an order, passed the "money" to a *pukamuni* man through a window (an opening in a pole) and then demanded, in a loud domineering voice, his thumb-print on a scrap of paper as a receipt.

177 *Wurarbuti*, still seated on the top of a pole, started to distribute the
431 presents, imitating, as he did so, the actions and broken English which the
765 same clerk used when dealing with aborigines.

"You a worker," said *Wurarbuti*. "Have you a wife? How many children? You work for me, make proper good pole, I pay you."

The "worker" on accepting his payment, put his thumb-print on a scrap of paper (initialled—with a twig—by another *pukamuni* man), and walked away satisfied[61] with his square of printed calico, pipes and tobacco. As each "worker" received his gift the *pukamuni* men performed a dance.

[61] This is not always so. Sometimes a "worker" becomes so annoyed over inadequate payment that he will not allow his pole to be carried to the grave, preferring to let it rot in the forest. On several occasions we saw a pole which had been left in the forest because its maker was dissatisfied with the payment.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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When all the "workers" had been paid, *Wurarbui* called my name and presented me with a number of *pukamuni* arm and chest ornaments (Pl. 31), which normally would have been left on the grave. 431 765 123

These ornaments, *Wurarbui* explained, were a gift from the dead man, *Wenimpori*, because I had assisted in making his *pukamuni* a success.[88]

In the Bathurst Island *milimika* the three "workers" were also receiving their payments. 765

Jibunglakuni, although he did not have as good a story to tell as *Wurarbui*, danced around the poles with some of the presents in his hand, singing, "Here I come in an expensive motor-car, with lots of money to pay the 'workers' for cutting such beautiful poles."[89] [535] [539] [177]

(d) *Erecting the Poles around the Graves*

The distribution of the last of the presents was a signal for the "workers" to carry the poles from the respective *milimikas* to the grave. 765

Some of the poles were both large and heavy; in particular that illustrated on Pl. 34D, which was eighteen feet long, and so heavy that it took seven "workers" to carry it from the *milimika* and up-end it in the hole prepared for it at the grave (Pl. 26A).

As the poles were carried past the Bathurst Island ceremonial ground, *Jibunglakuni* threw short sticks over them to commemorate the time when the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, took part in a spear-throwing contest at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* (p. 33).

While the "workers" nonchalantly carried the poles to the grave, the women, with tears running down their cheeks, beat themselves with sticks (until someone restrained them), and the close male relatives, mourning loudly, hysterically cut their heads with steel knives. 765 785

Katapi, the son of the dead man, had washed the painted decorations from his body, and was about to cut his head when he was stopped by his stepmother, *Dominas*. On seeing this, *Marawani*, one of the chief *pukamuni* men, took the knife from the woman and gave it to *Katapi*, who gashed his head two or three times, and, with blood pouring down his face, threw himself on the ground in a paroxysm of grief.

[88] To help them in their payments I had given the *pukamuni* men some printed calico.

[89] Although these stories about great wealth to pay the "workers" are much Europeanised, they are probably following a traditional pattern, when, instead of referring to money and the goods of the white man, the ceremonial leaders exaggerated the number of spears, commerans, and other goods they had collected to pay the "workers".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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(e) *The Final Mourning Rituals*

765 As soon as the poles were in place the "workers" pulled away the bushes covering the grave. This was a signal for the closing phases of the final rituals. Everyone, men and women, from both Melville and Bathurst Islands, rushed forward and threw themselves on top of one another at the base of the burial poles, until the ground, and even the grave itself, was covered with a mass of human beings, each mourning heartbrokenly.

After a period of mourning, *Jibungliaiumi* and *Wurarkui* rose to their [302] feet, cut off the beards they had grown for the occasion,[84] and washed the painted decorations from their bodies, while the mourners, assembling close [535] to the poles, impersonated, in almost hysterical dance and song, the shark, the rain-woman, the jabiru, and many other mythical heroes of creation times.

Nangrinini, assisted by his wife, first performed the basket dance (Pl. 26c),[85] then once more the dance of the bark canoe. *Pulaninkuvi*, who danced beside him, acted the part of *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), the sea-eagle, swooping down on its prey.

The return of the ceremonial leaders to the grave was the signal for another exhibition of mass hysteria. Weeping women, beating themselves with sticks, threw themselves on the top of the grave, while men, leaning over the burial poles, mourned continuously in high-pitched wails.

Gradually the sounds of lamentation became less. One by one the mourners left, until there remained only the crouching body of *Waniamperi's* widow, painted entirely in black, a little wizened woman, whose span of life was almost spent.

(2) *The Final Pukamuni of Makapini*

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

[302] A little before sunset, the Melville Island men and women assembled to decorate themselves for the final rituals, while *Kitapipatu* (Pl. 27a), a sister of the dead woman, *Makapini*, carrying a long stick, and painted entirely in white, wandered among the *pukamuni* people, crying the *amburu* song.

[184] The body decorations finished, which neither took as long, nor were as elaborate as at the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*, the performers assembled about twenty yards from the three burial poles (Pl. 34a, b, c), which the "workers" had hidden from view by a screen of boughs.

[84] Before the days of the white man, the Tiwi men did not cut their beards at the final *pukamuni*, but plucked them out in handfuls. Spencer, 1928, p. 673, Fig. 467, both illustrates and records having seen this curious ritual in the *kulama* ceremony.

[177] [85] Mountford, 1956, p. 434.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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PLATE 29. *Totemic Dances*
A, Jabiru, Tjalati; B, Owl, Pintoma; C, Lizard, Kilpuruni; D, Frog, Kwouk-kwouk.

[p. 88 A]

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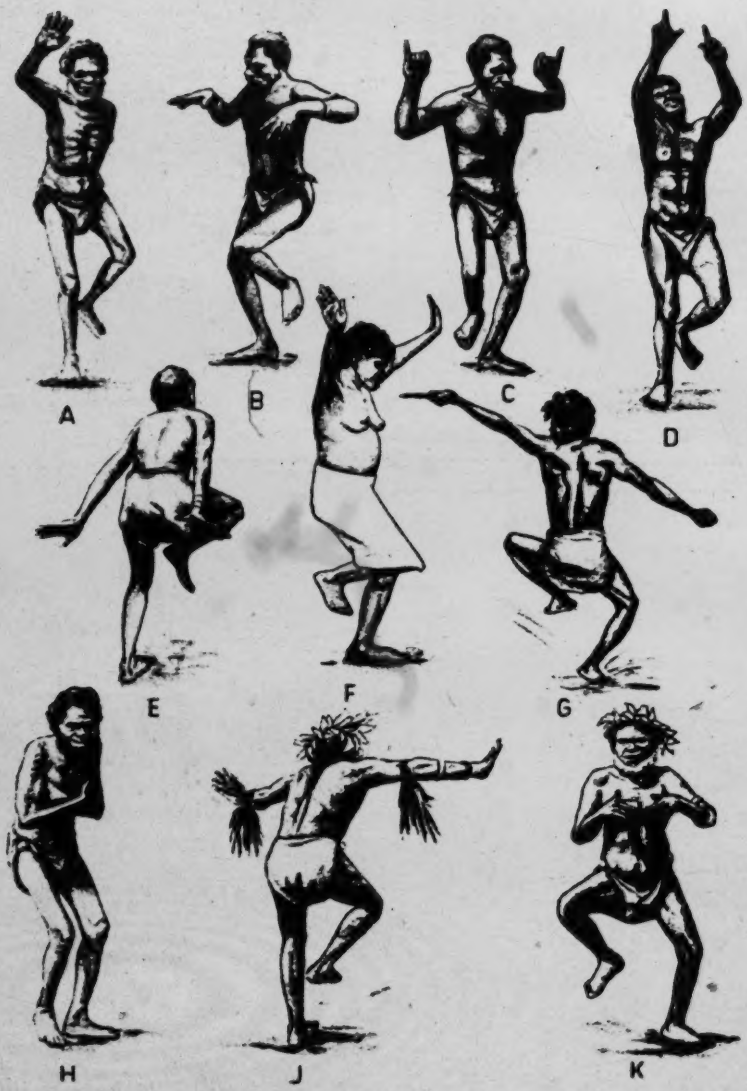

PLATE 30. *Totemic Dances*

A, Moon; B, Rain; C, Flying Fox; D, Wild Honey; E, Crocodile; F, Amburu; G, Shark; H, Skinny Fish; J, Sea-eagle; K, Ningaui.

[p. 88 B]

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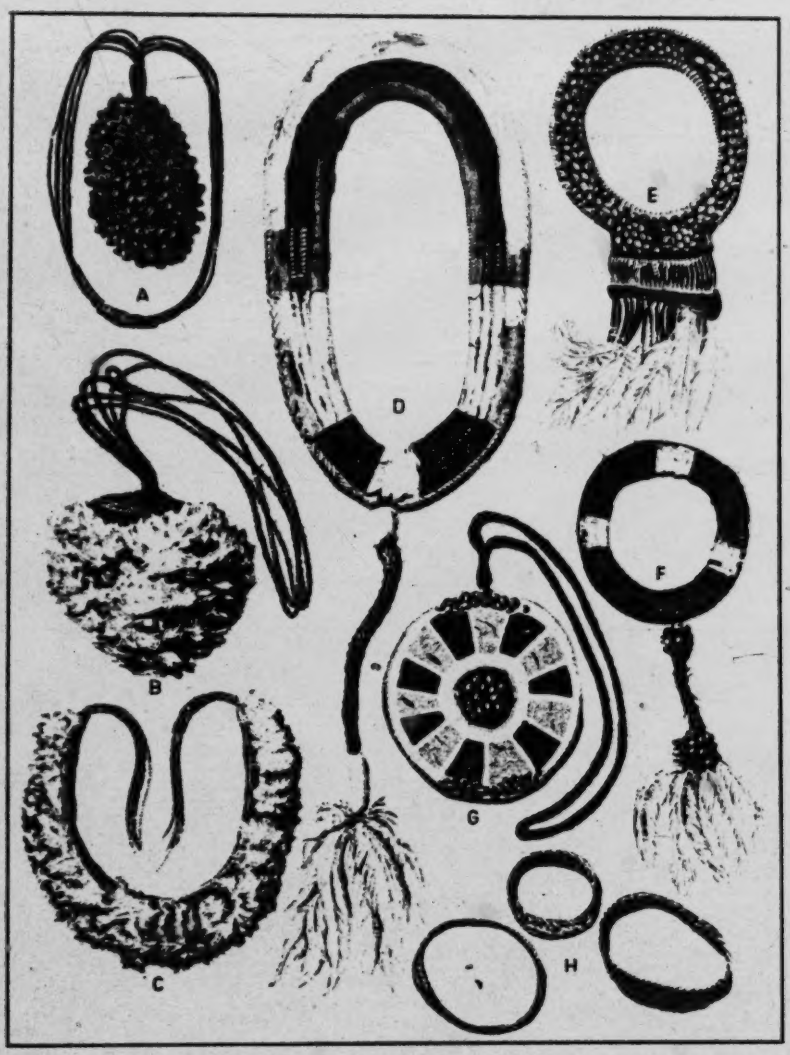

PLATE 31. *Ceremonial Decorations*
A, D, G, Chest Ornaments, Pukabinda; B, Goose-feather Ball, Tokwianga; C, False Beard, Bal-di; E, F, Arm Ornaments, Palmatjinas; H, Cane Arm Bands, Jairinis.

[p. 84 C]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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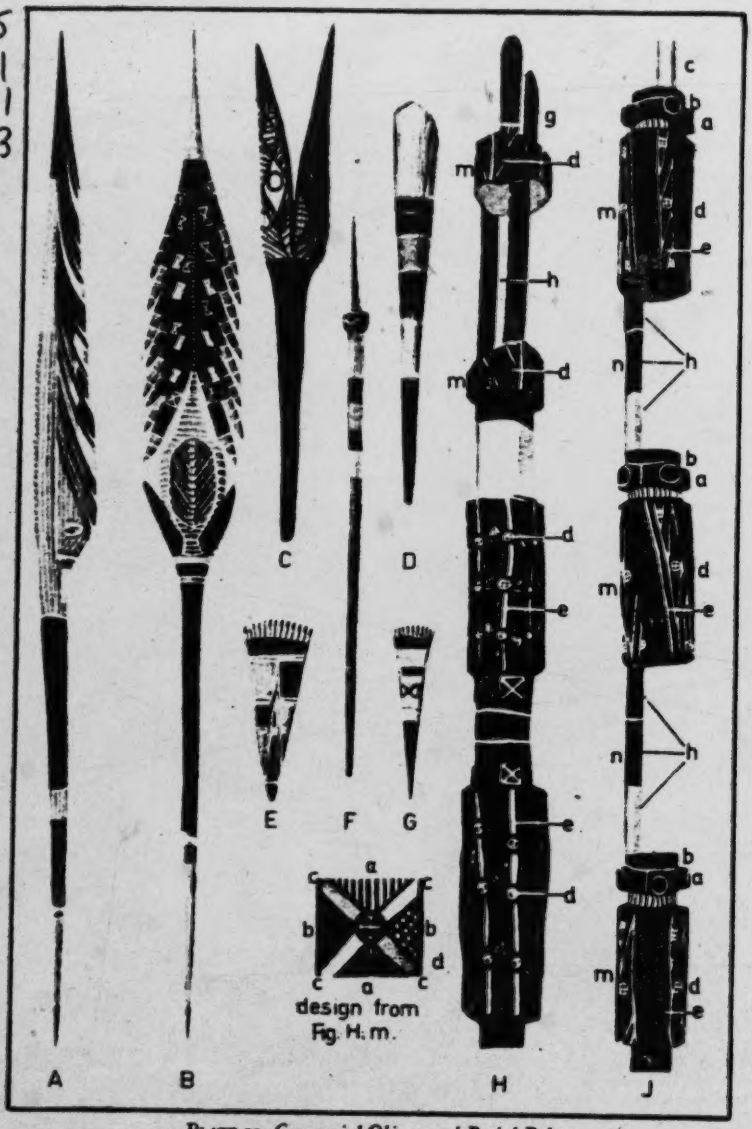

PLATE 32. *Ceremonial Objects and Burial Poles*
A, Male Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaringa; B, Female Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaguni; C, Forked Throwing Stick, Miluanta; D, Plain Throwing Stick, Muruguna; E, G, Tool, Porta, for Body Painting; F, Scratching Stick, Murubunga; H, J, Pukamuni Burial Poles.

[p. 88 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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The ceremony opened with the honey call, then, as the men stepped across a fire lit in the centre of the *milimika* (Pl. 24B), a long sustained mosquito call. Following this, the men formed a circle around the fire, and chanted a song which described the bombing of a ship off the coast of Bathurst Island. 765 [533] [177]

Close female relatives, standing in a line facing the poles, sang the *amburu*, while three men, painted white, each carrying a spear, rushed toward the screen of boughs, peered through them, then returned to the *milimika*. Three other men were given spears, one of whom, with a *tokwiangu* (goose-feather ball) in his mouth, took a stand as if to throw a spear at the poles, remarking to his companions as he did so, that he was about to spear a *mopaditi*.

As soon as the "workers" removed the boughs which shielded the poles from view, an old woman, *Jibandui*, ran forward and beat the ground near the poles, while the six men, with spears poised ready, followed and stabbed around the base of the poles. These rituals, the signal for all the participants to rush to the grave poles and (Pl. 27B) mourn, were carried out to frighten the *mopaditis* from the vicinity of the grave.

A young man with his head and shoulders through an opening in one of the poles, and his arm around an old woman, sobbed bitterly (Pl. 27C) while others stood around either crying or singing the *amburu*.

As the sounds of grief became less, a young man, miming a killing which had taken place some time ago, sneaked up with great stealth, and "speared" *Tjamalampua* who was lying on the ground in the *milimika*.[66] Shortly afterwards the ceremony closed with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

(*b*) *Songs and Dances*

The next morning about 10 a.m., the ceremonies started afresh. On this occasion, all of the songs and dances dealt with secular incidents; a crocodile creeping upon a man to kill him, an aboriginal sailing a European racing boat, another paddling a bark canoe, still another spearing an enemy, and so on. 177 765 [533]

Several of the aborigines created much laughter by miming the actions of our physical anthropologist, Dr. Carleton Coon, who had just completed a series of body measurements and observations on the Melville Islanders. [123] [535]

One man, using a short stick, measured the arms, legs and body of old *Tjamalampua* as he lay stretched out full length on the ground; he then danced around the *milimika* with his hands round his head, in imitation of the head callipers; another mimed Dr. Coon weighing an aboriginal, cutting his hair and looking at his teeth.

[66] Spencer, 1928, p. 651, describes a similar episode. No doubt the spearing of Tjamalampua had a much deeper symbolism than appeared at the time.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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765 533 *Wurarkuti* described, in song and dance, how some aborigines from the northern end of the island had tried to kill his father, but the father, being forewarned, had run into the mangrove swamp for shelter. A spear, however, thrown by his enemies, hit him in the side but did not kill him.

[535] [177] Then followed a long series of songs and dances, made up by *Wurarkuti*, describing how the mechanics from Darwin erected a large steel tank at the nearby settlement. To the chanting of songs and beating of buttocks, the actors "rolled" the tank (actually a small log) along the ground, tilted it on one end, rigged blocks and tackle and lifted the "tank" in place. These dances lasted about a half an hour.

Toward the end of this performance, which finished about mid-day, a woman, *Narlaui*, painted entirely in white, and carrying a throwing stick, called upon the dead woman to fight her because, at one time she, *Narlaui*, had reprimanded her for running after men. The aborigines applauded her when she had finished her song. Emboldened by this, *Narlaui* stood in front of one of the poles and challenged the dead woman to a fight.

[535] [177] The ceremony finished[97] with an aeroplane dance, the men posturing in a similar manner to that of the *Jirakati* dance (Pl. 30j).

About sunset, the rituals started afresh with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

Pulanimbwi and *Muramajua*, acting the part of little children, struggled with each other in the dust of the *milimika* while one of them sang,

[539] "You can't drink from the same breast as I can because we have different mothers."

Old *Malumerinita*, taking up the same refrain, pushed the two "children" aside as he sang,

[539] "I'm a big man, so I'll drink the milk."

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

765 It was after dark before the three "workers", who had cut and painted the burial poles, received their payment (Pl. 27D). As each *pukamuni* man passed the goods, loin cloths, and tobacco to the "worker", he cut his head with a [535] knife, and started a dance in which even a number of little girls took part (Pl. 25A). They had been told by some of the older women what to do, so [868] that the youngsters would be conversant with the woman's place in the rituals.

[97] This ceremony would have probably, like that of *Wonimpori*, finished at mid-day had not the Superintendent of the settlement insisted on sending the chief woman mourner to a distant locality from which she had been unable to return on time.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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(d) The Final Mourning Rituals

By this time the chief woman mourner, painted entirely in red, had arrived. 765
On reaching the ceremonial ground, she charged against a pole, then leaned [302]
over it, crying heartbrokenly. Another woman, *Dominao*, in paroxysms of grief, threw herself on the ground at the base of another pole, while still another woman, dancing the *amburu* before the third pole, told the *mopaditi* [533]
of the dead woman, in a song "to keep away from me". [775]

The ceremony finished, like that of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*, with concerted wailing around the poles.

(3) The Pukamuni of Inbiñarmeri's Infant

This simplified *pukamuni* was held for a premature child of *Inbiñarmeri*. 766
The child died, about a month previously, at the Darwin hospital. The complete rituals, though curtailed, having occupied only two hours, followed the normal pattern with two exceptions. The *pukamuni* group did not employ any "workers" to cut the burial poles, and, as the body had not been brought to Melville Island, the ceremonies were held at the grave of a young child, of the same parents, who had died about two years previously.

A distant relative, appointed by the father of a "worker" had burnt the grass, cleared a space adjacent to the grave as a dancing ground and draped a turtle rope around the old poles in which had been twisted the wing feathers of geese.[88] For these duties he was given two loin cloths.

There were no dances at the first *ilania* which took place about three hundred yards from the burial site, only prolonged honey and mosquito calls.

The *pukamuni* group then moved to within a hundred yards of the grave where, after more honey and mosquito calls, they lit the *wandiasapinda* fire, and walked through its smoke and flames.

At the commencement of the final rituals, most of the group halted behind a rope, stretched between two trees, over which the "worker" had hung bagging and blankets;[89] but others rushed forward, spears in hand, and, as in the two previous *pukamunis*, stabbed at the base of the poles surrounding the grave to drive away the *mopaditis*.

After this, everyone moved to the grave-side of the screen, the men carry- 535
ing out a series of dances while the women, beating themselves with sticks, 765
leaned on the *pukamuni* poles and mourned. 533

While some of the *pukamuni* men chanted a song about the red-fruited eugenia, *binamia*, *Muramajua*, walking around the *milimika*, imitated a

[88] I did not find out the significance of this custom.
[89] This took the place of the screen of boughs used in the normal rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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533 535 766 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milimilia* to the rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamani* men chanting a series of songs, first [177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamani*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[90]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamani* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten- [114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and [775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[91] the fundamental idea [517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamani* and *kulama*, will not recognise them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamani*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the [775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[92]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon [126] drawings[93] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[90] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.

[832] [91] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women were attracted to them.

[92] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated as an *ilania*.

[93] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

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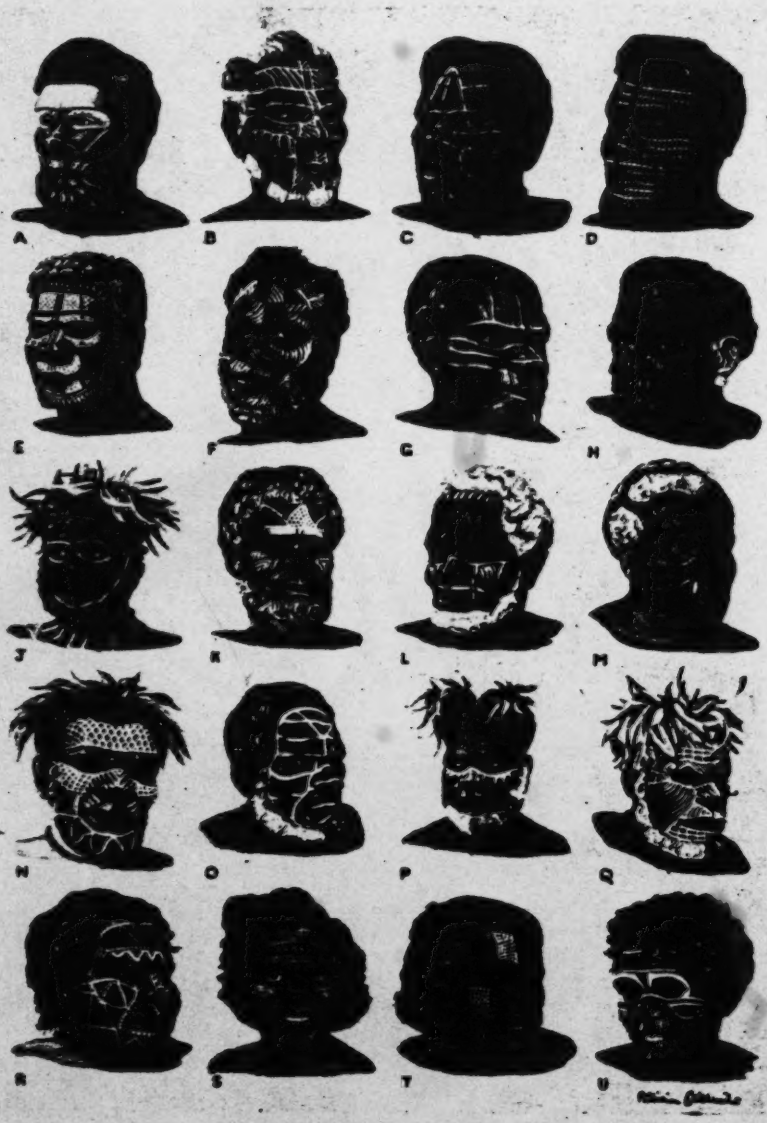

PLATE 28. *Ceremonial Facial Decorations*

A, Wadjeniati Initiate; B, Water-snake, Tuluma; C, Shark, Tuduwala; D, Fish, Mungumini; E, Thunder-man, Pakadringa; F, Salmon, Kumuninu; G, March-fly, Kudjatumpi; H, Boobook-owl, Purutjikini; J, Barn-owl, Pintoma; O, Ningaui. K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, U, Unidentified.

[Analyst's note: the plate in the original text is in full color]

[FACING p. 92]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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All the facial designs, about which I was able to find out the meanings (except Pl. 28B), dealt with some totemic creature, or myth. This was in direct contrast to the designs painted on the *tudini* burial poles, where few, if any, were associated with the myths or the totemic places. 302 778 [531]

A Wadjeniati Initiate

Pl. 28A is the facial design of a *Wadjeniati* initiate in the *kulama* ceremony (p. 130). The white dots represent a white edible plum, *murumbatana*, the red dots, a small red fruit, *kupaliju*, and the lines, the limbs of the trees on which the fruit grew. The white around the eyes and on the forehead is symbolical of *Purujikini*, the boobook owl-man (*Ninox novæ-zealandiæ*), the leader of the second *kulama* ceremony. [881]

The Poisonous Water Snake, Tuluma

Pl. 28B, a facial *pukamuni* design, symbolises the markings on the skin of a poisonous water snake, *tuluma*. Although I neglected to ask the aborigines whether there was any myth associated with this facial decoration, it is likely that the design refers to an incident in creation times.

The Shark, Tudawala

At *Purukupali's pukamuni*, the shark-man, *Tudawala*, represented on Pl. 28C, painted his face so that he would appear as ferocious as possible. The radiating lines round his eyes were supposed to have added greatly to his savage appearance. After the *pukamuni*, *Tudawala* fought with *Kumuninu*, the salmon man, because the latter, although he had a large number of hair-belts, refused to give any to *Tudawala*. [773]

Although the shark-man escaped injury in that encounter, he wounded the fish-man a number of times with his throwing sticks, wounds which can still be seen, as parallel lines, on the head of the salmon (see Pl. 28F).

The Fish, Mungunini

Pl. 28D is a facial design, called *Mungunini*, worn at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* by a fish of the same name. The markings on the face are supposed to be similar to those on the head of the present-day fish.

The Thunder-man, Pakadringa

Pl. 28E, a *pukamuni* facial design, refers to the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, and the dangerous *Marajji* (p. 154), both of whom are closely associated in the myths.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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The yellow bands encircling the face and eyes, and stretching from the forehead to the base of the nose, all symbolize the dreaded *Marapi*; the white cross-hatching represents the thunderstorms of *Pakadringa*.

The Salmon, Kumuninu

Pl. 287, the *pukamuni* decorations on the face of an aboriginal, are the same as those used by the mythical salmon-man, *Kumuninu*, who, at the first *pukamuni* ceremony, fought with *Tudawala*, the shark-man (Pl. 28c). The present-day fish still carries the marks of that encounter on his head.

The March-fly, Kudjatumpi

Pl. 280 is the facial pattern of an aboriginal belonging to the March-fly totem of Kudjatumpi, southern Melville Island (p. 58).

The black discs symbolize dark-coloured stones which formed on the footprints of *Kudjatumpi*, the small white and yellow dots, an edible plum, *murumbatana*, and the white lines, the limbs of the tree on which the fruit grows.

The red lines in the design represent the strata of red rocks at Kudjatumpi, which were created when the woman squeezed the milk from her breast and allowed it to run down the face of the cliff. All these things happened at Kudjatumpi after the March-fly woman had returned from the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*.

The Boobook Owl, Purujikini

The design on Pl. 281 was used in one of the *ilanias*. The white ears refer to *Purujikini* the boobook owl, and the lines on the face to its feather patterns.

The Barn Owl, Pintoma

Pl. 285 is the facial decorations of *Wurarbuti*, the *alouwia* of the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*. He is wearing the false beard, *baludi*, and the head-dress of cockatoo feathers, *primitiki*. The design on his face, particularly the rings around his eyes, symbolize *Pintoma*, the barn-owl woman, who assisted her husband, *Purujikini*, the boobook owl-man, at the first *kulama* ceremony (see dance of *Pintoma*, Pl. 292 and frontispiece).

The Ningaui Men

The facial design on Pl. 280 resembles that used by the *Ningaui* men when they performed the second *kulama* ceremony on Turiturina Island (p. 124). The yellow dots are the cockles in the mangrove swamps on Western Bathurst Island, one of the foods of the present-day *Ningauis*.

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Unidentified

The designs on Pl. 28T are the same as those painted on the face of the chief mourner, *Kasapi*, at *Waniamperi's* final *pukamuni*. I did not ask about their meanings. 302 778

Although I did not learn the meanings of the facial designs on the remaining faces on Pl. 28, it is reasonable to suppose they all referred to some mythological story, probably associated with the totem of the aboriginal who wore them.

7. THE PUKAMUNI DANCES

A number of the dances we saw at the *ilanias* and final *pukamuni* rituals belonged exclusively to certain Tiwi totemic groups. They were so constant in form that, in no time, we could recognize the dance and the totem to which it belonged. [794] 765 535

Many of these dances are more strenuous than any belonging to the mainland; some of them, indeed, so strenuous, i.e., the crocodile (Pl. 30E), the shark (Pl. 30G), or the sea-eagle (Pl. 30J), that they seldom lasted more than a minute. [171]

Although I recorded only fourteen of these totemic dances (illustrated on Pls. 29 and 30), I feel sure that these represent but a small proportion of those performed by the Tiwi. For instance, none of the totemic dances belonging to the dead person would have been performed at the burial rituals we witnessed.

Pl. 29A is the dance of the jabiru, *Tjalasi*, which was performed with such skill and abandon by *Nilitumo* at the Bathurst Island *ilanis* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* ceremony.

Pl. 29B is the dance of the boobook owl, *Purutjikini*, who with his wife, the barn-owl, *Pintoma*, organized the second *kulama* ceremony on Turiturina Island, western Bathurst Island. The dancer is indicating the large eyes of the boobook owl.

Pl. 29C is the dance of the blanket-lizard, *Kilpuruni*, who was punished by *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, because the former seduced *Jurumu's* wife. The dancer walked around the ceremonial ground with an awkward gait, in imitation of the blanket-lizard's curious method of locomotion.

Pl. 29D pictures the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, who is the mother of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, the woman of the monsoon rain, *Tamimbo*, and the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. The frog dance was performed many times at the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi*, the frog being the totem of his father.

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Pl. 30A is the moon-man, *Tjapera*, who fought with *Purukupali* during the creation period. The bent, upraised arm of the dancer symbolizes the crescent moon.

Pl. 30B is the dance of the rain-woman, *Tominka*, who lives at Wailu with her brother, sister and her mother, the frog-woman, *Kwuk-kwuk*. The fingers pointing downward symbolize the falling rain.

Pl. 30C illustrates the dance of the flying-fox, *Murungipili*, whose totemic place is at Kaialili lagoon, southern Melville Island. This dance was frequently performed at the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, her father being a flying-fox man. The dancer, with high steps, moved his arms alternately up and down, with the little fingers pointing upward.

Pl. 30D is the dance of wild honey. In this dance the performer, dancing vigorously around the ceremonial ground, pointed upward, as if to indicate the position of a hive of wild bees.

Pl. 30E is the spirited dance of the crocodile, *Jirakupai*, who, during creation times, transformed himself into a crocodile to escape his enemies. This was not often performed in the burial ceremonies we witnessed.

Pl. 30F is the *amburu*, the women's dance of mourning. When the men are performing in the ceremonial circle, the women come in from the left-hand side performing the *amburu*. I did not collect any specific myth about this dance, except that it has been performed by the women ever since the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*.

Pl. 30G is the dance of the shark, *Tudawala*, probably the most strenuous dance in aboriginal Australia. It is performed only by young men, women and children, the older men claiming that its performance requires too much effort.

Pl. 30H illustrates the dance of the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, who injured his spine while taking part in a spear-throwing contest held during the final *pukamuni* rituals of *Purukupali*. The dancer is miming the pain that *Pipinjawari* suffered on account of his injury.

Pl. 30J is an attractive and graceful dance symbolizing the sea-eagle, *Jirakai*, swooping down on its prey, with its wings outspread. This dance was performed many times at the *ilanias* of the woman, *Nulatini*.

Pl. 30K, the *Ningami* dance, symbolizes the awkward gait and curious actions of these dwarf spirit people who live in the swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. This dance was performed with considerable skill and artistry by the leader of the Bathurst Island group, *Jikungkahani*, at one of the *ilanias* of *Wonimpari*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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8. THE CEREMONIAL OBJECTS OF THE TIWI

The ceremonial objects of the *pukamuni* ceremony, like the carved and painted burial poles and elaborate facial and body decorations already described, are totally unlike those used by the mainland aborigines. 301 778 765

A series of objects obtained on the 1954 expedition is illustrated on Pls. 31, 32.[24] [171]

On Pl. 31, A, D, and G, are chest ornaments called *pukabinda*, which are suspended around the neck with a loop of human hair string. Fig. A is an oval ball of the soft wax of the native bee, into which has been pressed a large number of the red and black seeds of a jungle vine. Fig. D, made of several ovals of lawyer vine, is bound together with strips of the same material. The pendant is made of human hair and white cockatoo feathers. The oval opening is too small to pass over the head, therefore this ornament, and similar examples which I saw, were suspended around the neck with string. Fig. G is a flat disc like Fig. D, with lengths of lawyer vine bound together. This disc was coated with wax, and further decorated with red and black jungle seeds. [237]

Pl. 31E and F are ornaments, *pątnatjinas*, decorated with red and black seeds, which are pushed up the arm over the elbow.[25] Both have been made in the same manner as Fig. D, G.

Pl. 31B is a goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, worn around the neck or tied around the upper arm. *Wurarbuti* (frontispiece) is wearing a *tokwianga*.

These ornaments are made by embedding ends of the downy feathers of the pied goose in a ball of wax. So much work was entailed in making a *tokwianga* that the aborigines were loth to part with them. The *tokwianga* is worn on all ceremonial occasions. [237]

Pl. 31C is a false beard, *baludi*, which was worn at the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni* (see frontispiece), and the *kulama* rituals. The *baludi* may be pure decoration, or it may replace the beard, which up until comparatively recently was plucked out at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals. [302]

Fig. H illustrates three cane arm rings, *jairinis*, made from plaited lawyer vine. These were worn on the upper and lower arms of the *pukamuni* men and women, and occasionally by other performers, as decoration. At the end of the burial ceremony the performers take these rings from their arms and leave them on the grave as a present for the spirit of the dead.

[24] Spencer, 1928, Pl. XII, Figs. 450–4, illustrates a number of *pukamuni* ornaments he collected in 1911.

[25] Several of the men illustrated on Pl. 26B, are wearing these arm ornaments.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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765 778 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamani* and *kulama* rituals.

[411] [531] Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known respectively as the male *pukamani* spear, *tunbaringa*, and the female spear, *tunkagumi*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

[114] [322] [412] At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *mihanna*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *murugana*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamani* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

[302] [413] Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *porta*, used for printing lines of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[66]

[515] [413] Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipanini kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 765 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkina*, are used by the Tiwi for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamani* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkina*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamani* rituals were about to start.

[301] [302] As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in white and donned his goose-feather ball, *ankwinga*, his chest ornaments,

[66] The lines of dots on *Warurkui* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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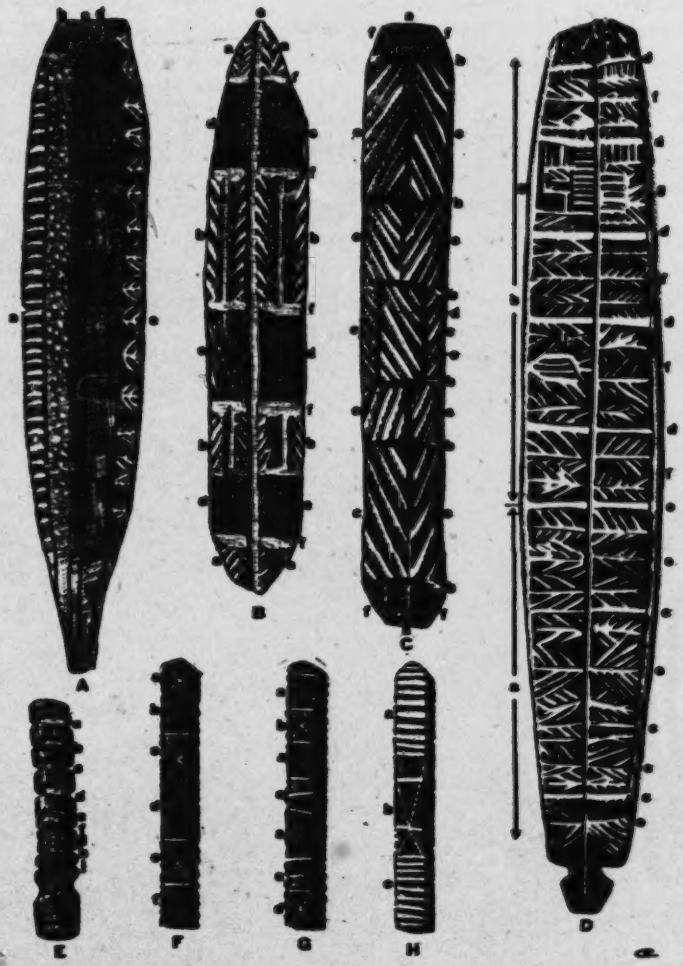

FIG. 5. *The Message Sticks*

A, Numanira; B, Puntubu; C, Munnapi; D, Pirilou; E, Secular; F, G, H, Pukamuni Ceremonial.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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202 765 *pulmajinis*, and cane armlets, *jairinis*. Then, taking a female *pukamuni* spear, *tambagui*, in his hand he seated himself within sight of the camp.

[301] [302] The local aborigines went out to welcome him, but on seeing the message stick and hearing the news, they mourned hysterically, cutting their heads [785] and beating themselves with sticks.

When the mourning died down, the aborigines gave the messenger a meal, [574] after which he returned to his own camp.

Although the general distribution of the totemic *purunkitas* has been dis- [126] continued in recent years, the aborigines who knew them well, made nine [184] examples for me. It would seem that each totemic place had its own particular [794] design, for when I showed the *purunkita* (Fig. 7D) to old *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, neither of whom had seen it previously, they recognized it immediately as a message stick which would have been sent to the *Mudungkala* totemic group of Buchanan Island, at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. However, other *purunkitas*, i.e. (Fig. 5C; Fig. 5F, G, H; and Fig. 6A, E) are still being used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

During the early days of our stay, when the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were about to start, three men, two of them, *Marawani* and *Uramatjina*, being the chief mourners, made a journey to the Bathurst Island people for the purpose of giving them a *purunkita* and telling them the news.

A few days later a Bathurst Island man returned with the message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H, and verbal instructions relating to the forthcoming burial rituals.

Although I did not see the message stick which *Marawani* and his com- [126] panions carried to Bathurst Island, I was able to make a rubbing of another (Fig. 7C), which was sent to the same locality on the death of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife.

Later, old *Tjamalampua* sent another message stick (Fig. 7A, B), to the men of the *Mudungkala* totem of Buchanan Island, asking for European goods and food to pay the "workers" at the final rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*.

Notification of Death

202 211 ×532 The designs on message stick, Fig. 7C, which an aboriginal carried to the Bathurst Island people, together with the news of the death of *Nulazini*, did not, in any way, refer to the message that accompanied it, but to topographical details along the motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point on Apsley Straits.

The upper section, *d*, is the aboriginal camp at Snake Bay, and the indentations, *a*, *a*, are the rocks on its shores. The cross-hatched rectangle in the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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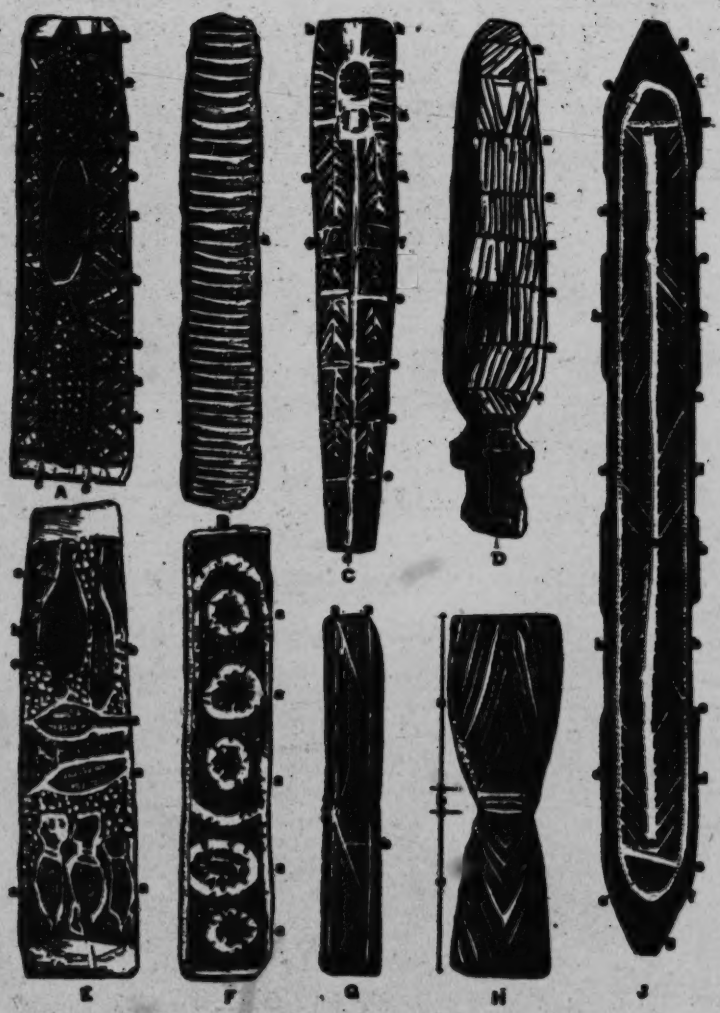

FIG. 6. *The Message Sticks*

A, B, Imilu; B, Ceremonial; C, Wurimpi; D, Secular; F, Kudjatumpi; G, H, Invitation to Secular Ceremony; J, Murumpi.

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centre of the message stick is the freshwater creek, Primbiamili, across which there is a crude bridge of logs (parallel lines *e*, *f*, on either side of the cross-hatched rectangle).

The long rectangle at the top of the message stick is the track between Snake Bay and Primbiamili Creek, and that at the bottom, from Primbiamili Creek to Cockle Point on Apsley Straits. Symbols *b*, *b*, are living stringy-bark trees by the roadside, and *c* is a group of dead trees.

The crossed squares *h*, *h*, indicate trees that had been cut down to clear a motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point. Apsley Strait, indicated by rectangle *g*, was crossed by the messenger in the dug-out canoe, *j*. The triangles at *n*, refer to the houses of the Bathurst Island Mission Station.

Pukamuni Ceremonial Purunkita

The return *purunkita* to that notifying the death of *Waniamperi* is shown on Fig. 5F, G, H. A messenger carried this *purunkita* to the Melville Island aborigines, together with the instructions about the conduct of the *pukamuni* from *Jibunglialumi*, the leader of the Bathurst Island group.

On side F, the crossed square, *a*, refers to *Urumatjina*, *c*, to *Marawani*, and *e*, to *Katopi*, the three chief mourners at the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*. *Katopi* is the son of the dead man.

Square *b* refers to instructions asking the "workers" to build a screen of boughs round the grave so that unauthorized people cannot see it; *d* refers to the cleaning of the grave site, and *f* to a request for the "workers" to dig out the roots and sticks in the ceremonial ground, so that the dancers will not injure their feet.

On side G, the crossed square *d*, is the *milimika* of the Bathurst Island group, and *b*, that of the Melville Island people. Groups of lines, *c*, *c*, refer to the number of "working men" to be appointed, while cross-hatched areas, *a*, *a*, indicate a request to the "workers" to do their tasks well and happily.

On side *H*, the lines, *a*, refer to burial poles to be erected around *Waniamperi's* grave; *b*, to the chief *pukamuni* men at Melville Island, and *c*, to the Bathurst *pukamuni* men whom *Jibunglialumi* will bring with him.

Pukamuni Ceremonial Purunkita

Fig. 6a is a *purunkita* sent by an old man, *Tjamalampua*, to another old man, *Tipumbriaria*, in Bathurst Island, asking him to bring many aborigines to the forthcoming *pukamuni* ceremony at Melville Island. The cross-lines, *a*, indicate the required number of men.

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Kudjatumpi

This *purunkita* (Fig. 6b) was sent to the March-fly totemic centre at Kudjatumpi, southern Melville Island. The designs on the message stick were painted, instead of being engraved, because of the difficulty of cutting the circular patterns.

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The white circles and ovals, *a*, *a*, are backwaters and lagoons at the mouth of the freshwater stream at Kudjatumpi and the star-shaped designs, lilies growing on the surface of the water.

Wuriupi

Fig. 6c is an engraved message stick sent to members of the fire totemic group at Wuriupi, eastern Melville Island.

The disc, *a*, indicates the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, travelling across the sky, the radiating lines, *b*, the beams of light at sunrise, *f* and *g*, the mid-day camps of the sun-woman (p. 172). The long line, *d*, is the path of the sun-woman across the firmament.

Pandanus trees in the Milky Way are indicated at *c*, *c*, and similar designs and breaks in the galaxy by the transverse lines, *e*, *e*.

Numanira

The *purunkita* (Fig. 5A) belonged to the totemic red-ochre group at Numanira, west of Karslake Island.

The left-hand band of short transverse bars at *a*, represents the lines of coloured ochres in the sands of the sea-shore; the dots on the next band, *b*, to the right, are the oysters on the rocks at Numanira; band *c* indicates the reefs of red and yellow ochres covered at high tide; *d* is the motor road along the cliff on the mainland opposite Karslake Island, and *e*, the trees on the shore of Karslake Island, opposite Numanira.

Puntubu

Fig. 5B illustrates a *purunkita* which was sent to Puntubu, on the upper reaches of the Tjipripu River, central Melville Island, one of the totem places of the eucalyptus-tree woman, *Aragoutourina*.

The central line, *c*, is the Tjipripu River, which flows into Curtis Haven. On the banks of that river grow many *tulini* palms (symbols *b*, *b*, *b*,) from which the aborigines make their palm-leaf baskets. The roots of the palms, *a*, *a*, are indicated at either end of the message stick, and reefs of black and yellow rocks on the banks of the Tjipripu River at *d*, *d*, and *e*, *e*, *e*,

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respectively. The junctions of those rocks are indicated by the transverse lines, *f, f, f.*

Muranapi

A message stick to invite the aborigines of Muranapi, southern Melville Island, to a *pukamani*, is illustrated on Fig. 6J.

The central white line is Muranapi Creek; the groups of sloping lines on either side are the eucalyptus trees on its banks, and the transverse panels, such as *c, c,* pandanus trees on the subsidiary watercourses.

The semi-circles, *a, a,* on either end of the *purunkita*, represent the hills, *g, g,* the high ground, *f, f,* the sandy soil on the shores of Muranapi Creek, and the indentations, *d, d,* etc., on either edge of the *purunkita*, the *tulini* palms which grow on the edge of the fresh water.

Muranapi

Fig. 5C is another message stick sent to Muranapi, this time to the *Mandukuka* (blow-fly) totemic group.

The central lines, *a, a,* at both ends of the *purunkita* represent the salt-water creek, Duniau. On this creek is the totemic place, *d,* a rock about thirty feet long and six feet above the level of high tide. The transverse lines, *b, b,* etc., are freshwater creeks which flow into Duniau.

The sloping cuts within rectangle *d,* symbolize cracks in the totemic rock of *Mandukuka*. The remainder of the sloping cuts, as at *c, c,* etc., represent bloodwood trees and other eucalypts growing on the banks of the freshwater streams. Marks *f, f,* etc., on either end of the *purunkita*, indicate a point of land at the mouth of Duniau Creek.

Pirilou

Fig. 5D illustrates a message stick sent to the catfish totemic group of Pirilou on the Goose Creek swamps, central Melville Island.

The middle line is the Goose Creek, *a* (lower) being the salt-water section, and *b* (upper), the fresh-water. The transverse lines, *c, c,* etc., are subsidiary mangrove creeks, and *d, d,* etc., the freshwater lagoons or backwaters of the Goose Creek swamps. At *e, e,* etc., are mangrove trees on the shore of the salt-water stream, *a*; and *f, f,* etc., living paper-bark, and *g, g,* dead paper-bark trees in the freshwater lagoons.

Imilu and Buchanan Island

A *purunkita* (Fig. 6A, E), partly engraved, partly painted, was taken from Snake Bay first to the aborigines at Imilu, north-western Melville Island,

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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then to a group on Buchanan Island, notifying them of the forthcoming burial rituals.

The three large ovals on Fig. 5A are graves on Melville Island, the short transverse lines, *b*, *b*, the *pukamuni* poles, and the short lines, *c*, *c*, at the bottom of the *purunkita*, the tracks leading to the grave. The cross-hatched panels, *a*, *a*, represent the grass around the grave site.

On the opposite side, Fig. 5B, the designs, *a*, *a*, are *pukamuni* poles, and *b*, *b*, old graves surrounded by poles (short lines, *c*, *c*). The dots represent the mourners at the grave.

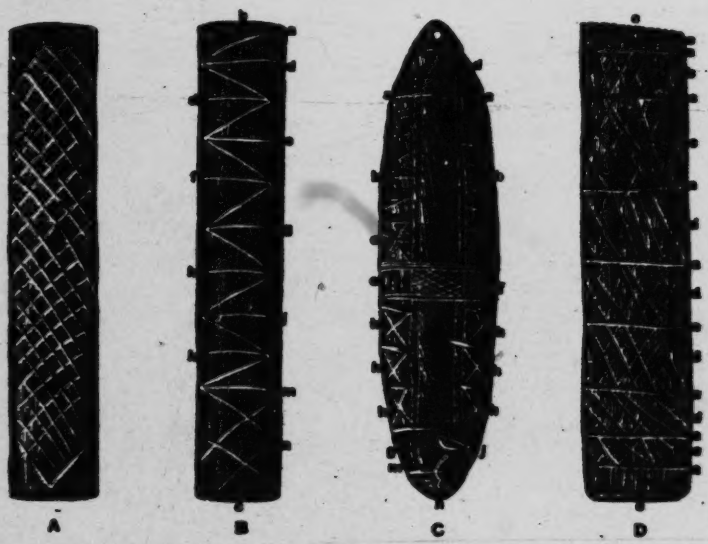

FIG. 7. *The Massage Sticks*

A, B, Buchanan Island; C, Notification of Death; D, Buchanan Island.

Buchanan Island

Fig. 7A, B, are two sides of another *purunkita*, which was sent to the *Mudungkala* (eucalyptus tree) totemic group on Buchanan Island (adjacent to the Bathurst Island Mission Station). This *purunkita* asked for a supply of European goods and food so that the "workers" could be paid at the closing rituals of *Wanawpari's pukamuni* on Melville Island.

The diamond patterns on Fig. 7A refer to the numbers of men in large the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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202 211 ×532 *Mudungkala* totemic group. On the reverse side (Fig. 7B), the zig-zag line *a*, is the road between Snake Bay (upper end, *b*), and Cockle Point, in Apsley Straits (lower end, *c*). At *d*, *d*, is a request for two six-pound bags of sugar; *e*, for tea; *f*, sufficient printed calico for a loin cloth; *g*, three sticks of tobacco; *h*, a tin of tobacco; *j*, a pair of trousers; *k*, a pocket knife, and *m*, a pipe. The crossed lines at *n* indicate the camp of *Tjamalumpua*, the sender of the message stick.

Buchanan Island

The message stick (Fig. 7D) refers to the Jaulama jungle, about a half a mile south of our camp.

This stick was sent by the chief mourner of the Melville Island *pukamuni* group to the members of the ironwood, *Mudungkala*, totemic group of Buchanan Island, and adjacent Bathurst Islanders, notifying them of the oncoming burial rituals. The designs on the stick, however, have no relationship to either the ironwood tree group or the message they would receive. The short vertical lines at *c*, *c*, are living paper-bark trees, and the transverse lines, *a*, *a*, dead paper-bark trees in the Jaulama jungle. At *b*, are the roots of the trees, and at panels *c*, the vines of the edible *roko* yams on the branches of the paper-barks. The four panels, *d*, *d*, etc., are jungle trees, and *e* indicates their roots.

Invitation to Adjoining Tribe

[574] Fig. 6G, H, illustrates a message stick (not associated with a *pukamuni* ceremony) from the Melville Island people, inviting the aborigines on the Coburg Peninsula to pay them a visit and to perform some of their mainland ceremonies.[97]

On the obverse side, Fig. 6G, the parallel lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the shores of the Coburg Peninsula, and the zig-zag line, *b*, a mangrove creek in the same locality.

On the reverse side, 6H, the V-shaped patterns, *a*, indicate the men who have been invited from the Coburg Peninsula, and those in the lower section, *b*, the women. The short transverse lines at *c*, represent the Melville Island men who will act as hosts to the visitors.

Secular

202 211 439 Fig. 5E is a secular message stick sent to an aboriginal, *Marawani*, who was on a visit to Darwin, asking him to bring back the following goods; *a*,

[97] This message stick suggests that, at the present time, members of the mainland tribes and those of the Tiwi, occasionally visit each other.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tobacco, *b*, matches, *c*, a pipe, *d*, a calico loin cloth, *e*, a pair of short trousers, *f*, a shirt, *g*, sugar, *h*, tea, and *j*, flour. 202 211 439

Secular

Fig. 60 is a carved stick whose designs were thought out by the artist as he walked along the sandy beach near our camp. Although not a message stick, the illustration is included in the section as an example of how an aboriginal expresses his mental images through the medium of simple wood carving. 532x

The horizontal lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the waves breaking on the beach, and the groups of short lines, a pattern of shallow gutters which had been formed on the sandy shore by the fresh water seeping from a nearby lagoon.

10. THE BURIAL POLES

The painted and decorated poles of Melville and Bathurst Islands attracted the attention of all the early visitors. Sir Gordon Bremer in 1824, possibly the first European to see the *pukamuni* poles, when writing about a grave he saw on Melville Island, states: "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilised people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed around with trees, 7 feet to 8 feet high, some of which were carved with stone or shell and further ornamented by rings of wood. On the tops of these were placed the waddies (throwing sticks) of the deceased. The grave was raised above the level of the earth, but the raised part was not more than 3 feet long. At the head was placed a piece of a canoe (probably a bark basket) and a spear and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and earth were cleared away from the sides and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."[98] 765 211 [322] [413]

I have quoted Sir Gordon Bremer's description in full because it shows that, even after a hundred and thirty years, the aborigines of Melville Island, 211 178 765

[98] Bremer, 1843. From this description it would appear that Bremer chanced to see a grave not long after the aborigines had completed the final rituals. Had any time elapsed the whole area would have been covered with grass and leaves, for, after the *pukamuni* commencies, nobody is interested in either the grave or the poles.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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[178] where they have not suffered from ecclesiastic prohibitions, are still using a similar form of grave and posts.

Major Campbell (1834, p. 158), writing of a grave he saw on Melville Island in 1826, states: "It (the grave) is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberts, 14–15 feet high, and between these the spears and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground."

Brown (1905, p. 28) found a grave on Luxmore Head, in Apsley Straits surrounded . . . "by wooden slabs, portions of which had been burnt. Aboriginal markings were faintly discernible in places on the wood, some of the posts had the wood cut away from the outside toward the centre, leaving a short spike standing up in the middle of the post."

Klaatsch (1907, p. 257), in referring to the same burial poles at Luxmore Head, writes: "In some examples the slab was so carved that the upper part was only connected with the lower by two thin pillars or, on others, the top was mushroom-shaped.

"It is easy to see that the aborigines used fire for this work of sculpture, scratching the burnt part away with shell."

Basedow,[99] in 1911, came across a grave of an infant, on Bathurst Island, surrounded by five simply decorated posts, which had "been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk."

Basedow persuaded the aborigines to renovate the designs, which did not vary greatly from those in use at the present day.

[114] Spencer,[100] in 1911, made sketches of many of the burial poles, and arranged for the aborigines to redecorate a group which was later displayed in the National Museum, Melbourne. He states (1928, p. 682) that: "It (the pole)
[177] was slowly and laboriously cut with an iron tomahawk, but formerly with a sharp shell, until it has the form decided upon by the artificer."

Dr. Kenneth Fry, who visited Melville Island in 1913, was the first investigator to ascertain the meanings of a number of poles. These, with his permission, are illustrated on Fig. 8. All of these shapes, but two, are those still most commonly used among the hundred or more which I saw on Melville Island.

[115] An old aboriginal, *Tjamalampua*, told me that in *palaneri* times, i.e., a long while ago, before there were any steel axes, the aborigines used stone axes to fell the hollow trees for *pukamuni* poles. Although there were just as many poles around the grave as there are today, they were neither as

[99] Basedow (1913), p. 314, Fig. 4, Pls. 13, 14, 16, 17, 18.
[100] Spencer (1928), p. 682, Figs. 475–7, Pl. X.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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elaborately shaped nor decorated, often being covered with no more than a series of dots.[1] 211 765

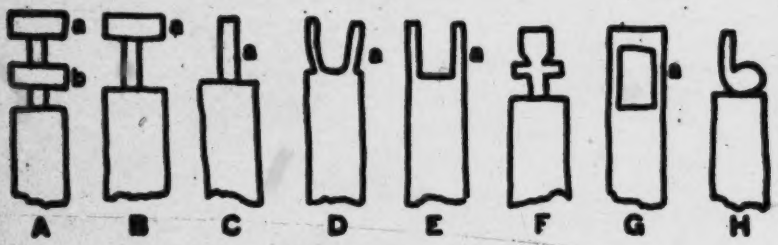

FIG. 8. *The Burial Poles*

Origin of the Pukamuni Poles

At present we have no evidence to show whether the custom of erecting burial poles around the grave in such numbers, not as a memorial, but as a gift to the dead, is confined entirely to the Tiwi tribe, or whether it is used in any other part of the world, and has reached the Tiwi by diffusion. There certainly are no similar burial poles on the Australian continent. 171 765 211 [769]

In north-eastern Arnhem Land, some of the decorated log coffins are as high as seven feet.[2] But the function of those coffins bears no relationship to that of the burial poles of Melville Island, the former being no more than coffins to hold the bones, and the latter, gifts to please the spirit of the dead.

It is possible that, during the long period of isolation from the mainland cultures, the Melville Islanders may have changed coffins of north-eastern Arnhem Land into the burial poles of the Tiwi.

The only examples of burial posts outside of Australia known to me, that are in any way comparable in function to those on Melville Island, are the *malanggan* burial ornaments of New Ireland described by Kramer.[3]

Methods of Manufacture

Although, at the conclusion of the *pukamuni* rituals, the grave is totally neglected and the poles allowed to decay, the "workers", using steel axes[4] 765

[1] Although *Tjamalampua* is not fully correct (see Bremer's and Campbell's statements in the early nineteenth century, pp. 107, 108), it indicates that both the poles and their painted decorations have, with the passing of the years, and the acquisition of steel tools, become more complex.

[2] Mountford, 1956, p. 317. [3] Kramer, 1925.

[4] The evidence of Bremer, Spencer and the aborigines, suggests that before the advent of metal the only cutting tools owned by the aborigines would have been crude stone axes, and the shells of cockles. It is likely that, under these conditions, the poles would 412 174 322

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 and the hardest and most durable timber available, spared no pains to make the best poles they could.[6]

×532 When the "workers" had finished shaping the poles they notified the
965 leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, who then gave the order for the poles to be scorched over a fire of blazing leaves to make a black ground on which to paint the design (Mountford, 1956, p. 427). Then, setting up the poles in a double row near the grave (Mountford, 1956, p. 426), the men began their task of decoration (Pl. 33B, D). At the same time, the ceremonial leader sent message sticks (p. 98) to notify the outlying groups that the final rituals were about to start.

386 The materials used for decoration were: red and yellow ochres from Imilu, Cape Van Diemen, a white ochre from a beach nearby, crushed charcoal for black, one of three types of fixatives, i.e., the white of turtle eggs, wild honey and beeswax mixed together, and the particularly gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids.

The ochres were crushed, mixed with water and one or more of the fixatives, and applied to the poles with brushes made from chewed strips of bark or vines (Fig. 2).

517 As I watched these primitive artists at work, I was impressed with the care
×532 they took in the arranging of their simple patterns, and with the obvious pleasure they experienced in their work. A quiet air of contentment pervaded the outdoor studio as each of the ten artists made his own pole as beautiful as possible.

Each artist appeared to be certain as to the designs he would use; there was no evidence of copying; in fact, *Pulanimkuwi* showed me the rough draft of the designs of his pole (Pl. 35A, B, Fig. 9), scratched on the back of a cigarette tin, days before he had even felled the tree.

×532 A puzzling aspect of the *pukamuni* poles is the wide variety of the painted
765 designs used, and the almost total absence in those designs of any reference to the myths and totemic localities.[6]

At first sight it would appear that the pole shapes, collected by both Fry and myself, were inventions of the moment. An analysis of the poles

174 have simpler shapes than at the present time, although Campbell (1834, p. 158) speaks
412 about "poles with tops like lances and halberts". The aborigines may have used fire to
322 assist in the shaping of the poles, in fact, this is suggested by Klaatsch (1907, p. 387).

[5] Not far from our camp was the deserted grave of the father of *Muramajua* (Pl. 38D), who died when his son was an infant. *Muramajua* was then over forty years old, yet the poles, although somewhat eroded and disarranged by the elements, are still in a fair state of preservation.

[111] [6] This and old *Tjimakimpua's* statement, p. 109, could indicate that the poles and their designs are a recent cultural trait that is not yet fully absorbed into the culture.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

recorded on the expedition, however, indicates that this may not be so, i.e., 532x 765

Forks or limbs of trees	26 per cent
Breasts of women	9 per cent
Rocks on sea-coast	18 per cent
Windows and doors (openings in poles)	15 per cent

That is, four shapes make up 68 per cent and the remaining eleven shapes, 38 per cent.

This would suggest that certain shapes have a traditional meaning, and that these shapes predominate. In fact, an examination of the accounts of the early travellers, Bremer, Campbell, Klaatsch, and Spencer, suggests that, except for those poles in the form of human figures, the *pukamuni* poles have not changed in shape to any extent during the last fifty years or more. [114] [178]

Description of the Burial Poles

(a) *The Pukamuni of Waniamperi*

The ten *nulinis* which the "workers" cut and painted for *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were looked upon as a family, a man, his two wives, and their children.

Pl. 32J, a middle-aged man, had two wives; Pl. 34E, a very fat, but young woman, and Pl. 35A, B, her much older sister.

The young wife, Pl. 34E, had three children; Pl. 36A, B, a small boy about ten, Pl. 36D, a girl of twelve, and Pl. 37D, a young married woman without a family.

The older wife, Pl. 35A, B, had four children; Pl. 36F, a boy of five, Pl. 36C, a girl about twelve, Pl. 32H, a young unmarried man, and Pl. 37D, an unmarried woman.

Plate 32J, eighteen feet in height, was by far the tallest pole in the group.

Because the actual shapes of the poles seldom had any relationship to the designs painted on them, the pole shapes and the painted designs will be described separately.

The pole shapes of Pl. 32J are: the projection, *c*, on the top, represents the branch of a tree, the bosses, *a*, *a*, *a*, are the breasts of women, the three cylindrical sections, *m*, *m*, *m*, large rocks on the sea-coast, and the narrow uprights, *n*, *n*, joining them, the limbs of eucalyptus trees.

In the painted designs, *a*, *a*, *a*, are, as before, the breasts of women, and the short vertical lines, *b*, *b*, etc., the teeth of a comb. The painted white projection, *c*, on the top of the pole, is a shovel-nosed shark; the crossed circles, *d*, *d*, are the noses of crocodiles, and the diagonal bands, *e*, *e*, *e*, the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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mangrove creeks in which the crocodiles live. The red, yellow and white bands, *h*, *h*, etc., are boulders of various colours on the beach, and the dotted diamond shapes, on *m*, *m*, *m*, the pattern which the turtle-woman, *Garagalani*, painted on her bark basket at *Purukupali's* ceremony, and which, when she changed herself into a turtle, became the shell design on her carapace (p. 39).

The pole shapes of Pl. 34B are: the projections, *f*, the fork of a tree, the bosses, *a*, *a*, breasts of women and the three cylindrical sections, rocks on the sea-coast.

The painted designs at *a*, *a*, are, as before, women's breasts, and the radiating designs and central dot on the bosses, the eyes of women. The vertical bands, such as *d*, etc., on the two upper cylindrical sections, and the horizontal bands, *e*, etc., on the lower section, are women's trade belts, the discs on the upper and lower sections, silver coins, and the dots on the background, stars in the sky.

The pole shapes of Pl. 35A, B, are: the two forked projections, *a*, *a*, the throwing sticks used by the moon-man, *Tjapara*, in his fight against *Purukupali*; the rectangular opening immediately below, is a window, and the lower section, a large boulder.

The painted decorations on the pole (Pl. 35A, B), are, by far, the most elaborate and best executed I have examined. On the upper section, the diagonal and transverse red and white lines, *b*, symbolise the native roads near Imilu, north-western Melville Island, the source of the red ochre so valued by the Melville Islanders; the cone-shaped figures, *d*, outcrops of red and white rocks, and the bands, *c*, *c*, grass on the top of the cliffs at Imilu.

The many designs on the lower section illustrate, in detail, the topography at Imilu. On Fig. 9, the key to Pl. 35A, B, these designs are arranged in topographical levels.[7]

Level 1, pictures the highlands; 2, the jungle at the top of the cliffs; 3, an aboriginal road; 4, the trees on the sea-coast; 5, the surface of the sea; 6, the creatures in the sea, and 7, the waves breaking on the sea-shore.

On level 1, *g*, *g*, *g*, represent the eucalypts of the highlands and on level 2, *j*, *j*, etc., the jungle trees which grow along the edge of the cliff. At *y*, is a

[133]

[7] Brown (1905, p. 28), writing about the appearance of these cliffs, when viewed from the sea, states, "... they often appear thus: four parallel lines—top of timber, top of cliff, top of beach, edge of water; the first, green, the second, red, the third, white, greyish-blue water in front and blue sky above." Brown and *Pulenimbuwi*, the artist of the pole, were both impressed with the same parallel lines of colour, which extend for miles along the shore of Cape Van Diemen.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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winding track leading from the beach, up the cliffs, to Imiln. Another road, at level 3, along the top of the cliff, is indicated by the horizontal barred design, *k*, *k*.

Level 4 pictures the sea beach, *h*, *h*, etc., being casuarina trees, and, *z*, an especially large eucalypt.

FIG. 9. *Carved and Painted Burial Pole*

There is a billabong at *b*, with trees (radiating designs) on its banks, and the pit, *y*, at Imiln, surrounded by trees, from which the aborigines dig their ochres.[8]

On the surface of the water (level 5), *c*, *c*, are canoes, and *e*, *e*, turtles.

A series of panels, 8–15, on level 6, picture the creatures that live in the deep water. The designs *h*, *h*, etc., indicate large sponges on the rocks; *a*, *a*,

[8] This ochre, yellow when dug out of the ground, changes to red when heated in the camp fire.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

X532
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etc., old and young crocodiles; *e*, *e*, etc., turtles; *f*, *f*, etc., octopi, and *d*, *d*, etc., crabs. Panel 17 is a creek in the mangrove swamps, in which the aborigines anchor their canoes, *c*, *c*, etc. In this creek are octopi, *f*, *f*, etc.

Panels 16–26 illustrate the sea-shore and the waves. The series of vertical parallel lines in each panel are the incoming lines of waves; the ovals, such as *k*, are the shells on the sandy bottom, and the curving panels, similar to *m*, the waves breaking on the beach.

The pole shapes of Pl. 37F, which the aborigines looked upon as a young woman, are: *a*, her hat; *b*, her neck, and *s*, her ribs. Sections *c*, *c*, *c*, are large rocks on the sea-shore.

The meaning of the designs painted on the same pole are: the chevrons on the top of the pole at *a* are spider webs in the jungle; the bands, *b*, rocks of different colours on the beach; diamonds on *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, the check designs on the printed calico of the young woman's skirt; *d*, *d*, *d*, her belts of different colours, and *e*, is the coloured cloth she used as a head band.

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In general, the pole shapes of Pl. 32H, represent a tree. The projections, *g*, are the branches; the two upper cylindrical sections, *m*, *m*, the boles; the opening, *h*, is a hollow and the lower sections, the trunk.

The painted designs in the rectangles covering the pole each have similar meanings. The intersecting diagonal lines (see inset), *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, symbolize the pattern on the back, and the groups of vertical parallel lines, *a*, *a*, those on the side of a reef fish, called *pranaia*. The long white lines, *e*, *e*, are stripes, and *d*, *d*, *d*, *d*, dots on the bodies of the *Maludaianini* caterpillars which later were transformed into the men of the Milky Way. The dotted triangles, *b*, *b*, represent the shell pattern on the back of the hawkbill turtle, *Garagalani*.

In the pole shapes of Pl. 36C, the upper projection, *a*, is a cycad palm; *c*, *c*, are the breasts of women, and *e*, *e*, *e*, edible yams.

The painted rectangles on sections *d* and *f* refer, almost exclusively, to different kinds of food, although some common objects, such as throwing sticks, baskets and spears are represented. I did not find out the meanings of the designs on the lowest section.

The pole shapes, illustrated on Pl. 36A, B, are: *a*, the bow of a wooden canoe, and the oval designs at *c*, the paint on its sides.

On section *b*, of Pl. 36A, the painted diamond pattern *g*, is the body of a goanna, the triangle, *h*, its tail, and the dots are its eggs.

The intersecting lines on the other side of the same section (Pl. 36B), symbolize the ribs of a goanna, and the cross-hatched diamonds, the marks on its skin.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

The designs on sections *d* and *f* also relate to the goanna. The small white discs on *d* are goanna holes; the cross-hatched diamonds, its skin patterns, and the dots, its eggs. The triangles on *f* are the ribs, and the dots, the fat of the same creature. White and red bands on *e*, symbolise waves breaking on the beach. 532x 765

The shapes of Pl. 36D are: *a* is white cloud; the rectangular opening *e*, a door, and the thinner section *f*, a post of a house. Section *d* is a large boulder, and *g*, *h*, the trunks of a fan palm.

The painted, cross-hatched bands, *b*, on section *e*, indicate goanna fat; the alternate bands, *c*, *c*, etc., are rocks on the shore, and the central white disc on *d* is the light from an electric torch. The vertical lines radiating from this disc are aboriginal paths; the horizontal bands are adjacent mangrove creeks, and the cross-hatched rectangles, discarded fish-bones on its banks.

The circles at *g* are rocks in the sea, and the white lines represent rope used for catching turtles. The dots on the background symbolise turtle eggs in the sand. The vertical bands on *h* are mangrove creeks, and the cross-hatched areas, body scars on the backs and arms of old men and women.[9]

The two projections at *a* on Pl. 36F, are the front flippers of a turtle, the opening, *c*, is a window, and *d*, a door. The lower section is a European house.

The cross-hatching at *e*, *e*, represents the marks on the handles of throwing sticks (Pl. 32D); the transverse bands, *f*, and the vertical bands, *g*, *g*, aboriginal tracks in the forest, and the dots, stars in the sky.

The upper projections at *a* (Pl. 37D), are the branches of trees, the rectangular opening below is a doorway, the two cylindrical sections, *h*, *h*, are rocks on the coast, and the design, *j*, is a stingray.

The painted designs refer almost exclusively to the decorations used at a *pukamuni* ceremony. The chevron bands at *b* and *c* on the upper projections, *a*, are coloured cane, and plain, feathered *pukamuni* arm ornaments respectively (Pl. 31E, F). Painted designs at *f*, *f*, are arm ornaments similar to those at *b*, *c*. The plain band, *g*, however, represents chest ornaments (Pl. 31D, G). The circles at *d*, *d*, are *pukamuni* cane armlets, and the cross-hatched rectangles and panels *h*, *h*, *h*, the chevron body scars of the performers. [301]

(*b*) *The Pukamuni of Makapini*

As in the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*, the poles of *Makapini* were looked upon as a family; Pl. 34B, the mother; Pl. 34A, an adolescent daughter,

[9] Until recently, both men and women were decorated with elaborate series of chevron scars on the arms, legs and back (Pl. 29A). This practice has been discontinued. [304]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

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and Pl. 34F, a small son. As before, the shape of the pole had one set of meanings, and the designs painted on them another.

The two projections, *a*, on Pl. 34B, represent the fork, and the central white section, *d*, is the bole of a eucalyptus tree. The sections above and below *d*, are large rocks on the beach.

The central transverse painted bands, *b*, *b*, are women's leather trade belts, the vertical panels, *c*, etc., in the upper section, crocodile's intestines, and the cross-hatched panels, *g*, etc., crocodile's backbone. On the lower section, *f*, etc., are turtle intestines, and the cross-hatched panels, *e*, etc., chevron body scars.

The significance of the shapes of Pl. 34A, reading from the top are: the white top, *k*, a European hat; *s*, its rim; the openings, *c*, *c*, windows, and *p*, *r*, tree trunks.

The white vertical panels, *a*, indicate a turtle's vertebrae, and the adjacent cross-hatched panels, *b*, its intestines. White bands, *e*, *e*, are *pukamuni* cane arm ornaments (*jairinis*, Pl. 31H), and cross-hatched bands, *d*, *d*, chevron body scars.

Transverse band *f*, is a leather belt; panels, *h*, are turtle's intestines; cross-
[291] hatched areas, *g*, etc., body scars. On *r*, the lowest section, band *m*, is a leather trade belt; the vertical panels, *o*, are turtle intestines, and the cross-hatched panels, *n*, body scars.

The four projections, *a* (Pl. 34F), are branches of trees; *g*, is a hill; *h*, an edible yam, and *j*, a large rock on the coast.

The long white rectangles, *b*, etc., are small freshwater creeks, and the diagonal marks on *c*, body scars; yellow band *d*, is a male *Maratji* (p. 154). The chevron panels, *e*, etc., are female *Maratjis*, and the white rectangles, *f*, etc., thunderclouds associated with this dangerous mythical creature.

The meanings of the painted designs on 37C are: sections *a*, *a*, arm ornaments, *palmatjinas* (Pl. 31E, F), and *b*, the false beard, *baludi*, made of goose feathers (Pl. 31C), both of which are worn at the *pukamuni* ceremonies. Designs *c* and *d*, symbolize a stingray, *pahwadju*, and *e*, its body markings.

(*c*) *Miscellaneous*

Pl. 34C, D, pictures the crocodile-man, *Jirakupai*, who once lived in a lagoon near Cape Fourcroy (myth, p. 27).

The forearms of the crocodile are at *a*, the V-shaped design, *b*, representing its lower jaw. The head is at *c*, the chest at *d*, the neck at *e*, the nose (crossed lines) at *f*, the spinal crest at *g*, and the scale pattern on its back at *h*, *h*.

On Pl. 37E the upper projections *a*, *a*, symbolize the limbs of a tree. The

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

diagonal lines, *b*, indicate the sandbanks in the bay at the front of our camp, and the dots, *c*, on the triangles, the oysters on the rocks. 532 x 765

The opening, *a*, is a window; *d*, *d*, are the legs of an aboriginal man, and the bosses, *f*, *f*, etc., breasts of women. Diagonal coloured lines, such as *g*, etc., are the vines of an edible yam, and the dotted diamond shapes, *h*, etc., the spider webs on their leaves.

The shapes and painted designs on Pl. 37B all refer to the topography near the expedition camp.

The projection, *a*, represents the trunk of a eucalyptus tree, the bosses, *b*, *c*, *c*, and *e*, *e*, symbolise boulders on the sea-beach; the horizontal lines, *c*, *c*, etc., the sandbars in the bay; the long vertical panels, *g*, *g*, etc., the open beach; the bands of short vertical lines at *d*, *d*, *d*, the lines of waves breaking on that beach, and the cross-hatched rectangles, such as *f*, *f*, etc., the seaweed floating on the surface of the water.

The painted projections, *a*, *a*, on Pl. 37A again represent the fork of a tree, and the opening, *b*, is a window. The bosses, *b*, *b*, are the breasts of women, the painted circle *c*, with the intersecting lines, symbolizing the nipple.

The central line, *d*, is a freshwater creek which ran into the sea about 200 yards from our camp, while the parallel chevrons, *e*, etc., indicate the lines made by the water of a nearby lagoon as it seeps through the sand and runs down the beach into the sea (see carved stick, Fig. 60).

The boss, *f*, is an adjacent rocky point, the grooved arms, *g*, *g*, refer to Karkalu Island, and the painted design, *m*, to the sandy beach on that island. Diagonal lines, *j*, are the roots of a jungle tree, *pistomu*, and the crossed circles, *k*, its fruit.

The symbolism on the pole, Pl. 36B, deals with the sea and the swamps at a mangrove creek, Tungudum, which was about two miles north-west of our camp.

The dark-coloured designs, *a*, indicate the open sea, and the white spaces, *d*, the salt water in the mangrove creek. The symbols, *b*, *b*, etc., show the tide marks on the banks of the mangrove creek; *c*, *c*, the sand, and *e*, the mud on its bottom. The dots on semi-circle *f*, are coloured mud crabs; the lines *g*, sandbars in Snake Bay, and the triangles, at *h*, as well as *h*, and *j*, the tide lines on the sandy beach. At *i*, is a black stingray which lives among the rocks; *m* is another stingray (unidentified) which frequents the shallow water, and the cone-shaped design, *q*, is a fine-head fish.

The larger circles, *n*, etc., on the lower section are the cockles, the shells of which the aborigines use as cutting tools; the smaller circles, *o*, mussels, wurdidi, and the dots, *p*, the soldier crabs on the beach.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532 765 [114] Dr. Kenneth Fry, when visiting the islands during 1913, made sketches of the pole shapes of eight *tadinis* and found out the meanings of five of them. These are reproduced on Fig. 8.

Fig. 8A represents a man carrying a roll of blankets on his back, *a*, being his hat, and *b*, his blankets. Fig. 8B also represents a man, *a*, as before, indicating his hat. On Fig. 8C, *a*, is the mast of a boat; on Fig. 8D, *a*, is the crutch in the boom of a pearling lugger (usually called branches of trees in the 1954 series); and on Fig. 8G, *a* is a window.

Dr. Fry did not find out the meanings of Fig. 8E, F, and H.

The present-day meaning of design, Fig. 8F, which could have applied to [177] [797] Dr. Fry's example, is somewhat interesting. The aborigines at the Bathurst Island mission are warned of the terrors of their future life if they are not buried "under the cross", i.e., in the mission cemetery.

When I asked the aborigines at Melville Island what was the significance of the cross they had carved on the top of several of their *pukamuni* poles, they explained that it was there purely as a "safety measure", just in case there was something in the mission story.

11. THE CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

[171] It has been known, for about twenty years, that aboriginal craftsmen, in widely separated places in Northern Australia, but particularly in north-eastern Arnhem Land, have made carved and painted figures in wood.[10] It was a surprise, however, to find that the Tiwi people, who appear to have been separated from the mainland cultures for a considerable time, were using similar figures in their burial rituals.

Inquiries revealed that, for some years, one or another of the aboriginal craftsmen, skilled in the carving of *pukamuni* poles with steel tools, and, no doubt, experimenting with new shapes, occasionally made a burial pole in the form of a conventionalized human body (Pl. 39), or smaller human figures (Pls. 40, 41), which were placed on the grave.

I gathered information about three old human-headed burial poles as well as adding to the expedition collection, two recently made poles and six smaller figures.

At the burial, about thirty years ago, of the mother of one of my informants, a "worker", called *Kado*, made and erected a human-headed burial pole. In 1941, Mr. W. E. Harney saw a well-carved head on a burial

[10] Mountford, 1956, p. 415, traces the distribution of the carved wooden figures in Northern Australia and their development at Yirrkalla, from simple human-headed burial posts of Malay origin to carved heads and full-length figures of considerable merit.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pole at Punata on Apsley Strait (Fig. 1), while I saw and photographed the third example in the form of a highly conventionalized human figure (Pl. 38A, B, C), which was on an old grave not far from our camp. No doubt there are other examples of these poles on the deserted graves of the Islands. I saw recently, in the Musée Ethnographique et Musée Suisse de Folklore, Bâle, Switzerland, two full-length human figures which had been collected at Bathurst Island by Mr. Karel Kupta in 1956. 532x 765

This evidence indicates that, for thirty years, at least, the men and women of the Tiwi,[11] occasionally carved burial poles in human form; we do not know when the practice of carving the smaller figures[12] began.

At first sight it appeared that these wooden figures might have been a cultural trait borrowed, as in north-eastern Arnhem Land, from the Malay trepangers. Further research, however, did not confirm this hypothesis. [177]

Although now and again some Malay prau, driven off its course by contrary winds, must have touched the shores of either Melville or Bathurst Island, it is certain that the men of the Tiwi, who were notably unfriendly, would have endeavoured to drive them away. This unfriendliness probably explains why the Malays were not able to establish themselves on these Islands as they did in north-eastern Arnhem Land. The old men of the Tiwi do not remember any Malay fishermen visiting their country. This evidence that the Malays did not settle on the land of the Tiwi is further supported by Campbell (1834), who writes (p. 143), "The Malays were never seen near Melville Island", and later (p. 155), ". . . Malay fishermen were forbidden to go near Melville Island . . . alleging that it was infested with pirates. . . ." 174 648 [114]

This evidence suggests that the Tiwi practice of carving human figures in wood was not, like that of the aborigines of Arnhem Land, borrowed from a Malayan source, but is a recent local development, probably stimulated by the acquisition of steel tools and the other possessions of the white man. For instance, it would be easy to imagine a skilled aboriginal trying to make his pole resemble the tall bodies of the white man's saints in the mission church. From these larger would develop the smaller figures. 532x 765 177

It is unlikely that any elaborately carved burial pole, much less one in the form of a human figure, would be more than fifty years old. Before that time, except those stolen from the short-lived Fort Dundas settlement, the Tiwi would have owned few, if any steel tools. 532x 765 773

Although the Tiwi have no specific myth about the larger burial poles,

[11] A woman may cut a burial pole instead of her husband, should he be absent.

[12] There is a difference, however, between the two; the *tudini* poles, in human form, are cut from the hardest and most durable eucalypt; the smaller figures from the soft wood of the beach kapok, a wood which is quickly destroyed by insects.

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773 they do have one which explains, to their satisfaction, the origin of the small
×732 figures.[13]

765 On the occasion of the first *pukamuni* at Tapararimi, a man, *Piamatilidjara*, who later become the tawny frogmouth (*Podagus strigoides*), made and painted a small figure, similar to Pl. 40C, F. This he placed on the grave to impersonate *Purukupali*, whose body was not buried there, he having walked into the sea and drowned himself.

×532 At present these human figures, both large and small, are made, either at
765 the request of the chief mourner, or by the "worker" himself. This happens if the man cutting the pole, holding the dead person in especial esteem, wishes to please his spirit. The smaller figures may represent either a son of the dead or mythical men and women of creation times.

When the burial poles are being erected, one of them, in human form, or a smaller figure, is occasionally placed at the head of the grave.[14] The *mopaditi*,
[775] on leaving its body, sees the wooden figure, and thinking it is either its son, or one of its old companions, stays at the grave and talks to it about old times. These wooden figures have no *imunka* (life essence), nevertheless the *mopaditi*, who is believed to be stupid and easily misled, thinks it is talking to a living person.

I collected two burial poles (Pl. 39) in the form of highly conventionalized
[126] human beings, and six smaller, full-length figures (Pl. 40, 41). I also photographed a pole, in human form, on an old grave (Pl. 38A, B, C).

Pl. 39A, B, C, is a *pukamuni* pole representing a performer, ready to take part in the final burial rituals. The projection *m* (39B), is his hair; *n*, *n*, are his ears, and *o*, *o*, his arms; *p* is a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball), and *s*, (39A), his backbone.

The cross-hatched squares, *a*, *a*, *a* (39A), represent patches of grass on the floor of the jungle; the designs, *e*, *e*, *e*, jungle trees, and *b*, *b*, *b*, spider webs in the branches.

The waves of the sea are indicated by the bands of short vertical lines, *c*, *c*, *c*; a boulder on the sea-shore by oval *f* (39A); oysters on the rocks by the squares with diagonal lines, *d*, *d*, and paper-bark trees by the groups of intersecting lines at *e*, *e*.

The designs on the face and head (39C) are: *k*, edible fruit, *h*, grass in

[174] [13] This myth does not necessarily indicate great age because those of non-literate people tend to keep up-to-date. Mountford, 1956, p. 98, and Worsley, 1955, p. 856, both give examples of how the Groote Eylandt aborigines have incorporated foreign elements in their creation stories.

[14] This is only one of many safeguards used by the Tiwi to keep the *mopaditi* away from the camp of its old companions, particularly during the first few days after death.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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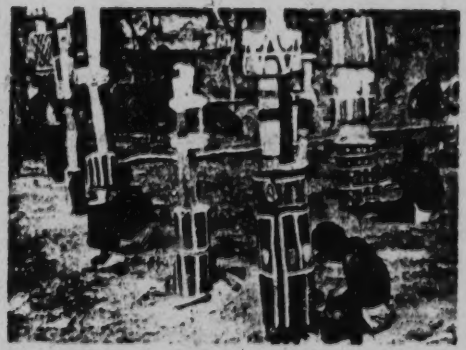
A

B

C



D

PLATE 33. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*
A, Poles at Old Grave; B, D, Painting Burial Poles; C, Cutting Burial Pole.

[p. 120 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

x532
765

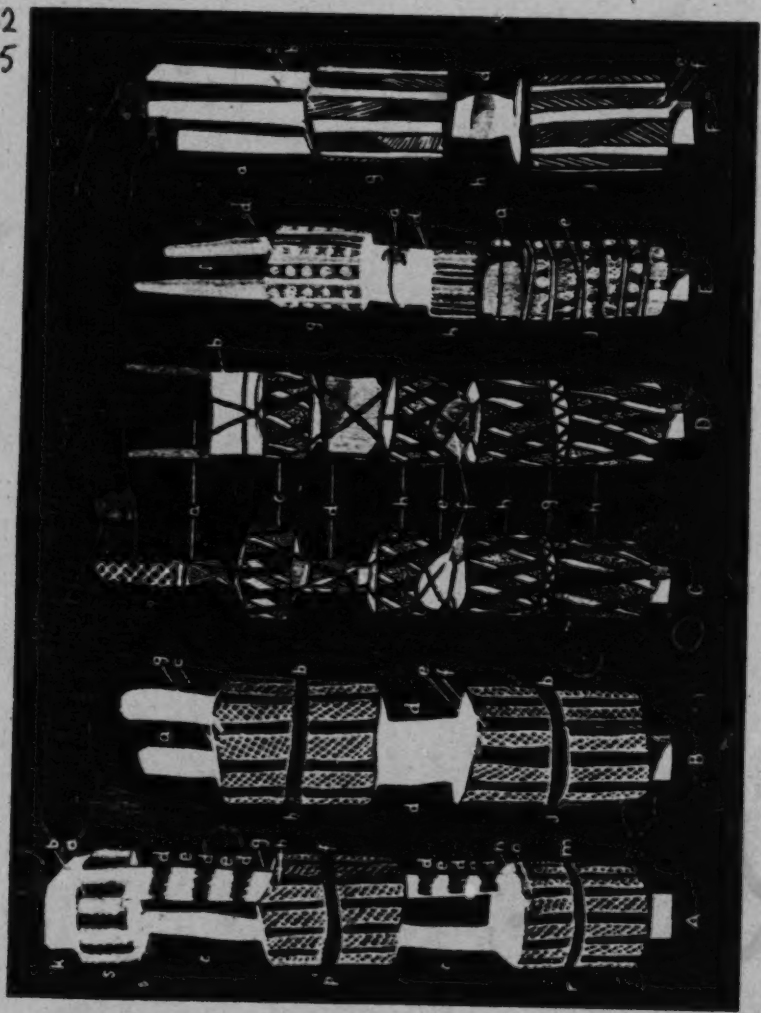


PLATE 34. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

[p.120B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x
765

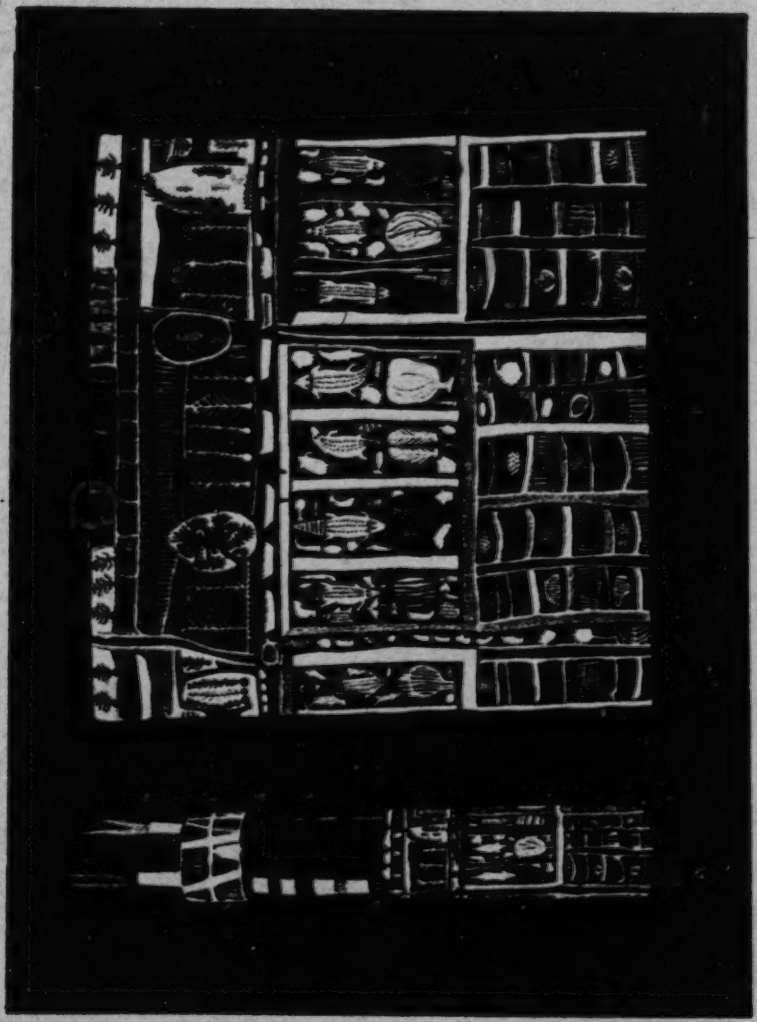


PLATE 35. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles. See also Fig. 9*

[p.120 c]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

*532
765

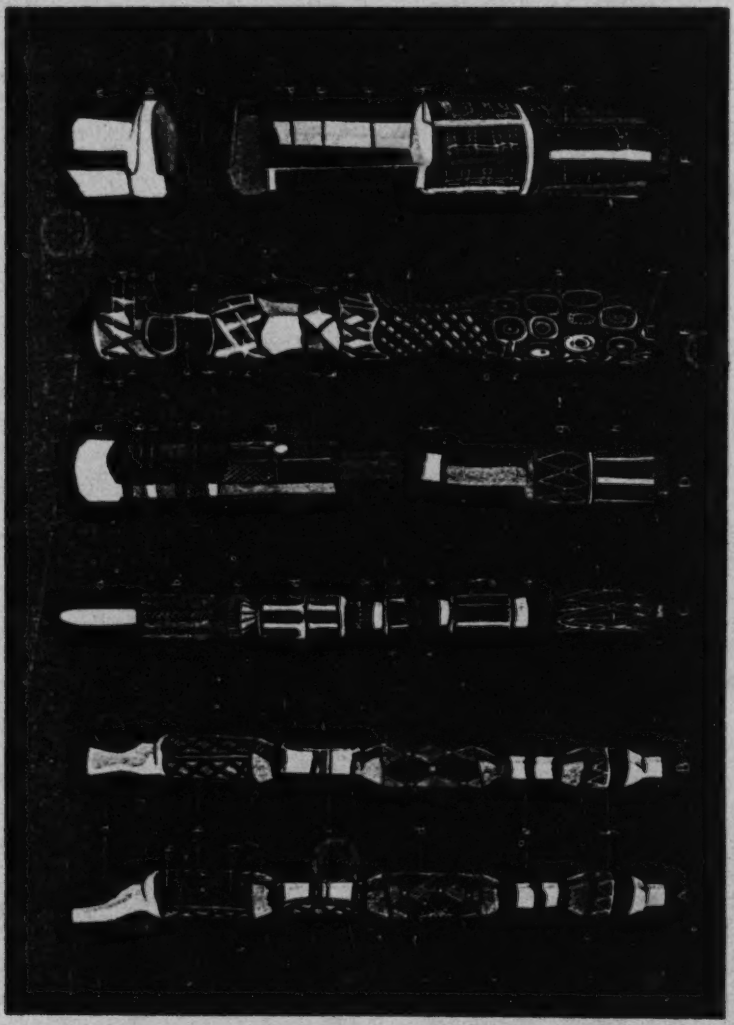


PLATE 36. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

[p. 120 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532
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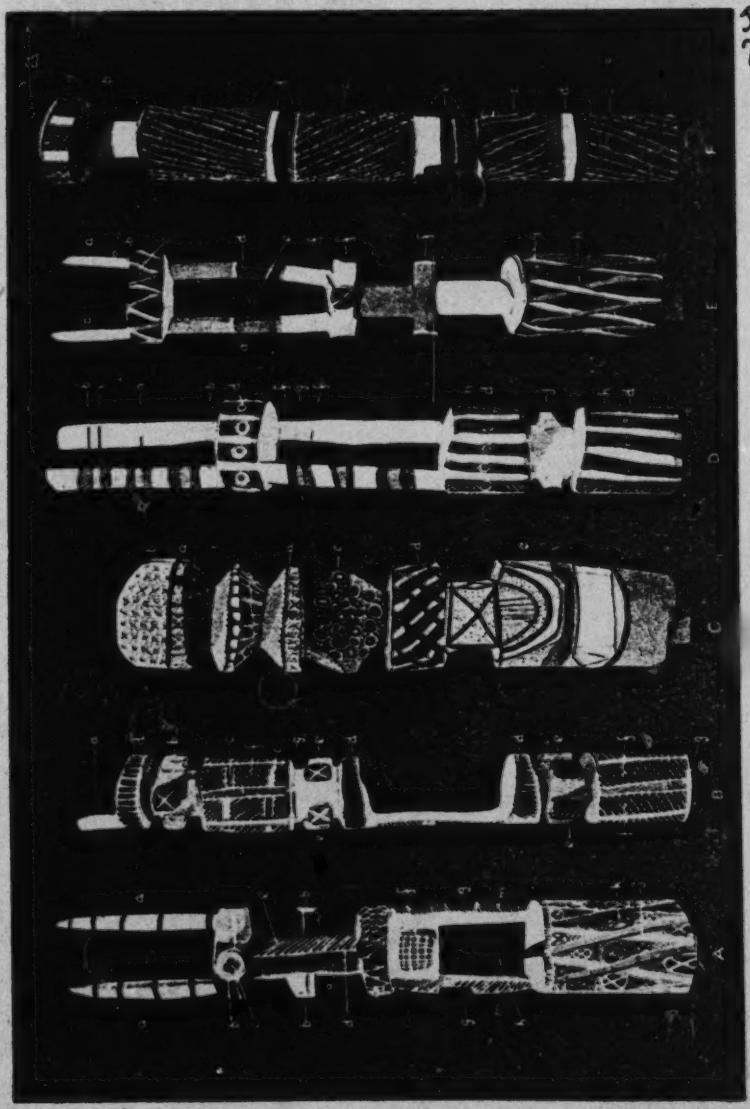

PLATE 37. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

[p 120 E]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

*532
765

A

B

C

[291]
[142]
[302]
[516]

D

PLATE 38. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*
A, B, C, Carved and Painted Pole on Old Grave; D, Poles on Old Grave.

[p. 120 F]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x
765

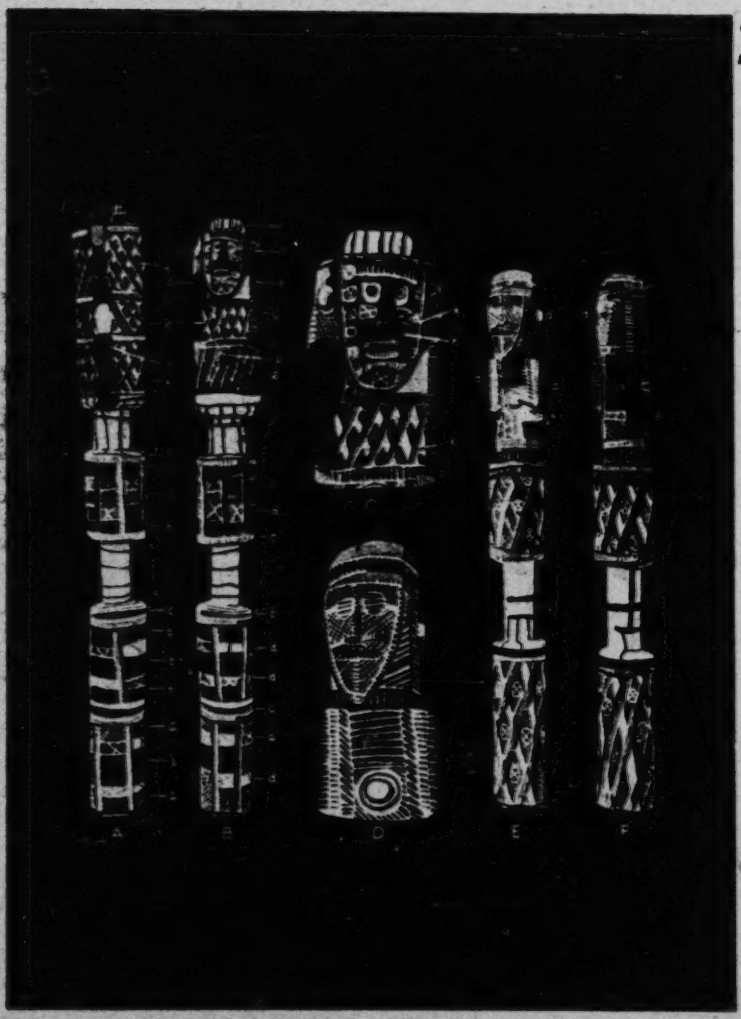

PLATE 39. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

[p. 120 G]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

X532
765

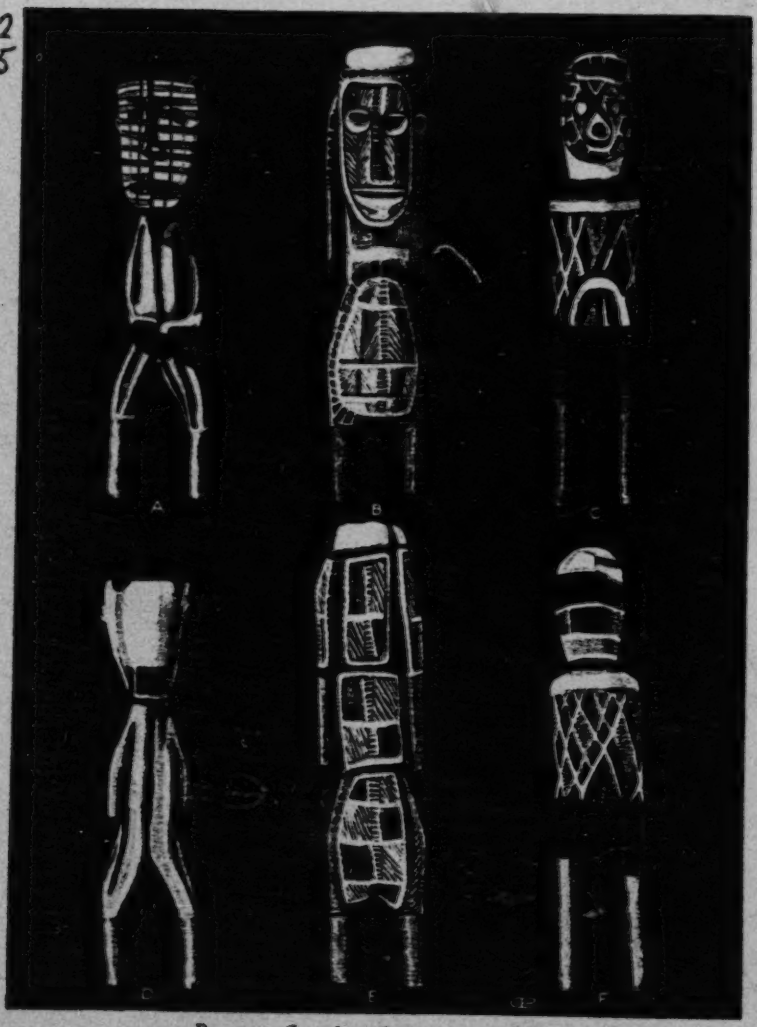

PLATE 40. *Carved and Painted Burial Figures*

[p. 120 H]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x
765

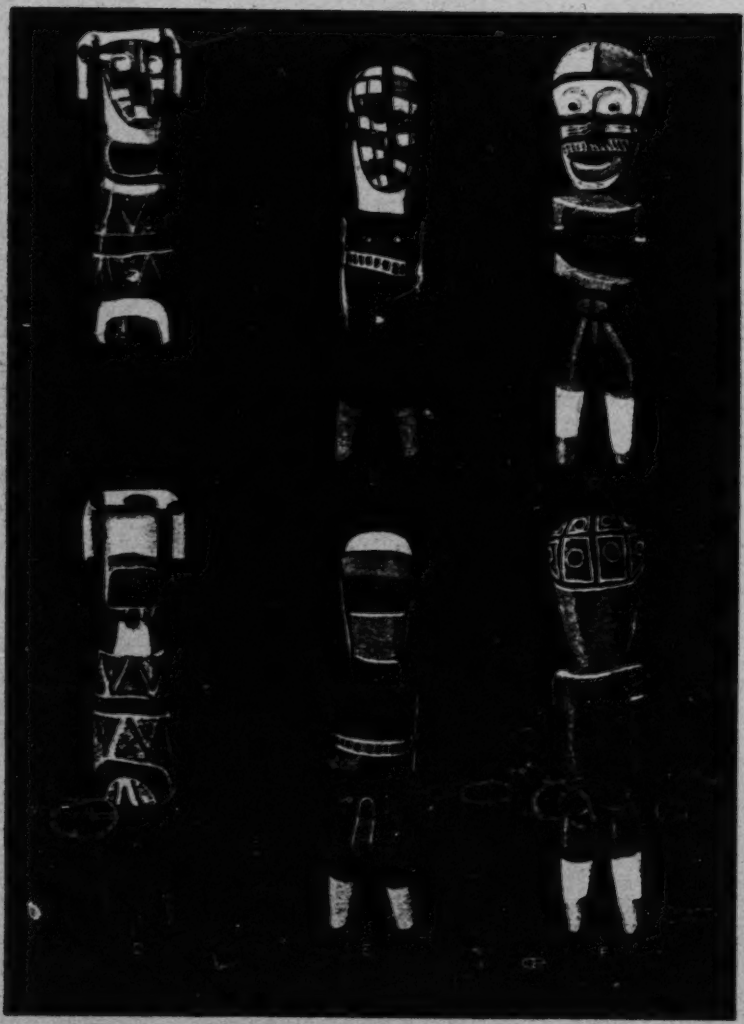

PLATE 41. *Carved and Painted Burial Figures*

[p. 120 I]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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881

[301]

[301]

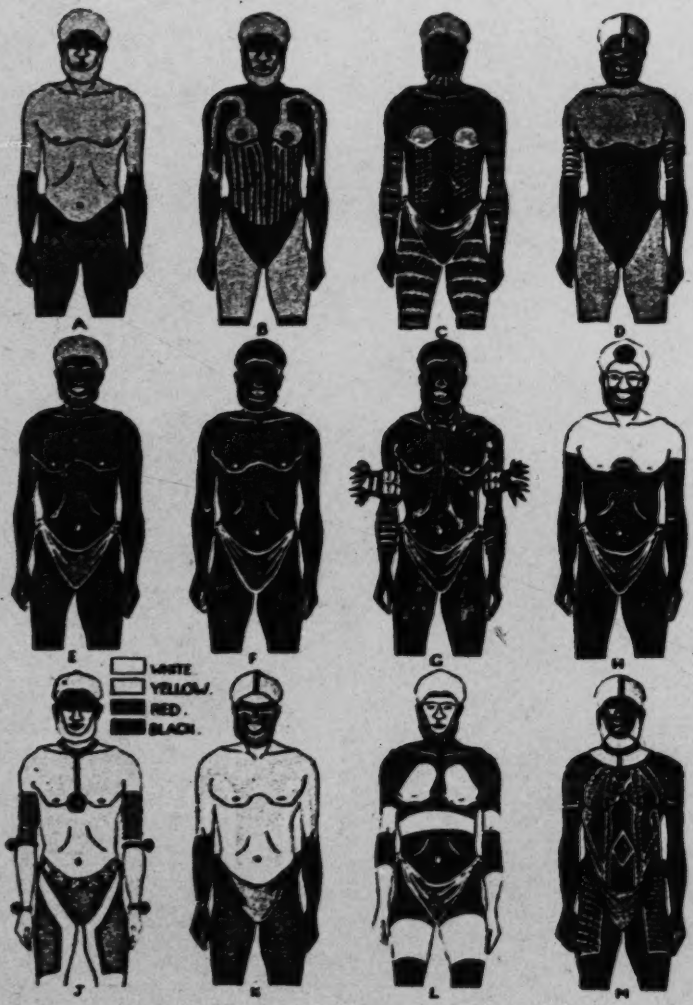

PLATE 42. *Body Decorations of the Kulama Initiation*
A, B, C, D, E, F, Marukamuni; G, Kilipaniati; H, Wadjeniati; J, K, Mikinatrina; L, Kulama Design; M, Mikinatarima, Mikintara and Mikingula.

[p. 120 J]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the forest, and the circles with crossed lines, the scarlet flowers of a eucalyptus tree lying on the ground. 532 x 765

The pole (Pl. 39D, E, F), also represents a man ready to take part in the final *pukamuni* rituals. The few scanty notes that I made at the time state that *a*, *a* (39E) are his arms, and *d*, *d*, his ears. At *f*, is his goose-feather ball, and *e* (39F) his backbone. The facial *pukamuni* decorations are shown on 39D.

Pl. 38A, B, C, are photographs of the pole on an old grave. The pole represents, in a simple way, an aboriginal wearing a hat. The ears are shown as bosses on either side of the face, and the arms, as projections, on either side of the body. The painted eyes and nose, which were not carved into the wood, such as on those illustrated on Pl. 39, can still be faintly seen on Pl. 38B.

Pl. 40A, D, and B, E, are two small full-length figures carved to represent the children of a dead man. To keep him company, these would be placed on the top of his burial poles.

Pl. 40C, F, is supposed to be a duplicate of the wooden figure carved by *Pianatilidjara*, at *Purukupali's* ceremony. The designs on the figure are those which the mythical man painted on his own body.

Pl. 41B, E, is *Purukupali's* son, *Djinini*, who died from the neglect of his mother, *Bima*, and was carried into the sea by his father (myth, p. 30).

Pl. 41C, F, pictures *Purukupali*, his face and body covered with *pukamuni* decorations, carrying his dead son (the transverse band across his abdomen) into the sea.

Pl. 41A, D, represents *Bima*, the wife of *Purukupali*. The designs are those which *Bima* painted on her body when she took part in the *pukamuni* of her husband.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER IV

The Kulama Ceremony

114 881 ALTHOUGH little has been recorded about the colourful *pukamani* burial rituals of the Tiwi, several investigators have published details of the *kulama* ceremony.

Spencer saw a *kulama* ceremony during March 1912. His records of those rituals (Spencer, 1928, pp. 658–76), the most complete we have, show that, [678] during the last forty years the pattern has not changed to any extent. Although the names of the initiation grades given by Spencer do not agree with those recorded by later investigators, it is likely these differences are due to Spencer's interpreter, the buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who was not then fully conversant with the ceremony.

Fry (1949, p. 176), during 1913, witnessed an initiation ceremony in which Reuben Cooper, Joe Cooper's half-caste son, passed from the *Kollopeniati* (my *Kilipeniati*) stage to that of a *Wadjeniati*.

In the same year Fry (1950, pp. 79–80), saw the closing phases of the *kulama* from the peeling of the yam (p. 138), to the final rituals (p. 142). Although Fry was mistaken in considering that this ceremony was part of a burial rite, his record is a valuable and accurate description of the last two days of the *kulama*.

Hart (1930, p. 286), recorded the *kulama* initiation names and the duration of the grades of both male and female initiates. These names correspond closely to those I was able to obtain from the fully initiated men, with one exception. Hart stated that the grade of *Mikingula*, i.e., the fully initiated, lasted for four years. This is obviously incorrect, as the *Mikingula*, being the final grade, lasts for life.

178 881 It appears certain that Tiwi initiation has ceased, although, I feel sure, within comparatively recent times. The *Mikingulas* often talked about initiating some of their companions, but when the opportunity came, they procrastinated.

115 881 However, the same fully initiated men gave me full details of the rituals at each stage of initiation, explained how those rituals fitted into the *kulama* rituals we had witnessed, and either decorated themselves, or painted designs

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
Ol20 Tiwi Ol20

on sheets of paper to illustrate the body markings used at each stage of initiation. 115 881

To give a complete account of the full *kulama* which included initiation as well as the preparation of the yam for food, I have included both groups of rituals, as they would have been performed in the original *kulama* ceremony. However, it must be borne in mind that we witnessed only the rituals belonging to the *kulama* yam. As stated before, the details of initiation were obtained from the fully initiated men. 128 881 123

1. THE MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGIN

(1) *The first Kulama Ceremony*

During *palaneri* (creation) times, not long before the death of *Purukupali*, when all the animals and birds were still men and women, *Purujikini*, a boobook owl-man, and his wife, *Pintoma*, a barn owl-woman, decided to perform the first *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina, in Port Hurd, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1). They invited *Jirakati*, later the white-headed sea-eagle, and *Tupatupini*, the small owl, to be present, planning to make them the first initiates. Many other people assisted in the ceremony, the *Ningauis*, a small spirit people who still live in the mangrove swamps nearby; *Inwati*, *Mauwini* and *Taparalili*, three groups of the honey people; *Jirakupui*, the sea-going crocodile; *Narina*, the black cockatoo, and *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle. 773 881

Tukimbini, *Wuriuprinili* and a number of ancestral people from the eastern end of Melville Island, being opposed to the holding of the *kulama* ceremony, did not attend.

At the ceremony, the white-headed eagle, *Jirakati*, was the first *Wadjeniati* initiate (he still wears the ceremonial paint), and the owl, *Tupatupini*, the first *Mikinatrina*. There is no mention in the creation myths of the other grades of initiation.

When the first *kulama* ceremony was finished[13] the participants returned to their homes until the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, which was performed at the end of the *palaneri* (creation period). It was then that *Purujikini*, the leader

[13] Some informants referred to a fight which took place at the first *kulama* in which *Purujikini* was attacked because he did not wait for some late-comers. Others described another quarrel which started when one of the *kulama* men followed a woman of the Kulakumruniri group into the mangrove swamps and raped her so badly that she died.

The Kulakumruniri people attacked the performers of the *kulama*, killing some and driving others into the mangrove swamps where they live today as the *Ningauis*. The more elderly informants, *Tjamalangua* and *Mahumirinia*, however, said that there were no quarrels at the first *kulama*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 of the *kulama* ceremony, became the boobook owl, his wife, *Pisanna*, the
881 barn owl, *Jurunu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, *Jirakasi*, the white-headed sea-eagle, *Tupanupini*, a small owl, and so on.

(2) *The Second Kulama Ceremony*

After the close of *palaneri* times, the *Ningauis*, a spirit people, who had been present at the first *kulama*, performed a second ceremony on the same island, Turiturina, as was used by *Purutjikini* during the creation period. On the second occasion, the *Ningauis* carried out the complete *kulama*, which included not only the preparation of the poisonous *kulama* yam for food, but also the performance of all the grades of initiation from that of the *Marukumuni* to the *Mikingula*.

At its completion, the *Ningauis* decreed that the form of the ceremony with its preceeding and initiation rituals, should always be the same. The
[753] aborigines believe that if this form is altered, a mysterious sickness, called *sani* will punish them by making everyone ill.

(3) *The Myth of the Ningauis*

After the second *kulama*, the *Ningauis* made their home in the mangrove swamps of a small island, Imaluna, near Cape Helvetius, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1).

The *Ningauis* are somewhat like the present-day aborigines, except that
776 they are small people, about two feet high, with long hair and very short feet, their footmarks resembling those of an oversized dog. The aborigines often see these tracks on the edge of the mangrove swamps of Imaluna (Pl. 22c).

Should an aboriginal, when hunting through the swamps, go too near a home of the *Ningauis*, one of the *Ningauis* by calling, "Eeh", would cause the whole place to be suddenly enveloped in complete darkness. The native could bring the light back again by striking the trunk of a mangrove tree with a stick, but, in the meantime, the *Ningauis*, by taking advantage of the darkness, would have sneaked away. Therefore, no aboriginal has seen a *Ningaui* even though they are often heard in the mangrove swamps calling "Eeh, eeh", to each other.

When the *Ningauis* chant their songs after dark, the mangrove swamps become as brightly lit as in the day-time. There are stories of how aboriginal hunters, lured by the songs and the light, have wandered among the tangled mangroves to see what was going on, but as soon as the *Ningauis* heard the intruders, they finished their song with the word "Eeh",[16] which made the

[533] [16] The *Ningaui* songs chanted by *Jikungkaui*, as one of the *ilanias* of *Wanimpari* (p. 74), all ended with a long drawn-out "Eeh".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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FIG. 20. *The Kulama Ceremony*
A Ningui in a Mangrove Swamp at Imadama

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

776 place so dark, and the trees bend together so closely that the hunters lost their way and died. Some informants stated that the *Ningauis* cast a short throwing stick, similar to a *murugana*, at all trespassing aborigines, rendering them insensible.

According to my informants, the *Ningauis*, who gather their food only at night, do not, at present, know the way to make fire, although they were able to do so at the time of the second *kulama*. Therefore, the crabs, shellfish and toredo worms they collect from the swamps, and the edible plants from the nearby jungles, have to be eaten raw.

X532 Two bark paintings and two crayon drawings deal with the *Ningaui* myth. On Plate 22D, the upper space, *a*, is a muddy flat in the middle of the mangrove island of Imaluna. At *b*, is an adjacent jungle; at *c*, a stream of fresh water nearby, and at *d*, *e*, are large dead eucalyptus trees lying in the water. At *f*, and *g*, are two pandanus trees; at *j*, *j*, salt-water creeks in the mangrove swamps; at *k*, *k*, etc., is the sea-shore at the mouth of those creeks, and cross-hatching at *m*, *m*, etc., the mud at the base of the mangrove trees. The squares, *h*, *h*, *h*, *h*, are the camps of the *Ningaui* people.

Plate 22C illustrates the footprints of the *Ningaui* in the swamps at Imaluna. The horse-shoe shaped designs are marks made in the mud by the front of the feet and toes, while the irregular circles, show the prints of the heels. The toe-marks are usually yellow and the heel-marks red. The dots are mangrove trees in the Imaluna swamps.

Fig. 10 is the copy of an aboriginal crayon drawing of a *Ningaui* on the mangrove island at Imaluna.

The central figure is a *Ningaui* standing on the roots, *a*, of a mangrove tree, which, in turn, is growing from a pile of rocks, *b*, *b*, *b*. On either side of the central figure are conventionalized mangrove trees, *c*, *c*; the designs on the lower portion represent the marks on the trunk, and on the upper portion, the foliage. At *e*, is a branch, and at *d*, a pandanus palm.

X532 Fig. 11 is a copy of another crayon drawing which illustrates the *Ningauis* 881 holding the second *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina. The oven for cooking the *kulama* yam is at *a*, the dots surrounding it representing the upright sticks which keep the firewood in place.[17] The darker circle is the low mound of earth surrounding the ceremonial ground, on the inside of which a number of men are parading and chanting the *kulama* songs. Symbol *b*, indicates the leader of the *kulama* ceremony.

The symbols in circle *c* are the *Marukumuni* and *Mikinatrina* initiates, who do not take part in those particular rituals, and symbols *d*, in the outside

[17] See Pl. 43A.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

circle, the women and children looking on. The designs radiating from the central circle represent a forest of eucalyptus trees.

592x
881

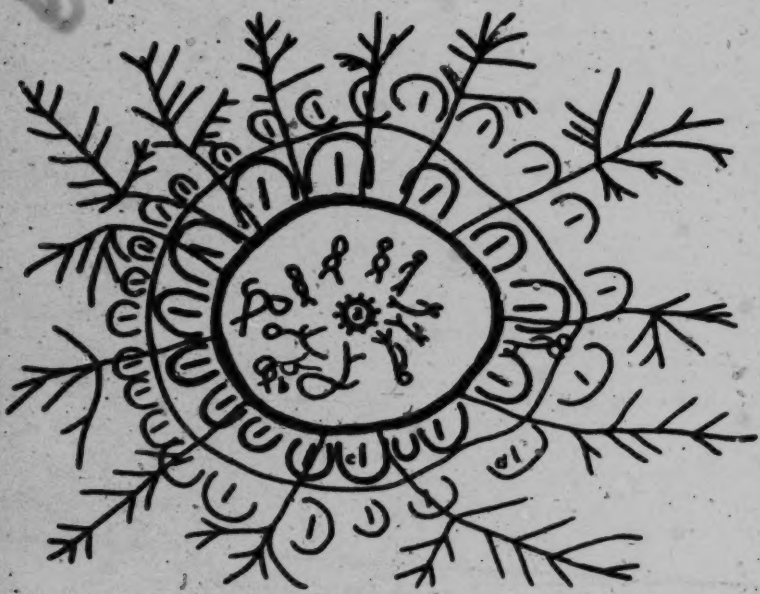

FIG. 11. *The Kulama Ceremony*
The Ningauis Performing the Second Kulama Ceremony.

KULAMA INITIATION

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Grades of Kulama initiates		*Period of initiation*
Marukumuni Marukumuningu	Male Female	From approximately April until next Kulama
Kilipuniati Kilipuniatingu	Male Female	From Kulama, mid-March until the fruiting of the cycad, about mid-July
Wuliponiati Wuliponiatingu	Male Female	From mid-July until the eating of the edible yam, at the next Kulama

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Grades of Kulama initiates		*Period of initiation*
Mikinatrina Mikinatrinings	Male Female	2 years
Mikintara Mikintarings	Male Female	From one kulama until the next
Mikiatarima Mikiatarimings	Male Female	From one kulama until the next
Mikingula Mikingulings	Male Female	Fully initiated for life

2. THE PRELIMINARY RITUALS OF THE KULAMA

881 (1) *The Capture of the Marukumuni Initiate*

According to my informants, any tribesman chosen for initiation, must be a mature man, usually married and with children. In fact, all the men pointed out to me as being suitable candidates were thirty years of age or older.[18]

The first time there is a gathering of people after a *kulama* ceremony, such as at a burial, or an *ilania*,[19] the fully initiated *kulama* men, the *Mikingulas*, ask the permission of the leader of the *kulama*, the *Naripikilitipi*, to capture any man or woman, who is suitable for the first stage of initiation, that of the *Marukumuni*.[20] In preparation for this, the *Mikingulas* have already mixed a quantity of yellow ochre.

At a given signal, one of the *Mikingulas*, who has been standing unobtrusively near, suddenly throws his arms around the chosen initiate. The captive struggles to release himself, protesting against being initiated into the *kulama*. But a number of the *Mikingulas* rush to their companion's aid, lay the struggling initiate on the ground, paint a design, in yellow, on his upper arms and body (Pl. 42A), and put the red tail feathers of a black cockatoo in his hair. Meanwhile, other initiated men are walking around the group

[302]
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[18] The age of initiation has been raised since Spencer and Fry saw the *kulama* in the early days of the century. Spencer (1928, p. 661) refers to young boys, while Reuben Cooper, whom I knew in 1920 as a young man about twenty, would have only been about thirteen years of age when Fry saw him as a *Kilipanini*.

[178]
[114]

[19] A preliminary ceremony for the burial rituals.

[20] I do not know who captures the female initiate, the *Marukumuninga*.

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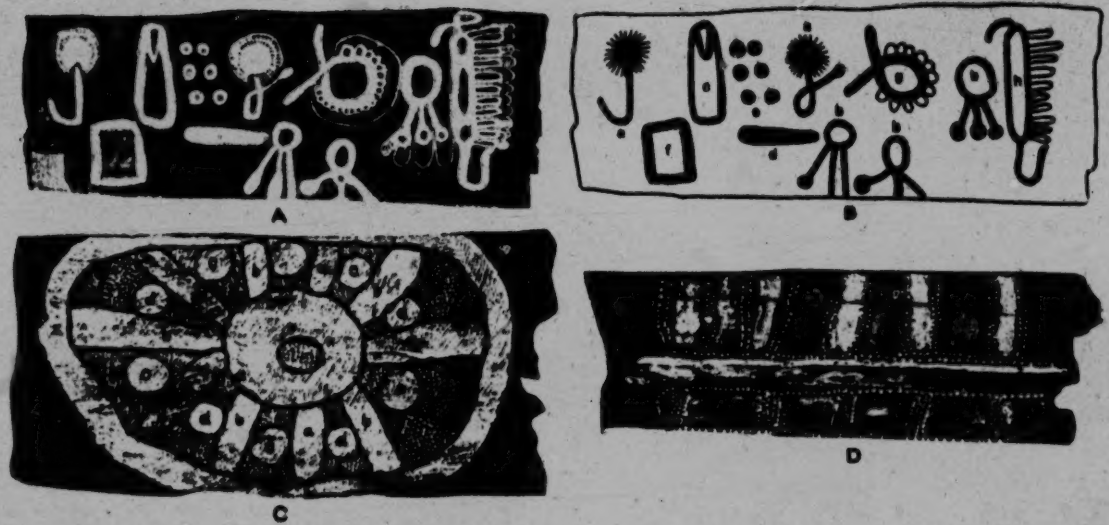

PLATE 43. *Bark Paintings of the Kulama Ceremony*
A, B, Kulama Ornaments; C, The Kulama Ceremony; D, Food Baskets at a Kulama Ceremony.

[p. 128A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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[516]
[137]

[142]
[302]

A

B

C

D

PLATE 44. *The Kulama Ceremony*

A, Chanting Kulama Songs; B, Placing Kulama Yams in Oven; C, Ritual before collecting Kulama Yam; D, The Kulama Yam.

[p. 128 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

chanting *kulama* songs. Later, the decorated initiate, now called a *Marukumani*, is taken to the camp of the man who captured him. It is the duty of this man, now his guardian, to provide the initiate with food. However, he must not be given snakes, for such food would cause his joints to swell and become painful. 881

The guardian takes the food he has collected to the *Marukumani*'s wife who feeds her husband over a period of four days in the same manner as a *pukumani* man is fed (Pl. 24A). Neither she, nor any of the food he eats must touch the initiate's body. The food left over from the meal is wrapped in paper-bark and burnt. After four days this taboo is lifted and the *Marukumani* is free to hunt for and eat all foods, except snake.

(2) *The Eating of the Cycad Fruit*

About August, when the fruit of the cycad (*Cycas media*) is ripe, the *Marukumani* is decorated with a new design (Pl. 42B). At the same time the leader of the *kulama* ceremony instructs the women of the camp to collect and prepare a considerable quantity of the cycad fruit. As the fruit in its raw state is highly poisonous, it has to be shelled, pounded out flat, and soaked in running water for three days before it is edible. When the fruit is ready for eating, the women, putting it in a number of bark baskets, stand them on either side of a log (Pl. 43D). [302] [252]

Then, while the women walk around the baskets, chanting the songs of the *kulama*, two *Mikingulas* wash the design (Pl. 42B), from the *Marukumani*'s body, and decorate him with a new one (Pl. 42C). This, he must renew continuously until he hears the first sounds of thunder (about mid-November). [533] [302]

As soon as these decorations are completed a member of each family picks up a basket, takes it to their camp, and all have a meal.

The *Marukumani* initiate, however, is fed by his wife from a separate store of cycad fruit.

At the same time as the *kulama* leader sent the women of the camp to collect and prepare the cycad fruit for the *Marukumani* rituals, he instructed the women of the *Kilipuniasinga* grade to do the same. However, when the other women of the camp placed their baskets of prepared food beside the log, the *Kilipuniasinga* women poured their cycad fruit on a nearby pad of grass, pushed four sticks into the ground around the heap and seated themselves on the outside.

The ceremonial activity then centred around the men and women of the *Kilipuniasi* grade of initiation, who, from the previous *kulama* until then, 301 881

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

[88] had worn continuously their curious ornaments, *mariguani* (Pl. 42D),[21]
[301] around their necks as well as many cane and bark ornaments on their arms. During the whole of that period (about five months) they renewed their body paint continuously. They were not allowed, however, to scratch their heads with their hands, but must use for that purpose a special pointed stick, *murukunga* (Pl. 32F).

The rituals began when one of the *Mikingulas*, coming up behind the male
[302] *Kilipaniati*, cut the *mariguani* from the neck of the initiate, poured water over him to remove his body paint, and decorated him with the design of a *Wadjeniati* (Pl. 42H). Similarly, the husband of the female initiate cut her neck ornament, washed her and redecorated her as a *Wadjeniatinga*. After eating their store of cycad fruit, these new initiates resumed the normal life of the tribe.

About mid-November, thunder and other signs of the oncoming wet season are signals for the *Marukumuni* to discard the design he has been wearing since the ceremonial eating of the cycad fruit. As soon as this hap-
[301] pens the men paint another design on his body (Pl. 42D), put new cockatoo
[302] feathers in his hair, and many cane armlets on his arms. The initiate wears these decorations, continuously renewing his body paint, until the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, which takes place at the beginning of the *kulama* ceremony about four months later.

3. THE KULAMA CEREMONY

(1) *Collecting and Eating the Edible Yams*

Toward the end of January, when the wet season was approaching its climax, the *kulama* leader instructed the women to go into the jungle, locate a number
[262] of the young plants of two species of edible yams, a long one, *juruguni*, and a short one, *karawani* and show them to him so that he would know when they would be ready to eat.

When some weeks later, the leader estimated that the yams were fit for digging and the tall, annual grass was about to shed its seed, he called the people together and told them that the *kulama* rituals would start in a few days.[22]

[21] Spencer, 1928, Pl. ix, No. 4, illustrates a *mariguani*.

[22] From the time of this announcement until the finish of the *kulama* ceremony, no
[834] fully initiated man, must sleep with his wife. If he does, he will be attacked by *ceiel*, the mysterious *kulama* sickness, and die. I did not find out the characteristics of the *kulama* sickness.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, 881
dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp, and prepared them for cooking.

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42E).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place 302
where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42E), 881
and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh", threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[23] It is [821] believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunderstorms and so prolonging the wet season.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikingulas*, the *Mikiatarimas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts, 881
went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* [386]
sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a [824] line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[24]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the [775] portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always [824] present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the *kulama* people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates then sat down to a meal of the edible yams.

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a *pukamuni* man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any [753] part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them [626] ill.

[23] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[24] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 463, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated men.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

88 | iii. The *Marukumunis* were fed behind their bark shelter and the *Wadjeniatis* in the open camp.

(2) *The Opening Rituals*

After dark, on the day following the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, the fully initiated *kulama* men, and all people above the grade of *Mikinatrina*, prepared for the opening ceremony by clearing an oval about fourteen feet long and six feet wide. The *Marukumuni* initiates were brought from their hiding place, the *Wadjeniatis* from their camp and both were seated just outside the ceremonial ground. Neither of these grades, however, took part in the opening rituals.

[372] [758] In the middle of the ceremonial ground were two smouldering logs, but no flames, for fear of attracting *taini*, the *kulama* sickness. Among the trees outside of the ring, were a number of families of uninitiated men, women and children.

Normally the *kulama* party would have been made up of *Mikintaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, and the songs chanted by the men in that order.

177 533 881 539 On the occasion of our visit the ceremony opened when a *Mikingula*, *Wurarbuti*, seated on the ground, beating his throwing sticks, started to hum a song softly. Becoming more confident, he stood up, and pacing backward and forward still beating his sticks, chanted the following three songs.[88]

(*a*) "My father was king, therefore I am the Prince of Wales. As King George was King, so was the old man on the hill, my (dead) father. I will have warships, money and a flag of red and white." When the singer mentioned his dead father there was a high-pitched wail among the near relatives.

(*b*) The second song dealt with the invitation he had received to dance before the Queen of England. "When the Queen was in England, she said 'I would like to see a black-fellow dance', and so I went up. King Philip watched me a lot while I danced."

(*c*) "My uncle in Darwin said to me 'Why haven't you made a lot of *pukamuni* arm rings. If you don't soon do so, you'll cause a lot of trouble among the *pukamuni* people."

Muramajua also chanted three songs;

(*a*) In the first, of which I did not collect the words, he explained, at length,

[88] This man, who was the ceremonial leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, described earlier, had been invited, only a few months previously, to visit the southern States, and dance before the Queen of England. Naturally, this left such a strong impression on his mind that many of his songs dealt with that remarkable experience.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

how a slow canoe journey had made him late for a recent *pukamuni* ceremony. 177

(*b*) "I was sick in the Darwin hospital. Sister Philips said it was because I had had too much grog." 533 539

(*c*) "There was a man at Cockle Point (opposite the Bathurst Island Mission), who wanted to kill me with a spear. So I changed myself into a mullet and he didn't see me." 881

Another singer chanted,

(*a*) "I am a goose and a man cast his throwing stick and hit me." 533

(*b*) "I want that girl from Bathurst Island to wash her with fresh water to make it square for giving away my sister."[36] 539 881

Another *Mikingula*, *Pulitara*, aired his differences with a woman, *Batali*, in the following song.

(*a*) "I fed *Batali*, but she did not give her daughter to me as a wife."[37]

(3) *Collecting the Kulama Yam*

Early on the following morning, the *Mikinarimas*, *Mikintaras*, the *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, went to the ceremonial ground of the previous evening. They first dipped their hands in a bark container filled with water, throwing some over their bodies; then, taking a mouthful, they squirted water into the air in imitation of rain, afterwards calling out "Oom-oom", to symbolize thunderstorms. Taking two small sticks, one in each hand, the men used them to clean the wax from their ears, afterwards standing the sticks upright in the ground.[38] 881 [515]

Placing their palms on a sheet of bark covered with white paint, the men patted their hair, chest, wrists and pubes (Pl. 44c), turning toward the north as they again called out "Oom-oom", in imitation of thunder.

Following this ritual, each *kulama* man painted another with a design in white (Pl. 42I.). The leader then picked up the bark basket, held it on his arm, and facing north, south, east and west, again called "Oom-oom", while he made a drum-like sound, symbolical of thunder, by hitting the basket with his hand. After this the men set out to collect the *kulama* yams. They were

[36] I did not find out the significance of this ritual.

[37] When a woman promises her daughter to a man, it is the duty of the future son-in-law to give her continuous presents of food. On this occasion, the woman had accepted *Pulitara's* gifts, but when her daughter was old enough, she gave the girl to another man. [584]

Quarrelling at a *kulama* ceremony is forbidden, otherwise *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, will destroy all the participants. This prohibition allows an aboriginal, such as *Pulitara*, to air his grievances without causing a quarrel, even though, as on this occasion, the defaulting person was present. [626] [753]

[38] The meaning of this ritual is obscure. According to the aborigines it prevents trouble and quarrelling during the *kulama* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

881 led by the *Mikinatrinas*, carrying the baskets, followed by the *Mikinaras*, the *Mikinatrinas*, and the *Mikingulas*. No *kulama* woman accompanied this party.

As the *kulama* men entered the jungle they separated, each searching for vines which indicated the presence of the yam.[20] Before digging, however, the [824] *kulama* men, softly calling "Oom-oom", gently patted the ground to wake [758] up the yams, for, should any yam get a fright, its spirit, becoming annoyed, would make everyone ill with the *kulama* sickness. When digging the yams, the men were most careful not to break even one of the fine roots (Pl. 44D).

On filling in the holes, the men again made the thunder call, "Oom-oom", [821] which, they said, would cause more rain to fall before the day was over. One aboriginal accidentally broke a *kulama* yam while digging it. Instantly, he was on his feet, and, with the broken yam in his palm, dodged in and out among the trees, to escape the spirit of sickness released by the angry yam. After a few minutes, however, he returned, placed the broken yam carefully in the basket with the rest, and resumed his digging. His companions said that it was fortunate that he had only damaged the yam slightly, otherwise, its spirit would have made not only the careless aboriginal, but all of the *kulama* people ill.

When sufficient yams were collected, the party returned to camp in the same order as they went out, i.e., *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinaras*, *Mikinatrinas* and *Mikingulas*. The *Mikinatrinas* carried the yams to the foot of a blood-wood tree, called the *wuringalua*, cleared the grass from around the base and, taking the yams from the basket, placed them on the ground. They were covered with leaves by the female initiates, the *Mikinatrinigas*.

(4) *The Preparation of the Ceremonial Ground*

In the late afternoon, the *kulama* men and the male initiates, excluding the *Marukumui* and the *Wafinistis*, prepared the ceremonial ground, the *milinika*.

372 The men walked toward an open space in the forest, and with low cries, 881 beat the ground with sticks, while the leader, pulling up a tuft of grass, threw it into the air. At the place where it fell, the men dug a small circle, the *tumarapi* (navel), in which the yams were to be cooked. Then, sitting down, the men pushed the sand and grass outwards with their feet until the *milinika*, about fifteen feet in diameter, was cleared and surrounded by a low mound of earth and grass.

[222] [20] The *kulama* yam (*Dioscorea sativa*, variety *rotunda*) (Pl. 44D), is about the size of a hen's egg and covered with hairs similar to a brush. It is held in the palm of the hand until [137] it is placed carefully in the bark basket.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Dry sticks, about three feet in length, were pushed upright into the ground around the *tumarapi* (oven), kindling wood was laid between them, other pieces of dried wood piled cross-wise between the uprights until there was a stack about three feet high (Pl. 45A). 881 [372]

(5) *Placing the Uncooked Yams in Water*

About sunset, the *kulama* men went to the bloodwood tree, the *wuringakea*, where the *Mikinarinas* had stored the yams in the morning and, on pulling bushes away, revealed some of the male and female *Marukumani* initiates squatting, holding in their arms a basket of the uncooked *kulama* yams. The *Marukumani* initiates took the yams to the water, everyone assisting in laying them on a pad of grass in the bed of the stream (Pl. 46a).

Immediately this task was completed, the *kulama* men pushed the *Marukumani* initiates over,[88] and, holding them by the legs and arms dragged them backward and forward through the now muddy water to wash off their body paint. They were then taken back to camp, seated beside the *milimika* and painted with a different pattern (Pl. 42F). Neither the *Marukumani* nor the *Wañjoniani* initiates took any further part in the rituals of that day. When, after dark, the *kulama* men entered the *milimika* to chant another series of songs, the camp fires were allowed to burn brightly, because the aborigines said that the yams, being in the water, were now "quiet" so that there was no fear of *tuini*, the spirit of *kulama* sickness. [302]

The chanting men walked counter-clockwise around the *milimika* because *Purujitini* did so at the first *kulama*. To have walked in the opposite direction, even then, would have made the spirit of the *kulama* yam angry. 881

The following are literal translations of a selection of the songs. 533

(*a*)[89] "I had a quarrel with Tom Crow, the Superintendent of Snake Bay Settlement." 539 [177]

(*b*) "My mother-in-law is good to me, she did not take away my promised wife."

(*c*) "The fruit of the *binamia* (*Eugenia* sp.) ripens and falls to the ground."

(*d*) "The little *Pitipituis* (spirit children) are dancing on the beach."

[88] Spencer, 1928, p. 664, describing a similar ritual, states, "Several old men seized the *Wañjoniani* (my *Wañjoniani*), and plunged into the water with him. As many as could get near him gripped him by the legs and arms, and yelling, splashing and churning up the mud, . . . dragged him backward and forward several times, . . . As soon as the *Wañjoniani* were released, the men turned their attention to the *Marukumani* boys. . . ." Although my informants did not say so it is likely that the *Wañjoniani* initiates were also pushed into the water to remove their body paint in readiness for the second design of a *Milimika* (Pl. 42J). [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (e) "The salt water (sea), brings plenty of drift-wood up on the beach for
539 our fires."
881 (f) "The *tukwall* (shark) killed a stingray."
(g) "The boat sails fast and the waves are beating its sides."

At approximately 8.30 p.m. the chanting ceased and the aborigines retired to their camps.

(6) *The Lighting of the Ceremonial Fire*

About 6.30 the next morning, the *Mikinastrinings* woman collected pieces
[137] of termite mound and put them on the top of the sticks for the fire which had been piled over the oven, the *tumarapi*. This fire could be lit by any man above the grade of *Mikinastrina*. Whilst the fire was burning down, the *Mikingulus* walked around it, and sang a few *kulama* songs, only one of which was recorded.

[177] (i) "When I see the shining iron of the new schoolhouse, I think how my children will go to school and wear boots."[81]

881 By 9.30 a.m. after everyone had had a meal, most of the aborigines, including several children, painted themselves in red and made their way to the swamp to take part in the ritual of bringing the *kulama* yams from the water, to the *milimika*.

On reaching the swamp, the leader took the yams from the pad of grass under the water, placed them carefully in the basket, with a bundle of rushes plucked from a nearby swamp on top, then, putting the basket on his shoulder, carried it to the *milimika* and stood it beside the fire "to warm up the yams".

881 The *Mikingulus*, walking anti-clockwise as before, chanted another series
533 of songs.
539 (a) "I went to Native Affairs (Darwin), drew out £10 (with which to
[177] gamble) and bought a pack of playing cards."[82]

Striding around the ring with two spears in one hand and a throwing stick in the other, the same man sang

(b) "I have many spears. If the white people were not here, I would kill you all."

881 At the end of the song, the performer called out the name of his dead
765 father, striking himself on the head with his throwing stick to indicate his sorrow. The people on the outside of the ring cried in sympathy.

[185] [81] A parent's hope in a changing society that his children will live at a higher social level that the one which he himself occupies.

[82] A number of the younger Melville Islanders work for extended terms in Darwin, periodically returning to their homeland to take part in the ceremonies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the 881
previous singer's dead father. 765

(e) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[88] when I think of you, my uncle." [533]
Some of the women cried when the song was finished. [539]

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the 252
fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the 881
glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *mini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants.

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate 881
it (Pl. 442), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, [533]
goodbye",[89] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purujiktini*, did at the first [539]
kulama.

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the 535
following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women. 881

(a) The dance of *jirinu* (silver-crowned friar-bird). [534]

(b) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 302), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(c) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*ankwiangu*) in his mouth to symbolise the prey of the crocodile.

(d) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(e) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(f) The buffalo,

(g) The shark (Pl. 300).

[88] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *kwanka* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions. [826]

[89] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the swamp-gum tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten. [824]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(8) *Cutting up the Yams*

881 After the yams had been in the oven for about one and a half hours, the
252 men gathered around the oven, felt it, and, after a short discussion began to scrape the warm sand away from the paper-bark covering. As they did so, they pressed handfuls of the warm sand against their elbows, chest, shoulders and knees, believing that this sand made their joints strong and supple (Pl. 45c).

When the paper-bark, carefully removed strip by strip, exposed the
881 cooked yams, the women, who had been quietly standing on the outside of the *milimika* murmured reverently, "Ah, *kulama*, ah, *kulama*." Taking the hot yams from the oven each man held them against his chest, and his
[827] head. This they said would give them added strength and vitality. The women although they did not participate in this ritual, sent their children into the *milimika* to have the yams pressed against their bodies so that they would grow to healthy and strong adults.

As the men peeled the yams, exposing the soft, yellow flesh, they sang
[177] about preparing and eating various kinds of food belonging to the white
[533] man,[86] "cutting bread for a meal, carving steak from a bullock and roasting it on the coals, cooking the tongue of a bullock, eating corn beef", and so on. When all the yams were peeled they were left on a sheet of bark whilst
[412] everyone had a meal and a sleep. In the late afternoon the *kulama* men started
[177] to slice the yams (cockle shells, *irakapi*, were used before the advent of steel). As they did so, the men mashed up some of the sliced *kulama* between the palms of the hands, mixed this with red ochre, and each rubbed it on his hair, face, whiskers and body. This, they believed, aided by the earlier rituals, would ensure them good health until the next *kulama*.

(9) *Initiation of the Kilipanjatis and Mikinastrinas*

The sliced yams were put in the basket, and stood in the centre of the *milimika*. A *kulama* man walked into the forest, and collected a length of flexible vine. Returning to the *milimika* he bent the vine round the necks of the male *Marukumunis* and the female *Marukumuningas* in such a way that it could not be removed. These initiates were then *Kilipanjatis* and *Kilipanjatingas* respectively. This neck ornament, which had a number of cords
[801] hanging from it, is called a *mariguani* (Pl. 42a). After these initiates had been further decorated with bark armlets, *ijunguris*[88] (Pl. 42b and c), and cane

[86] No doubt, in times past, they sang about abundant supplies of their own favourite foods.

[88] Spencer, 1928, illustrates the bark armlets, *ijunguris*, on Pl. XI and the belt, *ulurini*, on Pl. IX, No. 1.

Z: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

arm rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31B), they seated themselves outside the *milimika*, but took no part in the subsequent rituals. 881 [301]

Other fully initiated men led initiates of the *Wadjeniasi* grade to the *waringulua* tree, where the yams had been stored on the second morning, told them to sit down and erected a low screen of boughs in front so that the initiates could not be seen from the *milimika*.

The *Mikingulas* first painted the bodies of the *Wadjeniasi* initiates with yellow paint, then decorated them with many cane rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31B), on their upper arms, hair-string belts, *ulerini*, around their waists and goose-feather balls, *tokwiangas* (Pl. 31B), on their necks, arms and wrists (see Pl. 42J). This ritual admitted them to the grade of *Mikinastrina* and *Mikinastringa* respectively. 881 302 [301]

After the *Wadjeniasi* initiates were decorated, the senior grades of the *kulama* painted their faces, bodies, hair and beards with elaborate designs in red, yellow, black and white. In one design, peculiar to the *kulama*, the aborigines covered one side of their faces with red paint, and the other side with black,[87] the two colours being separated with a line of yellow (Pl. 42M). The men painted a complex design, usually in red and white on their hair and beards.[88] Some of the men also decorated their children.

The leader of the *kulama* then assembled everyone to see the *Mikinastrina* initiates perform their first dance, which they had been quietly practising for some time. 595 881

At a given signal, each *Mikinastrina* stood up in turn and, gaily decorated with body paint and coloured ceremonial ornaments, and holding a flat fighting club, *jurawila*, in either hand, performed his first dance. As each initiate danced, the assembled people applauded, slapping their buttocks in approbation of both the dancing and the appearance of the initiates. [201]

When the *Mikinastrinas* had finished their dance, the female initiates, the *Mikinastringas*, similarly decorated, but without the clubs, individually performed their dances. Still painted and wearing their decorations, the male and female *Mikinastrinas* seated themselves outside of the *milimika* beside the newly created *Kilipaniasis*.

After the initiates had finished their dances, several of the *Mikingulas* entered the *milimika* and chanted another series of secular songs. [533]

[87] Spencer, 1928, p. 674, who saw a *kulama* ceremony during 1911, refers to this curious form of facial decoration.

[88] The method of colouring the hair with intricate designs is of some interest. The aboriginal, loading his fingers and thumb with wet ground-up ochre, pinched the hair, instead of rubbing the colour into it. By this means, the operator was able to keep sharp well-defined edges to the design, an effect that could not be achieved in any other way.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

177 *Wurarbui* described some of his experiences when he visited Brisbane to
533 dance before the Queen of England.
539 (*a*) "I saw the big boat, Marella, beside the jetty at Brisbane, many motor
881 cars, boats and trains. The boats went under a big bridge over the river, and across that bridge went the motor cars. The ship's flags were flying."

Another man sang.

(*b*) "The *tapalingas* (stars) are like those on the American flag in Darwin. They lifted the flag up in the morning, and let it down at night."

(*c*) "The *tadawali* (shark) swims about the sea looking for stingrays."

[535] The onlookers applauded this song and asked the singer to perform the shark dance (Pl. 300), which he did to the delight of all.

(*d*) "I am a wireless man, and have sent native tucker (food) all over Australia. The Native Affairs branch in Darwin listened in."

(*e*) "Leo Hickey's boat comes quickly to Snake Bay with a cargo of food from Darwin."

Another *Mikingula* chanted a lengthy song describing the making of a wooden canoe, the felling of a tree in the jungle, the length and shape of the craft and the final launching.

After these songs, the *kulama* men rested in the shade, and the initiates sat by the side of the *milimika*, until about sunset.

(10) *Taking the Cooked Yams to Water*

881 The *Mikingulas*, starting from equally spaced positions on the periphery, crawled toward the basket of cooked and sliced yams standing in the centre of the *milimika*, and pretended to fight over it. While this was going on, the women, beating sticks together, called out "Brr-brr", as did the owl-man, *Purutjikini*, at the first *kulama*. Meanwhile two of the *Mikingulas* vigorously
[535] performed the crocodile dance (Pl. 302). Then with a loud cry, one of them picked up the basket containing the yams, and followed by most of the women and children, carried the basket to the water.

With long-drawn-out calls, and the sound "Brr-brr", the men tipped the cut-up yams from the basket on to a grass bed on the bottom of the stream. While the leader patted the surface of the water, the rest of the people called in a high trilling note, similar to the mosquito call of the *pukamani* ceremony,
[821] ending up in a loud *yoi*. These calls, they said, would cause still more thunder storms and heavy rain.

533 It was quite dark (about 7.30 p.m.) when the *kulama* people assembled to
881 hear the *Mikinastrina* initiates sing for the first time. For, at this stage of the ceremony, each male initiate of the *Mikinastrina* grade was invited by the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Mikingulas to enter the *milimika* and chant his first song, known as the *Ai-ipa*, which he had been practising for some time.[39] The female initiates, the *Mikinatrinipas* assisted the *Mikinatrinas* by beating the time on the outside of the *milimika* in the same way as *Pipuma*, the owl-woman, assisted her husband, *Purujikini*, at the first *kulama* ceremony during creation times. 533 881

One *Mikingula* told me that when he was passing through the *Mikinatrina* grade of initiation, he chanted three songs; one was about a fish, one about a rifle and a third about a crocodile.

When the *Mikinatrina* initiates had finished their songs, the men of the higher initiation grades, the *Mikinatras*, *Mikinatrimas* and the fully initiated *Mikingulas*, entered the ring, one by one, and walking anti-clockwise chanted the following songs:[40]

(*a*) "A big ship brings many things to Darwin." 177

(*b*) "A Japanese plane was flying low over Melville Island. The men on the ground said 'stand-by' and shot it down with a cannon." 533 539 881

(*c*) "In Darwin, I saw a kite, on a long string, which flew into the sky."

(*d*) "The Government plane flew me to Brisbane to see the Queen. It flew through the clouds. I went into the pilot's room in the front of the plane and the wireless told them Brisbane was only seven miles away."

(11) *The Karaririui Songs*

About nine o'clock, the character of the songs changed and all but one dealt with the spirit, *imunka*, of their children.[41] These songs are called *karaririui imunka*. 533 539 881

(*a*) "The spirits of my children have gone to Karslake Island (Wulrungku), and are playing there." [774]

[39] At the conclusion of the *kulama* ceremony, both the male and female *Mikinatrina* initiates wear their ornaments and keep themselves decorated for a month, and every evening when seated in the camp, they chant the same *Ai-ipa* songs as they did at the *kulama* ceremony.

At the end of a month, the initiates wash the paint from their bodies, discard their ceremonial ornaments, and resume a normal life until the next *kulama*.

Two years later, the *Mikinatrina* becomes a *Mikinatra* retaining that grade for another year, when he enters the grade of a *Mikinatrina*. On the following year, the initiate reaches the full status of a *Mikingula*.

During the last two stages, i.e., *Mikinatra* and *Mikinatrina*, the initiates are not subject to any special restrictions nor do they have to pass through any special rituals. Their body decorations too, are similar to those of the fully initiated men.

[40] The men did not carry their throwing stick in the same manner as they did in the afternoon performance (Pl. 44A).

[41] The Melville Islanders in common with most aboriginal tribes, believe that their spirit (*imunka*) leaves the body during sleep and wanders around. The songs refer to the spirits of their children, who, during the hours of sleeping, play in the forest and on the sea-shore.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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533 (b) "The spirits of my children are dancing on a sand-bank beside the sea."
539 (c) "My children's spirits are paddling about in a canoe, looking for fish
881 and turtle eggs."

Another man first chanted a secular song, which he had tried to do earlier, but had forgotten the tune.

[177] (d) "I saw a tractor pulling big trees out of the ground to make the new aerodrome."

Then he continued with his *Kararigui* song.

(e) "My little children have gone to the island, but they must come back because they are short of tobacco." After a pause he continued, "They're back because someone has just taken the tobacco out of my hand."

(12) *The Ceremonial Eating of the Kulama Yam*

881 On the third day, at early dawn, everybody went to the swamp to eat some of the prepared yams. The leader quietly plucked a bunch of grass from the edge of the water "to waken the *kulama* yam", for should it get a fright the yam would cause much sickness in the camp.

The fully initiated men, the *Mikingulas*, ate the first few pieces "to tame the yam", after which everyone took some to eat. This ritual ensures for all the participants, good health until the next *kulama*. Some of the prepared yam is left in the water for others to eat should they desire it.

This ritual completed the *kulama* ceremony. Everyone returned to his camp, and, except for the initiates of the lower grades, pursued a normal life. The grass ring and the pieces of antbed were left in place but the *kulama* ground and the *milimika* were deserted (Pl. 41D).

784 There are, however, a number of taboos and restrictions associated with
881 the deserted *kulama* ground and oven. For instance, should anyone make his camp or light a fire in the deserted *milimika*, the spirit of the *kulama* yam
[778] would be offended and blind the culprit.

If anyone were so foolish as to toss a piece of the antbed, from the oven, and from the *milimika* or a fragment of cooked *kulama* yam into the sea, *Marayi*, the rainbow, would be angry and create heavy seas and storms.
[821] The aborigines of the Cape Fourcroy area were convinced that a recent hurricane, which devastated the whole area, was caused by some foolish person throwing a piece of *kulama* into the sea.

On the other hand, if a *kulama* man takes a piece of antbed from the oven,
[224] and throwing it at a tree, hits the mark, his hunting will be successful, until the next *kulama* ceremony. But, if he misses his mark, his hunting will be poor.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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532x
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Three bark paintings relate to the *kulama* ceremony, i.e., Pl. 43A, B, Pl. 43C and Pl. 43D.

Pl. 43A, B, illustrates the ornaments used in a *kulama* ceremony.

Designs *a*, *a*, are two goose-feather balls, *tokwiangar* (Pl. 31B); *b*, *b*, etc., bark armlets, *tungutir*; *c*, unidentified; *d*, a throwing stick, *murugunu* (Pl. 32D); *e*, cane arm rings, *jairinar* (Pl. 31H); *f*, bark basket, *wunatuna*; *g*, false beard, *kakadi* (Pl. 31C), and *h*, a ceremonial belt, *ularimi*.

Pl. 43C illustrates the ceremonial circle, the oven and the performers of a *kulama* ceremony.

The central dotted circle is the oven (Pl. 46C), in which the yams are cooked, and the outer white oval, the mound of earth which surrounds the *milimika*. The ovals, *a*, *a*, etc., indicate the *Mūrukumuni*; *b*, *b*, etc., the *Wadjonisti*; *c*, the *Mikinatrina* initiates, and *d*, the fully initiated *Mikingulas*.

Pl. 43D is a bark painting showing baskets of prepared cycad fruit leaning against a log (p. 129). The horizontal panel is the log, and the rectangles on either side, the baskets of food leaning against it.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER V

The Spirit People of the Tiwi

776 775 The Tiwi believe that a number of spirit people live on the land, in the swamps, the sea and the sky of their tribal country. They are: the *mapaditis* (p. 61), the spirits of the dead whose homes are in the various totemic localities; the *Ningauis* (p. 124) of the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island; the *Marajis*, or rainbow people, living in the swamps; the *Pisipinis*, or spirit children, who later become aboriginal children; the sea-dogs, *Wunkuis*, of the shallow sandbars of the sea; the *Papinjuwaris*, the meteor-men, who live in a place in the sky, far away to the west, and the *Parumunas*, who often befriend the aborigines.

Although the aborigines are afraid of the *Papinjuwaris*, the *Marajis* and, to some extent, the *Mapaditis*, they do not particularly fear the other spirit people.

000 The aborigines of Oenpelli, western Arnhem Land, however, believe that their countryside is inhabited with a multitude of spirit people (Mountford, 1956, p. 181), some dangerous and some harmless. This is unusual in aboriginal Australia, most tribes fearing only the spirits of the dead.

1. THE METEOR-MEN, THE PAPINJUWARIS

776 The *Papinjuwaris* live, with their wives and children, in a large paper-bark hut at Wangidji, a place far away to the west, where the sky ends.

The men, large and heavily built, have only one eye as bright as a star. The aborigines often see a *Papinjuwari* streaking across the sky, a blazing firestick in one hand and a fighting club in the other.

The *Papinjuwaris* are ghoulish people, who, although their food consists of bandicoots and large centipedes (Fig. 12), are always craving for the bodies of the dead and the blood of the sick to satisfy their degraded appetites.

[821] One evening, the aborigines pointed out a brilliant meteor which they said was a *Papinjuwari*; he was taking the body of *Wantimperi*, whose grave was not far from our camp, back to his companions at Wangidji.

753 When a *Papinjuwari* hunts for blood, he locates a sick person (by smell),
776 and standing some distance away (they can make themselves invisible) sucks

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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PLATE 45. *The Kulama Ceremony*
A, Building the Kulama Fire; B, Placing the Kulama Yams in Water; C, Pressing Heated Sand against Joints; D, Deserted Kulama Oven.

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[p.144 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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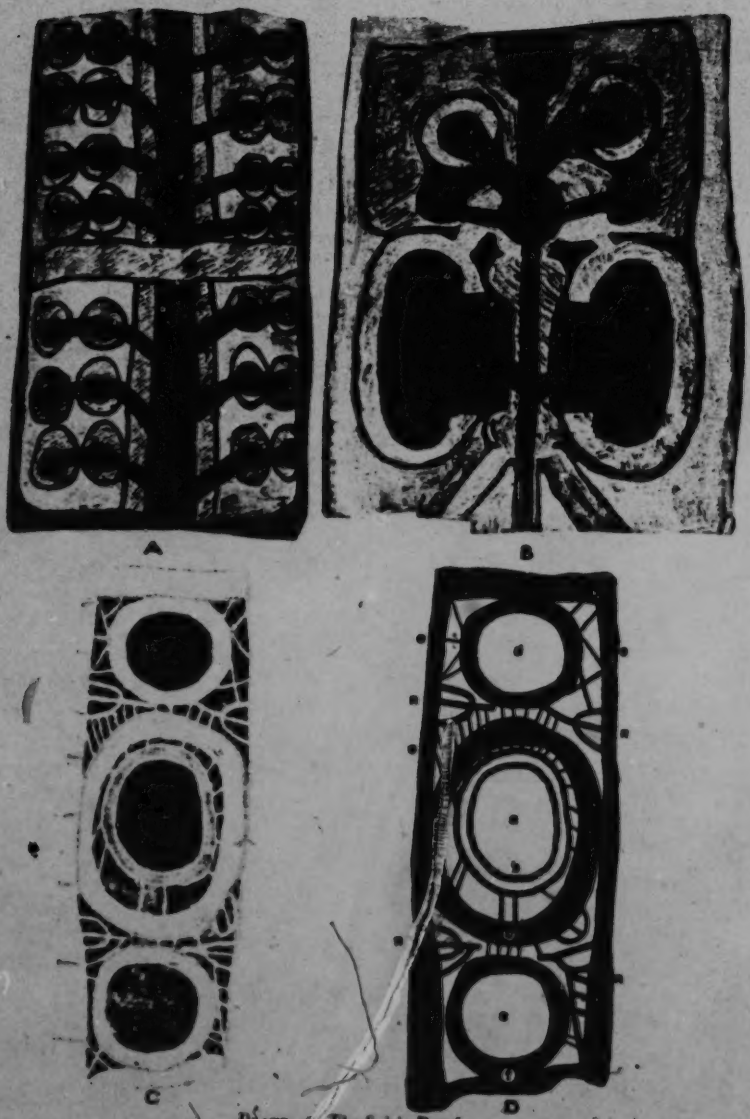

PLATE 4. *The Spirit People*

A, Pitipituis at Wulrungku; B, Pitipituis at Cape Fourcroy; C, D, Pitipituis at Purgundili and Umakumbi.

[p. 144 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

blood from the arm of the victim, yet leaves no wound. As the sick person becomes weaker, the *Papinjuwari*, making himself sufficiently small, enters the body through the mouth, and, by drinking up the rest of the blood, kills the victim. 753 776

776 [532x]

FIG. 12. *The Spirit People*
The Meteor-man, Papinjuwari.

On his return to Wangidji, the meteor-man vomits the stolen blood into a bark container. This provides a drink for the assembled *Papinjuwaris*.

The aborigines stated that, as the Tiwi have no medicine men, they are without protection against these dangerous spirit people.[42] [751] [756]

Pl. 47c is a simple bark painting of the *Papinjuwaris*. The white figures are the ghoulish sky-people, the crescents are moons, and the circles, stars. 532x

Fig. 12 is the copy of a crayon drawing showing a *Papinjuwari*, *a*, inside of his paper-bark hut at Wangidji. On either side of him at *b*, *b*, are the large 776

[42] Spencer, 1928, p. 671, refers to a song chanted in a *Kulama* ceremony which is supposed to protect the initiates from an evil spirit, the shooting star, *Makinna* (almost certain to be my *Papinjuwari*); Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 282, who call the meteor man, Papinowari, or Lamparapari, state that, if a piece of dried blood of a person is burnt, the smell will attract the meteor-man. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x 776 centipedes, *plarion*, and on the lower right at *o* is a bandicoot. These are the main foods of the *Papinjuwaris*. The outer oval is a line of rocks which surround the home of the *Papinjuwari*; *m*, *m*, are piles of boulders, and designs, *d*, *d*, etc., beach kapok trees, *tjingunia*. This *Papinjuwari* is shown with two eyes, although in the mythical story the *Papinjuwaris* have only one.

2. THE SPIRIT CHILDREN, THE PITIPITUIS

776 The *Pitipituis* are small dark-skinned people who have always existed, even in early creation times, although the aborigines cannot explain their origin. The adults are about nine and the children two to three inches high. They live either on outlying islands, in patches of dense jungle near the seashore, or in those of the freshwater swamps. The *Pitipitui* centres are scattered somewhat evenly around the two islands (Fig. 1); they are:

(1) Kaiadju, on the Baxendale reef, a few miles from Murupianga, S.E. Melville Island. In this locality, the *Pitipituis* have made their home among the trees of a mangrove swamp.

(2) Miadibiniadu, near Wailu, N.E. Melville Island, where the *Pitipituis* live among the dense groves of pandanus palms that grow on the edge of the freshwater lagoon. When the aborigines see the pandanus leaves scattered about, they believe that the *Pitipituis*, in their play, have been throwing them at one another. [824]

(3) Pumaduba, near Pirilou, on the Goose Creek swamps, N. Melville Island. In this locality the *Pitipituis* live among the blossoms and leaves of the water-lilies.

(4) Wulrungku (Karslake Island), N.W. Melville Island. Some *Pitipituis* camp in the jungles along the shore of Wulrungku, and others on the bed of the nearby ocean.

(5) Purapundill, a sandy island off Cape Van Diemen, N.W. Melville Island. During the heat of the day they shelter in the jungles of Cape Van Diemen.

(6) Tiatri-inga, a long beach at Murroo Point (south of Mandumbi), N.W. Bathurst Island. Like the *Pitipituis* at Wailu, those at Tiatri-inga live in the thick clumps of pandanus palms. At Mandumbi, near the mouth of Putawini Creek, a group of *Pitipituis* have made their home in a dense jungle.

(7) Jambutu and Juruna, at the head-waters of Port Hurd, S.W. Bathurst Island. Those at Jambutu live among the mangroves and those at Juruna, in the jungle.

(8) Jampatural and Jurilupa, near Cape Fourcroy. The *Pitipituis* in the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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former locality make their camp in a dense jungle, and at the latter, in the forest near the sea-coast. At one time, these *Pitipinuis* lived at Jurusia, but left after a while and established these camps at Jurtlupa and Jamparurai. 776

(9) Unakumbi (Buchanan Island). Here, the home of the *Pitipinuis* is on a sandbank on the southern side of the island. When the tide is low, the little people play on the sandbank, but when it is high, they go to their underground homes, where it is warm and dry.

During the early creation (*pakuari*) times, *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the *Pitipinuis* in a bark canoe, brought back some of the little people and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranale* and *Murupiangkule* so that they could have children. In a later period, *Purukupali* gave the *Pitipinuis* to his wife, *Bima*, who in turn presented them to their future mothers. 773 776

Before *Purukupali* drowned himself, after the death of his son, *Djinini*, he told the *Pitipinuis* that they must find their own mothers. Now, should one of these little people wish to become a human being, it travels to a native camp, and giving her name, asks one of the married men (when he is asleep) where its future mother is camping. After the father has indicated the particular wife, the little sprite waits a suitable opportunity to enter her vulva and start life as a human being. 776 842 787

The aborigines believe implicitly in the *Pitipinuis* and the mystical origin of their children; several of them gave me details of how their children came to them in dreams.

Old *Tjamalampua* told of the time when, while he was asleep, the *mapadisi* of his dead father brought him a spirit child, and sat it on his knee saying, "This is your daughter." *Tjamalampua* directed the little *Pitipinui* to one of his wives, who later became its mother.

Muiamajua described how his three children came to him.

(1) A boy, now dead, came from a Japanese plane[48] and asked for his wife as a mother. Later she felt the movements of the child. [177]

(2) A little girl came to him in a dream and spat at him. His wife conceived soon afterwards.

(3) His last girl hit him on the head whilst he was asleep, and, in his fright, he slapped her face. It was not long afterwards that his wife became pregnant.

Those accounts indicate that although, ideally, the child comes to the father and asks for the mother, in actual practice they visit the father under a number of conditions.

[48] This aboriginal had worked with the Australian Navy during the war; an example of acculturation.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Three bark paintings and a crayon drawing illustrate the beliefs of the Tiwi concerning the *Pitipinuis*.

The upper part of Pl. 46C, D, deals with the *Pitipinuis* at Purapundili, a low sandy island north-west of Cape Van Diemen, N.W. Melville Island, and the lower part with those at Unakumbi, on Buchanan Island.

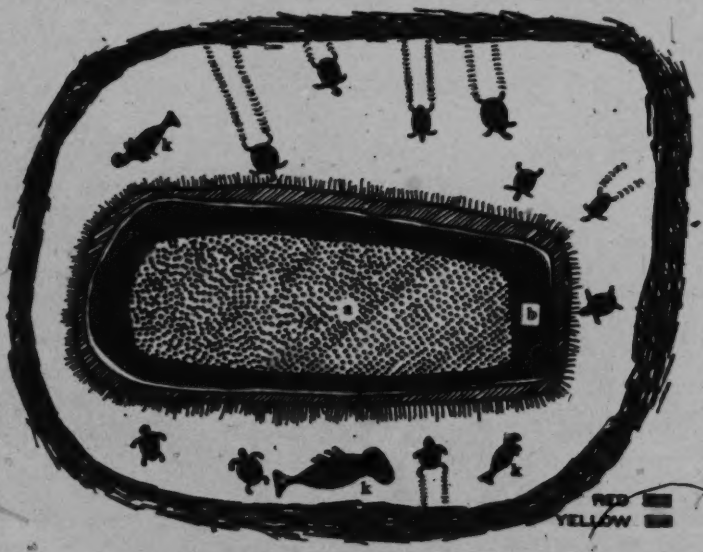

FIG. 13. *The Spirit People*
The Spirit Children, the Pitipinuis at Purapundili.

Purapundili, on which the *Pitipinuis* live, is at *a*; the circle *b* representing the waves breaking on the shores and the black oval, *c*, the surrounding ocean. As there is no shade at Purapundili, the *Pitipinuis* often paddle in their diminutive canoes to Imilu, at Cape Van Diemen, and shelter in the jungle from the heat, returning to Purapundili when the day becomes cooler.

Malawurisiu said that when the aborigines visited this island to collect sea-gull eggs, they often saw the *Pitipinuis* at a distance, but if they, the aborigines, approached too closely, the little people disappeared.

Buchanan Island (Jurnbulimai), another *Pitipinui* centre, is at *e*, the black circle *f*, indicating the waves breaking on the shore. Pandanus trees on

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Jurubulinai are indicated at *n*, *n*, etc.; the short lines, as at *o*, *o*, etc., throughout the painting are the driftwood logs cast up on the beaches.

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776

Fig. 13 is the copy of a crayon drawing again depicting *Pitipituis* on the sandy island of Purapundili.

The central rectangle, *a*, represents the grassy surfaces of the island, which are favourite nesting places of the sea-birds, and the black areas, *b*, the sticks and debris above the high tide mark. The outer shaded rectangle is the sandy shore, while the many short lines on its edge are the little *Pitipituis* of the island.

Dugongs are indicated at *k*, *k*, the other designs being female turtles coming on shore to lay their eggs. The tracks they make in the sand are indicated on six of the turtles. The outer oval symbolizes the open sea.

Pl. 46B pictures the two camps of the *Pitipituis* near Cape Fourcroy, S.W. Bathurst Island. One camp, called Jampaturai, is in the forest on the sea coast, and another Jurilupa, in a dense jungle further inland. During the daytime, the *Pitipituis* from both localities hunt together in the forest and the jungle for food, but at night each group sleeps in its own camp.

The lower designs are the camps of the *Pitipituis* in the jungle at Jurilupa, and the upper designs, the camps of those at Jampaturai. The white ovals and the circles, represent the large leaves of the *dioni* yam which provide a shelter for the little people. The roads by which the *Pitipituis* travel from Juruna to their respective camps are indicated, and the open country near their camps is the plain ground.

Pl. 46A pictures the *Pitipituis* at Wulrungku (Karslake Island) and the *Bilwuwi*[44] who live at Milika, a group of rocks on the sea-bottom to the north of Wulrungku.

According to the aborigines, the *Pitipituis*, and the *Bilwuwis* are the same type of people, only some, i.e. the *Bilwuwis*, live under the water, and others, the *Pitipituis*, on the dry land, the jungles, and the pandanus swamps of Wulrungku.

The *Bilwuwis* and *Pitipituis* who often visit each other's camps, hunt the same foods as the aborigines but, having no fire, they must eat their foods raw.

The upper part of Pl. 46A pictures the homes of the *Bilwuwis* under the water, and the lower, the *Pitipituis* on Wulrungku.

The central vertical black panel on the upper section is the main track of the *Bilwuwis* and the branching lines, the paths leading to their many camps. The encircling white rings are the red rocks among which they live;

[44] Harney and Elkin, 1949, p. 231, refers to the home of the spirit children as Bilswuwi.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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532 the background is the sea. The white central transverse panel is the beach at
776 Wulrungku.

The meaning of the designs on the lower panel are similar, the black central and branching lines representing the tracks made by the *Piripiuis* as they travel to and from their camps (the black discs); the encircling lines represent the sand around those camps, and the painted background, the jungle which shelters the little people.

3. THE PARAMANUAS[44]

776 The *Paramanuas* are short, particularly active, agile men, about three feet high, with thick, powerful limbs, tusk-like teeth, and projecting toe and finger nails.

In general, except for these details, they resemble the aborigines in appearance, eat the same foods and follow a similar way of life.

They live in many places throughout Melville and Bathurst Islands, but no one except those captured by the *Paramanuas*, has seen either them or their homes. As they dislike being talked about, and often make those people [753] ill who do so, I found it somewhat difficult to gather information about the [124] *Paramanuas*.

The homes of the *Paramanuas*, their wives and their children, are spacious underground caves, the entrances to which are openings either in the side of termite mounds, or hollow trees. In these caves, the man store their utensils, weapons and food (Fig. 14). Their cooking fire, like that of the aborigines, is [343] always outside of their camp.

Occasionally a *Paramanua*, wishing to befriend an aboriginal, will watch 776 him for some time. Then one day when the aboriginal is hunting by himself, 787 the *Paramanua* will cast a spear at him. But, before the spear has reached its mark, the *Paramanua* will have caught it and, standing at the back of the aboriginal, will be tickling his ribs. The aboriginal, thoroughly scared, turns to strike his opponent, only to find him again at his back. This game goes on until the aboriginal is exhausted, dizzy and confused. Then hitting him on the side of the head with an open hand, rendering the aboriginal unconscious, the spirit man picks up the prostrate man and carries him to the underground home of the *Paramanuas*.

Awaking to find himself in a dark place, the aboriginal is terrified, but on receiving plenty of food from the *Paramanuas*, and treated with every kindness, the aboriginal loses all fear, and as the weeks go by, all sense of time.

[44] Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to these little people as Bremimuar.

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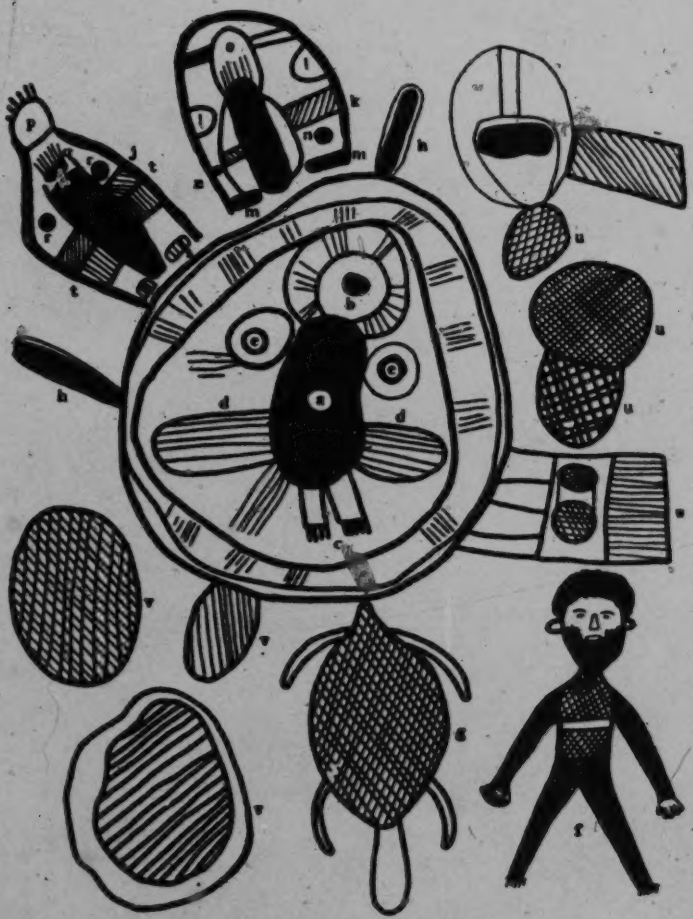

FIG. 14. *The Spirit People*
A Parumuna Man and his Family.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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776 After many weeks, the *Paramanus* takes the aboriginal to a forest close
787 to his old camp and releases him, saying, "You're lucky to have been caught by a *Paramanus*. From now onward, if you don't tell anyone about me, and the things you have seen, I'll be your friend. I'll protect you in a fight; I'll chase game toward you so that you'll be known as a good hunter, and because I can see into the future, I'll make sure that you do not get into serious trouble."

To this, the aboriginal always agrees; but should he divulge the source of his good luck, his *Paramanus* guardian, who is always nearby, will either kill the aboriginal for his breach of faith or withdraw his protection.

532 Fig. 14 and Fig. 15, are copies of two crayon drawings of the *Paramanus*,
776 one (Fig. 15) being the work of a younger sophisticated aboriginal.

Fig. 14 deals with a *Paramanus* and his family at home in a termite mound. The central figure, *a*, is a conventionalized representation of a *Paramanus*. His face and head are at *b*, the radiating lines within the two circles indicating his hair. His feet are at *c*, and shoulder blades at *h*, *h*. I did not gather the interpretation of symbols *d*, *d*, but they may be his arms. The outer concentric circles are the walls of the termite mound and discs, *e*, *e*, the entrances to the *Paramanus's* home.

The *Paramanus* is shown again at *f*, in a more naturalistic form, the line across the fingers of the left hand indicating his long finger-nails. The interpretation of design *g*, was somewhat confused, some informants saying that it was a *Paramanus* woman, others that it was a turtle caught for food.

In the upper left is the son, *j*, and the daughter, *k*, of the *Paramanus*. In these drawings the various parts of the body are separated[46] and have no relation to normal position or appearance.

The head of the son is at *p*, the upper radiating lines being his hair; *q*, is his mouth, the upper lines symbolizing the teeth; *r*, *r*, are two goose-feather balls, and *s*, *s*, his feet. The lines *t*, *t*, indicate his ribs.

On the right is the *Paramanus's* daughter. Her eyes are at *u*, *u*; her eyebrows at *m*, *m*; breasts at *l*, *l*, and her feet at *o*. The chevrons on either side of her body indicate her ribs. The cooking hearths of the *Paramanus* are at *v*, *v*, *v*; piles of rocks at *u*, *u*, *u*; and a jungle is at *w*.

In the middle of Fig. 15 is a *Paramanus* with a goose-feather ball, *ad-wiangu*, *b*, around his neck, and on the lower right at *a*, his camp in the middle of a large anthill. Within the camp are many foods and weapons; *c*,

[170] [46] The separation of the parts of the body is not unusual in aboriginal art, Mountford, 1937, Fig. 2, illustrates a crayon drawing of the Ngadadjara tribe of the western Australian deserts, where these characteristics are present.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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is a seagoing turtle; *d*, a snake; *e*, a bandicoot; *f*, a lizard; *g*, a bark basket; *h*, a palm leaf (*nalini*) basket; *l*, a female, and *m*, a male *pukamani* spear; and *n*, a multi-pronged fish spear. Another fish spear is at *p*, and a female *pukamani* spear at *o*. At *r*, is a large-leafed climbing vine which provides a shade over the home of the *Paramanus* and *q* is a eucalyptus tree.

FIG. 15. *The Spirit People*
The Paramanus Man and his Camp.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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4. THE SEA-DOGS, THE WANKUIS

773 A fragment of a myth tells of how, at the close of the creation period, a mythical man, called *Kirinua*, assembled all the dogs and asked them whether they would prefer to live on the land or in the sea. The present-day dingos, the *Kirijunas*, chose the land, and others, the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, the sandbanks in the sea.

776 The home of one group of the sea-dogs is a long sand-bar on the eastern side of the entrance to Snake Bay, about a mile from the expedition camp, over which, except at the spring tides, the waves break continuously.
[823] The aborigines look on the breaking waves as the wagging tails of the *Wankuis*.

When the tide is out in the day-time and the sandbank exposed and dry, the sea-dogs, to escape being seen go to their camps under the sand.

When it is dark, the *Wankuis* leave their watery home, come on shore and make their camps in low caves at the base of a cliff at Snake Bay (Pl. 472). While there, the *Wankuis* capture the sea-foods of the shallow waters, sting-rays, shell-fish and crabs. The aborigines claim that on the still nights they often hear the *Wankuis* barking.

In the shallow waters of a sandbar near Cape Fourcroy, the aborigines frequently see another kind of *Wankui* which walks on three legs, waving the fourth in the air.

x532 Pl. 470 pictures the *Wankuis* at the sandbar in Snake Bay. In the centre,
776 with many tears, is the mother surrounded by her twelve sons. It is significant that there was no mention of the father.

5. THE RAINBOW, MARATJI

171 A belief in a mythical serpent-like creature, which is associated with, or is,
776 the rainbow, and is dangerous to strangers, but not to the local inhabitants, occupies an important place, not only in the mythology of the Australian
[821] aborigines, but in the mythologies of people in many parts of the world. These mythical creatures are usually highly-coloured (like the rainbow), of huge size and have both mane and beard.

I have traced these mythical creatures, in their various forms, from the River Murray in South Australia, through Central Australia to Arnhem Land. In the western deserts of Central Australia, Mountford, 1948, p. 138, writes, "The snake (*wonawili*) is a huge, many-coloured creature with a
[778] mane and a beard. It is feared . . . because it attacks all strangers who approach

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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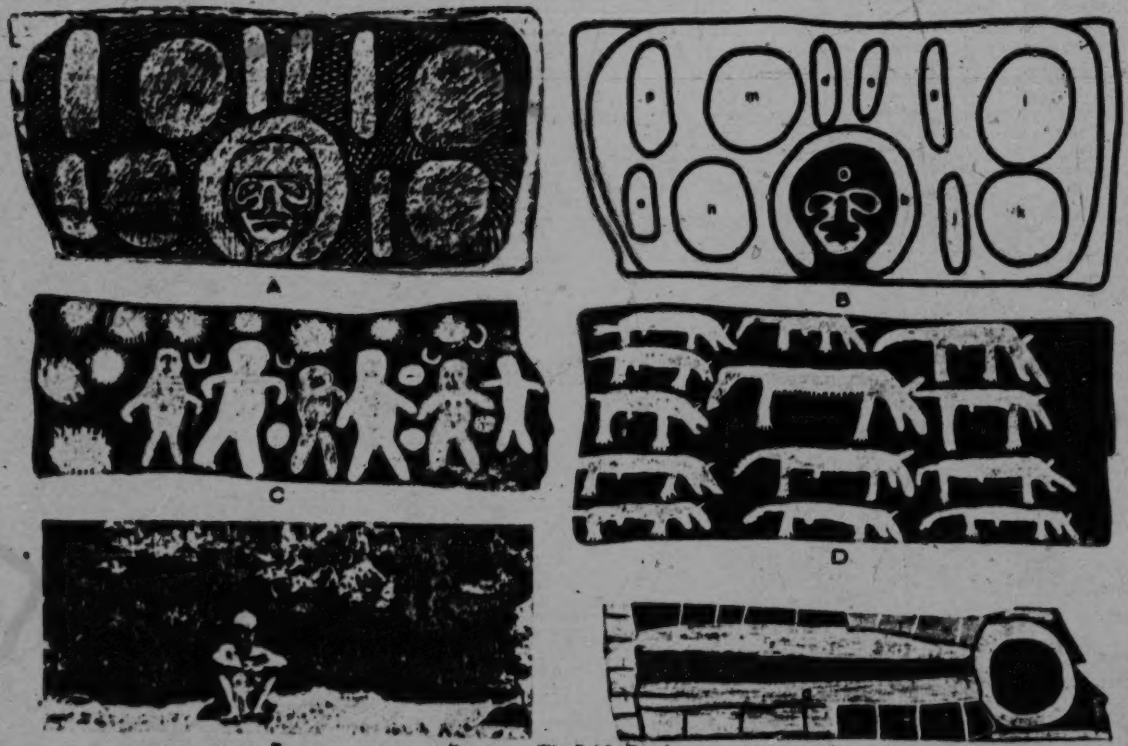

PLATE 47. *The Spirit People*
A, B, Spirits of the Dead, Mopaditis; C, F, Meteor-men, Papinjuwaris; D, Sea-dogs, Wankuis; E, Caves, Homes of Wankuis.

Cp. 154 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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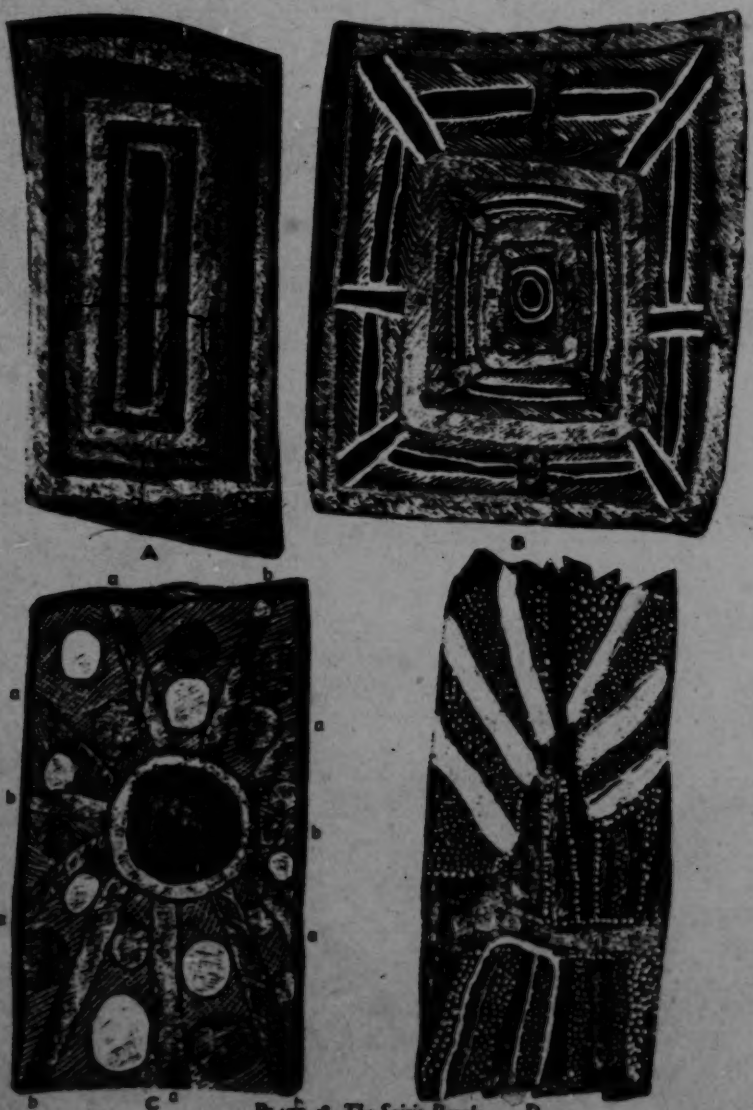

PLATE 48. *The Spirit People*

A, B, The Rainbow-spirit, Marauji, at Kulimbini; C, Marauji at Mamuka; D, Marauji, at Goose Creek.

[p. 154 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

the water in which it lives, usually calling with a deep booming note. The rainbow serpent . . . is related . . . to water, rainbow . . ." The rainbow-serpent myth is widespread throughout Arnhem Land. At Oenpelli (Mountford, 1956, p. 210), "mythical serpents live in deep waterholes. . . . The aborigines are . . . afraid of these mythical creatures for should anyone interfere with their . . . home, the serpents, particularly *Ngalsit*, will make their waterholes overflow and drown everyone. The rainbow-serpent woman, *Naroma*, of the Liverpool River area . . . destroys all aborigines who approach her home." 171 776 778

In north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 462; Warner, 1937, p. 541) the rainbow-serpents live, in one form or another in most of the important water-holes; they are associated with water, the rainbow, lightning, and thunder. Again these serpents are usually highly coloured (like the rainbow), and have a mane and beard. The aborigines claim that they are dangerous to all strangers who approach their waterholes, and even to local aborigines who do not perform the proper rituals before drinking. On Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 75), however, it is a lizard, the gekko, *Ipiſiø-ipiſiø*, which takes the place of the rainbow-serpent. It is highly coloured, about one hundred feet in length, has long hair on its head and whiskers on its lower jaw. It lives in a swamp, called Numarika, on south-western Groote Eylandt. Should anyone drink from this swamp, they will surely die. *Ipiſiø-ipiſiø* is associated with thunder, thunderstorms, and rain, but not, as far as I could ascertain, with the rainbow.

The lizard-like *Marapiø* of Melville and Bathurst Islands[47] have many of the characteristics of the gekko, *Ipiſiø-ipiſiø* of Groote Eylandt[48] as well as the rainbow serpents of the Central Australian deserts, and Oenpelli, in Arnhem Land. 776 [171]

The *Marapiø* are highly coloured lizards, the males being up to one hundred yards in length, with horns on their heads instead of hair, and long projecting jaws in the place of beards.

Should any unauthorised person interfere with their waterholes, the *Marapiø* become annoyed. They roar loudly, make the water bubble up (like the Oenpelli serpent, Mountford, 1956, p. 210), and send a waterspout into the air which, falling as torrential rain, floods the countryside. One of the *Marapiø* then changes himself into the rainbow and travels across the land seeking to injure the offender or anyone else in its path. [821]

[47] Hassell and Elkin, 1940, p. 231, refers to *Marapiø* as the rainbow snake.

[48] It is of interest to note that on isolated places, such as Groote Eylandt and Melville Island, these mythical creatures resemble lizards, and on the Australian mainland, and in most other places in the world, they take the form of snakes.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

776 The *Maratjis* belong to the totem of *Andjaki* (fresh water), in common with *Pakudringa* (thunderstorms), *Tomituka* (monsoon rain) and *Bunurali* (lightning). They are mortal creatures who die and disintegrate like everything else (Pl. 48D).

[123] I collected bark paintings and crayon drawings of a number of *Maratjis*, living with their wives and families in three lagoons on Melville and Bathurst Islands, i.e., Maundu, southern Bathurst Island, and Kulimbini, north-western, and Maratjiana, northern Melville Island.

776 778 The *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands are not always of the same temperament. For instance, the *Maratjis* who live at Kulimbini (Pl. 48A) are so dangerous that should any aboriginal dare approach their water, they will steal his *imunka* (spirit), and he will die.

Although the *Maratjis* of Maundu (Pl. 48C) are feared, it is possible, if certain rituals are performed, for even a stranger to drink the water without harm; while those who live in the Maratjiana lagoon at Goose Creek, are looked upon by the aborigines as "properly quiet fellow".[49]

776 821 The rainbow, as a *Maratji*, however, is universally feared, the aborigines believing that the primary bow is the *imunka* (spirit) of a male, and the secondary bow, that of a female *Maratji*.

If a rainbow goes too near an aboriginal camp, the occupants will quickly [789] build up their fire[50] and call out to frighten *Maratji* away, but should he come too close, the people will feel ill and break out into a cold perspiration. If an aboriginal is overtaken by a rainbow,[51] it will kill him by taking his spirit.

Should some aboriginal be so foolish as to throw a spear at a rainbow and injure it, the *Maratjis* would destroy the whole country and the people who live in it.

776 821 648 Two heavy wind-storms, which occurred whilst the expedition was at Melville Island, were supposed to have been caused by angry *Maratjis*. The first was due to some foolish aboriginal who broke a *kulama* ceremony taboo (p. 142) by throwing some of the termite mound from the *kulama* oven into the sea. The second happened when a *pukamuni* pole, taken from a grave by one of the senior officers of the Native Affairs Branch, was being loaded on a boat for transport to Darwin.

The aborigines explained that as these poles are a gift from the living to

[49] Further research will no doubt reveal other waterholes on Melville and Bathurst Islands, inhabited by *Maratjis*.

[171] [50] This would suggest that *Maratji*, like the *Wonambi* of the Central Australian deserts, is afraid of fire (Mountford, 1948, p. 138).

[51] These conditions are, of course, impossible because the rainbow is always several feet from the observer.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat and so prevent the theft. 776 821 648

The Maratjis at Maundu

Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained by the faeces of the *Maratjis*. 776 778

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandubuka* totem are the only people safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from his own armpits, rubs it over his companion. 751 776 [827]

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then, walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi* which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of Maundu. [437] [753] [164]

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon, they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an aboriginal, called *Alumgun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this taboo. [841] [784]

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu. 532 × 778

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained) water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the 776

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

K 532 776 [778]

lighter, the bubbles of water (supposed to be caused by the *Maratji*), which rise from the bottom of the lagoon. The cross-hatching represents a grass which grows on the shores of Maundu.

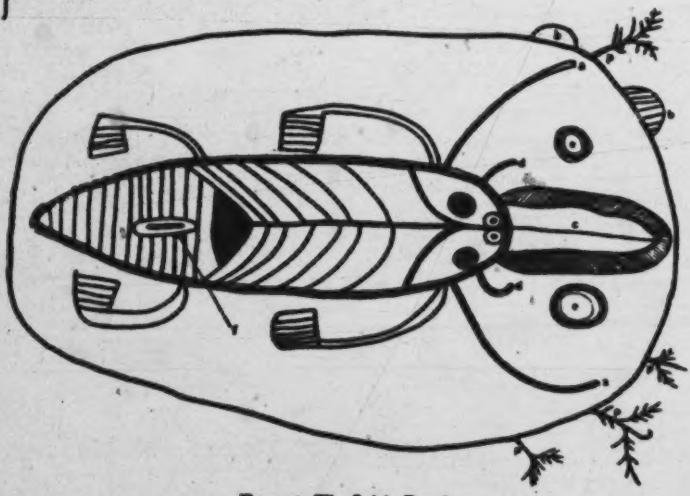

FIG. 16. *The Spirit People*
The Rainbow-spirit, Maratji.

Fig. 16, the copy of a crayon drawing of *Maratji*, was the work of a sophisticated aboriginal who had been employed for some years in Darwin. It shows a young female *Maratji*, a lizard-like creature measuring about fifty feet, with two long horns, *a*, *a*, and two short horns, *d*, *d*, projecting from her head. At *c*, are both her tongue and lower jaw; *f*, is her vulva, and circles *e*, *e*, show the bubbles of water which rise to the surface when she becomes annoyed.

K 532 778 776

The outer oval is the shore of Maundu, the designs, *p*, *p*, etc., are trees, and *b*, *b*, piles of rocks on the shore.

The Maratjis at Kulimbini

On Pl. 48a, the long central black rectangle is the body of a female *Maratji* at Kulimbini, north-western Melville Island. The six encircling rectangles are the colours of the *imunka* (spirit) of *Maratji*, i.e., the rainbow, and the dark-coloured spaces at the top and bottom of the design, the falling rain.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Pl. 48B does not deal with the myth, but the natural features of Kulimbini lagoon, in which the *Maratjis* live. The central black dot symbolizes an area of blue water-lilies in the lagoon, and the white circles, the surrounding water. The diagonal lines, *b*, *b*, etc., indicate the Kulimbini creek, and the rectangles, *a*, *a*, *a*, the broken water of the stream as it flows among the stones of its rocky bed. The short black panels and the two black rectangles indicate a grass with an edible bulb (probably the spike rush) that grows in the shallow water. The chevrons on the outer part of the design represent dead leaves lying on the grass, and those within the first and second inner rectangles, *a*, *a*, a red-coloured algae found along the edge of the still water. 532x 778 776

The Maratjis at Maratjiana, Goose Creek

Pl. 54A pictures a large freshwater stream, called Maratjiani, on the northern end of the Goose Creek swamps.

The meandering lines on the right and left hand edge and the central vertical panel are freshwater creeks, and the outer vertical panels, two *Maratjis* who live in them. The short, transverse panels are rocks along the banks of the stream and the dots, dry land covered with grass.

Pl. 48D pictures the skeleton of a *Maratji*, which the artist claimed had died in a swamp to the north-east of Maratjiana. At present there are no remains, they have all disintegrated.

The bulk of the skeleton is at *a*, the backbone at *b*, the ribs are shown by the radiating lines at the top and the vertical panels at the bottom; the jaw is at *c*. The dotted background symbolizes the many-coloured skin of the dead *Maratji*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER VI

The Secular Bark Paintings

×532 THE designs used by the Tiwi on many of their secular bark paintings are strongly influenced by those employed in decorating the poles and the large bark baskets of the *pukamuni* ceremony. For instance, all of the patterns on Pl. 49 would be similar to those used on a burial pole, while a number of the paintings of the totemic places, for example, those shown on Pl. 10, have the same fundamental designs as those on the *pukamuni* baskets.

As mentioned previously, one of the remarkable aspects of the art of the [171] Tiwi is that it is highly formalized, whereas, on the mainland, only fourteen miles away, across the dangerous waterway of Dundas Strait, the art is fully representational. This difference in the art forms of the Tiwi and that of the aborigines of the adjacent mainland is an excellent example of how a natural barrier can isolate one culture from the influence of another.

I. TOPOGRAPHY

×532 133 137 The obverse side of a large *pukamuni* basket (Pl. 49A, B), illustrates the trees and shrubs of Cape Van Diemen, arranged in a decorative pattern, and on the reverse side (Pl. 49C, D), the natural features at Imilu, in the same locality.

Cape Van Diemen

On Pl. 49A, B, the series of rectangles at *a*, on the top of the basket, represent a forest of stringybark trees, and the groups of vertical and sloping lines at *k*, *k* (bottom), many bloodwood trees. The vertical lines, *f*, *f*, etc., are also stringybarks and the horizontal lines, *c*, *c*, etc., bloodwood trees.

The many circles, *d*, *d*, etc., are *pukamuni* arm ornaments, *palmajinas* (Pl. 31E, F); the cross-hatching in rectangles *e*, *e*, etc. (upper) are spider webs, and the dots at *b*, *b*, etc., black and red seeds of a jungle vine lying on the ground.

Imilu

On Pl. 49C, D, the circles *a*, *a*, etc., in the border, represent the many hives of wild bees in the trees at Imilu, and the intervening panels, *f*, *f*, etc., red

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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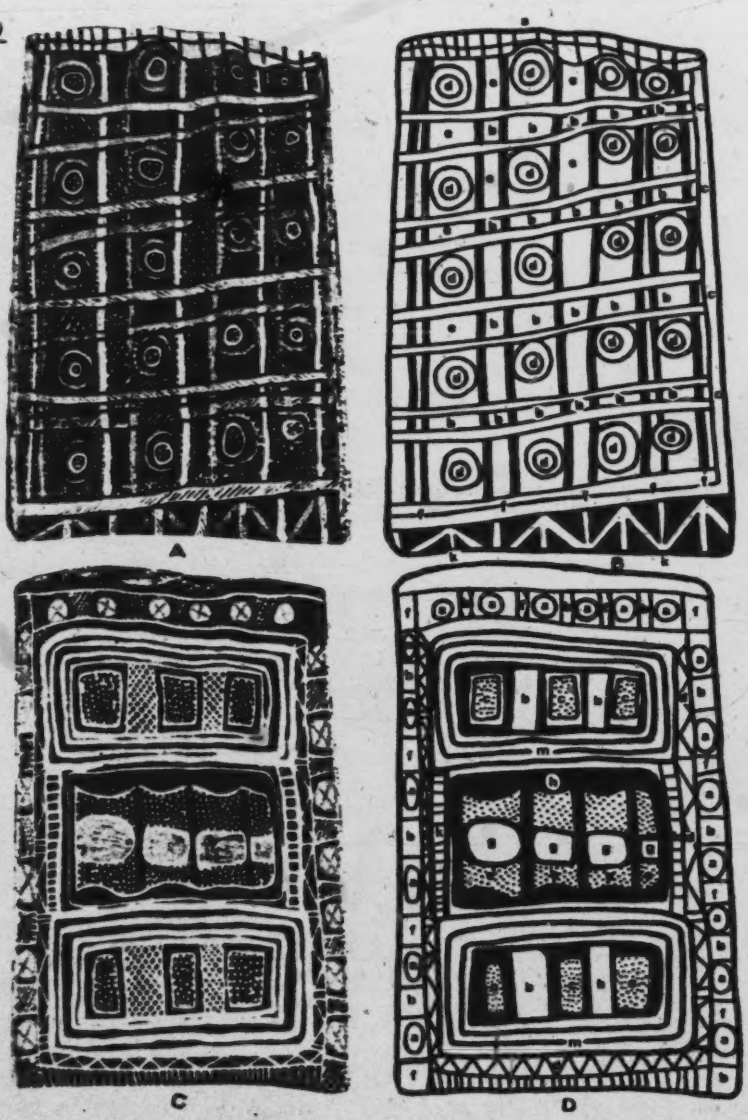

PLATE 49. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Topography, Cape Van Diemen; C, D, Topography, Imilu.

[p. 160 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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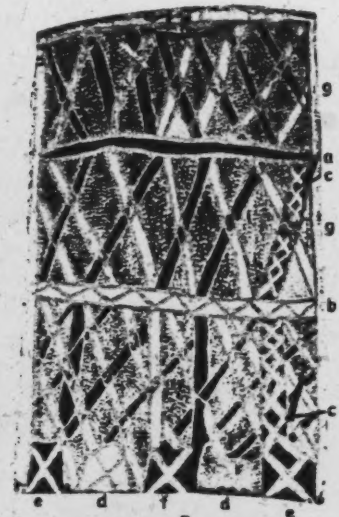
A



B

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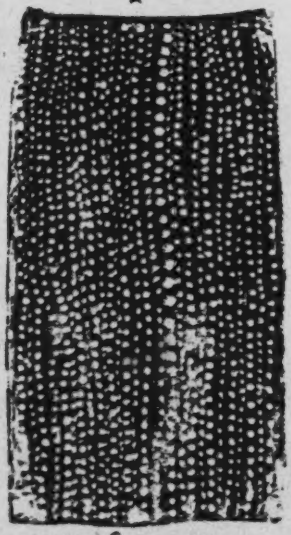
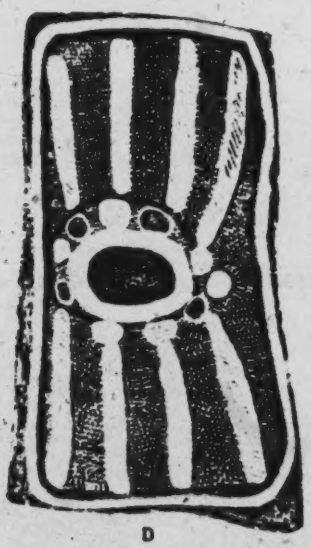
[302]



C



D

PLATE 50. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Sea-floor; B, Mangrove Swamp; C, Fish-man, Kumunga; D, Topography, Bathurst Island.

Cp. 160 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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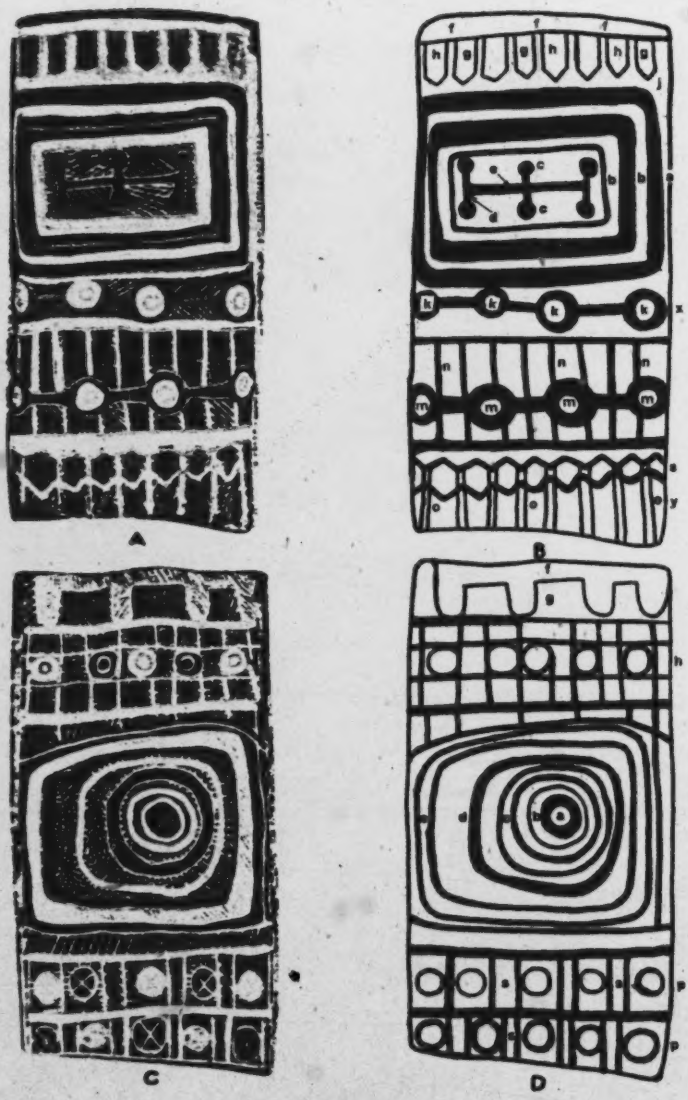

PLATE 51. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Topography, Garden Point; C, D, Topography, Snake Bay.

[p. 160 C]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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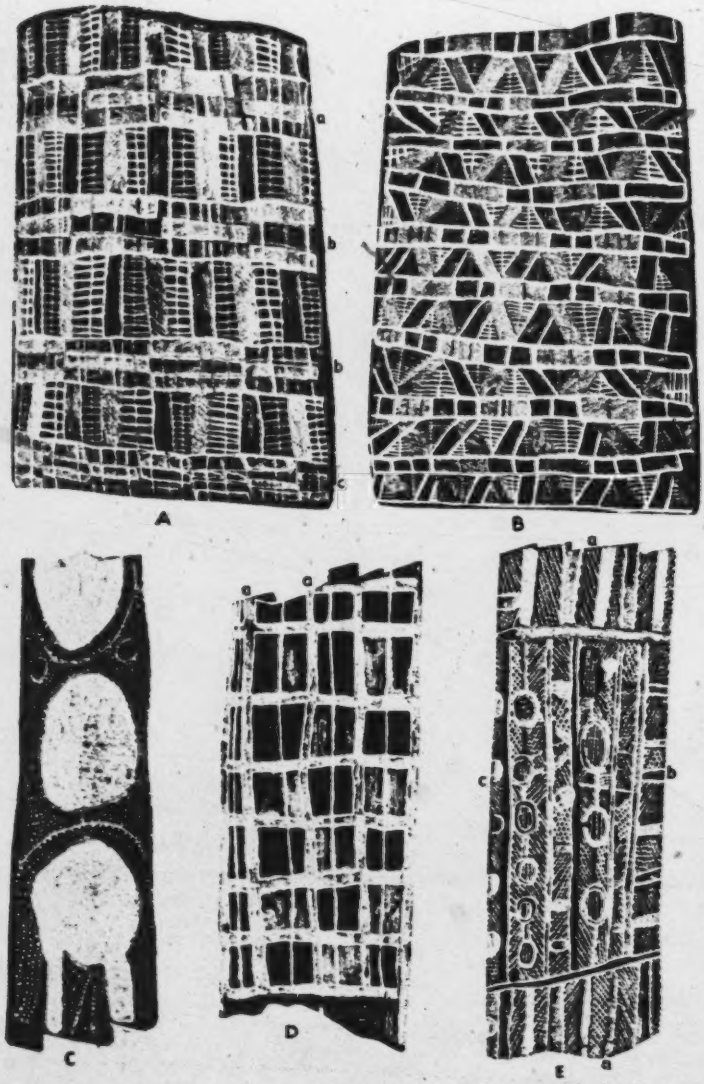

PLATE 52. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Sea-coast, Cape Van Diemen; C, Lagoons and Swamps; D, The Sea-shore; E, Jungle Scene.

[p. 160 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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[136]

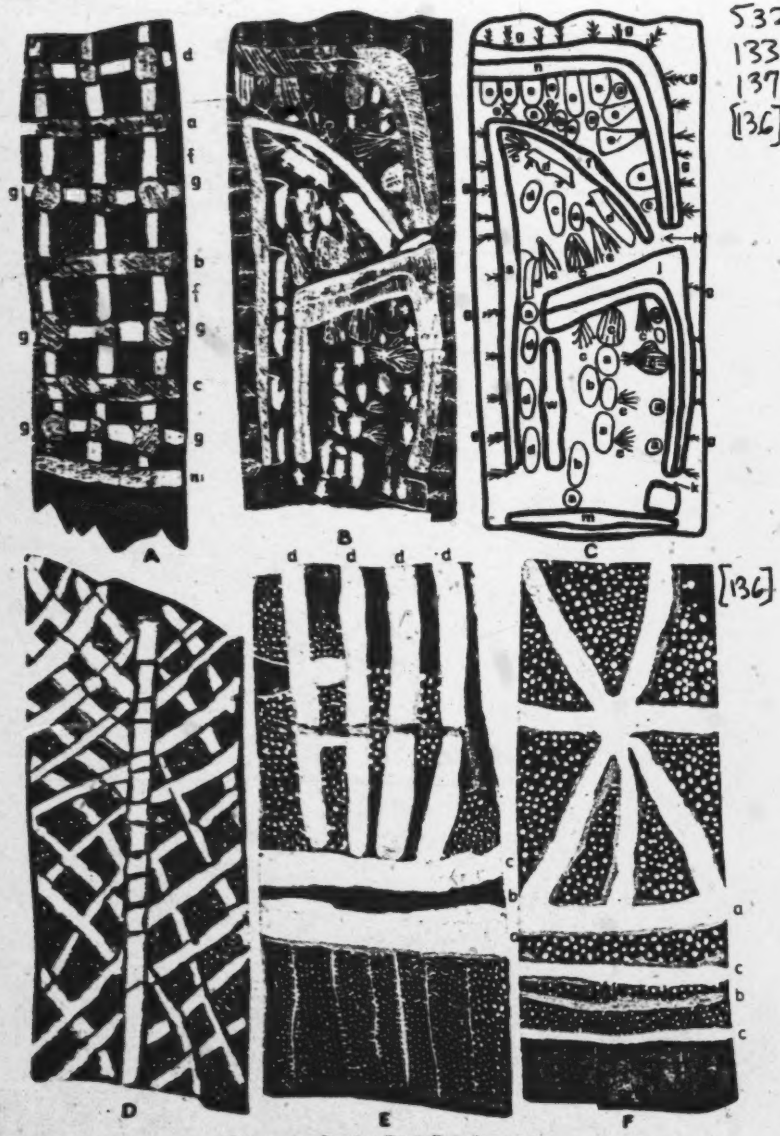

PLATE 53. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Forest, Curtis Haven; B, C, Topography, Snake Bay; D, Fresh and Salt-water Streams; E, Topography, Goose Creek; F, Sea-scape.

[p. 160 E]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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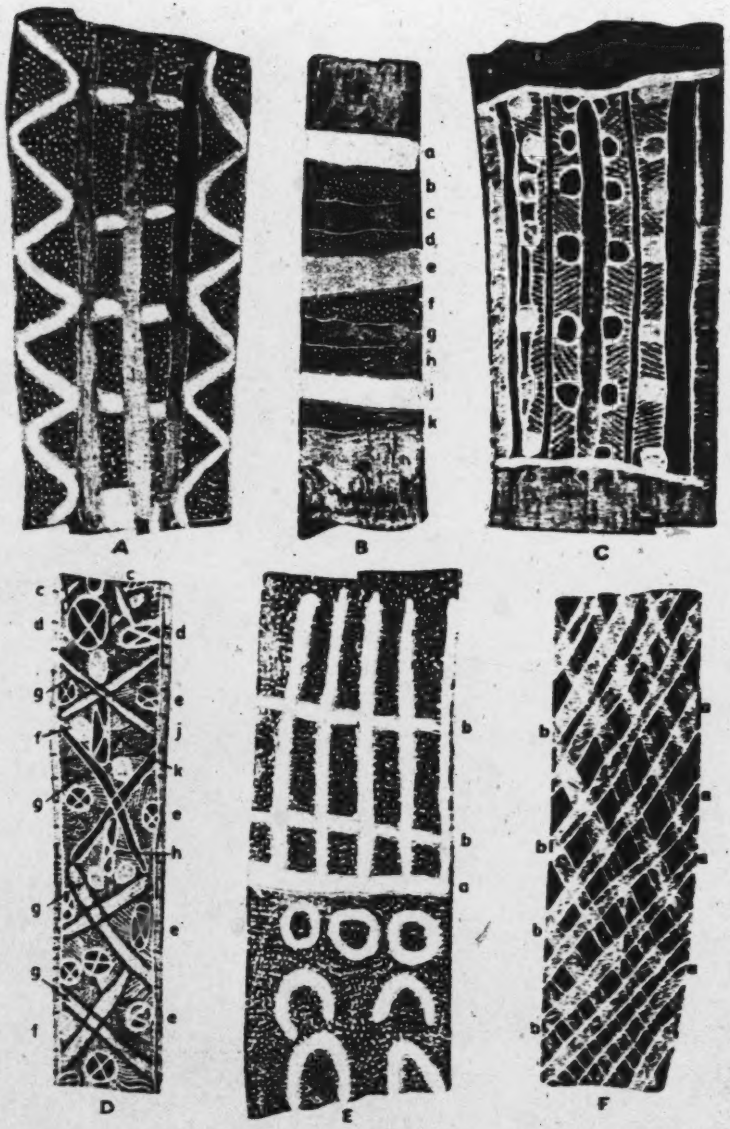

[821]

PLATE 54. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Maratji, Goose Creek; B, Sea-shore; C, Sea and Sea-coast; D, Marine Creatures; E, Topography, Snake Bay; F, Jungle.

[p. 160 F]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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A

B

[137]

C

D

E

PLATE 55. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Sea and Shore Creatures; C, Sea-going Turtles; D, Barramundi; E, Sea-snakes.

[p. 160 G]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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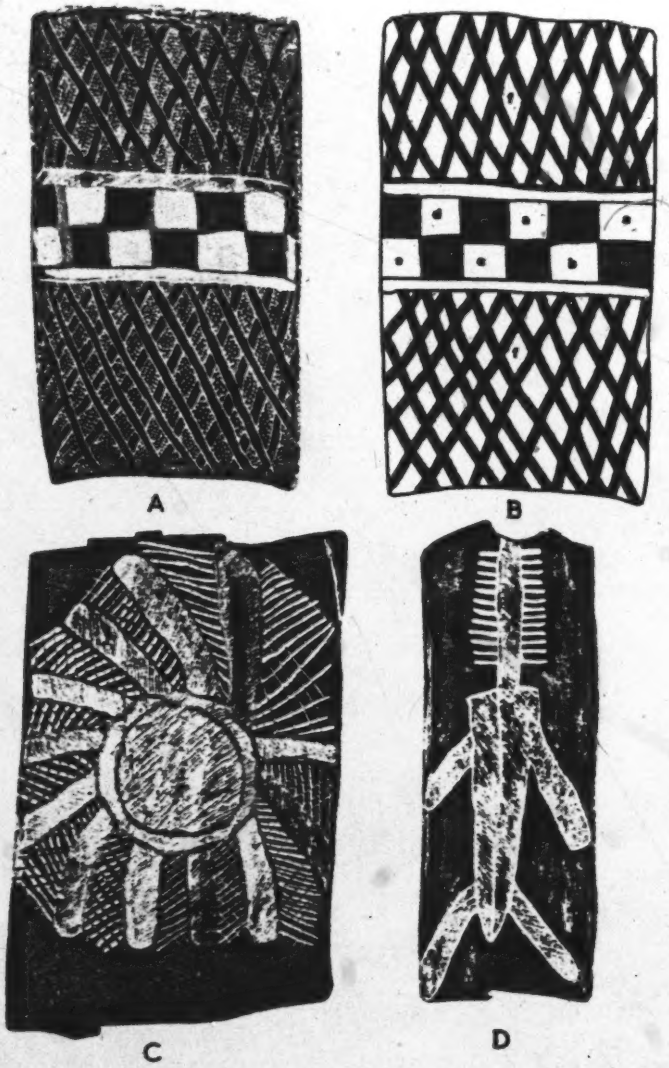

PLATE 56. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Creatures of the Sea; C, Jelly-fish; D, Saw-fish.

Cp. 160 H]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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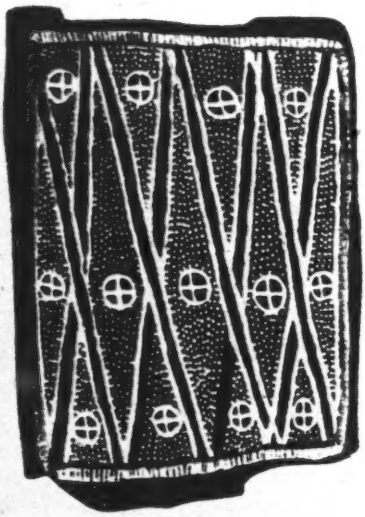
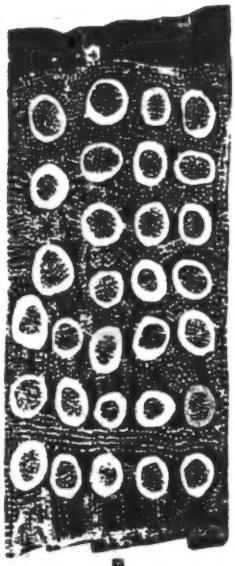


A



B

C

D

E

PLATE 57. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Edible Fruits; B, Poisonous Yams; C, Goanna; D, Sea-snakes; E, Sponges.

[p. 160 I]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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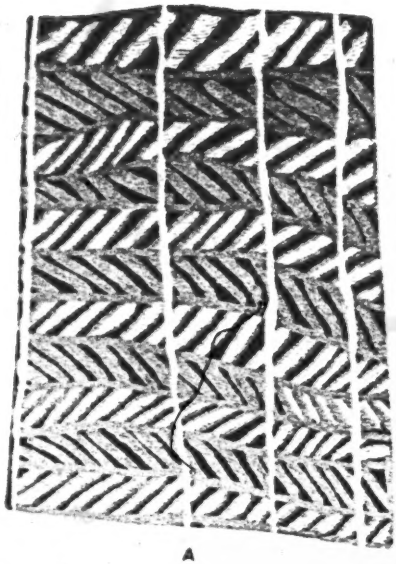
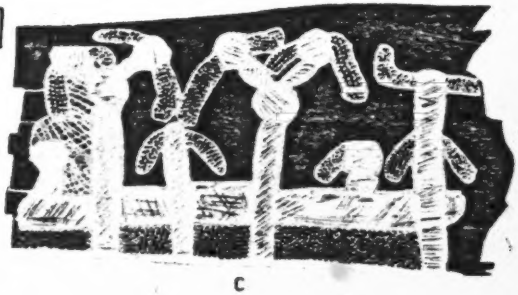
[821]



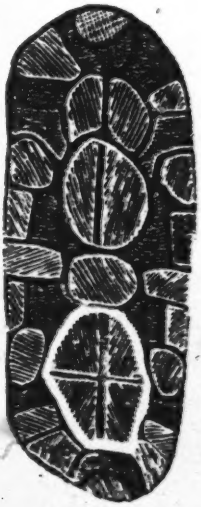
A

B

[137]



C



D

PLATE 58. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Chevron Body Scars; B, Wet-season Sky; C, Honey-bearing Trees; D, Unidentified.

[p. 160 J]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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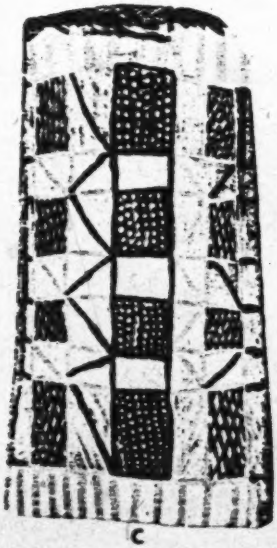
A

B



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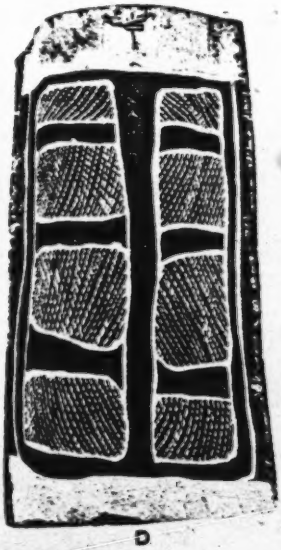

D

PLATE 59. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, C, D, Unidentified.

Cp. 160 K]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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PLATE 60. *Astronomical Bark Paintings*
A, B, The Sun and the Moon; C, Unidentified; D, The Milky Way.

[p. 160 L]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x

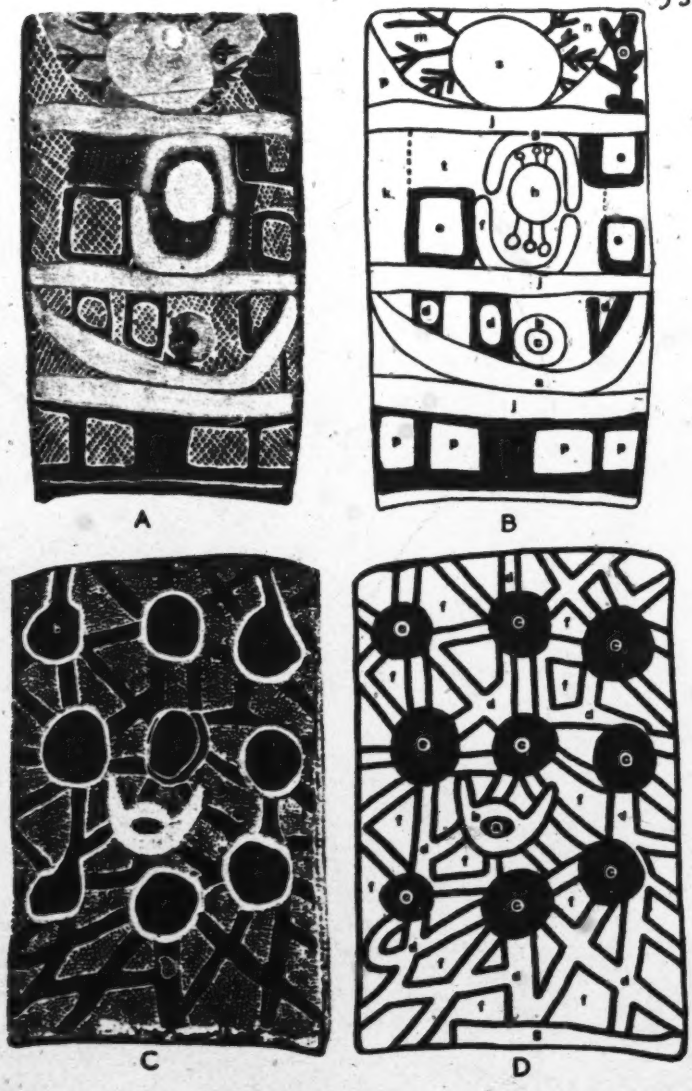

PLATE 61. *Astronomical Bark Paintings*
A, B, The Sun, Moon and Stars; C, D, The Moon. n.

[p. 160 M]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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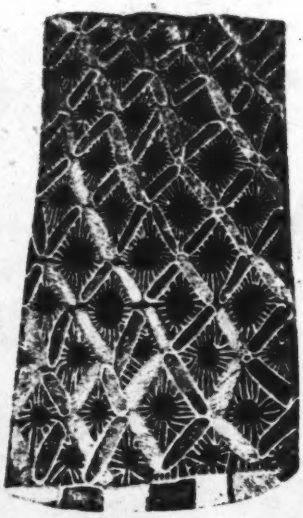
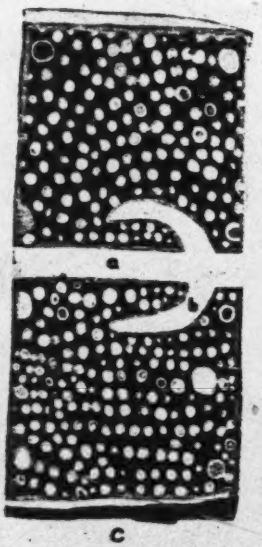


A

B



C

D

PLATE 62. *Astronomical Bark Paintings*
A, The Milky Way; B, Orion and the Pleiades; C, The Night Sky; D, The Moon and his Wives.

[p. 160 N]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x

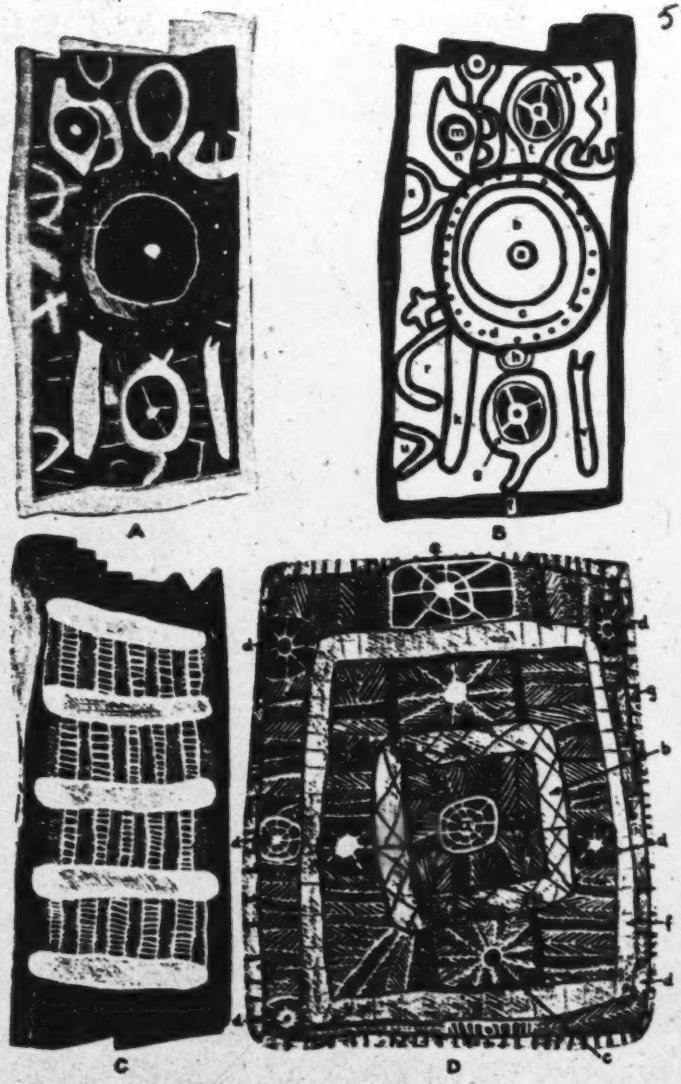


PLATE 63. *Astronomical Bark Paintings*
A, B, Sun-woman; C, The Milky Way; D, The Sky and the Upper World.

[p 160-0]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

and black seeds. The dotted rectangles, *c*, *c*, at the top and bottom of the paintings are lily-covered lagoons (dots represent the blossoms); the cross-hatched panels, *b*, *b*, etc., between them are spider webs in the trees and the meandering lines, *d*, *d*, etc., along the outer edge, a jungle vine hanging from the branches of the trees. The black design *h*, in the middle of the painting, is the beach at Imilu; the irregular circles, *g*, *g*, etc., are large rocks on the shore, and the dots, the eucalyptus trees that grow along the top of the cliff. The series of large rectangles, *m*, *m* (top and bottom) indicate the sandy shores of the lagoons, and the short vertical lines at *k* (bottom), a forest of eucalypts. 532x 133 137

A large *pulamuni* basket, Pl. 51A, B, C, D, pictures (*a*) Pl. 51A, B, the topography near the mission station at Garden Point, near Punata (Fig. 1), and (b) Pl. 51C, D, the surroundings near the expedition camp.

Punata (Garden Point)

The series of rectangles on the obverse side of the basket (Pl. 51A, B), represent a house at Garden Island mission. At *a*, are the foundations; *b*, *b*, the walls; *c*, *c*, the upright posts of the house; *d*, the beams of the roof, and at *e*, is the ridge pole. [177]

At *f*, *f*, etc., on the upper edge, are the tall eucalyptus trees of the surrounding forest. At *j*, is the red ground on which the trees grow; at *g*, the dots are black and red seeds on the ground, and at *h*, the cross-hatching is the spider-webs in the trees.

At the bottom of the painting, *n*, *n*, etc., and *o*, *o*, etc., are more large eucalyptus trees. Symbols *k*, *k*, etc., and *m*, *m*, etc., represent hives of wild honey in the trees; the meandering lines at *s*, are jungle vines hanging from the branches; the cross-hatched areas are spider webs among the leaves, and the dots, as before, red and black seeds on the ground.

Snake Bay

The central black circle, *a*, on the reverse side of the basket, Pl. 51C, D, is a black rock in the sea, and the circle, *b*, immediately surrounding it, the broken water at its base, while circle *c*, indicates large rocks at the bottom of the cliffs, the white outer rectangle, *e*, being the sea-sand and the rectangle, *d*, the waves breaking on them. The white dots are the pebbles on the shore.

The upper and lower panels of the painting deal with the land. The white design *f*, on the upper edge, is a forest of large eucalyptus trees, and the cross-hatching, *g*, spider-webs on their branches. The five circles at *h*, are hives

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

X532 of wild honey in the hollow trees, and the dots, the red and black seeds of a
133 jungle vine.

137 On the lower panel, *s*, *s*, etc., indicate another forest of eucalyptus trees; the two rows of five circles at *p*, *p*, hives of wild bees, the cross-hatched panels between them spider webs, and the dots, the red and black seeds.

Biru Creek

Pl. 53E refers to a water-course, Biru, near the Goose Creek swamps, which is fresh in the southern and salt in the northern section, where it enters the sea.

The white panel *a*, is the saltwater end of Biru Creek, which is near the entrance of the Goose Creek swamps (Fig. 1), and the white band *c*, the freshwater end of the same creek. The black band *b*, is its banks. Panels *d*, *d*, etc., are white patches of sand and the dots, on the upper panel, patches of water-grass on the floor of the swamp. The bottom panel represents the open sea, the dots indicating patches of seaweed on the bottom.

Snake Bay

Pl. 53B, C, deals with the topography of Snake Bay.

Karslake Island (Wulrungku) is shown at *m*, on the lower edge; a sandbar (upper), the home of the spirit dogs, the *Wankuis* (p. 154) is at *f*; Iluwara inlet, in the Curtis Haven, is at *h* (middle right); a beach on the opposite shore of Iluwara inlet is at *j*, and Tjipripu Point at *w* (lower left). The long vertical line *s*, on the left, is Banjo beach, on which we camped; and *k* (lower right), a mangrove creek to the east.

Designs *e*, *e*, etc. (upper right), are mangrove trees growing on Karslake Island, and crosses, *o*, *o* (upper left), dead trees on the shore. Basket sponges, growing on rocks at the sea-bottom, are indicated at *c*, *c*, etc. (centre).
[136] Turtles are at *a*, *a*, etc.; dugongs at *b*, *b*, etc., and canoes at *d*, *d*, etc. Many casuarina trees, *g*, *g*, etc., grow along the shore lines.

Lagoons and Swamps

This simple bark painting, Pl. 52C, pictures the lagoons at the rear of the expedition camp.

The upper white semi-circle is the swamp, immediately behind our camp, in which there are many paper-bark trees (*Melaleuca* sp.); the white dots are water-lilies growing in the swamp. The central white oval indicates an open lagoon from which the water runs into the sea.

The lower design indicates a swamp further inland, which is fed by two

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

freshwater streams (projections on the lower edge). The dots around this design are also water-lilies. 532x 133 137

Western Bathurst Island

Pl. 50D illustrates a hill, Ipitjulimpi, on western Bathurst Island.

The central black oval is Ipitjulimpi Hill, and the white outline, the tall annual grass which grows at its base. The circle of small discs are groups of boulders on the sides of the hill. The eight long ovals on the upper and lower sections of the paintings, are cabbage palms; the white outer border symbolizes red cliffs near by, and, the dots, the grass on the hillside.

2. THE SEA AND THE SWAMP-LANDS

The Sea and Sea-shore

Three bark paintings, Pl. 54C, Pl. 53F, and Pl. 52D, deal with the sea and the sea-shore.

Pl. 54C refers to the sea and the sea-coast. The outer plain vertical panels symbolize the white sand on the sea-shore, and the outer black panels, batches of sea-weed. The light-coloured ovals are rocks under the water, covered with the sea-weed, and the black ovals are reefs of dark-coloured rocks on the bottom, which shelter the parrot fish and the rock cod. The cross-hatching indicates the white sand on the bottom of the ocean.

Pl. 53F depicts in a simple manner, the sea and the beach.

The intersecting lines on the upper panel represent an octopus, the dots, throughout the painting, small stones on the floor of the ocean; *a*, indicates the waves breaking on the beach; *b*, is a salt-water creek, and *c*, *c*, are its banks. [136]

Pl. 52D is a bark painting of the sea. The horizontal bars symbolize the waves breaking on the beach; the black rectangles, the dark-coloured stones, and the lighter-coloured rectangles, the red stones exposed at low water. The five vertical bands such as *a*, *a*, indicate the lines of debris, left by the retreating tide.

The Ocean Floor

Pl. 50A pictures the floor of the ocean. The light and dark coloured discs throughout the painting are boulders on the bottom, black projections on the dark-coloured discs, pearl-shell oysters, and those on the lighter discs, star-fish. The dots indicate the sea-sand. [136]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

x532
133

A Salt-water Creek

Pl. 53D pictures a salt-water creek, Tunangabupi, which flows into the sea at north-eastern Melville Island.

The central panel is the Tunangabupi creek, the rectangles along it alternately representing sandbanks and outcrops of rocks in its bed. The lines forming the diamond patterns, indicate a series of freshwater streams which flow into the Tunangabupi Creek, and the white dots, the shrubs growing on their banks.

A Mangrove Swamp

Pl. 50B depicts a mangrove swamp at Cape Fourcroy.

Transverse band *a*, is a dry creek bed whose waters run into the swamp during the wet season, and *b*, a salt-water creek among the mangroves. The lines of diamond-like patterns at *c*, *c*, indicate a muddy salt-water creek, and the crossed designs *d*, *d*, muddy patches among the trees. At *e*, *e*, are fallen trees with mud on their roots, and *f*, is a large tree with its roots exposed. The intersecting lines in panels, *g*, *g*, indicate a forest of mangrove trees, and the dotted background, edible mangrove fruit lying on the ground.

The Sea-coast at Cape Van Diemen

Both sides of a large *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 52A and Pl. 52B, picture the sea-coast adjacent to Imilu, at Cape Van Diemen, north-western Melville Island.

The horizontal lines, *a*, on Pl. 52A, the obverse side of the basket, indicate the grass and fallen leaves on the sea-shore; the two bands, *b*, *b*, represent the sharp eroded rocks on the water's edge, and the lower band, *c*, weeds growing on the rocks under the water.

Throughout the design, the darker-coloured barred rectangles, with white [136] lines, are black trepang, and those with grey lines, white trepang. The plain rectangles indicate the sandy bed of the ocean.

On Pl. 52B, the reverse side of the same *pukamuni* basket, the series of transverse bands picture flat rocks on the edge of the sea, and the barred triangles, the water surging through them. The high cliffs at Imilu, Cape Van Dieman, are indicated by the many v-shaped designs.

The Sea and Mangrove Creeks

Pl. 54B is a particularly simple design which the artist once used to decorate a *pukamuni* pole.

The plain panels at the top and bottom of the paintings, represent the open sea; the transverse panels, *a*, *c*, *e*, *g*, *j*, refer to the salt-water creeks in the man-

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

grove swamps, and the dotted panels, *b*, *d*, *f*, *h*, and *k*, to the seaweed growing on the sea-bottom. 532X

3. THE FAUNA

The Sea-Creatures

Two bark paintings, 55A, B, and 56A, B, depict the creatures who live on the floor of the ocean. 532X 136

On Pl. 55A, B, design *a*, represents a shark; design *b*, and *f*, are large sea-snakes; *e*, is a smaller species, and *g*, another snake that lives in the mangrove swamps. At *c*, is a saw-fish; at *d*, a porpoise, and at *h*, a sea-slug or *beche-de-mer*. Designs, *m*, *m*, etc., are shells; and *l*, boulders on the sea-bottom; *k*, is a creek in the mangrove swamp, and *j*, a sandbank in Snake Bay.

Pl. 56A, B, also deals with the creatures of the sea. In the central section panels *a*, *a*, are star-fish; panel *b*, refers to an octopus; *c*, to pearl-shell oysters; *d*, to a crab, and *e*, to a turtle. The cross-hatching, throughout the design, is symbolical of the scale pattern on a crocodile skin, and the two transverse white bands are the creature's intestines.

The Snakes

Two bark paintings, Pl. 57D and Pl. 55E, depict the snakes of Melville and Bathurst Islands.

Pl. 57D pictures, in conventionalized form, a number of sea-snakes, some of which were poisonous and much feared.

Pl. 55E illustrates a number of snakes that live in the forest and jungle adjacent to the expedition.

Reading from the right, *a*, is the venomous bush snake, *jaruwini*; *b*, a copper-coloured non-venomous snake, *ilinga*; *c*, a venomous snake, *buliaringa*, that lives in the mangrove swamps, and *d*, a harmless water-snake, *patinga*. The short, more or less horizontal lines at *f*, *f*, are tall eucalypts in the forest and the dots, the grass at their base. [137]

A Goanna

Pl. 57C is a simple X-ray bark painting of a goanna, on which the backbone and ribs are indicated. This is the only example of that curious art form which I saw on Melville Island, although on the adjacent mainland, the X-ray art has reached its highest development.[88] [171]

The Sea-going Turtle

Pl. 55C pictures the sea-going turtles. The central design represents the

[88] Mountford, 1956, p. 256.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

X532
136

large logger-head turtle, *Ringa*, whose totemic place is at Juiapinta, north of Karslake Island (see Pl. 12c).

In the lower right is a young logger-head, and in the upper left, a hawk-bill turtle, *Garagalani*, which when a woman, assisted in the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*.

On the upper right of the painting is a green turtle and on the right-hand edge, a canoe which the aborigines had used to capture the turtles.

A Barramundi

This bark painting, Pl. 55D, pictures a barramundi, *alaminga*, a large fish which lives in either fresh or salt water.

The fish, *c*, is shown within the inner white oval. Its head is at *a*, its eyes being the two short lines within *a*; its tail is at *d*, and its fins at *e*, *e*, *e*, *e*. The dots represent the marks on its skin.

The outer oval is made up of red, white, yellow and black lines. Reading from the outside, the red oval indicates the land; the white, the sandy beach; the yellow, the breaking waves, and the black, the open sea.

A Jelly-fish

Pl. 56C illustrates an unidentified jelly-fish, *indringa*. The central disc is the body; the radiating lines, the tentacles, and the cross-hatched areas the ocean.

A Saw-fish, Jidati

Pl. 56D is a simple, representational bark painting of the saw-fish, *jidati*, in which the saw of the creature is given special prominence and the fins are shown as legs.

Sea Sponges

Pl. 57E pictures a number of sponges growing on the floor of the ocean. Although sea sponges do not appear to have any specific value to the aborigines, they are often pictured in the bark paintings.

4. THE FLORA

X532
137

Edible Jungle Fruits

Pl. 57A illustrates a number of edible fruits that grow in the jungle and the forest.

The crosses surrounded by a circle, represent the fruits of two different eugenias. They are about the size of an apple; one, a red fruit, is called *binamia*, and the other, a white fruit, *tauraruina*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The intersecting diagonal lines symbolize the trunks of those fruit-bearing trees, and the dots on the ground, a small edible berry. 532 x 137

The Poisonous Yams

Pl. 57B illustrates two of the poisonous yams, the *kulama* and the *kwani*. These yams have to be sliced and soaked in water for about three days to remove the poison. They are then edible. The dots on the background indicate grass and shrubs.

The Jungle Trees

This simple painting, Pl. 54F, represents two species of trees that grow in the jungle. The diagonal lines such as *a*, *a*, etc., leading from lower left to upper right of the painting, symbolize a large white-barked jungle tree, and those crossing at right-angles, i.e., *b*, *b*, etc., the milkwood tree. The unpainted diamonds indicate the bare ground and the small plants on the floor of the forest.

A Eucalyptus Forest

The central horizontal panel, *a*, of Pl. 54E represents a track that leads through the forest adjacent to our camp. The five vertical white lines are large eucalyptus trees in a nearby forest which have been hollowed out by the termites, the hollows being indicated by the two upper horizontal lines, *b*, *b*, in the top panel. The dots indicate grass and low shrubs.

On the lower panel, the four crescents are the new moons; the dots, the stars in the sky, and the circles, rocky outcrops. I did not find out whether these rocky outcrops were celestial or terrestrial features. [821]

A Jungle Scene, Imilu

Pl. 52E pictures the trees in a jungle at Imilu, Cape Van Diemen.

The short vertical lines, *a*, *a*, in the top and bottom panels and the short horizontal lines at *b*, on the right-hand edge are trees in the jungle, and the spaces between them, the sandy ground. The five semi-circles at *c*, on the left-hand edge and the ovals in the panels, are the trunks and branches of other jungle trees, and the cross-hatching is a carpet of fallen leaves.

Honey-bearing Trees

The painting, Pl. 58C, deals only with the honey-bearing blossoms of the trees. The long horizontal rectangle is a fallen tree in the forest and the six upright symbols, the trunks of living eucalyptus trees with their upper

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

x 532 137

branches in full blossom. The dots at the base of the painting indicate eucalyptus blossoms lying on the ground.

A Forest, Curtis Haven

Pl. 53A illustrates the topography at Curtis Haven.

Transverse panel *a*, is a stringy-bark tree,[53] *b*, *c*, are two woolly-butts and *m*, is an ironwood. The short white panels at *f*, *f*, are cycad palms; the lines of circles at *g*, *g*, *g*, low hills, and the short white panels between them, cabbage palms. The cross-hatching indicates the grass on the hillsides.

5. MISCELLANEOUS AND UNIDENTIFIED

x 532 304

Body Scars

Pl. 58A refers to the chevron scars on the bodies of the older men and women; it has no other meaning.

The four white vertical lines indicate the scars on their legs; the many transverse lines, those across the abdomens, and the lines of dark and light-coloured chevron designs, the scars on the abdomens, backs, upper arms, and thighs.[54]

The Salmon-man

x 532 302

At the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, a salmon-man painted himself and his many wives with a series of large spots like those on the basket; when at the completion of the ceremony, those people became fish, they still retained the coloured spots on their bodies. The dots on Pl. 50C are symbolical of those on the body of the mythical salmon-man.

Design for a Pukamuni Pole

x 532 136

Pl. 54D is a similar design to one which the artist once painted on a *pukamuni* pole he made for the dead man, *Kulatina*. The designs,[55] which are not linked with any myth or secular story, were, according to the artist, formed in his mind by the sound of the waves breaking on a nearby coast.

The four groups of crossed lines, *g*, *g*, etc., represent trepang, the lighter coloured being the white and the darker, the black species. The smaller

[53] These are species of eucalypts.

[54] The older generation of Melville and Bathurst Islanders were decorated with these scars. The custom has been discontinued in recent years. Spencer, 1928, Fig. 439, illustrates examples.

[55] Spencer, 1928, Fig. 475, illustrates poles decorated with a design similar to bark paintings, Pl. 54D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

groups of crossed lines at *c*, *c*, are two stingrays; *d*, *d*, etc., are two dolphins; the darker crossed discs, *e*, *e*, and similar patterns, stones on the beach, and the lighter, such as *f*, *f*, etc., freshwater cockles. There is an unidentified salt-water fish at *h* and a shark at *k*. 532 X 136

Unidentified

I do not know the meanings of the designs on the bark paintings, Pl. 58D, nor those on the three *pukamuni* baskets, Pl. 59A, B, Pl. 59C, D, and Pl. 60C. 532 X

Two of the baskets, Pl. 59A, B, and Pl. 59C, D, were brought by the Bathurst Island group when they attended the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER VII

The Astronomy of the Tiwi

171 THE Tiwi's knowledge of the night sky does not appear to be as extensive as
773 that of the aborigines of the adjoining Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, Part 6).

821 Although myths relating to the sun, the moon, the Milky Way, the stars and Orion and the Pleiades were often told, I was unable to find any relating to the Southern Cross, Scorpio, the Magellan Clouds and other constellations well-known to the aborigines of Arnhem Land.

The Universe

821 The Tiwi believe that the earth is flat, and so limited in area that, if they travel far from the shores of their tribal country, they would fall over the edge. As evidence of this they point out that, in the morning they can see *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman, rise above the eastern rim and, at the end of the day, disappear beneath the western rim of the world.

The earth, too, is of limited thickness, the aborigines believing that, if they dug a hole sufficiently deep they would reach the lower world, *Ilara*.[66]

772 The aboriginal universe of the Tiwi consists of four levels, (*a*) a subterranean world, Ilara, (*b*) the earth on which the aborigines live, (*c*), the sky-land, Juwuku, and (*d*) an upper world, Tuniruna.

On Ilara where it is always dark, there are two high stony ranges with a
772 valley between. It is along this valley that the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,
776 and according to some informants, the moon-man, *Tjapara*, guided only by
821 the light of their glowing torch of bark, travel each day from the western horizon to their homes in the east. As there are no plants or animals on Ilara, the celestial travellers cannot gather any food during their underground journey, although they can quench their thirst at a stream which flows from the top of one of the high mountains.

During the wet season, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms; *Tomituka*, the woman of the monsoon rains; *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, with her husband and her many children, make their home on the sky-land,

[171] [66] I did not find a belief among the Melville Islanders, like that of the aborigines of Groote Eylandt, that the earth was a thin crust resting on the top of the water. (Mountford, 1956, p. 67.)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Jurwuku; while the sun-woman, the men of the Milky Way, the star women and the moon-man (except for a short period each month) travel daily across its surface. 772 776 821

Above the sky is another world, Tuniruna. This is the day-time home of numberless star women, the *Tapalinga*, and the men of the Milky Way, the *Mahadainini*. During the dry season, *Pakadringa*, *Tominuka* and *Bumerali*, with her family leave the sky-world, Jurwuku, and make their homes in Tuniruna.

Unlike the Ilara, the lowest world, Tuniruna resembles the earth except that there is no sea, although there are many freshwater streams and swamps. All the creatures and plants that live on Melville Island, with the exception of the saltwater fish, are also at Tuniruna.

Every morning the inhabitants of the upper world leave their camps, the women to gather the plant foods of the forest, the men to hunt and capture the creatures, such as freshwater fish and the geese, ducks, pelicans and jabirus, that live in the extensive swamps. Also, many fruits grow at Tuniruna, some of which were specifically named, i.e., *rakarina*, the wild plum; *amaramina*, the white-fruited eugenia; *kinamia*, the red-fruited eugenia; *putasakuma*, a small egg-shaped fruit about three-eighths of an inch long; *kwerka*, cycad fruit, and the various yams.

By the time the sun-woman has sunk below the western horizon and extinguished her torch, the inhabitants of Tuniruna, the upper world, have returned from their foodgathering and are lighting their camp-fires to cook the food they have brought in. The light from these fires illuminates the upper world as brightly during the night-time as the sun-woman, with her blazing torch, illuminates the earth during the day-time.

About November, *Pakadringa*, *Tominuka* and *Bumerali* leave Tuniruna and travel from place to place in the sky-world, shedding rain on the parched earth. During this time, the aborigines claim that those with good hearing can distinguish a low "Sh . . . sh . . .", the pleasure call of the thirsty trees as their roots drink the moisture from the sodden ground. It is then that the trees and plants of the upper world, using the raindrops as a vehicle, send their spirits (analogous to the human *Pinipinis*) (p. 146), to the ground beneath, where they grow into plants similar to their progenitors in the upper world.[17] That is, all the plants and trees in the land of the Tiwi were once, as tiny spirits, dropped from the upper world, Tuniruna. 776 821 [824]

[17] I did not specifically inquire whether the creatures in the upper world also sent down their spirits in the same manner as the plants. However, as both plants and human beings have a spirit origin, it is reasonable to assume that the creatures originate in a similar manner. Further research on this subject will be of considerable interest. [124]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

824 This belief probably accounts for the fact that I did not hear any songs chanted, or witness any ceremonies (with the possible exception of the *kulama*) that would bring about a plentiful supply of food. Nor did I hear [171] of any increase centres such as I saw on Groote Eylandt, (Mountford, 1956, pp. 84, 91), and were seen by Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 166), and myself (1948, p. 145) in Central Australia.

The Sky and the Upper World

x532 821 772 Pl. 63D is a bark painting of the sky and the upper world, Tuniruna. The central series of concentric circles represent an unidentified planet, one of the wives of *Tjapara*, the moon-man; the designs, *d, d, d, d*, are some of the stars, *Tapalinga*; *f, f*, are the plum trees (already mentioned), which grow in the upper world. The radiating lines are the limbs of the plum trees.

The inner square, *b*, is the upper world, Tuniruna, the chevron patterns are the clouds in the sky, and the outer square the surface of the earth.

The groups of dots, throughout the painting, are the spirit fruits of the many trees at Tuniruna, which (as mentioned earlier), fall from the upper world to the earth beneath.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala

773 776 A myth, belonging to the early creation period, tells of how *Wuriupranala*, one of the first women, was given the task of keeping alight a torch of blazing bark. When, after the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, the men and women changed themselves into creatures and plants, *Wuriupranala* became the sun-woman, who travels daily across the sky, her torch of blazing bark providing the world with light and heat.

776 821 However, before *Wuriupranala* sets out from the eastern horizon, she powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which flying into the air, reddens the clouds of early morning.

When she reaches the western horizon, *Wuriupranala* again powders her body (this accounts for the brilliant sunsets), extinguishes her torch and rests for a while beside a celestial lagoon, Kumpinulu, before returning to the east along a path through the subterranean world, Ilara. On this journey, she is guided only by the light from the glowing end of her smouldering torch.[58]

x532 773 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60A, B, Pl. 61A, B, and Pl. 63A, B, deal with the myth of the sun-woman.

776 821 The designs on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 61A, B, picture the sun, moon and stars.

[58] See pp. 35, 40 for more details of the sun-woman.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The crescent, *a*, symbolizes the eastern horizon, beneath which both the sun-woman and moon-man have their camps; the transverse panels, *j, j, j*, indicate the western horizon. 532 x 773 776 821

The disc, *b*, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, while the black dot in the centre is her life essence, *imunka* (p. 137).

The sun-woman again is represented by the white disc, *s*, on the upper edge. This time she has several of the blazing torches, *m, n*, which she carries across the sky. Her many camps in the east are at *p, p*, etc. (lower edge).

The white oval, *h* (upper centre), is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, with his torches, shown as a series of radiating lines. Crescent, *g*, is the waxing, *f*, the waning moon, and the three adjacent squares, *e, e, e*, are places in the east where the moon-man made his camps. The cross-hatched areas, *p, k*, etc., indicate the men of the Milky Way, *Maludaiaini*, and the groups of dots, such as *t*, the star-women, *Tapalingas*. At *o* (upper right) is an unidentified celestial tree.

Pl. 60A, B, pictures two suns, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*,[50] the moon, *Tjapara* and the stars, *Tapalinga*.

One of the sun-women, *Wuriupranala*, is shown at *f* (upper edge) the circle of radiating lines, *g*, symbolizing the flames of her bark torch. At *h*, on the bottom of the painting, is the other sun-woman, *Murupiangkala* with her bark torch, *j*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, is at *b*, his head at *e*, his shoulders at *c*, and his genitals at *d*.

The oval at *k* (upper right), is a mountain in the east from the top of which *Wuriupranala* or *Murupiangkala* alternately set out on their daily journey across the sky. The white oval at *l* (upper left) indicates the mountain on the western horizon where the sun-women rest for a while before they travel to the Kumpinulu lagoon, and prepare and eat their meal before returning to the east via the underground road, *m* (upper left).

The designs on the lower edge of the painting deal with the journey of the sun-woman, *Murupiangkala*; the white design *o*, is the mountain in the east from which she sets out on her journey across the sky; *p* represents the mountain in the west where she finishes her journey.

At *a, a*, etc., are the wives of *Tjapara*, the planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. Black ovals, *z, z*, are dark-coloured rain clouds, and ovals, *q, q*, clouds reddened by sunrise and sunset light. The dots are the star-women, the *Tapalingas*, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

Pl. 63A, B, deals with the sky journey of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

[50] The artist claimed that two sun-women travelled alternately across the sky. This, however, was not the dominant belief. [184]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 At *c*, is the sun-woman with her *imunka* (life essence) (see Pl. 61A, 2).
821 Her palm-leaf baskets are at *u* and *r* (left); her hair-string belts at *k*, *v*
776 (bottom); a dingo-skin hair ornament is at *s* (left), and her head at *m* (top
773 left).

The place where the sun woman appears above the eastern horizon is indicated at *f* (bottom) with her mid-day camp at *g*. There she makes a fire, *e* (the four radiating lines being the firewood), and cooks the food she has collected during the morning. Black rain clouds are indicated at *d*, and a thin cloud, which partly obscures the sun, at *h*.

The upper section of the painting deals with the evening camp *o*, of the sun-woman. Her fire and firewood are at *p*, *q*.

At *n*, on the upper left, is the daughter of the sun-woman (an unidentified star), the central dot at *m*, symbolizing her eye.

The Moon-man, Tjapara

773 At the conclusion of the fight between the moon-man, *Tjapara* and *Purukupali*, during creation times, the moon-man went up to the sky, bearing on his face the wounds he received at the hands of *Purukupali*.[60]

It was then *Purukupali* decreed that the whole of creation once dead, would remain dead for ever. However, *Tjapara*, the moon-man, partly escaped that
821 decree, for, although he dies for three days every month, his life is eternally
776 renewed.

As soon as *Tjapara* comes to life, he eats huge meals of the flesh of the mangrove crabs, which makes him grow fat and round at the end of a fortnight. However, this food makes him so ill that he sickens and dies.

The aborigines look upon the thin crescent of the waning moon as the skeleton of *Tjapara*,[61] and the body of the moon (visible by earth shine) as his spirit, *imunka*.

During his daily journey across the sky, the moon-man follows the same path as the sun-woman. He, however, carries a much smaller torch.

At one time the moon-man used to return to the east by a road just under the southern horizon. But a nest of hornets, which lived along that road, stung him so badly that he changed his path and now returns to his home by a northern route.[62]

The moon has four wives who live in the sky with him. They are the

[60] See p. 29 for details of the fight between *Purukupali* and *Tjapara*.

[825] [61] A larval form of one of the cockroaches which curls up into an almost complete circle, is called *Tjaparalinga*, the son of the moon.

[184] [62] Most informants, however, said that the moon returned to the east through the same underground world as the sun-woman.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. My informants were certain, however, that *Tjapara* had many more wives in his eastern camp. 776 821

When a ring forms around the moon, during moist weather, the aborigines believe the moon-man is taking part in a *kulama* ceremony. The ring is the mound of earth around the ceremonial circle, the *milimiko* (p. 134), inside of which a multitude of star people are dancing and singing the *kulama* songs.

Two bark paintings illustrate the myth of the moon, Pl. 61C, D, and Pl. 62D. 532x 821

On Pl. 61C, D, one side of a *pukamani* basket illustrates the moon and the clouds. 776 [773]

In the centre, at *b*, is the crescent moon, *Tjapara*, the black oval, *a*, indicating his genitals. The monsoon clouds, *ngurupitjina* (cumulus-nimbus) of the wet season are indicated by the six black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., and cumulus clouds, *kumbaresina*, by the three circles on the left-hand side at *e*, *e*, *e*. The older aborigines referred to these clouds as hills in the sky. The intersecting lines, *d*, *d*, etc., are "young" cumulus clouds, which, when they appear in the sky at the beginning of the wet season, remind the natives it is time to search the trees of the forest for the hives of the wild bees.

The surface of the ground is indicated by the long rectangle, *g*, on the lower edge, and the place of the stars, by the groups of dots at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 62D pictures the moon-man, *Tjapara*, and his many wives.

The central circle is the full moon, the lighter coloured crescents and ovals being the white clouds that sometimes obscure the moon at night; the dark-coloured, but similar designs are the clouds made yellow with the sunset light. The white circles are the planets, the wives of the moon man, and the dots, the stars, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

The Moon and the Stars

Pl. 62C is a painting of the night sky. The crescent, *b*, is the new moon, *Tjapara*, and the white vertical panel, the road, along which he travels. 532x 821

The larger circle on the right hand of the painting represents the morning star, probably Venus, and that on the left, the evening star. The many smaller circles are unidentified stars in the night sky. These are the wives of the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaiminii*.

The Men of the Milky Way

In creation times, certain men, the *Maludaiminii*, although each had many wives, were always sneaking off into the jungle with the wives of other men. 773

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 This behaviour led to a great deal of trouble, developing later into a fight in which many of the *Maludaianini* men were wounded.

After that fight, the *Maludaianini* men rose into the sky and became the Milky Way; their wives were turned into stars.

776 821 When the sun-woman sinks beneath the western horizon, and the light from the blazing torch leaves the sky, the *Maludaianini* travel in a long line across the firmament (similar to the processional caterpillars at the beginning of the wet season), visiting their wives, the stars, as they go.

[827] Early in the evening the men of the Milky Way rub their hands over their bodies to remove the dried perspiration. This dried perspiration, falling on the eyelids of the aboriginal people, make them heavy with sleep.[65]

x 532 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60D, Pl. 62A, and Pl. 63C, illustrate the myth of the men of the Milky Way.

776 821 The black bars between *c*, *c*, and *c*, *c*, Pl. 60D, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*; the white disc, *a*, being their camp, while similar white designs, *b*, *b*, indicate the camps of their star wives.

The central white panel, *d*, is the Milky Way; the dark squares, *e*, *c*, etc., are the red clouds at sunrise and sunset, the dark-coloured vertical panels on either side of *d*, white cumulus clouds at night, and the six black discs, dark-coloured clouds, in the night sky.

Pl. 62A is another painting of the Milky Way. The circles with the radiating lines are the camp fires of the stars, the background being the shadows cast by those fires. The Coal Sack in which there are no fires, is the camp of the star women.[66]

The lighter panels, leading from the upper left to the lower right, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, the darker panels, from upper right to lower left, indicate the night sky.

Reading from the left on the lower edge, panels one, three and five symbolize cumulus clouds, *Kumbaratina*, of the night sky, and two, four and six, unidentified clouds, called *aratinia*.

The dotted panels on Pl. 63C represent the men of the Milky Way, the barred panels, the "roads", i.e., dark spaces, in the galaxy, and the five horizontal panels, eucalyptus trees in the firmament.

[855] [65] The aboriginal women, to the accompaniment of a lullaby, send their children to sleep by rubbing their fingers together above the face of the child in the same manner as the *Maludaianini* do in the sky.

[66] The Coal Sack is visible at Melville Island only during the hot "wet" season, i.e. from November to March. This had given rise to the belief that the star-women, who make their camp within that heavenly spectacle, do not need fires. The same belief accounts for the fact that, within the Coal Sack there are no stars (the camp-fires of the star-women).

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

Orion and the Pleiades

Pl. 62a illustrates the myth of Orion and the Pleiades. In the astronomical myth Orion, *a*, is a pack of dingoes, called *daiimini*, who are for ever chasing the *Pleiades*, *b*, a group of wallabies, *karaku*. 532x 776 821 [773]

The black vertical lines on either side of *a*, and *b*, starless spaces in the Milky Way, *Maludaianini*, are the trunks of celestial bloodwood trees; the short lines at right-angles, their limbs, and the dots on the background, the many spider-webs on their branches.

The large outer ovals, unidentified parts of the Milky Way, are patches of bare and grass-covered land of the sky, and the eight discs on the insides of the ovals, some of the larger stars.

Discussion

There is a wide difference between the astronomical myths of Melville Island and those of the adjacent mainland. Nor do the Melville Islanders have such a detailed knowledge of the night sky as the tribes of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 479). This fact suggests, as do other aspects of the culture, that the natives of Melville Island have been isolated from the mainland cultures for a long time. 171 773 821

The effects of this isolation are most evident in two of the sky myths, i.e., the Milky Way, and the constellations of Orion and the Pleiades.

Throughout Australia, with few exceptions, the Milky Way is looked upon as a celestial river, along which the sky people travel in their canoes, and gather their food (Mountford, 1956, p. 491). No trace of this widespread myth is present on Melville Island, the Milky Way being a multitude of caterpillar men, the *Maludaianini*.

Similarly with Orion and the Pleiades. In the Australian mainland myths, Orion is a man or men, and the Pleiades, a group of women, more often than not, the wives of the men of Orion.

In the place of this widespread myth, the Melville Islanders look upon the stars of Orion as a group of dingoes chasing the Pleiades, a mob of wallabies.

Even in the myth of the moon-man, there is a reversal of the adjacent Arnhem Land beliefs. In Arnhem Land, it was the moon who brought death to the world (Mountford, 1956, p. 495; Warner, 1937, p. 523). On Melville Island, it is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, who tries to stop *Purukupali* from imposing death on all living creatures.

CONCLUSION

105 171 THIS study of the Tiwi tribe of Melville and Bathurst Islands, made through the medium of their art, their myths, and their ceremonies, reveals wide differences between many phases of their cultural life and that of the aborigines who live on the adjacent mainland. These differences are probably the result of isolation caused by the dangerous tideways which have separated the two peoples from each other for an unknown, but probably lengthy, period.

Though both are of aboriginal stock, and from the same cultural back-
[174] ground (as indicated by basically similar creation stories), this isolation has allowed the two groups to develop independently. It may well be that the beliefs of the Tiwi represent those of one of the aboriginal migrations to Australia, and has remained somewhat constant, while the mainland people, enriched by occasional waves of new ideas, have developed a much more varied philosophical and cultural life.

The main differences between the two cultures can be summarized as follows:

171 x532 (a) The art forms of the Melville and Bathurst Islands are so highly formalized that they seldom resemble the objects they represent. In contrast, the art of their neighbours on the mainland, the Arnhem Land aborigines, is not only entirely representational, but is probably a more vital and colourful art than exists in any other part of the continent.

171 765 (b) Compared with the rest of Australia, too, the ceremonies of the Tiwi are particularly limited, there being only two in the whole culture. The major ceremony, that of burial, is by far the more elaborate. It extends over several months, involves the co-operation of many people, and provides the tribe with a complete outlet for their grief, their music, their dancing, and their art. This ceremony is without parallel in Australia, and, so far as we know, elsewhere in the world.

171 881 The other ceremony, the Kulama, is a blending of several rituals: the initiation of men and women into the social grades of the tribe; the ceremony of preparing a poisonous yam for food,[88] which ceremony the participants believe prolongs the wet season; and the airing of grievances

[88] Spencer, 1928, p. 661, speaks of the Kulama as a food increase ritual. It is probable
[114] that Spencer was only expressing an opinion, having previously carried out research in Central Australia where increase rituals are both numerous and important. I did not obtain any evidence which indicated that food increase rituals were carried out by the Tiwi.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

without quarrels. Again, there is no comparable ceremony on the mainland. 171 [881]

(c) Throughout the mainland of Australia, women occupy a low social status within the tribal framework. They are rigidly excluded from almost all aspects of the ceremonial life, and of initiation; they also are ignorant of most of the creation myths, the procedures of the secret rituals, and even the existence of the sacred objects. 171 562

These restrictions do not apply to the women of the Tiwi. They are initiated, side by side, with the men, and take similar though not identical parts in the ritual. They also participate in all phases of the burial ceremonies, at which they usually perform their own dance, the *Amburu*, but occasionally take part in dances which are performed by the men (Pl. 25c). A woman even has the right to cut and paint a burial pole, if her husband, who has been allotted the task, is unavoidably absent. In short, I was unable to find any aspect of Tiwi ceremonial life in which women could not take their part if they so desired.

(d) Although the creation story of the Tiwi is basically similar to that of the aborigines elsewhere in Australia, it is not as elaborate as, say, the travels of the Wawalik and the Djunkgao Sisters of Arnhem Land, recorded by Warner (1937), nor those of Central Australia, described by Spencer and Gillen (1899). I did not witness, nor did I hear of any specific Tiwi ceremony that commemorated the myths of the creation period. The dances in the *ilanias*, and the final rituals of the burial ceremony, usually referred to the various creatures or the elements, but seldom to an incident in the creation myth. 171 773 [535]

(e) There are also important differences between many of the myths of the Tiwi and those of the mainland people. For instance, in northern Australia, it is the moon man who brings death to mankind; in Melville Island the same moon-man endeavours to prevent death from coming to the world. I have already pointed out other wide differences between the astronomical myths of the mainland and those of the adjacent Melville Island.

On Arnhem Land, in fact, as far as South Australia, the aborigines, almost without exception, believe that their spirits go to a distant land not visible to human eyes, where there is continuous good weather, and an abundance of easily gathered food. 171 775

On the other hand, the Tiwi believe that at the close of the burial rituals the spirits of their dead return to their separate birthplaces, where each one hunts for food in the same manner as its living relatives, suffering, as they do, from exposure if the weather is inclement, and from hunger if the food supplies are limited.

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411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly
412 limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe
[177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of
[415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the
[245] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[46]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[114] [46] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This
[173] information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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113

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

INDEX

Ancestors, totemic, 56–7
Art, 19–22
Artists, *Ildiffarmeri*, 21; *Mahumerinia*, 21; *Pukumbowi*, 21; *Tjamalampua*, 21
Astronomy, 170–7; *see also under* Bark paintings

Bark paintings, 19; artists, 21; body scars, 168; brushes, 20; burial poles, 33, 107–18; colours, 20; decorations for burial ceremony, 81; fixatives, 20; unidentified, 169
ASTRONOMY: lightning-woman, *Bumerali*, 44; Milky Way, *Malukinini*, 175; moon-man, *Tjapara*, 174; Orion, *Dalimini*, and Pleiades, *Kerake*, 177; sky and upper world, *Tuniruna*, 172; sun-woman, Wuriupranala, 172; thunder-man, *Pakedinga*, 44
CREATION STORY, *see also* Drawings, crayon: burial ground of *Purukupali*, 32; death of *Purukupali*, 30; journey to *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, 31; *pukamini* of *Purukupali*, 31; salmon-man, at *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, 168
FAUNA: barramundi, *alaminga*, 166; goanna, 165; jelly-fish, *indringa*, 166; saw-fish, *jidani*, 166; sea-creatures, 165; sea-turtles, 165; snakes, 165; sponges, 166
FLORA: edible jungle fruits, 166; eucalyptus forest, 167; forest, Curtis Haven, 168; honey-bearing trees, 167; jungle at Imilu, 167; jungle trees, 167; poisonous yams, 167
SEA AND SWAMP LANDS: Mangrove swamp, 164; ocean floor, 163; salt-water creek, 164; sea and mangrove swamps, 164; sea and seashore, 163; sea-coast, Cape Van Diemen, 164
SPIRIT PEOPLE, *see also* Drawings, crayon: meteor-man, *Papinjuturis*, 145; *Ningauis*, 124; *Paramanuas*, 150; spirit-children, *Pitipitais*, 146; spirit of dead, *Mapaditis*, 61; rainbow, *Marapi*, 154; — at Goose Creek, 159; — at *Kulimbini*, 158; —at Maundu, 157
TOPOGRAPHY: Biru Creek, 167; Cape Van Diemen, 160; Imilu, Cape Van Diemen, 161; lagoons and swamps, 162; Punata, Garden Point, 161; Snake Bay, 161; Western Bathurst Island, 163
TOTEMIC ANCESTORS: bamboo-woman, *Kaialili*, 56; blow-fly woman, *Mandukuka*, 57–8; bush-fire woman, *Puruliangkala*, 51; cat-fish woman, *Pirilowkala*, 45; crocodile-man, *Jirakupai*, 27; — woman, *Wilinduela*, 46; eucalyptus-tree woman, *Aragoutourina*, 49; — *Imburai-inga*, 48; — *Mantinuria*, 55; — *Matingalia*, 51; — *Mudungkala*, 54; — *Pungulu*, 49; — *Timarai-inga*, 49; fish-woman, *Wuringa*, 45; flying-fox man, *Murungimpili*, 56; fork-tailed kite-man, *Mudaii*, and dingo-woman, *Kirijuna*, 55; freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, 42; frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, 43; hawk-billed turtle-woman, *Garagalini*, 39; honey-eater man, *Tukimbini*, 38; logger-head turtle-woman, *Ringa*, 46; March-fly woman, *Kudjatumpi*, 58; pandanus-tree woman, *Miatrina*, 53; red-ochre woman, *Numanirakala*, 47; sand-fly woman, *Mandukuka*, 51; spider-woman, *Baraka*, 47; sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, 40; white-cockatoo woman, *Milapukalu*, 53; yam people, *Tililindigia*, and *Ulunu*, 53
Basedow, Herbert, 19, 92, 108
Berndt, Ronald, 20, 23
Bremer, Sir Gordon, 13, 107
Bonython, John, 12
Brown, H. Y. L., 112

000

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

000

Burial, 63–7; of *Nulaiai*, 63–7; of *Wanimpori*, 64–5

Campbell, Major, 13, 19, 108
Canoes, bark, 16; — wooden, 16; disposal after death, 65
Carved and painted figures, 20, 118; function of, 120; origin of, 119
Catcheside, Patricia, 12
Coon, Dr. Carleton, 15, 89
Cooper, Joe, 13, 180
Ceremony, KULAMA: 21, 122–43; beliefs about deserted oven, 142; collecting edible yam, 130; collecting *kulama* yam, 133; cooking *kulama* yam, 137; cutting up *kulama* yam, 138; dances, 137, 139; decoration of performers, 129; eating cycad fruit, 129; eating edible yams, 131; eating *kulama* yams, 142; grades of initiation, 127; immersion of *Marukumunis* and *Wadjeniasis*, 135; *Kilipaniasis*, 138; lighting ceremonial fire, 136; *Marukumunis*, 128, 129, 130; *Mikinatrinas*, 139, 140–1; mythological origins, 123, 124; opening rituals, 132; placing uncooked yams in water, 135; placing cooked yams in water, 140; periods of initiation, 127; preliminary rituals, 128; preparing ceremonial ground, 134; quarrelling forbidden, 133; *Wadjeniasis*, 130, 139
PUKAMUNI: 19, 21, 60–122; burial, 64–5; ceremonial fight, 72, 77, 79; erection of poles, 87; final, 81–92; feeding of workers, 72; fire-jumping, *waniatapinda*, 69, 73, 75, 77, 81, 83, 89, 91; function of, 60; *ilaniaz*, 68–81; myths, 30; of *Purukupali*, 30–5; payment of workers, 86, 90; *pumuni*, 73, 85; sending out message sticks, 74, 98; songs and dances, 70, 73, 74–5, 77–9, 80, 84, 90, 91–2; types of, 60
Creation period, 23–36

Daily, Brian, 15
Dances: *kulama* ceremony, 137, 139; *pukamuni*, 64–6, 70, 71, 73–5, 77, 80, 82, 84, 86, 90, 92, 93, 96
Dead, belongings of, 64, 66
Death and burial, 63; of *Nulaiai*, 63; of *Wanimpori*, 64
Drawings, crayon, spirit people: dead, *mapadisis*, 61; meteor-men, *Papinjuwaris*, 145; *Ningauis*, 126, 127; rainbow, *Marajji*, 158; *Paramanua*, 150–3; spirit children, *Pisipisis*, 304

Elkin, A. P., 23

Facial decorations: *kulama* ceremony, 93, 129, 133, 136, 139; *pukamuni* ceremony, 73, 92, 93
Fire, origin of, 25
Fixatives for painting, 20
Foelsche, P., 16
Fry, H. K., 15, 108, 122

Goodale, Jane, 12, 15, 60
Grave, customs associated with, 67; digging of, 64, 66; seclusion of, 68

Hair, method of colouring, 139
Harney, William, 12, 14, 60
Harney and Elkin, 15, 145, 149, 150, 155
Hart, C. W. M., 15, 16, 123
Hasluck, Paul, 12

Increase centre, absence of, 172

Joy, George, 12

King, Sir Philip, 13
Klaatsch, Herman, 108
Kulama sickness, *ta'ini*, 124, 134, 135

Life essence, *imunka*, 41, 173

Mawson, Sir Douglas, 12
Message sticks, 31, 98; function of, 98
Myths: ASTRONOMY: Coal Sack, 176; Milky Way, *Mahdaiaiai*, 32, 35, 36, 171, 175; moon-man, *Tjapara*, 29, 174; Orion and Pleiades, 177; stars, *Tapalinga*, 171; sun-woman, *Wurlupranala*, 24, 25, 26, 29, 35, 38, 40, 172

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CREATION PERIOD: black cockatoo-woman, *Narina*, 28; blanket-lizard, *Kilpurani*, 28; creation of Melville and Bathurst Islands, 24–5; creator-woman, *Mudungkala*, 24, 25; crocodile-man, *Jirakupai*, 26; crocodile-woman, *Wilinduala*, 25, 46; death of *Djinini*, 25, 29; death of *Purukupali*, 30; dingo-woman, *Kirijuna*, 56; fight between *Purukupali* and moon-man, *Tjapara*, 29; first inhabitants, 25; fish-men, *Pipinjawari*, 33; fork-tailed kite-man, *Mudati*, 27–8, 55; frog-woman, *Kwauk-kwauk*, 43; honey-eater, *Tukimkini*, 35, 36; honey people, *Talinini*, 30, 31; jabiru, *Tipurumdunga*, 26; lightning-woman, *Rumerali*, 43; message sticks, 31; monsoon-rain woman, *Tonituka*, 44; origin of death, 29; origin of fire and light, 26; plover, *Parubruma*, 28; sea-eagle, *Jirakasi*, 26; sea-osprey, *Purusi*, 26; thunder-man, *Pukadinga*, 43; turtle-woman, *Garagalani*, 31; turtle-woman, *Ringa*, 46; wedge-tailed eagle, *Jurumu*, 25–6, 27–8; working party for *pukamani* of *Purukupali*, 31

KULAMA: ceremony, 123, 124; *Ningauis*, 124

SPIRIT PEOPLE: children, *Pitipitinis*, 146; dead, *Mopaditis*, 61; meteor-men, *Papinjuwaris*, 144; *Paramanuas*, 150; rainbow, *Marotjis*, 154; sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, 154

UNIVERSE: 170; lower world, *Ilara*, 170; sky-land, *Jurukta*, 170; upper world, *Tamirama*, 171

National Geographic Society, 12
National Geographic Society Expedition, 13, 15

Objects, ceremonial, 97; arm ornaments, 97, 138; arm rings, 97; chest ornaments, 97; false beard, 97; goose-feather ball, 65, 97, 139; hair-string belt, 139; neck ornament, 97; ochre, 20, 47, 110, 113; painting tool, 98; scratching stick, 98, 130; spears, 98; throwing stick, 98; *see also* Poles

Parsons, David, 15
Pigments, used for painting, 20, 113
Pilling, Norman, 15
Poles, burial, 33, 67, 84, 87, 89, 91, 107–21; collected by Fry, 118; description of, 107–21; human-headed, 118; looked upon as family, 111, 115; material for decoration, 110; method of decoration, 110; method of manufacture, 109; miscellaneous, description of, 116; origin of, 109

Tasman, Abel, 13
Totem and totemic places, 36
Trans-Australian Air-lines, 12
Tribe, division of at pukamuni ceremony, 70
Truran, Jean, 12

Warner, Lloyd, 23

2: Mountford OI20 Tiwi OI20

885

[For material on adult initiation rites see category 881.]

2: Mountford
773, 778, 776, 821

OI20 Tiwi OI20

[Materials pertaining to these categories will also be found in category 532.]

2: Mountford OI20 Tiwi OI20
532

[Materials on representational art will be found in category 116, pp. 20, 23, 27, 30-32T, 33-35, 38-44A, 45-59, 63, 108-121, 125-127, 128A-144B, 145-146, 148-154B, 157-169.

Since much art relates to creation myths, totemic deities and sacred places, meteorological phenomena etc. for full explanation of these paintings categories 773, 776, 778, 821 and other 82 categories should be consulted.]

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[Title Page]

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

THE TIWI OF MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDS

By C. W. M. HART[1]

MELVILLE and Bathurst Islands lie off the north coast of Australia (3) some fifty to eighty miles north-east of Port Darwin. They are divided from the mainland by Dundas Straits, which at their narrowest part are about twenty-five miles wide, this being the approximate distance between the Vernon Group and Cape Gambier on Melville Island. The latter is the largest island in the Commonwealth of Australia with the exception of Tasmania, being some seventy miles long by forty miles wide, and containing about one and a half million acres. Bathurst Island is about one-third of that size, and is separated from its neighbour by Apsley Strait, which varies in width from about a quarter of a mile opposite the mission to two or three miles below Fort Dundas.

The first settlement in Northern Australia was made on Melville 175 Island at a spot named Fort Dundas in Apsley Strait. It was founded on the 26th September, 1824, by Captain Gordon Bremer, R.N., of H.M.S. *Tamar*, who had been specially sent from Sydney for the purpose. Chiefly owing to difficulties with the natives, the settlement was abandoned on 31st March, 1829, when the convicts, troops, stores, etc., were transferred to Fort Wellington, on the Coburg Peninsula of the mainland. To-day a few piles of stones and a dilapidated ramparted ditch are all that is to be seen of this outpost of empire.

From 1829 until 1911, when the Sacred Heart Mission Station was established on Bathurst Island, no permanent settlement was made on either of these islands, though they were visited from time to time, and various buffalo shooters and timber-getters resided there for varying periods, the best-known of them, R. J. Cooper, having lived on Melville (where his house still stands) from 1894 until 1914. At present Bathurst 648 Island is a native reserve with the missionaries as protectors, and hence

[1] This paper contains some of the results of research carried out as Science Research Scholar of the University of Sydney and with the aid of a grant from the Australian National Research Council. [122]

[P. 167]

648 has no other white inhabitants, while Melville is held under lease by the meat firm known as Vesteys Ltd., but has no permanent white inhabitants, though occasionally campers, beachcombers, and hunters from Darwin stay there for a few months.

177 All the earlier accounts lay stress on the ferocity and hostility of the
648 natives of these islands, but long albeit intermittent contact with the whites has tamed them. At the present time it is no exaggeration to say that except for the Larakia, who are almost extinct, no tribe in the Northern Territory has so assimilated white ideas or is so familiar with white men. A proof of this is afforded by the fact that members of this tribe are more in demand in Darwin as houseboys than members of any other tribe, simply because, as it is generally expressed, they have more "savvy," that is they are more intelligent and more adaptable to white conditions.

But while their proximity to Darwin and their long experience of white men have taught them much of our ideas and customs, the absence of a permanent white settlement in their country with its consequent massacres and epidemics has on the other hand prevented their numbers being depleted and their social organization being broken down. It is therefore still possible to obtain fairly full and satisfactory information about the life and culture of these islands as they were before white influence began.

181 The ferocity of these people, I am convinced, has been much exag-
648 gerated even by the earliest settlers. As a matter of fact their outstanding characteristic is not their fierceness but their sense of humour, as noted by Spencer. They are constantly laughing, even at the most solemn moments, and this applies to practically every man, woman and child on the island. I am inclined to think that their superior physique, which is very apparent, their huge spears—which incidentally they seldom use, except ceremonially—their striking method of painting their faces and their years of conflict with the Malays, which had accustomed them to stand and fight rather than to run at sight of a stranger, gained them in large part their evil reputation.

144 In physical appearance they are certainly Australoid, but the men are on the whole taller, sturdier and better proportioned than any of the mainland tribes. This is obvious even in Darwin, where it is an easy matter to pick out almost at a glance a member of the Tiwi. I agree
153 also with Sir Baldwin Spencer that they are superior to the mainlanders,

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

not only in physique but also in intelligence. I should be surprised to 153
find in any other Australian tribe a man with the intelligence and adaptability of my own head boy Mariano.

The flora and fauna of the two islands is very similar to that of the 133
rest of the Northern Territory. The country is mostly flat with a low range of rocky hills between Cape Gambier and Cape Keith on Melville Island, and a still lower range in the centre of Bathurst. The timber 137
consists of the usual Australian trees; gums, stringy-bark, woolly-butt, bloodwood and ironwood cover most of the two islands, broken here and there by patches of open grassland and in other places by dense patches of jungle where snakes and "devils" thrive and the natives seldom enter. Wallabies are extraordinarily plentiful, but there are no kangaroos. 136
Buffaloes are found on Melville in small numbers. These are the wild descendants of the domestic Indian buffaloes imported for agricultural purposes by the early settlers at Fort Dundas. At one time they had increased and multiplied to such effect that thousands were shot every year without any appreciable effect upon their numbers. At the present time, however, probably owing to many of the cows being killed, there are probably not more than a thousand on the island. The natives are seldom able to kill a buffalo though they realise the fact that it is good to eat.

Not only are wallabies plentiful, but there is also an abundant supply 262
of the other native articles of food, fish, crocodile, birds of all kinds, wild honey, yams and other native vegetables. As a result of this abundance 161
of foods, it would seem that the two islands had a greater density of population than is to be found in almost any other part of Australia.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The people inhabiting Melville and Bathurst Islands are subdivided 621
into a number of local groups. These local groups are the important sections of the population since they act as land-owning groups, war-making groups, have a solidarity of their own which is far stronger than any tribal solidarity that may exist and even to some extent regulate marriage.

Before considering these hordes in detail, however, something must 184
be said about the tribal name. All the hordes practise the same customs, 619
speak the same language and inter-marry. The boundaries of the people speaking this language are of course strictly defined by the sea. In other words, the people of Melville and Bathurst have a solidarity of their own,

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

184 they speak one language and they regard a certain defined area of land as
619 belonging to them.

[171] The Australian tribe is a collection of persons who speak a common
619 language, or what they themselves regard as such, practise the same
101 customs, and normally have a name by which they distinguish themselves and their language. The inhabitants of Melville and Bathurst Islands are therefore to be regarded as a single tribe, but it is difficult to find a true tribal name. The Uwaidja of Port Essington call the Melville Islanders, *Wuyuk*, as Spencer notes, but the Melville Islanders scarcely regard it as necessary to call themselves anything. The local group of
186 which a man is conscious of being a member is the horde, and until the
648 advent of the white man, the Melville Islander was not aware that any
101 other people existed except themselves. It was impossible and also quite unnecessary for them to visit the mainland in their bark canoes more especially as the coast around Cape Don and Cape Hotham, dimly seen
[725] on clear days, was regarded as the abode of departed souls, *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead. It was apparently just as impossible or unnecessary, or perhaps danger was the chief deterrent, for the Uwaidja or the Larakia to visit Melville Island.

The result was that the people, with no contact with people not of their own tribe, did not really need a tribal name, and very seldom used the word *Tiwi*, which is the only one that can be regarded as the name of the tribe.

101 Tiwi is a word that is known and but seldom used. Some of the younger men were in fact surprised and interested when they heard the old men using it in response to my enquiries. There is no question of secrecy or tabu about it. In common everyday use are the words *tini*, meaning a man of one of the Melville or Bathurst Island hordes, *i.e.*, a male member of the Tiwi, and *tiya* meaning a female member of the tribe. *Tiwi* is the plural form of *tini* and *tiya*. It is often said by informants that *tini* means a man, and *tiya* a woman, irrespective of colour or race, but in point of fact these words are only used as applying to members of the *Tiwi*, and some other word would be used in referring to a white man, or a Larakia or Uwaidja.

101 Objection may be made to the adoption as the tribal name of these
619 people of a word that theoretically at any rate seems simply "men" in the ordinary language. But in point of fact the word is never used except

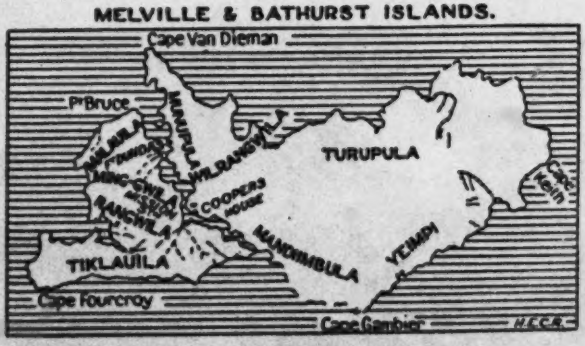
3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the same way as such words as Larakia, Worgaits, Uwaidja, etc., are 101
used. For example, if a Melville Islander at home is asked who a certain 619
group of natives are, he will reply in his own language that there are, *e.g.*, two *Tiklauila* and two *Munupula*, these being horde names. Ask him the same question in Darwin about another group and he will reply, *e.g.*, "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira Larakia*" (four Tiwi and two Larakia); he does not mean to insult the Larakia by denying them the status of men; he is merely applying the term *Tiwi* to men of his own tribe. Should he be uncertain of the tribe of the other, he will say "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira wanarui*" (literally "four Tiwi and two blackfellows"); *wanarui* being a term denoting black fellows as distinct from white men.

In other words, when at home on the Islands, a man thinks of himself as a *Tiklauila* or a *Munupula*, or whatever his horde may be, since there he feels strongly his bond of solidarity with the fellow members of his horde. When in contact with other tribes, however, as in Darwin, he thinks of himself as Tiwi, a member of a group which despite the divisions inside it, is nevertheless a group distinct from other tribes, and this seems quite an adequate reason for us to adopt Tiwi as the tribal name.

The hordes number nine, five on Melville and four on Bathurst Island. 101
This division is not strictly accurate, as may be seen from the accompany- 131
ing map; the *Malauila* territory, while mainly on Bathurst stretches across 621
Apsley Strait on to Melville, while a portion of Bathurst Island, including the site of the Mission Station, is *Mandiimbula* territory.

MELVILLE & BATHURST ISLANDS. [102]



MAP SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF THE TIWI HORDES

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

101 621 Like other concrete things in this culture, the hordes have a multiplicity of names, and this has caused a certain amount of confusion and doubt as to their actual number. A full list of these names is as follows. The name most commonly used in each case by the natives themselves is given first in each case, as these are the names used throughout this account of the Tiwi culture.

1. *Tiklauila*: *Arupula, Matjulauila, Muliuŋabila, Tuŋalimbila, Taiŋauila, Pilamirumtabila, Aritui, Wayiŋui, Adauinabila, Payondiŋaluwila, Pukuŋinabila, Primanduwila.*
2. *Wraŋgwila*: *Mungwaiunabila, Puiauarurwila, Tintauwila.*
3. *Miŋgwila*: *Wonuruwila, Kaliprauiŋuwila, Malamikwariuŋabila.*
4. *Malauila*: *Mirkalambila, Pulunduwila, Iwiriwila, Malamuyoriuŋabila, Papiuŋabila.*
5. *Wilraŋgwila*: *Panodjiwila, Mirkawiuŋabila, Marawauila, Kambuŋambila.*
6. *Munupula*: *Urumaiawila, Tunuŋabila, Imaluwila, Parumunupula.*
7. *Turupula*: *Yuŋanduwila, Tikampula.*
8. *Yeimpi*: *Arupontuwila, Araŋgitarila, Palwiuŋabila.*
9. *Mandiimbula*: *Tumulambila, Tilambila, Urumaiuŋabila, Uruwinapila, Ilubiuŋabila.*

101 114 621 If Spencer's list[1] is compared with mine it will be seen that allowing for our different spellings, his "Kambuambulla" are really the *Marawauila*, his "Cherupulla" are the *Turupula*, his "Purumunupulla" are really the *Munupula*, his "Mindaluulla" probably mean the *Miŋgwila*. "Ulobu" (or *Ilubi*) is a place-name of a favourite camping ground in the country of the Mandiimbula slightly to the north-west of Cape Gambier; hence *Ilubiuŋabila*. "Marungallambu" similarly is a camping ground in the territory of the *Malauila*. "Barranpunalli" I am unable to trace; *Punali* (or *Bunali*) is, however, the name for the district around the English Point Alley. "Arangijerulla" is an alternative name for the *Yeimpi*, but I prefer to spell it *Araŋgitarila*, while "Balauiungambulla" is obviously a misspelling of the *Palwiuŋabila*, which is another alternative name for the *Yeimpi*.

121 To explain this multiplicity of horde names, and also to throw some light on the actual composition of the horde, I propose to consider one of the hordes in detail, taking for this purpose the *Tiklauila*.

[1] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, 1914, page 43.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The territory of the *Tiklauila* is roughly contained in the area in the south of Bathurst Island, south of Point Hurd and west of *Mukambrimo*, which is a river about eight miles to the west of the mission station. In this area, roughly about two hundred square miles, there are a number of districts with specific names. Anyone familiar with the Australian blackfellow knows how certain districts are given certain names, and although no native can tell the exact boundaries, everyone in the tribe knows when he has come into one of these districts and when he has left it. The principle of differentiation of these areas seems to be upon the basis of the physical aspect of the country, a valley for example having a distinct name from either set of hills surrounding it, a plain being distinguished from a thickly-wooded piece of bushland on its margin, and so on. 361 621 103

These districts play an important part in Tiwi land ownership. Certain districts are not owned by the horde as a whole, but by a single family of that horde. Thus in the horde we are considering, *Tapio*, the extensive district in the extreme south-western corner of the island around Cape Fouveroy, is owned by a single set of men, all of whom are the son's sons of *Mikidjimirla*, a man who as far as can be judged died about 1870-1880. The basis of their title is the fact that *Mikidjimirla* died and was buried in the district, hence all the game and fruit in *Tapio* belong to them, and cannot be hunted or collected by anyone else without their consent. 423 [621]

The question immediately arises as to whether the mere burial of a man in a district gives his heirs property rights in that district. The Tiwi answer is that it always does if the man was sufficiently important. The man in question here, *Mikidjimirla*, was from all accounts one who left a deep impression on the society of his time both by his personality and by his prowess in warfare. More than that he left his mark on following generations by the number of children he had. At the present time, there are nine men, all grandchildren of *Mikidjimirla*, in whom the hunting and fruit-collecting rights of *Tapio* are vested, and these men and their families normally camp in *Tapio* and deny the right of other *Tiklauila* families to hunt there. This group has a solidarity of its own which is expressed by a name *Tapiauwila*, which is one of the alternative horde-names. It should be noted in this connection that the Tiwi name for father's father is *amini*, and the members of this group will frequently 423 425 554 423 613 [601]

423 refer to one another as *gia yirt'amini* (my "one grandfather") in preference
613 to *gi'iwuni* (my brother), or *gia kalipini* (my half-brother), which is the
601 normal term of address.

423 A member of another horde found trespassing upon the territory
685 of the *Tiklauila* would be killed immediately unless he had been invited for
609 a corroboree or some such festival. A member of the same horde who,
621 not belonging to the *yirt'amini* group, trespasses in *Tapio* would not be put to death, but he and his relatives would become embroiled in a serious quarrel with the group.

423 *Tapio* is the best example of this peculiar institution because being
613 in an out-of-the-way peninsula no one needs to go there except people
621 who have a right there. Consequently the *Tapiauwila* can exercise a much stricter supervision and hence as a matter of fact guard their rights more jealously than the people with such rights over districts that lie upon the main roads of the two islands. Nevertheless the whole of *Tiklaru* is divided into such districts and the whole of the *Tiklauila* into such *yirt' amini* groups.

Thus bordering on the *Tapiauwila* to the east, we find the *Arupula* who have similar hunting and food-collecting rights over *Arupi*, the coastal district in the middle of the south coast of Bathurst Island. The origin of their title is lost in obscurity inasmuch as nobody to-day knows who the ancestor was or exactly where is the grave that gave them such a right. Nor is the *Arupula* title respected as much as is the *Tapiauwila* partly because *Arupi* is crossed by several "high-roads"—notably the only road to *Tapio* from the east, and the *Wraygwila* road to the Mission Station —but even more because the present representatives of the *Arupula* are either uninitiated youths or peaceful old men.

423 This introduces what is perhaps the main factor in the perpetuation
628 of this institution—the power of the *yirt'amini* groups to enforce their
613 rights. The ownership of a particular territory by a horde and the
685 punishment of trespass upon it can always be enforced because there is always a certain number of fighting men in the horde. Hence horde-ownership is respected. In the *yirt' amini* group, however, periods frequently occur when the group is not strong enough to enforce its claims, and unless the claims are constantly brought under the notice of the rest of the horde they are ignored. The result is that unless the family gets a new lease of life by boys growing up into formidable warriors, such a

period is the prelude to the complete lapsing of the title to the district. 423
The prominent part played in this institution by the father's father and the 628
fact that most of the present districts held on such a title are held from the 613
father's father whereas comparatively few are held through an ancestor 685
(necessarily more remote) who has been forgotten, seems to indicate that *yirt' amini* holdings do not last more than three generations before they lapse for want of sufficient able-bodied men to enforce them.

It must not be imagined that the whole of Melville and Bathurst 423
Islands are divided into such holdings nor indeed that everyone in the tribe 613
belongs to such a group. The main obstacle to this lies in the self- 621
evident fact that if one's father's father dies in the territory of another horde, as must have quite frequently have happened in the days of marauding expeditions between hordes, there can be no such thing as a *yirt' amini* holding of the district wherein he died. Moreover there are numbers of the Tiwi whose fathers and grandfathers died young, and the essence of the system is that the grandfather should have been old enough to have sufficient male children and grandchildren to enforce the claim.

It can easily be seen from the above how it comes about that each horde has a number of names, since each one of the *yirt' amini* group-names 621
is liable to be applied to the whole horde merely by adding *-ila* or *-ula* to 101
the name of the district they control.

Spencer's list of horde names is at variance with mine, because he 101
did not realize this. Out of six men of the *Tiklauwila*, one might easily 114
get six different answers to his question as to their "country," each 103
giving the name of his *yirt' amini* group. It is quite possible that the 621
horde names that are used here—*Tiklauwila*, *Munupula*, etc.—are really *yirt' amini* names that have become extended to include a whole horde either by the identification of a very powerful *yirt' amini* group with a horde in the eyes of the rest of the tribe or by the former horde name becoming tabu and a *yirt' amini* name being substituted. This view is strengthened by the fact that in one or two of the hordes, the horde name is still in use as the name of a district. Thus whereas the whole of the territory of the *Wilraygwila* on the north of Melville is technically *Wilraygu*, the native name for Karslake Island, a small portion of that territory, is *Wilraygu*. Similarly *Malau* is a creek in the territory of the *Malauila* horde.

A man is born into the horde of his father. Should his father die and 591
his mother be taken by a member of another horde he goes with her, and [611]
WHILE THE WOMAN WILL ALWAYS BE LOOKED UPON 621
AS BELONGING TO HER FORMER HORDE, THE CHILD [768]
CHANGES HIS, TAKING THAT OF HIS STEPFATHER.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

541 while the woman will always be looked upon as belonging to her former
621 horde, the child changes his, taking that of his step-father. Very often
[882] when a boy is aged about 14 or 15 he is taken by his mother's brother of another horde to live with that horde for some years. Often he is initiated there and not quite so often he will spend the rest of his life there. It is no uncommon occurrence for a man to have spent his adolescent years in two or three different hordes in addition to the one into which he was born, always under the supervision of one or other of his classificatory mother's brothers. Two cases at least occurred in the last few years of young unmarried men who had been reared and initiated in one horde leaving that horde of their own free will and going to live permanently in another because they considered they had there more chance of obtaining a wife.[8]

On the other hand, a woman will usually be looked upon as belonging to the same horde all her life, even though she marries young and goes to live with another horde. To the tribe at large such a woman is for example a *Tiklawila*, though she has lived with the *Yeimpi* ever since her marriage, and her *Tiklawila* origin will never be forgotten.

As a result of these conflicting customs it is difficult to lay down any definite rule in regard to membership of the horde. The best generalization is perhaps to say that a woman retains all her life a connection with the horde into which she is born no matter where patrilocal marriage may lead her, while a man on the other hand belongs to whatever horde he is living with at the moment, this being normally but not at all invariably his father's horde.

TOTEMISM

614 The Tiwi have a system of matrilineal totemic clans. Each clan has a special relation to one or sometimes to two and in two instances to three species of natural objects. The members of the clan have a solidarity of their own, helping each other in tribal fights, speaking of each other as "brother" despite the variation in their actual blood relationship, and not marrying women of their own totem. There are,
101 however, few of the distinctive features of Australian totemism as known
614 from other parts of the continent. They eat their totem without any
771

[8] It was hardly a logical proceeding as one left the *Tiklawila* for the *Mumpula* and the other (quite independently) left the *Mumpula* for the *Tiklawila*.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

restriction; they have no ceremonies for the increase of the totem species.

Since the totem of a child is that of its mother it follows that the members of one totemic clan are found in different hordes, and inversely each horde contains persons of several totemic clans. Nevertheless each totem is associated in the minds of the natives with a particular locality or district. This association appears in the myths, there being a number of stories which connect particular natural species with particular localities. Thus each clan may be said to have its ancestral home or centre, but there is little or nothing of any feeling of reverence or ritual attachment to the home of one's totem. Taking it all in all Tiwi totemism does not amount to very much compared with the elaborate forms of totemism found in other parts of Australia.

The word for totem and totemic clan is *puksui*. But the same word means also "sun" and in addition "breath." The connection between these three concepts denoted by one word is not at all apparent.

The totems are grouped into three phratries. The term phratry is here used in the sense of an exogamous group containing a number of clans and not being a moiety. The phratries are unnamed. Should a man want to mention a phratry he will call it by the name of one of the totemic clans composing it. He will generally use the name of his own totem clan if his own phratry is in question, or that of the clan that is powerful in the phratry. Thus the phratry that I am calling Phratry 1, will more often be called *Tjilarui* than anything else because at the present time the *Tjilarui* clan is very numerous and many of them are the kind of people who are usually much in the public eye. For a similar reason Phratry 2 is more often called *Timiririqui* than anything else, and Phratry 3 is usually *Tokwombui*. There is a much stronger feeling of solidarity with one's clan than with one's phratry, which will perhaps explain that while the clan name is very important there seems no need, or much less need, for any specific name for the phratry.

A complete list of the clans and their totems is given below. Each clan name has three forms, masculine singular, feminine singular, and plural, and these are given in the list in this order.

Clan Name	Totems
Phratry 1.	
(*a*) *Tjilati, Tjilariya, Tjilarui*	jaberoo
(*b*) *Ariri, Arawidina, Arwudui*	mullet

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Phratry 1 (*continued*) Clan Name	Totems
(c) *Mandubani, Mandubuka, Mandubowi*	fly
(d) *Udugini, Uduna, Udunui*	crocodile
(e) *Milubruinila, Milubrukela, Milubruwila*	cockatoo
(f) *Mierdi, Mierdina, Mierdui*	pandanus
(g) *Tanikini, Taninka, Tanikui*	flying fox
(h) *Mutuninila, Mutungula, Mutunibila*	a fish
(i) *Timilani, Timiluka, Timilowi*	sand fly
Phratry 2.	
(a) *Timiririnini, Timiririna, Timiririnui*	woolly-butt tree
(b) *Yarinabila, Yarinabunela, Yarinabila*	red paint, sugar bag, (wild honey)
(c) *Orandjani, Orandjuka, Orandjowi*	stingray
(d) *Paroliuginila, Paroliuggula, Paroliuginila*	mud
(e) *Iliti, Ilitina, Ilitui*	*malikini* (a wild fruit)
(f) *Andjulini, Andjuluna, Andjului*	rain, turtle
Phratry 3.	
(a) *Tokwombini, Tokwombuna, Tokwombui*	a bird
(b) *Ariŋguinila, Ariŋguinela, Ariŋguwila*	stones
(c) *Pinaluwinila, Pinaluwinela, Pinaluwila*	wood
(d) *Walikuinila, Walikuinela, Walikuwila*	stars
(e) *Wirnigiti, Wirnigitiŋa, Wirnigitui*	bloodwood, *mipari* and a kind of fish.
(f) *Taparini, Taparina, Taparui*	moon
(g) *Djabijabini, Djabijabuna, Djabijabui*	march fly.

In reference to the list it must be pointed out that among the Tiwi there are two languages; one is used in common everyday conversation, and the other is a sacred language used on ceremonial occasions, in ritual songs and formulae. Most of the clan-names of the above list are words belonging not to the ordinary language but to the esoteric language. Such words would never be used in ordinary conversation *except as totemic names*. A bloodwood tree in ordinary speech is *urnalaka*, the wild plum is *malikini*, rain is *pakstirina*, the cockatoo is *ingaga*, trees are *tuka* and so on. Of the twenty-two clans nine are normally called by a word in use in the ordinary language; the other thirteen have names taken from the sacred language.

Sir Baldwin Spencer apparently failed to distinguish between the

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

sacred and the ordinary language, with the result that his list of Tiwi clans and their totems is confused and inaccurate.[4]

The Tiwi do not seem to associate very closely the totemic clan and the object that is the totem of the clan. For instance a man of the *Udunui* considers himself as *Udunini*, not as a crocodile, which he normally thinks of as *irungrabai*. The bond of solidarity is between one member of the clan and another rather than between a member of the clan and his totem.

So much is this the case that it is occasionally difficult to ascertain what is the natural object which gives the clan its name, *i.e.*, what is the totem of the clan. The *Ariŋgwila* are a case in point. In order to find what natural object was the emblem of this clan recourse had to be had to a few old men of the clan who were apparently the only people in the tribe who knew what natural object was the emblem of the *Ariŋgwila*. Everyone knew that a number of men, women and children were *Ariŋgwila*, thought of them and referred to them as *Ariŋgwila*, but very few members of the community connected them in any way with stones—" any kind of stones"—which according to these old men, are the *Ariŋgwila* totemic emblem.

With regard to the origin of the totemic clans and their names the natives say that the system of *pukui* was instituted by the old men a very long time ago. One old man said at some time in the distant past " *Udunui nia pukui kapi Primandua*—Udunui is my totem at Primandua," and so everyone knew his totem was *udunui*. Knowing their legends everyone knew the connection between *Udunui* and *Primandua* since it is at this place, a district in Bathurst Island, that *Munutuni*, the father of all crocodiles, still has his home. Another old man decided upon *mandubani* as his *pukui* because his favourite camping ground was at *Pripanjimili* which has a mythological association with *mandubuka* (the sand fly), such association being founded no doubt on the fact that sand flies breed in great numbers in the mangrove swamps of that region.

The *Ariŋgwila* (the stone totem) are closely associated with a famous rock in *Miŋgu* called *Wurukwompi* which, due no doubt to a hollow interior, gives forth a roll like thunder when beaten with a stick and hence is a sacred object to the natives. The former home of the *Ariŋgwila* is in the

[4] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, page 200.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 vicinity of this rock, so the legend runs, and they are often called the *Wurukwompila*.

The *Timiririyui* are said to have come originally from a small island off the coast of *Wrayju* where the *timiririya* (woolly-butt tree) is especially prolific due to the fact that it was here that *Prondupu*, the original mythological woolly-butt, settled after the battle at *Tanio* between the animal-men.

So the story goes on throughout the list of totems. It is not a myth properly so called since mythological figures are in it only incidentally. As told by the Tiwi it is a rationalized explanation on a basis of local geography and the desires of old men generations ago.

162 614 The clans vary greatly in size. The largest clan, *Mierdui*, numbers 132 persons whereas the *Parolinjibila* has only six and the *Taparui* only two. The distribution of the population amongst the clans and the hordes will be dealt with in a later paper in which the results of a census of the Tiwi population will be given.

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4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[Title Page]

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 0120 Tiwi 0120

PERSONAL NAMES AMONG THE TIWI[1]

By C. W. M. HART

[171] 551 THE Tiwi, who inhabit Melville and Bathurst Islands in North Australia, are in many respects unlike the other Australian peoples. So little is known, however, about the subject of personal names among Australian tribes that it is impossible to say whether in this respect also [121] they are atypical. Among the Tiwi at any rate personal names and the customs attaching to them play a very important part in the life of the tribe, and in this paper an attempt is made to describe this element of their culture and to explain it.

Every member of the Tiwi has not one name but many, each of which belongs to him or her alone and each having an equal validity as a term of address or of description, though naturally some are used more frequently than others. This is to say, although a man with five different names may be addressed or referred to by any one of those five names, nevertheless the normal thing is for one name to be much more generally used than any of the others, it being for a native, as for us, much easier to think of a person by a single name than by several.

553 602 The multiplicity of names is accounted for by the fact that quite a number of the relatives have the right to bestow names upon a new-born child and a certain proportion of them will always exercise that right. The father may always bestow names upon his own children, and the father's brothers, who are of course the classificatory fathers of the child, have the same power. The mother's brothers may also bestow names upon a child, should they so desire, and less frequently children will be found bearing names given to them by the older men of their own totem clan, that is not only the mother's brothers but also other

[122] [1] This paper, which was presented to Section F, Anthropology, of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science at the Brisbane Meeting, May 1930, contains part of the results of research carried out in 1928 and 1929 as Science Research Scholar of Sydney University, and with the aid of a grant from the Australian National Research Council.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

relatives of the mother, such as the mother's mother's brother. The Tiwi have matrilineal totemic clans. 553 602

Names are seldom bestowed upon an individual by women; the only female relative having that power is the actual mother's mother. A mother is never in any circumstances allowed to name her own child. The reason for this is fairly obvious. The naming of children is a ritual affair, and as such is more or less forbidden to the women, for although their exclusion is not nearly so strict as in some other parts of Australia, they do not, among the Tiwi, take very much part in ritual affairs. The mother's mother, however, stands in a rather privileged position to her daughter's child. She is of the same totem and is normally a very old woman, and to a certain extent appears to become a symbol of the clan for her daughter's son. A boy, for example, will strongly resent and often endeavour to revenge any insult to his mother's mother, even if it means taking up arms against his own father. For example, during my stay a boy of twelve abused his father and quitted his father's camp for over a month because in a fight between hordes his father had injured the boy's mother's mother's brother. There was no particular respect or regard for the latter individual on the part of the boy, but the injury was a grave insult to his mother's mother. [603] [562] 603

It must also be understood that it is impossible for any two people to have the same name. Should a father inadvertently bestow upon his child a name already in use he is guilty of a gross breach of etiquette, and to prevent such a possibility a man will refrain for a long time from coining a name until he is fairly certain that the one he decides upon is neither already in use nor was held by any person recently dead. Although the Tiwi number nearly eleven hundred people at the present time, and each one of these has on an average three names, a careful study of these three thousand three hundred names fails to reveal any two as being identical. 551 [161]

By the time that a child reaches puberty he is the possessor of several names since by then some at least of the people entitled to bestow names upon him will have exercised that privilege. In exceptional cases he may have six or seven names though sometimes only one. All of these will have been known at some time or other to the tribe at large, though it is usually possible to get a full list of a person's names only from that individual himself or his father or mother.

It is not at all unusual in primitive societies for the death of a man to

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

551 render his name tabu. This is the case among the Tiwi. All the names of a dead man become strictly *pukimani* (=tabu) immediately upon his death. Anyone in the tribe who uses a name of a dead person at any time for years after his death but especially in the period—usually about five to six months—that always elapses between the death and the funeral corroboree, violates one of the strictest social sanctions the tribe possesses.
192 And this prohibition extends to all words in the ordinary language—
551 though curiously enough not in the sacred language—which bear any
765 resemblance in sound to any one of the names of the dead man. It applies equally to English names in use by the tribe with resemblances to native or English words and to native words which resemble either English or native words. Thus a boy named *Tipuki* having died "tobacco," "baccy," *Tiparkitimiri* all equally became *pukimani*. Similarly when *Mulankina*, one of the Mandeimbula horde died, *mulikina*, one of the commonest words in the language, meaning "plenty," "full," "enough," was dropped completely from the language.

551 Nor does the *pukimani* stop here. Not only is the use of any of the
553 names of the dead man prohibited, but there is an equally strong rule against the use of any of the personal names he has bestowed upon other people, be they his own children or the children of others. A young child may only have one name, that given him by his father, but should his father die he must become nameless until he gets a new name from somewhere. This aspect of the *pukimani* does not extend to similar words in either the ordinary or the sacred language. For instance although
[192 765] *Tambu*, a proper name bestowed by an old man became *pukimani* on the latter's death, the ordinary word *tamu* (imperative form of verb 'to sit down') was not affected.

582 On account chiefly of the extreme form of polygyny practised by the
595 Tiwi whereby most of the girls and young women belong to a comparatively few old men, the father of a family is almost invariably much older than his wife. While a woman goes to live with her husband at about the age of 13, a man is lucky to get his first wife under the age of 35. It follows that in the great majority of cases the father of children dies
587 long before the mother. Therefore as a woman without a husband is unknown amongst the Tiwi, a woman passes through the possession of quite a number of different men during her lifetime and does not remain in an unmarried state for more than a day or two. A widow

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

normally gets a new husband as soon as her previous husband is dead, 587
frequently on the same day. Certainly she does not remain single for more than a week, save in exceptional circumstances as when the man to whom by common consent of the horde she is to pass, is absent. She will then remain with her brothers or with the other wives of her husband-elect until his return.

It can now be seen whence the people with tabued names derive their 553
new names. A child who is nameless because his father has died and there- 587
by rendered *pukimani* those names which he has given the child, gets a new name immediately from the new husband of his mother. It is important to notice that this new husband renames not only the children of the recently dead man by his new wife, but all her children no matter who may have been their father.[8]

These newly acquired names then become the ordinary names of the individuals concerned and are retained until the new husband in turn dies, when once more the names are changed by the next husband of the mother. Thus it is literally true that no one has a permanent name until the death of his mother.

The names themselves are rather interesting. With a few exceptions 551
they can be classified into groups by their endings. A full list of these groups is hardly important enough to warrant inclusion here, and a few examples will suffice. The commonest ending of all is *-miri* as in such names as *Timatalotimiri*, *Pripanyimiri*, *Tipilamberanitimiri*. This is distinctly a masculine ending. There is a corresponding feminine suffix *-mo*, *Kidjibongkimo*, *Munilatimo* being examples.

These suffixes *-miri* and *-mo* are the only two with a definite signification of sex; the others are indeterminate. For example, *Ilimatirimiini* is a man while *Punilantamiini* is a woman. Similarly with *Pripanyimirli* who is a man and *U-lau-undimirli* who is a woman.

To understand the coining of the names it must be understood that 198
amongst the Tiwi there are two languages, one the ordinary language in 192
everyday use, the other a sacred language used only in ceremonies, songs and ritual formulae. The latter is composed entirely of words that

[8] Thus A marries B who has children M and N by the recently dead X, and older children P and Q by T who died years before. When X married B he renamed P and Q, and now on X's death A proceeds not only to rename M and N but also to rename P and Q once more.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

198 apparently were once part of the ordinary language but by reason of their
192 becoming *pukimani* by one of the methods mentioned above have been dropped completely from everyday use and retained only in the memory of the older people until they are brought out again in some new song or substituted in the ordinary language for some word newly prohibited. The meaning then has to be explained to the younger people who have been born since the word formed part of the ordinary language.

It can easily be understood that in this mass of words handed down orally for centuries there are a number retained of which the meanings have been lost. For example it is quite impossible to obtain a word for word translation of any initiation song of the Tiwi, numbers of words being introduced which are totally meaningless alike to the singer, the maker of the song and to the audience. These words correspond to some extent to the "tra-la-la" or other nonsense syllables frequently found in modern American popular songs, being introduced to provide the correct rhythm or metre, to echo the sense of the song or for some conventional reason, certain meaningless words being exclusively found associated with other words, the meaning of which is known.

551 One of the favourite methods of coining names is to select one of these meaningless words and add one of the nominal suffixes mentioned above to it. Thus *matirandjiŋili* is a word frequently used in songs, the meaning of which is obscure. *Materandjiŋimirli* is, however, a proper name.

Place names are sometimes added to by a suffix or otherwise changed to become proper names. Thus *Pripanyimili*, a district of South Bathurst, gives *Pripantimiri* a masculine name; *Poru*, the district opposite the mission station, gives rise to *Porutimiri* a male name and *Porutimiu* a female name. (It should be noted that there is no connection between such a name and the district of origin or residence of the person bearing the name.)

428 The commonest method of all is for the name to descend in the direct
553 male line. That is, after the death of the father one of his sons (usually but not invariably the eldest) disregarding the name bestowed upon him by his mother's new husband, allows a sufficient time to elapse for the tabu to lose its efficacy and then assumes his father's name. This is done either of his own volition or by the older men of his horde who were the contemporaries of his father adopting the practice of using his

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

father's name towards him and thus implying their approval of his taking 428
that name. To select one example—there is at present in the Tiklowila 553
horde a man *Pwandjilora* whose father was also a *Pwandjilora* who died about fifteen years ago. His father in turn was also a *Pwandjilora*, who is only remembered by the very old people of the horde.

This succession of names also takes place though to a very much lesser degree in the female line, that is from mother to daughter.

It must not be thought, however, that there is any such thing as 424
private ownership of names by a family. A man but distantly related to 553
Pwandjilora II would be quite at liberty to bestow that name upon one of his children were it not already in use and had a sufficient time elapsed since his death. An example is a famous warrior of the last generation called *Walitoami*. This name has recently been bestowed by one of the Tiklowila upon his son though neither he, the child, nor the mother of the child is closely related to the first *Walitoami*. As a matter of fact the child is the mother's brother's son's daughter's son of *Walitoami I*.

One or two other aspects of this subject may be dismissed briefly 551
as they are more important in a study of kinship or ceremonial, than in a 422
study of names as such.

A man may not in any circumstances use the name of the wife of another man, even the names of his brother's wives, without giving the husband a *casus belli*. A woman is a man's own property and the use of her name is an infringement of his property rights. In the same way a man's own name is his own property and cannot be used with impunity, at least in the presence of the owner of the name. In calling out to a person for instance, he will always be addressed by a kinship term, never by a personal name. This also is the manner by which the news of a death is 551
carried to distant camps and the name of the dead man avoided, "your [196
mother's brother at *Wilraygu* of the *Tjilarui* totem and the son of so and so 203]
is dead at *Brega*" being an example of how a relative is informed. The dead man is thenceforward referred to as "he who died recently at *Brega*."

There is another prohibition against the use by a husband of his own 551
wife's name whilst she is in childbirth. For a couple of weeks before the 843
birth and for a couple of weeks afterwards the husband must not look upon his wife, he cannot use any of her names, nor can any others of the tribe mention her either by name or by implication to him. Even such an

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 expression as *int'abominaiiya* (=your wife) is forbidden, nor for example
843 can one of the woman's brothers enquire the whereabouts of his sister from the woman's husband. There is no such prohibition, however, against the use of her name nor against references to her by the rest of the tribe provided always the husband is not within hearing.

551 None of the names of a person passing through any stage of initiation
561 can be used by anyone at all. Such a person is always alluded to or
881 addressed as *Watyinyirti* or *Mikinyirtiya* or whatever degree of initiation he or she has reached. As the normal initiation ceremonies are carried out continuously from the age of seventeen to the age of about twenty-six for a man and from ten to nineteen for a girl, for those periods of their lives personal names are seldom used.

I propose to call these names "initiation-grade names," since they are applied to an individual according to the grade of initiation he has reached. A full list of them is as follows :—

Initiation-Grade Names (Male).

Average Age.		Duration of Grade.	
15-17	..	1 year	*Maru-kumarni*
15-17	..	6 months	*Kilipirni-ati*
16-18	..	6 months	*Watyinyirti*
18-20	..	2 years	*Mikin yirtiya*
19-21	..	1 year	*Mikin djira*
20-22	..	1 year	*Mikadjirima*
24-26	..	4 years	*Mikin gula*

Initiation-Grade Names (Female)[8].

10-12	..	1 year	*Maru-kumarniya*
15-17	..	6 months	*Kilipirni-atiya*
11-13	..	6 months	*Watyinyirtiya*
13-15	..	2 years	*Mikin yirtiyiya*
14-16	..	1 year	*Mikin djiriya*
15-17	..	1 year	*Mikadjirimiya*
19-21	..	4 years	*Mikin guliya*

551 In addition to these initiation-grade names there is also a series of
561 names which I propose to call "age-grade names." These are more

[8] In actual practice the female names are not nearly as commonly used as the male.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

strictly descriptive rather than terms of address, yet quite frequently they are used in both ways. They refer to the state of life the person has reached and are often used as substitute names during the period in which an individual is nameless on account of his name being tabu. Names such as baby, young man, etc., are of course found in every language; it is their occasional use as terms of address that makes them interesting among the Tiwi, and also the fact that Spencer has confused them with the initiation-grade names. These names are :—

Age-Grade Names (Male).

Male baby	(Birth to about 11)	*Kiritini*
Boy approaching puberty	(12-14)	*Mala-kuniŋa*
Uninitiated boy or young man		*Tatiŋ-ati*
Young man during initiation		(Initiation Grade Term)
Initiated man		*Mikingula*
Old man	(over 60)	*Irula or Palini*

Age-Grade Names (Female).

Female baby	(Birth to about 6)	*Kiritiŋa*
Girl approaching puberty	(7 to 11)	*Aliiŋa*
Girl beginning to menstruate	(12-14)	*Muru-kibura*
Girl at first pregnancy		*Miriŋaladja*
Shortly before birth of child		*Poporŋanti*
Mother of male child		*Ari-aui*
Mother of female child		*Pirnambili*
Mother of several children		*Nuran-rika*
Old women with children		*Pirimariŋa*
Barren woman		*Timiriŋa*

If these two lists are compared with Spencer,[4] it will be found that all the names which he gives as "status terms" are included in one or other of my two lists with the exception of "Gunmurdi" which Spencer gives as "very old man," and which I was quite unable to trace at all. I have adopted the division into age-grade names and initiation-grade names and rejected "status terms" altogether as the two groups of names are quite distinct, one depending on age, the other on advancement in initiation.

[4] *Native Tribes of Northern Australia*, 1914, p. 84.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 To sum up then the main points in the customs of the Tiwi connected with personal names, the outstanding features are these :—

(1) Multiplicity of personal names.
(2) Death renders tabu the names of the dead man.
(3) Death renders tabu similar words in the language.
(4) Death renders tabu names bestowed upon others by the dead man.
(5) Method of coining names.
(6) Tabu on names at certain times (*e.g.*, childbirth, initiation).

551 It is fairly evident from the facts cited in this paper that among the
424 Tiwi at any rate a personal name is the absolute property of the person
785 possessing it. Further than that, it is so identified with his personality
198 that even the use of it by anyone else in resented by the owner. There is no space here to describe the theology of the Tiwi, but it must be pointed out that after the death of a man his spirit does not go with his body to the region of the dead, but wanders about the world in a form both invisible and malignant. Just as an individual when alive would resent the use of his name so too will his spirit and will be much more dangerous an enemy on account of his supernatural form. Spirits are not only malignant, they are also unreasonable, and whereas a live man would not quarrel with you for using an ordinary word resembling his name, his ghost is quite likely not to appreciate the difference. Hence the prohibition against similar words. While in touch with the unseen world it pays to be careful. But in dealing with the unseen world the Tiwi have a special language. This body of words has a sacredness of its own, it is a part of the spirit world itself. Therefore you may incur the enmity of a spirit by using his mundane name or some similar mundane word, but the use of a similar word in the sacred language cannot do any harm; the spirit will not get annoyed with you for using a spirit word, especially as you can only use it in any case on sacred occasions. Hence there is no tabu on similar words in the sacred language.

551 This principle of the sacred language for use when in touch with
844 supernatural situations also helps us to understand several other things. The birth of a child is, to a native, a most mysterious affair and the woman is regarded as being intimately in touch with the spirit world. Hence her name as part of herself is invested with a ghostly character and this is expressed by the tribe in treating her husband as if she did not exist, as if

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

she were dead in fact and for the time being no longer his wife. She 551
is in touch with the spirits and the result will be a child for her husband. 844
Since he is too close to the mystery for comfort they abstain from mentioning it in his presence.

The result of the childbirth is a child and that child was recently a spirit. Therefore the name must come from the sacred language.

Initiation ceremonies also involve a very close contact with the spirit 553
world. Initiation is a sacred rite and sacred names must be taken when 881
passing through its various stages. When *Timalaykumi* is seized by men of his sister's husband's totem and yellow grease is smeared on his chest he ceases to be *Timalaykumi* and becomes *Maru-kumani*, a person in touch with unseen forces, and he therefore must have a sacred name. His previous name came from the sacred language, but this is a change of status and is expressed by giving him a new name, one that is only used on such occasions.

The fact that death renders sacred all the concepts closely associated 553
with the dead man does no doubt play a large part in causing the tabu 587
on names he has bestowed upon other people. There is I think another 768
factor which is even more important in the causation of this particular 593
tabu. When a man marries a widow he becomes to the tribe not the foster father of her children but the actual father. It cannot be pointed out too often that the Australian blackfellow does not distinguish physiological and social fatherhood. The new husband is married to the widow, he therefore must be the father of her children. Her children change their position in the tribe, and the function of the changing of their names is to show this change and the new social relationships that have been imposed upon them by it. It will be remembered in this connection that the husband changes the names of *all* the woman's children whether of her last husband or not, and also that words in either the sacred or the ordinary language which are similar in sound to the former names of the children do not become tabu. That is, it is a social not a sacred change of name.

It might be argued that the widow changes her status also, yet her 587
name is not changed. But in point of fact she does not alter her status; 768
her new husband is usually of the same clan as her last one, and frequently 553
he is an actual brother of the dead man. In any case her new husband cannot change her name as she is not one of the people he can bestow names upon. Nor does her name mean to the tribe any relation to her

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553 587 768 551

previous husband; he did not bestow it, therefore there is no necessity for her successor to change it.

In conclusion it seems almost superfluous to point out the necessity in such a society for a large number of personal names for the individual. When such a number of tabu on names exist a man with only one name would be constantly having to live for long periods nameless, but with multiple names it is almost a certainty at any particular time that some of them will be free from any of the prevailing tabu.

C. W. M. HART.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

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5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

By Herbert Basedow, M.D., M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., etc.

With Plates VII-XX.

Local Correspondent of the Royal Anthropological Institute, London, and Honorary Fellow of the Anthropological Society, Göttingen; late Chief Medical Inspector and Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Introduction.

In August of last year (1911), I visited Bathurst Island to inspect the natives on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. Accompanied by one of my inspectors (Mr. J. H. Kelly) and a crew consisting of a Chinaman, a Manilaman, and three natives of the Larrekiya Tribe,[1] I left Port Darwin at eleven o'clock in the evening and entered Apsley Strait early the next morning. We spent nine days in the examination of the island, entering the numerous salt-water arms and rivers, effecting a landing wherever possible and traversing the island on foot. Landing was, in most places, difficult on account of the thick growth of mangroves that fringes the island on the east. It had been my intention to circumnavigate the island, but a heavy monsoonal gale prevented us from even making the attempt in the small motor-craft at our disposal. I therefore decided to return *viâ* Apsley Strait and inspect part of Melville Island.

The plates included in this paper are all reproductions of my original photographs and coloured drawings.

Condition of Natives.

I estimate the population of the island to be about 500. Their isolation and, no doubt in a measure also, their reputation as being cannibalistic and treacherous in their habits, have guarded their primitive condition to the present day.[2] Before

[1] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. of S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 1.

[2] Compare the statement:—

"Melville Island, about 30 miles north of Port Darwin, is inhabited by a tribe of which very little is known. They do not circumcise, and speak a different language from those on the mainland. They are represented as a very strong and powerful race.

"Before the arrival of the Hon. B. T. Finniss at Escape Cliffs in 1864, the Melville Island natives occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras, in which they invariably succeeded; but they have not done so since. This tribe is of a very hostile nature, and on several occasions have attacked Europeans visiting the island. Their canoes and weapons are similar to those on the mainland." P. Foelsche: "Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia," *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 17.

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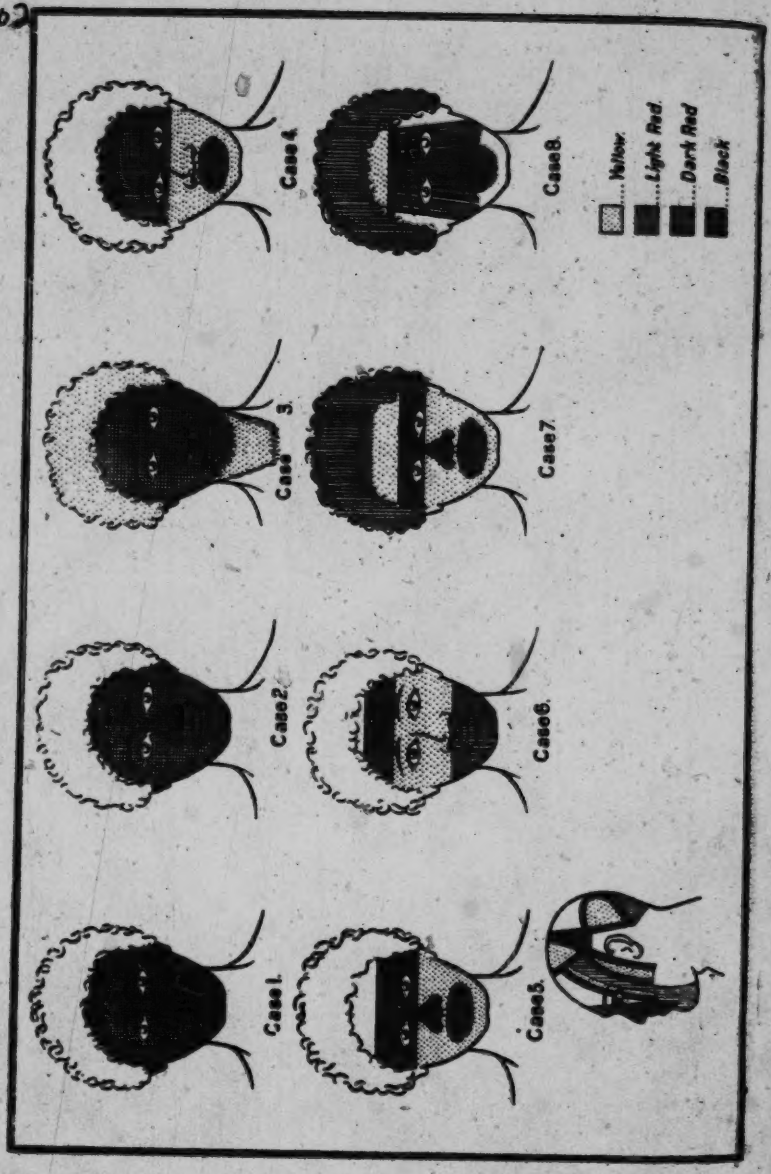
302



[p. 292]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

BEFORE the advent of the buffalo-hunters, few white men had visited the islands since the 648
early days of the naval settlement at Fort Dundas, established by Sir Gordon [175]
Bremer in 1824, but abandoned four years later. Malays and Japanese pearlers
have been in the habit of taking in water from either of the islands and have
frequently come into disastrous conflict with the natives. It is perhaps also on 164
account of their isolation from civilization that I found the blacks comparatively
free from any serious disease. Apart from the various minor ailments such as
traumatic lesions and their after-effects, cataracts and keratitis, a few congenital
deformities and such like, only a few cases of tertiary syphilis came under my
notice.

A young gin was suffering from a disease of the hip, apparently chronic, but
she was too timid to permit me to make an examination. They are on the whole 142
a healthy, sturdy people of moderate stature, with a good muscular development
and a square, big thorax. The characteristics are Australoid and yet they present [144]
certain insular peculiarities.

The Head.

The forehead is low, with a marked supraorbital development; the face
somewhat depressed and the lower jaw strong. The eyes are sunken and the nose
is small. The wavy black hair of some of the males was worked up into numerous [302]
small, cylindrical, pendant masses with clay and ochre.[1] This, so far as I could [765]
ascertain, designated mourning. Others had besmeared their hair with ochre. The
hairs on the upper lip are pulled out. The growth of the beard of the men varies,
but is, on an average, good.

The natives of either island do not practise the knocking out of one or two 304
incisors as they do on the mainland. Major Campbell,[2] however, reports having 171
observed the custom on Melville Island.

The face is painted symmetrically with differently coloured ochres, charcoal, 302
and pipeclay, in various degrees of complexity (Fig. 1). A few of the simpler designs
might be described briefly:—*Case* (1): The whole surface of the face blackened
with charcoal. *Case* (2): The nose red and the rest of the face charcoal-black.
Case (3): Face (including the shaven upper lip and upper part of chin) charcoal-

[1] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* London, 1852, vol. ii, p. 13: "The characteristic mode of dressing the hair among the Torres Strait Islanders is to have it twisted up into long pipe-like ringlets, and wigs in imitation of this are also worn"; and again, "at Cape York I have at times for a week together seen all the men and lads with the hair twisted into little strands well daubed over with red ochre and turtle fat."

Also P. P. King, *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114: "The [164]
men were more muscular and better formed than any we have before seen, they were daubed over with a yellow pigment which was the colour of the neighbouring cliff (Luxmore Head on Melville Island); their hair was long and curly and appeared to be clotted with a whitish paint."

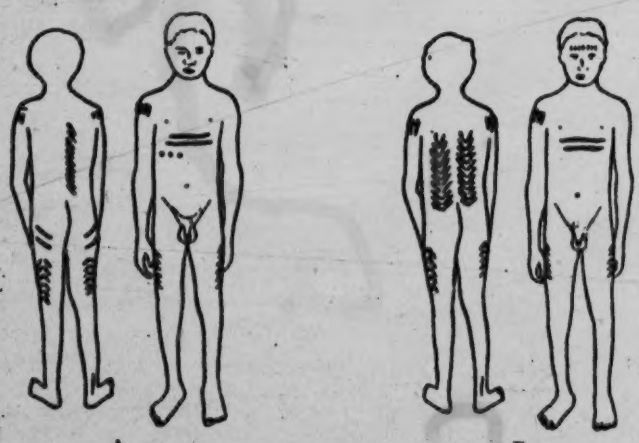
[2] *Journ. Geogr. Society*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 152. *Cf.* also H. Klaatsch: *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 601.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

302 black; ears, red; hair and beard on lower part of chin, yellow. *Case* (4): Lower half of face from below the eyes to the chin, yellow, excepting the lips and the immediate surrounding, which are red; the upper half of face divided vertically in a median line, the left segment being black and the right red. *Case* (5): A broad, horizontal band of black extends across the forehead and the eyes; beneath this, the whole face is yellow, excepting (as in the previous case) the nose and lips, which are red. *Case* (6): A broad horizontal band of black across the forehead; beneath this, the whole surface from the eyes to the level of the nostrils, yellow; the remaining portion including the lips and chin, red. *Case* (7): The crown of the head and hair, red, the forehead yellow; a black horizontal band across the eyes, below which the whole surface is yellow, excepting the nose and lips (as in previous cases), which are red. More complicated patterns are better understood by referring to the sketches.

Body Scars.

304 A type of cosmetic body-scars is prevalent on the island, which is unique and [101] different from the system found on the mainland. The production of this permanent ornamentation is, as elsewhere, dependent on the formation of an elevated cicatrix. This is done by cutting the skin and artifically inducing a prolific granulation by



A B

FIG. 2.

keeping the edges of the wound apart with foreign matter, such as ochre and ashes. [171] On the mainland we find such cicatrices in the form of horizontally or vertically disposed parallel ridges on various parts of the body. Although to a small extent such are also found on Bathurst Island, the characteristic pattern there is one made in direct imitation of an object of nature, namely, the frond of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*). The former simple type of cicatrices, consisting of two to five,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on The

or more, parallel ridges, is found first, as vertically disposed ridges, about 10 centimetres in length, on the outer surface of the upper arm, in the region of the deltoid muscle (*vide* Fig. 2, A and B); secondly, as two or three horizontal ridges, about 20 centimetres long, upon the chest and abdomen, either in the epigastrium or immediately below the nipples, or in the umbilical region; thirdly, as two or three ridges, horizontally disposed or slightly inclined from back to front, on the buttocks and outer surface of the thighs (*vide* Fig. 2, A). 304

Occasionally a horizontal row of short vertical scars is cut upon the forehead immediately above the eyes (*vide* Fig. 2, B); and also an asymmetrical vertical group on the chest or back consisting of a number of parallel scars which slant outwards and downwards from the sternum or spine, respectively (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

The palm-leaf pattern is composed of a series of V-shaped figures, whose angles rest one within the other and point downwards (or upwards as the case may be) and are so disposed as to lie one immediately above or below the other in a vertical line; the enclosing sides standing out as parallel and inclined ridges. The constituent V's are often slightly larger in the centre of the group than at either

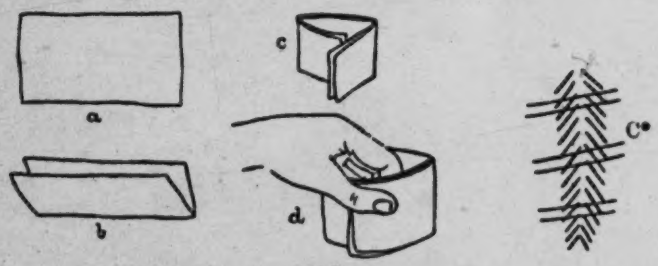


FIG. 3.

end. There is little doubt that the incentive to this design was given by the leaf of the "*Zamia*" (*Cycas media*). The designs, being of different dimensions and of different lengths according to their situation, were observed on the back (on both or either side of the spine) and on the upper and outer surfaces of the arm and thigh (*vide* Plate XVI). The number of the completed palm leaves, in any one particular part of the body, varies. The usual number is from one to three on the arms and thighs, and from two to five, or more, on the back. The design was not noticed on the chest or abdomen. Occasionally a design on the thigh might be seen modified by additional pairs of horizontal scars[1] (*vide* Fig. 3, C*).

[1] I also observed the same "palm-leaf" scars on the chest, back, and arms of Melville Island natives. These natives also paint their faces with ochre; one conspicuous method in use is to paint the hair yellow, the nose red, and to daub the chest yellow over the region of the sternum. [302]

Professor H. Klaatsch also noticed some of the scars on the Melville Island natives and stated that "they are totally different from the ornamentations on the mainland. They seem to imitate leaves arranged on a branch; but I make the suggestion that they are connected with the arrangements of the barbs on spears." *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 566. [101] [184]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. 372 Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Personal Decoration.

Plaited armlets of vegetable fibre are worn on both arms, by both sexes, young and old. They are made of a number of central spiral turns of fibre, around which a single outer layer of flexible vegetable ribbon is plaited from either side and through the centre. The armlet is usually painted over with yellow ochre and is worn above the elbow. 301 [531]

Corrobboree-armlets are constructed in the shape of a flat ring of plaited vegetable fibre, from 10 to 20 centimetres in outside diameter (*vide* Plate XV, Figs. 4 and 6). The ring, which is from 2 to 3 centimetres wide and from a ½ to ¾ centimetre thick, is neatly coloured on the outside with ochre in a regular fashion. From a point on the circumference depends a bundle of from seven to fifteen twisted strings of animal or human hair, 30 centimetres long, which ends in a flat oval mass of beeswax, studded on the outside with red seeds of the "gequirity" or so-called "Northern Territory bean" (*Abrus praecatorius*). A similar mass of beeswax and beans surrounds the point of attachment of this tassel.

Special corrobboree arm-decorations[1] are constructed on rather more elaborate lines. A piece of bark (*Eucalyptus sp.*), about 66 centimetres long and 10 broad, is bent once upon itself into a simple loop and the open end kept together by stitching the edges for a distance of some 12 centimetres down (*vide* Plate VII, Figs. 2 and 4). The united end is fenestrated; one oblong space (measuring 6 by 2 centimetres) is cut out some 3 centimetres from the top, and beneath this, at a similar distance from its lower edge, two squares, whose sides are equivalent in length to the smaller side of the oblong. The top end of the united portion, and the top and bottom edges of the oblong and squares, are hemmed with an overlapping crossstitch. One side edge only of the loop is hemmed with a simple backward and forward "run-on" stitch. The lateral edges of the windows and the septum between the lower squares are fixed by transverse winding. The material used for hemming and winding is a light cane obtained from a creeping plant. It is evident that the different methods of stitching have to do with the fibrous structure of the bark; the cross-thread would tend to keep the stitches from pulling out along the fibres, as would be the case in straight up-and-down stitching. Additional complexity is given the ornament by eight thin sticks (about 15 centimetres long) which are pointed at both ends. One of these is stuck vertically into the bark at either end of the top edge. Two others pierce the bark at right angles, immediately below the lower outer corner of each square window; one of them being just below that corner of each of the squares, respectively. At either end of these transverse pieces, another stick is fixed vertically by binding with vegetable string, at about 3 centimetres from the ends. The ornament is coloured on the outside with red and white earth-paints. The ground colour of the upper half is red; the hem stitches and the affixed sticks are white. The lower half, or looped portion, bears four white transverse bands 301 322 301 531

[1] Apparently also used during mourning ceremonies.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

301 bordered with red. Each of the intervening spaces is again sub-divided into two
531 squares at the centre (and a "half-square" at the sides) by three vertical, white lines bordered with red. The squares and "half-squares" are shaded diagonally with from four to six lines passing downwards and away from the central line in the topmost group, and upwards and away from the centre in the two lower groups of
[171] squares. The combined effect resembles the windmill or "wanningi" pattern common throughout Australia. The shading is all in white on one side, but red and white in alternate squares on the opposite side.

301 In another type of this arm decoration, which is also made of bark, the upper
322 united portion is shorter than in the previous case (*vide* Plate VII, Figs. 1 and 3). The top edge is concave and only one oblong window is cut beneath it. The sides have been united by hem-stitching and by the insertion of a few wooden pins which answer the same purpose as rivets. The edges are thickly plastered with beeswax. As in the previous case, the stitches (and the plaster also) are continued only along one side of the loop. A fairly stout rod of wood projects vertically from either end of the top concave edge. Shorter rods project laterally from either top corner of the loop. To the end of each of these rods a plume of
[237 white is attached with beeswax. Cockatoo feathers have been chosen and they are
531] fastened by their distal ends so that the fluffy portions are exposed. A number of twisted strands of fur and vegetable fibre pass from the extremity of one horizontal rod diagonally upwards to the base of the vertical rod above, along it to the top, thence horizontally across to the top of the other vertical rod, whence it is continued the same way down the other side to the extremity of the opposite horizontal rod. Beeswax retains these strands in position at the rod-tops, while more strands, wound horizontally from the base of one vertical rod to the other, and also round the base of each, make the former strands secure there. The painted design in this
301 case consists of one large cruciform figure on either side of the looped portion, the
531 arms being modified at the base in a manner suggestive of a snake design. One arm of the cross is white, the other yellow, both being bordered with red. The intervening spaces are shaded red and yellow, the constituent lines being parallel and straight up-and-down in the upper segment and crossed in the lower.

532 *Corrobboree-mask.*—An interesting object is what I take to be a corrobboree-mask (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 5). As I did not see it in use and did not receive the specimen until it was too late to make inquiries, I cannot, with certainty, describe it as such. The object represents an oval structure, 15 centimetres long and 8 wide, which encloses two connected circular rims resembling a solid pair of spectacles. The internal framework is made of split cane, bound together with vegetable strands. The oval portion is covered with human hair string, wound around it and knotted along the outer edge after the modern "button-hole-stitch" fashion. The rims are broad and covered with beeswax. A circle of the red beans of *Abrus precatorius*, embedded in the wax, surrounds the "eye-holes" on the front side. At one of the lateral extremities, a band of five human hair strings emerges from a cylindrical mass of beeswax and is surrounded, at 6 centimetres distance,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

by a similar mass, whence two strings only continue for 40 odd centimetres. 532
The whole length of the band, therefore, amounts to approximately 50 centimetres. Its object is, no doubt, to fasten the mask in position over the face during corroboree ceremonies.

Domestic Utensils.

Food carriers.—The most common form of "mika" or carrier for food and 322
other articles is one made of a single piece of bark of the "stringy bark" eucalypt 415
(*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 3, 4, 5, and 6). An oblong piece of such bark, say 1 metre long by 40 centimetres broad, is freshly cut and folded transversely at its centre. The edges on either side are pared down, then laid flat, one over the other, and sewn or laced together with plain "run-on" stitches, 2 centimetres apart. A row of slanting and overlapping stitches often skirts the open edge at a short distance down; occasionally, too, part of the edge is cross-hemstitched and plastered with beeswax. The object of this procedure is to prevent the bark from tearing by virtue of its fibrous structure. The open mouth of the carrier is nearly circular or oval; in the latter case the long axis of the oval runs at right angles to the base-edge of the implement. These carriers are of various sizes; the largest that came under observation measured 63 centimetres in height and 43 in width at the base. Ordinarily they are unpainted, but on special occasions elaborate designs, consisting 415
of circles, oblong and other figures, with cross-hatched shading, are drawn on the 531
outer surface in red, yellow, white, and black. The designs are best studied by reference to the reproductions (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 5 and 6). Occasionally tassel-shaped appendages are noticed at one of the convex outer surfaces of the mouth of the carrier. These consist of a flattish, egg-shaped mass of beeswax (studded on the surface with the red beans of *Abrus praecatorius*), which is suspended by two twisted fur strings (*vide* Plate VIII, Fig. 6).

Water carriers.—Water is taken to camp from a soakage or spring in simple [312]
structures made out of the bark of the paper-bark tree (*Melaleuca sp.*). An oblong 322
piece of this bark is bent upon itself longitudinally, both its ends folded several 415
times and kept together by binding with cane or by spiking with short pointed wooden pegs (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 1 and 2).

Drinking vessels.—Several natural objects are used for drinking vessels. 415
Among the most common are the discarded tests of mollusca. The species *Melo-* [237]
diadema and *Fusus pricei* were found in use at several native wells (*vide* Plate XIV, Figs. 1 and 2).

But when no such shells are available a piece of bark is torn or cut from a 322
tree (usually from a *Melaleuca*) and folded so as to form a water-tight cup (*vide* 415
Plate XIV, Figs. 3 and 4). This piece of bark, which measures about 30 centimetres by 20, is folded longitudinally at about its middle (*vide* Fig. 3, D). Both ends are then bent upon themselves at right angles to this plane and at about one quarter the whole length from either end. The overturned ends and the inner

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

322 piece of the former fold are clasped between the fingers and thus used as a cup
415 the part lying opposite to the fingers being held to the lips.

Honey Eating.

222 In my notes on the north-western tribes of the Northern Territory I have
262 described[1] a honey-collecting implement and there, also, referred to somewhat
264 similar observations made by Dr. Wilson[2] and Keppel.[3]

On Bathurst Island I observed still another modification. A young flower-stalk of the fan-palm (*Livistonia humilis*), when about 50 to 70 centimetres long, is cut just above the trunk of the palm and its bottom end chewed until all the fibres are separated and look like the hairs of a brush. The juice, being quite sweet, is swallowed. The brush end is then inserted into the nest of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*), whereby the honey gathers between the fibres. When saturated with honey, the brush end is passed back to the mouth and again sucked and chewed for a considerable time, after which it is once more returned to the honey for a fresh supply, and this is continued to repletion.

Tree Climbing.

481 Both male and female, young and old, are expert tree-climbers when in
[222] pursuit of game, honey of the wild bee, fruits, and seeds. As none of the trees on the islands grow to an abnormally large size, the butt is usually not too great in circumference to allow of the arms being thrown around it, so that the hands may obtain a firm hold on the side distant from the climber. Having obtained this hold while standing on the ground and facing the tree, the native jumps on to the butt, clutching it with the flat surfaces of his feet in a frog-like fashion. The knees in this position stand well outwards. The body hangs, suspended by the arms above and held against the tree by the legs below. The climber now raises his body; his hands quickly follow by a corresponding distance. Holding on with the latter he draws up his legs in a jumping manner once more to clutch the tree between the soles of his feet. This movement being repeated, he rapidly advances upwards.

Hunting and Fighting.

411 *Throwing-sticks and clubs.*—Several types of throwing-sticks and clubs are in use. They must be referred to under this general or collective heading, since it is hard to discriminate between the two implements and to say definitely where the throwing-stick ends and the club begins. They form an interesting group of Australian implements and weapons that allows of a satisfactory system of

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 26, Fig. 19.
[2] *Narrative Voyage Round the World*, 1835, p. 99.
[3] *A Visit to Indian Archipelago*, 1853, vol. 2, p. 168.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

classification on account of the regularity of the various types, not only as regards the actual cutting of the particular form, but also as regards the way in which they are decorated (*vide* Plate IX, Figs. 1, 2, 3, and 4). 411

Type 1.—The simplest type seen in use is a stick, 46 or 47 centimetres long, usually more or less curved, thin at the hand-end, gradually thickening upwards and swelling to a club-head at the distal end. The surface is longitudinally furrowed, the result of scraping. The stick is painted on special occasions in various colours, as follows: hand-end red or brown (25 cm.), thence successive circular bands of yellow (·5 cm.), white (1 cm.), red (·25 cm.), black (3 cm.), red (·25 cm.), yellow (1 cm.), white (·25 cm.), red (4 cm.), yellow (·5 cm.); club-head white (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 1). 411 53)

Type 2.—The second type to be described is somewhat similar. It measures 60 centimetres in length and is usually straight. Whereas in the previous type the club-head is rounded off at its distal end, it ends with a blunt point in the case now before us. The club-head, too, is larger in proportion. The surface is scraped longitudinally and painted in alternate bands of red and white of different breadths. From the hand-end upwards the coloured bands are as follows: red (19 cm.), white (10 cm.), red (8 cm.), white (23 cm.) (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 3).

Type 3.—The third type is slender and thickens very gradually from the hand- to the club-end, whence a sharp spine projects for 2 centimetres. It is scraped longitudinally and painted in rather more elaborate fashion than the two foregoing types. The hand-end is red for a distance of about 30 centimetres; thence follow successively bands of yellow (1 cm.), white (6 cm.), red (1 cm.), black (4 cm.), yellow (1 cm.). The club-head is white with two longitudinal yellow bands at opposite extremes of a diameter, dividing it into two halves vertically. Within each of the white fields thus produced are two intersecting, undulating lines, one of red and one of yellow, running longitudinally and terminating in the spine at the top, which is red (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 2).

Type 4.—This type consists of a stick, circular in section, which increases slightly in diameter from the hand-end upwards, for a distance of 55 centimetres. The diameter at that distance is 3½ centimetres, but immediately beyond, the stick slopes abruptly to a thickness of only 1½ centimetres, whence it tapers to a long pointed end, about 20 centimetres long. The stick is painted in red, yellow, and white, as follows: the hand-end is red for 23 centimetres, thence follow bands of white (1 cm.), yellow (8 cm.), red (1 cm.), white (12 cm.), red (1 cm.), yellow (8 cm.), red (1 cm.). The extreme end of the stick and the long spine are white (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 4).

The two last-described types have, to my knowledge, not been observed in Australia before.

Spears.

In dealing with the spears used on Bathurst Island (and the same holds good for Melville Island), we are brought into contact with types that are unknown on 411

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 the mainland. In the first place no spears are manufactured for projecting by
[101] other method than simply by hand. No spear-throwers, so much in evidence among all true Australian tribes, are in use on these islands. Yet light spears
411 were observed which really marked the beginning of the development of the arrow.
524 These were seen to be used by youths at play and during their sham fights. Light green sticks, a little over a metre in length and slightly more than a lead pencil's thickness, are cut and scraped to a simple point at one end. The opposite end, that is, the back- or hand-end, is next put to the mouth and split with the teeth along its fibres into several strips some 10 centimetres long. The split pieces are then bent outwards like the feathers of an arrow and the toy weapon is ready for use. It can be hurled by hand with astounding precision. The opponents evade the missiles by dodging and crouching and contorting their bodies in much the same clever manner as I have described[1] of the Larrekiya and Wogait tribes.

411 Strictly speaking, one type of spear prevails. It is made of a single piece of solid wood, straightened to a greater or less degree over a fire. It is barbed at the front end and tapers to a simple point behind. The extreme variations in length and, consequently, in weight also, of this spear attract the attention at first sight. It is nothing unusual to find spears measuring 450 centimetres in length and weighing 2,700 grammes, but at the same time the smaller specimens measure only 250 centimetres in length and weigh 370 grammes. When we consider that a fair average length of the Northern Territory spear is 300 centimetres and a good average weight 260 grammes, the maxima of the islanders' spears quoted seem
[136] very remarkable indeed. The more do these appeal to us since the largest species of the indigenous fauna is but a fair-sized wallaby. Crocodiles are comparatively scarce, and the buffalo, introduced from Timor by Captain Barlow, first commandant of Fort Dundas, in 1826, is practically unknown on Bathurst Island. On Melville Island, where similar spears are in use, the buffalo is very plentiful, but it is a singular fact that the natives do not hunt this beast to any considerable extent.

The head of the spear has many barbs carved on one side and, occasionally, on two diametrically opposite sides. There are usually from ten to thirty barbs, which are directed backwards (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 5 (Series)). Behind these there may or may not be from four to eight small serrations that stand out at right angles to the length of the shaft. In other cases, too, some six or more barbs are cut at the back part of the spear-head pointing the opposite way, that is, in the direction the spear is thrown. The spear heads have a long point resembling a cutting-blade or spike. The barbs are symmetrically carved with sharp edges and point. They are flattish lancet-shaped, with a central ridge on the outside, and project from the head to various degrees of prominence in different specimens. Many of the spears are longitudinally grooved with an adze, either for the whole of their length or along the head-end only. They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 33.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on The

They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some of the designs being very pleasing to the eye. Some spears, moreover, have human 411 hair strings wound round the shaft, immediately below the head, for a distance of [531] 10 centimetres or more, and this is kept in place with beeswax.

Canoes.

Elsewhere I have referred to the marked absence among the northern 501 Australian tribes of anything but the most primitive crafts and such innovated forms as have resulted from the contact with the white and yellow races. They are, therefore, not to be considered as truly indigenous canoes. On Bathurst Island, however, conditions are different; due, perhaps, in the first place, to its insularity (as well as the numerous estuaries and rivers that cross [133] the land), and, secondly, to the proximity of Melville Island, which is separated from it by only a narrow stretch of calm water known as Apsley Strait. The latter is barely a mile in width at its narrowest points. Numerous canoes are in use within this Strait, and occasionally, when wind and water are favourable, they venture a short distance out to sea. One type is principally in use, namely, a large bark-canoe measuring about 560 centimetres in length (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). It is made of a single sheet of bark, usually from suitable, straight, clear 396 trunks of the woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*) or the stringy-bark (*E. tetradonta*) 501 (*vide* Plate XII, Fig. 1). It is cut from the tree by chopping transversely at the respective distances from the ground, then slitting it once vertically for the whole length and removing it by forcing the edge of the instrument under the bark and finally levering it off with pointed saplings. The outer side of this oblong piece of bark, which is rough, will become the inside surface of the canoe. At a distance of from 65 to 70 centimetres from either end, transverse cuts are made on the inside to a depth of half the thickness of the bark, and such thickness is removed from the whole of the surface lying away from the centre at either incision. Each end is thus reduced by half its original strength and material thereby becoming more pliable. The cutting is done with the sharp edge of a [237 412] bivalve shell, usually a *Cyrena*. The subtilized ends of the sheet may, or may not, be held over a glowing fire to render them more pliant still. The sheet is folded lengthwise along its middle, and one or both ends kept together by vertical stakes, stuck in the ground and tied together at the top. The bottom corner of the fold is cut away in a very gentle upward slope. The two pieces of the fold are next held firmly together and cut in a more decisive upward direction from a point some 30 to 50 centimetres from the bottom edge end. The two freshly cut edges are neatly sewn with close, overcast stitches, and the same is done along the top horizontal edge for a distance of some 15 or 20 centimetres from the end. From the intervening space between the sewn parts at the top and bottom, an angular or curved segment is cut out in imitation of a fish-tail and its edges laced together in a like manner (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). The thread used for these "run-on" stitches is in the form of strips from the split sheets of the

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

396 501 climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*).[1] Holes are previously pierced through the [237 412] bark with an awl, made out of the leg-bone of a wallaby.

The stitches are made more secure and watertight by plastering them with [237 314] wax from the comb of the wild bee (*Trigona* sp.) or with one of the several resins so extensively used by all natives. The inside corners are caulked with plastic clay and fibre, or resin. Two stays or struts of fairly stout timber, cut to the required length and inserted at the points where the bark was reduced to half its thickness, keep the sides of the canoe apart. From these points, therefore, the sides of the canoe converge to the bow at one end and to the stern at the other; while in between they are more or less parallel. The canoe, if there be any difference at all, is wider aft (74 cm.) than it is nearer the bow (55 cm.); the "fish-tail" incision, too, is acute and deep at the bow and more rounded and shallow at the stern (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). Along the top, inner, edge of either side of the canoe, a straight strengthening pole is lashed with distant, unequally-spaced and grouped "run on" stitches of cane-strips. These structures lend considerable rigidity to the gunwale of the canoe; they do not extend throughout the whole length, but, being straight, are more or less parallel one to another, and do not enclose the stern or bow. Major Campbell,[2] in referring to the bark canoes seen by him while at Fort Dundas, states that "the gunwales are strengthened by two small saplings (such as grow in marshy places) fastened together at each end of the canoe." This method is more like that in use on the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria to-day and was not observed on the islands by me. Long shoots of vines and strips of cane are wound crosswise from side to side of the canoe, and at the same time take in the strengthening-poles along the gunwale. Additional circumferential winding binds the separate cords into one thick rope. Four of such ties are spanned at equal distances, from one side to the other, along the straight edges of the canoe. They not only preserve its shape, but afford a ready means by which the craft may be carried.

501 The canoe is not decorated in any way, but smears of various colours are [531] noticed both at the bow and the stern, resulting from the handling by fingers previously occupied in decorative work with ochre. When not in use the canoes are "housed" on a level piece of ground, under the overhanging branches of a shady banyan or guttapercha tree. They are laid in normal upright position (not inverted), and are kept so by short supports of timber stemmed against the sides. The bark thus dries in the required shape and does not become lop-sided.

Each canoe has its recognized place. Where a dense growth of mangroves [487] skirts the foreshore, a regular approach to the water is kept clear by cutting away the trees. The paddles are laid within the canoes.

Quite a large number of natives may be carried in a canoe, if the occasion

[1] Compare narrative of Mr. Carron in MacGillivray's *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* 1852, vol. ii, pp. 125 and 126; also P. P. King: *Narrative Survey Intertropical Western Coasts of Australia*, London, 1827, vol. i, p. 90.

[2] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 156.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

demands it; but usually, when on a simple turtle or dugong hunting expedition, 501
two persons only occupy places in the craft, one near the bow and another near
the stern (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). The boatmen, while propelling the [516]
craft, squat with their buttocks resting upon the heels and with their knees pressed
against the sides. The weight of their body being thus well within the boat, its
stability is thereby considerably increased.

Paddles.—Propulsion is effected by means of paddles which are made of hard 501
wood. They have a single well-shaped blade and a rounded handle (*vide* Plate
XII, Fig. 2). The edges of the blade are parallel or taper slightly towards the end,
which is square or rounded. Apart from the marks left by the tomahawk used in [531]
its making, the implement is without ornamentation. In one case only, a circular
collar was carved around the handle, immediately above the sloping shoulder of the
blade. The longest paddle noted measured 167 centimetres in length, its blade
80; the shortest was 115 centimetres in length and its blade 45. The width
of the blades ranges from 7 to 9 centimetres. Both hands clasp the paddle,
which is dipped alternately on one side or the other as the occasion and the steering
require it.

Balers.—Water that accumulates in the canoe, either by leakage or overwash [415
in a rough sea, is removed by means of a baler which is made out of the melon 824]
shell[1] (*Melo diadema*). The columella of the shell is carefully cut away, leaving
only the large body-whorl, which is used as a scoop (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 3 and 4).
The outer surface of the shell is painted with red and yellow ochre in large cross [531]
pattern, with a fine cross shading.

Dug-outs.—The dug-out canoes to which I have elsewhere referred[2] have, in [175]
all probability, been introduced by Malays from whom the natives obtain them by
barter. Dr. Walter Roth has also proved that the dug-outs met with along the coast of
Queensland are of Papuan origin. The form observed in Apsley Strait is without
outrigger and hollowed out of a single tree trunk. The bow and stern are raised
(*vide* Plate X, Fig. 2).

Corrobborees.

As with all primitive folk, song and dance constitute the ultimate stage of 535
any social intercourse or festivity. The islanders are even more ready than their 527
brothers on the mainland to resort to this means of entertainment. It thus
happened that, wherever we came into contact with the blacks and presented them
with divers small articles, a corrobboree was immediately inaugurated; even though
the encounter happened to occur in the middle of the day. Corrobborees on the

[1] *Cf. Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* vol. ii, p. 17: "the baler (a melon shell) is in constant requisition."

[2] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 53. Among others, note that Major Campbell says of the Port Essington natives that "such of the canoes as I saw were hollowed from the trunks of trees, like those of the Malays and were probably either left by these people or stolen from them," *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 170.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

527 mainland, it will be remembered, are with preference postponed until after night-
535 fall. The women were not permitted to take part in the proceedings, but were,
[562] indeed, kept at some considerable distance off. Youths and male children were allowed to join in the ceremonies without apparent restriction. When we met with men, hunting in the bush, and they had been convinced of our *bona fide* intentions, they would approach us in groups of from two to four, and deliver up their long
[300] spears to us. Several of the young men would, in the meantime, run into the woods as messengers to summon others who were as yet unaware of the presence of the strangers in their haunts.

203 A corrobboree[1] having been decided upon, the signal or invitation to take part
527 in the event is sounded by two or three of the older men, who have previously arranged it among themselves. This initial note is a long-drawn, continuous yell resembling the German diphthong ö! Other members immediately fall in with the same note and are joined, at intervals, by others excitedly rushing up to take their stand alongside of those who started the call. The monosyllabic "ö" is kept continuous by the combined efforts of many voices, each of which individually expires for a moment, after the lungs' capacity for air has been completely exhausted. The note is, however, taken up again immediately after a fresh supply of air has been inhaled. The weirdness of the monotone is suddenly broken by the powerful voice of the "master" of the ceremonies, who brings forth a penetrating, but abrupt, order resembling "wahoi." This is instantly and collectively repeated by all others present. A momentary silence follows and allows the sombre trunks of the surrounding forest to reiterate the final word in ringing echoes.

The leader once more gives the note; this time in a slightly modified form resembling a long-continued "ye," that merges imperceptibly into a "yi." A sudden shrill "wahoi-hoi" brings that note also to a stop. A deadly silence prevails.

527 The primary appellation now being over, the performers congregate themselves into a compact group. In the meanwhile much excited vociferation ensues from every mouth, young as well as old. At this stage their eyes make a survey of any
[628] neighbouring encampment and if, by chance, a likely performer is noticed who has not heeded the appeal and is shirking his duty by non-attendance, he is furiously implored, at times abusively, to join the assemblage of performers. The leader now emerges from the group at a walking pace and is followed, in single file, by all participants, each in his turn falling into regular order as though his place had previously been allotted to him. The course taken by the leader is a winding one; walking, at first, some distance away from the point of starting but returning
527 eventually thereto. The musical accompaniment is started afresh, and though not
533 exactly melodious to the European ear, it is certainly a remarkably clever and original production on the part of the aboriginal. The nearest way we might describe it in words is that it is in the form of a trill, produced by a rapidly repeated

[1] Compare also H. Klaatsch, *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, pp. 559 and 560.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

"i, i, i, . . . ," changing, it may be, occasionally to a "hi, hi, hi, ..." "That one 527
all-a-same bird," remarked one of my Larrekiya boys, who stood near to me, quite 533
overcome with excitement; and, indeed, I did now recognize the similarity to the
trill of the great stone-plover or "curlew" (*Oedicnemus sp.*). The leader having in 527
the interim returned to the starting point and thus completed that part of the 535
performance in which we might be prone to find an analogy with the polonaise of a modern ball, suddenly "doubles" or breaks to a running pace and all the others follow his example. He selects a wide spiral course, gradually nearing the centre and concentrating the body of men to a mass of humanity which to the observer seems to be moving in confusion and disorder. The pace quickens. The men stamp the ground with their feet, at the same time throwing up their arms and keeping them erect from the shoulder. An explosive shriek from the leader is echoed by the voices of all the others. The stamping of feet ceases and the arms of the performers drop to their sides. The leader now steps out to a position in front of his group of men, who, all of them, have turned to face the same way, viz., towards him. Looking to one side and lifting his arm in that direction, the leader emits a high-pitched shriek, which, as his arm is swept downwards on that side, is followed by a combined roaring "hoi" of all the others. This item is repeated several times over; alternately on one side and the other, in succession. This concludes another part of the corrobboree.

All performers now form themselves into a semi-circular group. The excite- [522]
ment is intense; forcible argument and debating ensue, accompanied by jocular shouting and laughing, which are repeatedly stimulated by gleeful interjections of "irr," an exclamation common to all Australian tribes.[1]

Having come to some different arrangement among themselves, a "tempo" is [533]
set by all members clapping either one or both of their hands upon the sides of their thighs, or their buttocks, producing dull and drum-like sounds by the impact. The latter are in marked unison and rhythmical. A performer now jumps from the semicircle of the time-beaters and runs round in a circle, facing its centre, and all the while stamping his feet. The interest and excitement increase among the [533]
audience, who further subsidize the accompaniment with a note, that is produced by a spluttering movement of the lips and sounds like "brr, brr, brr." As the stamping of the performer is accelerated, the clapping quickens with it. All at once he throws up his head and shouts "poop." This solicits an immediate response of "iah" from all others present.

Stationing himself in the centre, he next cuts some wonderfully clever and athletic antics. At the start he stamps the ground vigorously with both feet in alternation; the crowd keeping excellent time with their accompaniment of clapping hands upon their buttocks. As his pace increases, the beats of the hands become sharper and both hands are used (usually when striking the buttocks more posteriorly). While he stamps his feet, the performer, at the same time, vibrates

[1] *Vide* footnotes, H. Basedow, *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 33.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

527 his legs in a remarkable manner; a hyperflexibility in the knee produces,
535 alternately, a temporary valgus- and varus-deformation of the limbs. The arms are thrown straight-outwardly from the shoulders; the hands being dorsally flexed at the wrists. He throws his head from one side to another and occasionally backwards. At times he jumps wildly from one place to another, emitting, with each bound, a loud coarse cry of "poop," which, as before, is followed by a shrill "iah" from all others present. This item being repeated almost to exhaustion, the performer rushes back into the midst of the group while appreciative shrieks of laughter and applause conclude that part.

When the beating of time starts afresh, other performers may repeat the same act and try to excel the performance of their predecessor.

Other items follow, which are imitative in character. A few may be described. It will be understood that the beating of time continues throughout, as do, also, the frequent interjections of "poop" and "iah."

The kangaroo ceremony.—A kangaroo ceremony is started by one or two men jumping into the ring with their legs slightly bent at the knee. Their arms are held forward, bent vertically and at right angles at the elbow, with their hands prone and partly closed. The whole posture is to resemble that of the hopping marsupial of Australia. In jumping round the space, the actor turns his head from side to side, face downwards, as though in search of food. When such is supposed to have been found, his hands may assist to support his body and the hopping ceases. His legs are then bent strongly in the knees, so that his body sinks and the buttocks come to rest immediately above the heels, or, indeed, he may squat entirely upon the ground. Both hands being now placed on the ground between the open thighs, they are held together in the form of a scoop and made to take up a quantity of sand between them. Gently rubbing the hands backwards and forwards they are slowly passed to the level of the mouth and then above it, retaining a horizontal position all the time. This process is repeated several times. Then, at the moment that the sand is dropped to earth, the men rise to their feet with a bound and start running round the ring with the stamping of feet described above and a peculiar hissing noise from their lips. The act is interrupted at frequent intervals by a cry of "poop," which is echoed by the resounding voices of "iah." The hopping recommences. The men occasionally stop and scratch one of their legs with one hand, held in imitation of a claw. Then, while that hand is being held erect, and in a bent position, the opposite hand scratches that limb also. Either arm is now brought into contact with the mouth and licked in precisely the same way as the animals themselves do. The pace of the timekeepers at this stage quickens once more, and the performers furiously scratch all accessible parts of their body with increased zeal. An unexpected cry of "poop," followed by a hearty "iah," terminates this part amid loud shrieks and applause.

It is not long, however, before the two performers again leap into the ring, each armed with a light reed, resembling a spear, in his hand. The above ceremony is partly recapitulated, being, however, slightly modified in that one man, at intervals,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Notes on The

takes the part of a hunter endeavouring to drive his spear into the enraged kangaroo on the opposite side of the ring. 527 535

Corroboree of the ship of war.—The next item in the ceremony appeals to us Europeans in a twofold sense. Firstly, the mimicry on the part of the aboriginal in an introduced scene is excellent: its effect being still more enhanced in that his artistic genius has expanded the original impressions by adequate interludes of his own invention and taste. Secondly, the observer's sentiment and appreciation are kindled afresh when he sees this savage folk, who are oft not credited with the possession of anything but vice and immorality, present to a subsequent and younger generation, scenes in living picture, which happened long ago in the days of the naval settlement of Fort Dundas. To us the records are available in the libraries throughout the world; to the aboriginal the events can only be handed down by tradition and such ceremonies as that which is now to be described. 177 527 535 [173 182]

The chorus or semicircular group of men have again started their rhythmical accompaniment by clapping upon the lateral aspect of their thighs with the arched palm of one hand. A performer rushes into the centre of the half-ring and, after going through a few preliminaries, stands with one of his legs placed a short distance in front of the other and slightly flexed at the knee. Throwing his head back and looking upwards, he starts a vigorous hauling action by alternately throwing one arm out in the direction he is looking, closing the fist and making an imaginary pull right down to his loins, while at the same time the opposite arm is thrown out and returned in a similar way. Accurate time is kept by the time-beaters. This act is in imitation of the hauling-in of a sail on a European man-of-war, such as the natives saw at Fort Dundas nearly a century ago. The performer now turns and runs to the opposite corner of the half-ring; the onlookers marking the time by clapping to it in a quickened beat produced with both hands upon their buttocks. The same act is repeated there several times. Next, the same hauling motion is continued, but reversed from below towards the body, in imitation of the hauling-up of an anchor. Several short and harsh interjections suggest the orders of the commanding officers and the whole ceremony, in fact, is reproduced with a suspicion of caricature upon the strictness of naval discipline. During this part of the performance, several cries of "poop" and "ish" are again sounded. The actor now moves about in the semicircle with the familiar stamping of feet and cutting out the most grotesque antics. He first extends his arms straight out on either side, throws his head back and moves his thorax laterally in a pendulous manner from the hips. Then he turns his arms through a right-angle frontwards, so that they project slantingly upwards, whence he again changes them to the former position. Then again he extends his arms downward and bends them so that the elbows project behind and his fists rest against his flanks, from which position they are presently changed to a straight pendulous one. After remaining in that position a short while, he suddenly throws them furiously upwards in front of him; the stamping, which has been

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

197 continued all the while, is at this stage strengthened. Any of these acts may be
527 interrupted at any moment by changing to the "hauling of sail or anchor" scene
535 and many interjections of "poop" and "iah" accompany them. The performer himself now ceases to stamp with his feet, but in place thereof he bends his legs at the knees and knocks his thighs together while he extends his arms outwards, either in front or at the side of him.

527 *Corrobboree of a fight.*—During several of the corrobborees described, a chant
535 was heard which accompanied the acting in addition to the clapping of hands against the thighs or buttocks. In trying to reproduce the words or syllables of this chant, the nearest analogy I can find is—

[533
539]

"*Tupera monan la jerra*
Tupera monan la jerra,"

and

"*Tupatunan tenakomejona.*"

These chants are muttered uninterruptedly throughout the particular part. The corrobboree of a fight consists in the imitation of a spear duel between two angry blackfellows. They carry the same kind of reed-spears as was described under the "kangaroo ceremony." They first place themselves in defiance of one another at either side of the half-circle and go through all sorts of antics, brandishing their spears, rolling their eyes, and furiously throwing their bodies about. Next they start running about the ring and stamp their feet, throwing up their arms and knocking their thighs together in much the same way as previously described.

Corrobboree of the jungle fowl.—After the usual excessive amount of shouting, jabbering, and excited shrieks of laughter, an old man runs forward into the ring. He bends his arms at the elbow and holds them close against the sides of his body, while the closed fists rest on his chest, an attitude resembling that of a professional runner. This is to resemble the wings of the bird (*Leipoa*). He looks about the ground from side to side as though in search of something. Presently he imitates the bird's call with a shrill penetrating voice which sounds like "he-r-r-r-l." The onlookers' accompaniment consists in producing short spluttering and bubbling noises with their lips that sound like "brrl, brrl, brrl." The performer often interrupts the proceedings by shouting "he," to which all others respond with a loud "yah." Now he throws up clouds of dust behind him with his feet, in imitation of the way in which the jungle fowl scratch and throw up the earth into the enormous mounds that contain their eggs.

To conclude the ceremony, all performers are led off again by the original leader in Indian file and go through much the same performance as they did in the initiation of the ceremony; the final shouts and shrieks, after the completion of the "tree" in spiral line, being particularly loud and enthusiasic.

114 Captain King[1] was probably the first white man to have witnessed the
527
535

[1] *Survey Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1827, vol. i, p. 114.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

corrobboree of the Melville Islanders, but it appears that he regarded the [114] demonstration as hostile. He writes that "the dance consisted chiefly of the per- 527 formers leaping two or three times successively out of the sea, and then violently 535 moving their legs so as to agitate the water into a foam for some distance around them, all the time shouting loudly and laughing immoderately; then they would run through the water for eight or ten yards and perform again; and this was repeated over and over as long as the dance lasted."

During none of these ceremonies, or indeed anywhere on the island, did I see [771] anything of totemism in the scientific sense of the word. This fact is in accordance [114] with my observations in Central and North Australia, and my negative evidence is amply borne out by the researches of Drs. W. E. Roth and H. Klaatsch and others.

Pastimes.

The sham-fights of youths with small arrow-shaped spears have already been 524 mentioned. Children were observed upon the beach competing in running and long jump. A favourite amusement of the younger folk on a breezy day is to collect the light globular seed-heads of the "spring rolling grass" (*Spinifex hirsutis*), that grow on every sand-hill near the coast, and take them to the beach and there release them on the hardened sand. Driven along by the wind, these seeds travel over the surface at no mean pace. Allowing them to gain a fair start, the children bolt after them and endeavour to overtake them and pick them up from the ground while dashing past them at full speed in "cow-boy" fashion.

Another game is that of hand-ball. The seeds of the zamia (*Cycas media*) take the place of a small ball. Two lads stand facing one another and hit the seed to and fro with the palms of their hands, after the style of a modern game of tennis.

Despite their keenness of sight and quickness of hand, they are, nevertheless, [147] very backward in catching with their hands an object which is thrown at them.

Burial Method.

The aborigines of Bathurst and Melville Islands have a unique and elaborate 764 method of burial; graves have been found on both islands. It appears that the favourite places for burying the dead are there, where a jungle or mangrove-thicket breaks to the ordinary eucalypt-woodland, usually near to the sea-coast or to a native water.

Historically we have to note several observations in this connection.

Sir Gordon Bremer[1] mentions having discovered a grave on Bathurst Island in 1824. "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it

[1] *Imperial Parliamentary Paper*, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, London, March 27th, 1843; also in *The Genesis of Queensland*, by H. S. Russell, Sydney, 1888, p. 34.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there, and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilized people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed round with trees of 7 feet or 8 feet high, some of which were carved with a stone or shell, and further ornamented by rings of wood, also carved. On the tops of these posts were placed the waddies of the deceased. . . . At the head was placed a piece of a canoe and a spear, and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and the earth were cleared away from the sides, and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."

Major Campbell,[1] who in 1826 relieved Captain Barlow as commandant of Fort Dundas, in his interesting memoir to the Royal Geographical Society also refers to native graves observed by him. He writes: "It appears to be the custom of the natives to bury their dead, their burial places being in retired spots near their most frequented encamping ground. The burial place is circular, probably 10 or 12 feet in diameter; it is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberds, 14 or 15 feet high; and between these the spear and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground." This description applies equally well to those seen by us, [114] with the exception that the cleared circular space was considerably larger in our case, while the height of the posts, above the ground, was less.

171 764 In 1847, Beto Jukes,[2] naturalist to the expedition of H.M.S. "*Fly*," described and figured a native tomb seen at Port Lihou in Endeavour Strait; "Round a central mound of sand there had been a broad ditch or hollow scooped out and swept quite clean for several yards in width. The mound was of a quadrangular form, 8 feet long, 4 feet wide, and 3 feet high. A stout post stood upright at each corner, and the sides were ornamented by rows of the ribs of the dugong placed regularly along them. . . . On each post was either a large shell or the skull of a dugong, and on the grave were several other dugongs' skulls and shells of the *Nautilus pompilius*. All these, as well as the posts, were smeared with red ochre." Additional interest is attached to the description of Jukes, since he states that "between the two posts, near the sea, a long stick had been inserted, ornamented with feathers and streamers of grass, and fastened to the post by other cross-sticks similarly ornamented." From this wording, and more so from the [778 114] figure reproduced by him, it would seem that the decoration between the posts was one of those sacred ornaments to which I have elsewhere referred as the *wanaingi*.[3]

[1] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 158.

[2] *Narrative of the Surveying Voyage H.M.S. "Fly,"* vol. i, pp. 149 and 150 (1847).

[3] *Vide* also George French Angas, *S. Australia*, illustrated, 1847, Plate XXIV; Edge Partington, Album III, Plate CXIV; Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes Cent. Australia*, pp. 220 and 221; W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies, Queensland Aborigines*, Fig. 427;

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

A record of something of the kind having existed on the mainland is contained in MacGillivray's narrative (1852). In referring to the burial-ceremonies of natives of the Cobourg Peninsula, this author[1] states that "when decomposition has gone on sufficiently far, the bones are carefully removed, painted red, wrapped up in bark, and carried about with the tribe for some time; after which they are finally deposited, either in a hollow tree or a shallow grave, over which a low mound of earth and stones is raised, occasionally ornamented with posts at the corners." 171 765

This same author refers to similar burial ceremonies which he observed of the "Kowaraegas," natives inhabiting the Prince of Wales group of islands, situate near Cape York in Torres Strait. He writes[2] of a grave he saw at Port Lihou, some time after Bete Jukes' visit: "When the head of a family dies at Muralug, the body is laid out upon a framework[3] of sticks raised a foot from the ground and is there allowed to rot . . . until the head of the corpse becomes nearly detached by the process of putrefaction, when it is removed and handed over to the custody of the eldest wife. . . . The body, or rather the headless skeleton, is then interred in a shallow grave, over which a mound is raised, ornamented by wooden posts at the corners painted red, with sometimes shells or other decorations attached to them. . . ." 171 764

Perhaps it would not be out of place to make a passing reference to the native burial-place discovered by Captain Sturt[4] near Lake Buddah, off the Macquarie River, in New South Wales (latitude 32° 5′, longitude 148° 10′). "It consists of an oblong mound, with three semicircular seats. A walk encompassed the whole from which three others branched off, for a few yards only, into the forest. Several cypresses, overhanging the grave, were fancifully carved on the inner side, and on one the shape of a heart was deeply engraved." A similarity of method will be apparent. Instead of having separate carved posts surrounding the grave, the natives of Macquarie River carved the trees surrounding it. The walk encompassing the mound might be regarded as the equivalent of the cleared space characteristic of the island graves.

Mr. P. Foelsche and I have described painted and ornamented poles that are erected close to the graves of deceased members of the Larrekiya tribe in the Port Darwin district.[5]

During our geological explorations of the north-west coast of the Northern 764

R. Clement, *Publication of Royal Ethnological Museum at Leiden*, series ii, No. 6 (Catalogue by J. D. E. Schmeltz), vol. xvi, Plate V, Fig. 8; H. Basedow, *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxviii, 1904, pp. 23 and 28, Plate III, Fig. 4; H. Klaatsch, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1906, pp. 793, and 1907, p. 654.

[1] J. MacGillivray, *Narrative of the Voyage of H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* 1852, vol. i, p. 149.

[2] *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 32.

[3] *Vide* reference given by me in *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 6.

[4] *Vide* Charles Sturt: *Two Expeditions into the Interior of Southern Australia*, London, 1834, vol. i, p. 14, and frontispiece.

[5] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 5, and *op. cit.*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 7.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 Territory in 1905, Messrs. Brown and Gee[1] found, near Luxmore Head on Melville Island, "a grave enclosed by wooden slabs, portions of which had been burnt. Aboriginal markings were faintly discernible in places on the wood, and some of the posts had the wood cut away at the top, leaving two spike-like horns at the sides; others had the wood cut away from the outside towards the centre, leaving a short spike standing up in the middle of the post."

As I was examining the Rivers' country on the mainland at the time, I did not personally see the find.

Soon after Professor H. Klaatsch, when visiting Melville Island, discovered close to the site of the old naval settlement of Fort Dundas a "grave decorated by monuments." Professor Klaatsch[2] describes the find as follows: "The grave was surrounded by nine wooden pillars, arranged in an elongated oval, each post differing in size and shape from its fellow. The longest was about 6 feet, and each was variously painted in yellows and reds."

114 764 Bremer, Campbell, and Klaatsch found implements and weapons, presumably the belongings of the deceased, lying upon the grave or the grave-posts or stuck upright into the ground. They mention spears, waddies, bark water-vessels and baskets of fan-palm leaves.[3] No relics of this kind were noticed by me; in explanation thereof I state that such are likely to be destroyed by the numerous bush-fires occurring on the island, and secondly, in the case presently to be described, on account of the immature age of the individual, since children rarely are in possession of any belongings. I have, however, recorded[4] a similar custom from Central Australia.

764 The discovery I am now about to describe was made in the south-eastern corner of Bathurst Island. The grave was situated not far from the coast and on the edge of a eucalypt forest, adjoining a thicket of mangroves (*vide* Plate XIII, Figs. 1 and 2). The space was cleared; a circular patch of ground, 8 metres in diameter, had been artificially elevated by a few centimetres and swept clean.[5] It was bestrewn with numerous burnt fragments of shells of the edible *Telescopium fuscum* and *Cyrena cassingtonensis*, and also with ashes. In the centre of the elevated patch was a small elongated oval mound, which indicated where the corpse had been buried. The direction of its longer axis was north-west by south-east. Five ornamented posts[6] surrounded the small mound in an irregular way;

[1] *Vide Report on Explorations by Govt. Geologist and Staff*, 1905, p. 28, and *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, vol. xi, 1907, p. 546.

[2] *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, vol. xi, 1907, pp. 536–8, and *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, vol. xxxix, 1907, pp. 678 *et seq.*, Plate IX.

[3] *Cf.* H. Basedow, *Proc. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxi, 1907, p. 38, Figs. 40 and 41.

[4] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxviii, 1904, p. 24, Plate VI, Fig. 1.

[5] Whether this was done to guard the grave-posts against bush fires or to facilitate the detection of an imaginary visit of the evil spirit ("devil devil"), as is the case in Central Australia, or both, is still unsettled.

[6] Another grave, situated not far from the one under consideration, was surrounded by the remnants of nine posts.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

four skirting the north-eastern edge and only one standing on the opposite side, near to the south-eastern end. Before I exhumed the skeleton, the natives informed me that a male infant had been buried there. I am inclined to believe that this information was gathered from the arrangement of the posts and their markings, rather than that they recollected the identity of the child. The grave had apparently stood for some years, for upon digging down to the skeleton, several fair-sized roots of trees, that had grown subsequently, had to be cut through. At a depth of half a metre a layer of decayed pieces of timber, longitudinally laid, was found; under this rested the skeleton. It was, indeed, that of an infant, not many months old. Several men of the local tribe gave me voluntary assistance in the exhumation of the skeleton, and did not in the least object to handle the bones and carry them for me. 764

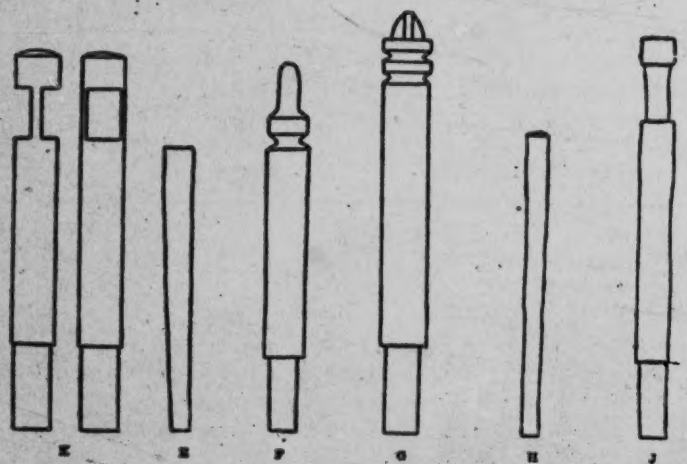


FIG. 4.

The ornamental posts surrounding the little central mound are all of wood, namely the trunks of the heavy iron wood and of a lighter timber (perhaps that of the corkscrew palm or *Pandanus*). They are circular in section and of various diameters and heights. The top ends of the three largest posts are carved in the manner described below. All of them still showed traces of having been painted with ochres in a most elaborate manner. The designs were, however, incomplete, so that I had them freshened up by the natives, who willingly consented to do so and exercised the greatest care to apply the colours in precisely the same positions as they originally occupied. The four posts along the north-eastern edge of the mound stood practically in a straight line, while the remaining one was at the head end of the opposite side. No two of them are alike either in size, method of carving, or colour ornamentation. It is safe to assume that each post has its significance, since the natives could decide the age and sex (and possibly many 532 764

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FIG. 5.

things more) of the interred and could reproduce the designs, upon request, with so marked a degree of precision and certainty.

The post that stood alone on the south-western side is no doubt of particular importance (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5b). It stood 125 centimetres above the surface and 11 centimetres in the ground. The circumference at the top, which is flat, is 42 centimetres and the post tapers very slightly downwards (*vide* Fig. 4, E). The post shows no signs of any carving. Its surface is, however, charred, and two simple, but effective, if not grotesque, designs in white pipe-clay have been drawn upon it (*vide* Fig. 5). These, without doubt, are in representation of two crocodiles or lizards, in profile, with their dorsal surfaces opposed but not in contact. I take it that these designs, and consequently this post, represent the family crest of the deceased.

The post at the south-eastern corner (the head end) stood 140 centimetres above and 37 centimetres below the level of the ground, the latter length having been reduced in thickness by about 3 centimetres all round (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5a). The top surface is practically flat. For a distance of 22 centimetres down, the wood has been cut away to a depth of from 3 to 4 centimetres all round (*vide* Fig. 4, F). At that distance it slopes outwards through 3 centimetres of vertical measurement to a collar 7 centimetres in width; it being the same diameter as the main pillar. Below the collar, material has again been cut away circumferentially in a V-shaped fashion; the intervening vertical space between the slopes of this notch measuring but

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

1 centimetre. From this furrow downwards the post has a uniform circumference of 54 centimetres. The colour-ornamentation (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 1) is briefly as follows: the portion of post reduced in thickness at the top is yellow for a quarter of its length and red for the remainder. The collar is divided into nine squares, yellow in outline and on a red background. Yellow lines, drawn from corner to corner, intersect at the middle of each square. Below this, the post is divided by five vertical bands. The one that faced the grave is waved: it is drawn in yellow ochre bordered with red. Upon the side diametrically opposite (*i.e.* the side seen on approaching the grave) are two vertical bands of yellow, about 15 centimetres apart. The spaces on either side of them are again subdivided by two slightly curved vertical bands of white, bordered with yellow. Occupying each of the three longitudinal spaces between these white bands are one elongate-oval figure in the centre and one-half such figure at the top and bottom of each respectively. Connected with the top and bottom ends of these figures are singly, doubly or multiply bent processes; the groups being separated from one another by horizontally laid shields. It is clear that these designs are intended to represent human figures in various artistically modified forms. Strange transformations of the limbs into snakes are visible on the left; while similar forms stand alone in the bottom corner of either side. 532 764

Such transformations are not infrequently met in primitive art, and from such latitude and privileges on the part of the artist there is no doubt all modern ornamental and emblematical designs have originated. The figures are drawn in red, bordered and shaded with yellow bars and crosses. The central, lowest figure is shaded in imitation of the zamia palm leaf, similar to the body ornamentation described above. All the spaces between the limb-like processes are filled in with bunched circlets or simple and criss-cross shading. The last-named method is also found among the designs of mainland natives.[1]

Next to this head-post, along the north-western edge of the mound, at a distance of about 65 centimetres from centre to centre of post, stands the largest, heaviest, and most elaborately decorated post (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5c). Its height above ground was 160 centimetres; its total length is 203 centimetres. The circumference is from 62 to 64 centimetres. For a distance of about 12 centimetres from the top, material has been cut away at two sides diametrically opposite, to a depth of from 4 to 5 centimetres, but at the points of emergence of an axis at right angles to this diameter, a vertical strip of timber has been left intact; the top is rounded off in the direction of this axis, which, moreover, ran parallel to the long axis of the mound (*vide* Fig. 4, G). Beneath this headpiece, two such notches, as described of the last-mentioned post, have been cut; the width of the collars so formed and the furrows, respectively, being each from 4 to 5 centimetres. The thickness of the part that stood in the ground has been reduced by from 1½ to 2 centimetres all

[1] *Vide* for example H. Basedow: *Archiv f. Anthrop.*, vol. vii, parts 2 and 3, 1908, p. 219 (Fig.).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 764 round. The ochre ornamentation is in three colours: white, yellow, and red. The design is quite symmetrical as regards the disposition of its constitutent parts (*vide* Plate XVIII, Fig. 1). In the centre of the post, on the side away from the grave, stands a figure resembling a St. Andrew's Cross, the arm on the left being yellow, bordered with red, that on the right, white, bordered with yellow. On either side of this figure, and at equal distances from it, are vertical bands of white bordered with yellow; in between are various elongate shield-shaped figures, symmetrically placed and enclosing circles or bars. All the remaining spaces are filled in with cross-hatched shading and circlets in the three specified colours. Between the two upper arms of the cross stands a red T-shaped figure, resembling the emu-track of the mainland tribes, but that it is intended to represent such is doubtful, since the emu (*Dromaeius novae hollandiae*) was not observed on either of the islands.

The next post[1] stood 50 centimetres further north-west (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5d). It is the smallest and made of light wood. Its length above ground was 120 centimetres, and the total original length was about 145 centimetres. The last-named measurement could not be taken with accuracy because a dry rot had set in and destroyed part of the timber. The circumference is from 29 centimetres at the top to 26 at the level of the ground. The top surface is rounded off but otherwise the structure is plain (*vide* Fig. 4, H). The colouring (*vide* Plate XVIII, Fig. 2) is as follows: top surface yellow; underneath, for a depth of 10 to 13 centimetres, the post is red, then follow thin alternate horizontal bands of yellow, white and yellow. Below, the surface is subdivided into a number of trapezoid and triangular spaces by two crosses resembling that of the post previously described, the one in white, the other in yellow. Of the intervening spaces, alternate fields are filled in with circlets of red, surrounded by yellow, and arranged in horizontal rows of from one to three, which are separated by horizontal bars of red. The other fields are painted red and are shaded with transverse bands of yellow.

Lastly, the post standing at the foot end of the grave, that is at the north-western corner, was 40 centimetres from the last described. Its total length is 193 centimetres and it stood 156 centimetres above the ground (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5e). The circumference varies from 45 centimetres at the top to 39 centimetres at the ground-level. The top surface is rounded. At a distance of 10 centimetres from the crest, the wood has been cut away circumferentially for a depth of 2 centimetres and a vertical distance of 28 centimetres (*vide* Fig 4, J). From this level to that of the old ground-line the post is plain, but, below the ground-

[1] The posts surrounding the other grave, mentioned in the footnote on p. 314, were apparently of a similar nature. Bush fires had seriously damaged them. One, however, was cut through at a distance of 15 centimetres from the top, leaving only two narrow strips of timber on either side to support the headpiece thus formed. Whether or not a sexual designation was hereby intended I could not definitely ascertain, but presume so. The "spike-like horns at the side" referred to by Mr. Gee (p. 314 above) must be regarded as the remnants of a post of similar type to this whose crown has been destroyed by fire (*vide* Fig. 4, K).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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level, further material has been cut away to reduce its thickness by about 1 centimetre all round. The top portion, which has the appearance of a knob, has been daubed with red ochre; the sunken portion, immediately beneath, is white (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 2). The lower surface of the post bears five vertical bands, three being of white pipe-clay and two of yellow ochre. Two of the former have a border of red, the third one of yellow; and both of the latter (yellow) are bordered with white. Three of the intervening spaces are shaded with inclined lines of white, the remaining two are each filled with a vertical row of white cricoid figures. The original surface upon which the pattern was drawn is charred. 532 764

Having persuaded the natives to repaint the designs on the tomb-posts, in places where they were defective or missing, they set about the work with enthusiasm and did not rest until they had repainted the whole of the surfaces. To accomplish this they leaned the posts against trees and divided themselves into small groups of two to four, each of which undertook part of the work (*vide* Plate XVI, Figs. 1 and 2). Youths were sent to the main camp, whence they soon after returned with lumps of red and yellow ochre and white pipe-clay (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 2). From these they broke off small pieces and crushed them by hand in the strong concave shells of the bivalve mollusc *Cyrena essingtonensis*.[1] To this crumbled pigment sufficient water was added to make a thick paint, more water being added from time to time as required. One might look upon these shells containing the mixed paint as representing primitive palettes (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 1). The paint is applied to the surface by means of crudely made, yet effective, brushes. Short pieces of the creeping calamus are cut with the sharp edge of a shell and one or both of their ends chewed until all the fibres have become separated (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 3); much in the same way as the flower-stalks of the fan-palm are chewed when feeding on honey (*vide* p. 300). Both of these small artists' requisites are highly interesting inasmuch as they show us a decidedly primitive, yet to the present day practically unaltered stage in the evolution of art. [126] 386 [413] 532 [413]

It is evident that the posts have been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk. Captain Flinders[2] as far back as 1803 noticed that the natives on the north coast (Caledon Bay) were familiar with the use of iron instruments and that they tried to steal his axes. He, therefore, suspected that "they had been previously visited by people possessing iron instruments." Later, he was himself able to confirm this supposition when he discovered, near to Cape Wilberforce, a fleet of proas from Macassar, the crew of which were in the habit of visiting the north coast of Australia to collect trepang, which they took to Timor and sold to the Chinese.[3] 412 [302] 177 171

[1] We have before us an interesting analogy, when we recollect that in our own country the shells of fresh-water mussels were, in former days, much used and are still used as a receptacle for mixing water-colours; whence also the name *Unio pictorum*.

[2] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, pp. 212 and 228–231.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 177 412 When Captain King[1] dropped anchor in Apsley Strait in 1818, and came into contact with natives near LEXMORE Head on Melville Island, he noticed that "they repeatedly asked for axes by imitating the action of chopping."

171 764 532 Ethnologically these tomb-posts are of the greatest importance. With the exception of the records left by Jukes and MacGillivray, we know of nothing of the kind existing nowadays on the mainland. That, however, the inhabitants of some of the Torres Strait islands adopt methods of preserving the memory of their dead by means of painted and decorated structures of a different type is an established fact. The Continental Australian certainly, also, has methods of his own to mark a place of burial, but in a decidedly more transitory and less laborious way. The latter leaves already existing belongings of the deceased upon the grave; the islander, in addition, surrounds the spot with specially prepared posts such as have been described herein. Apart from the carvings, the painted designs, alone, are quite superior to anything existing on the mainland. The marked symmetry of the individual patterns and their diversity, when compared with one another, can hardly find a parallel on the mainland. We might look upon these island productions as representing interesting and independent transition stages between the primitive art of the Continental Australian, on the one hand, and the more perfected types of equatorial island tribes to the north of Australia, on the other.

APPENDIX.

NATIVE OCHRE DRAWINGS ON BARK FROM MELVILLE ISLAND, NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA.

531 While visiting Bathurst Island in 1911, I also entered several of the inlets of Melville Island from Apsley Strait. At one point, not far from the southern entrance to the Strait, where some aborigines were living in huts near to Cooper's Buffalo-Shooters Camp, I found the drawings here described. They were upon sheets of bark of the Woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*), used for building their shelters and huts. All drawings are in pipe-clay and red ochre; these materials having been smeared or squirted on to the bark in the form of a thin paste or in aqueous suspension. Typical among the drawings of the aboriginals on the mainland are the negative imprints of hands produced by holding the palm of the hand flat against the surface and squirting a mouthful of pipe-clay or ochre, suspended in water, against the back of the hand and around it. The surrounding surface is thus coloured so that, when the hand is removed, its outline stands out conspicuously by the absence of colour.[2]

[1] *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, pp. 111 and 121.

[2] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, 1907, vol. xxxi, p. 56, Plate XII. Among other references note E. Giles, *Australia Twice Traversed*, 1889, vol. i, p. 78. "The drawing is done

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on The

The first plate reproduced contains a group composed of five imprints of the left hand of a native (Plate XIX, Fig. 1). The fingers are wide apart; the wrists of the two lowest hands seem very narrow in proportion, but that is due to the fact that they did not lie in close contact with the surface when the pigment was squirted against it. 531

In the lower corner on the right of the reproduction stands a single-masted sailing craft, intended to represent a small European pearling or fishing-boat. The former class of boats have long been in the habit of passing through Apsley Strait on account of the shelter afforded and the chances of procuring fresh water close to the shores of either island. 532

Plate XIX, Fig. 2, is the lower continuation of the proceeding. The sailing craft just described is noticed on the right. Below it is the picture of a frog. Special features of this design are firstly the two circular lateral prominences on the head representing the large eyes and, secondly, the inaccuracy in regard to the number of toes. The smear on the left hind leg, resembling a caudal appendage, is accidental.

The fourth design (Plate XX) is that of a double-masted pearling-lugger[1] in full sail. The proportion and neatness of execution of these designs of sailing crafts are excellent indeed. The hulk and sails of the latter figure are drawn in white pipe-clay and its masts in red ochre.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate VII.

Figs. 1 and 3. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with fur strings and cockatoo feathers. ½ natural size. 301 531

Figs. 2 and 4. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with pointed sticks. ½ natural size.

Plate VIII.

Figs. 1 and 2. Water-carriers, made of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). ½ natural size. 415

Figs. 3, 4, 5 and 6. Food-carriers, made of bark; Figs. 5 and 6 with ochre drawings. ½ natural size. 531

Plate IX.

Figs. 1, 2, 3 and 4. Throwing-sticks and clubs. ½ natural size. 411

Fig. 5. A collection of spears from Bathurst Island. $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size. 531

by filling the mouth with charcoal powder if the device is to be black, if red with red ochre powder, damping the wall where the mark is to be left, and placing the palm of the hand against it, with fingers stretched out; the charcoal or ochre powder is then blown against the back of the hand; when it is withdrawn, it leaves the space occupied by the hand and fingers clean while the surrounding portions of the wall are all black or red, as the case may be." (Central Australian Natives.)

[1] *Vide* figure in *Report Government Geologist and Staff*, 1905, Adelaide, By authority, p. 14.

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PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Baiers made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

314 396 137 Fig. 1. Forest scene on Bathurst Island. From the stringy-barked eucalyptus on the left side of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe. Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
501 Fig. 2. Various types of paddles in use on Bathurst Island. About $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.

PLATE XIII.

764 Figs. 1 and 2. Distant and near view of a native grave, surrounded by five carved and painted posts, Bathurst Island. Note the cleared space and the position of grave, viz.: at the junction between open woodland and thicket. A tall Bathurst Islander in seen in Fig. 2.

PLATE XIV.

415 Fig. 1. A melon-shell (*Melo diadema*) used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Fig. 2. A *Fusus priei* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 764 Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e. Painted and carved posts of native grave shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XV.

415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cyrena assingtonensis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
317 386 Fig. 2. Lumps of yellow ochre (on the left), white pipe-clay (in the centre), and red ochre (on the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
301 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (?). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 532 764 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

PLATE XVII.

Fig. 1. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5a (Plate VIII) shown in plan; modified forms of the human figure are embodied. 532
Fig. 2. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5e (Plate VIII) shown in plan. 764

PLATE XVIII.

Fig. 1. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5c (Plate VIII) shown in plan. 532
Fig. 2. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5d (Plate VIII) shown in plan. 764

PLATE XIX.

Pipe-clay drawings on a sheet of bark of the stringy-barked eucalyptus (*E. tetradonta*), from a native hut on Melville Island. The plate includes negative imprints of hands (Fig. 1), and drawings of a sailing craft (Figs. 1 and 2), and of a frog (Fig. 2). ¼ natural size. 531 532

PLATE XX.

Pipe-clay drawing of pearling lugger in full sail; bark from a native hut on Melville Island. About ¼ natural size. 532

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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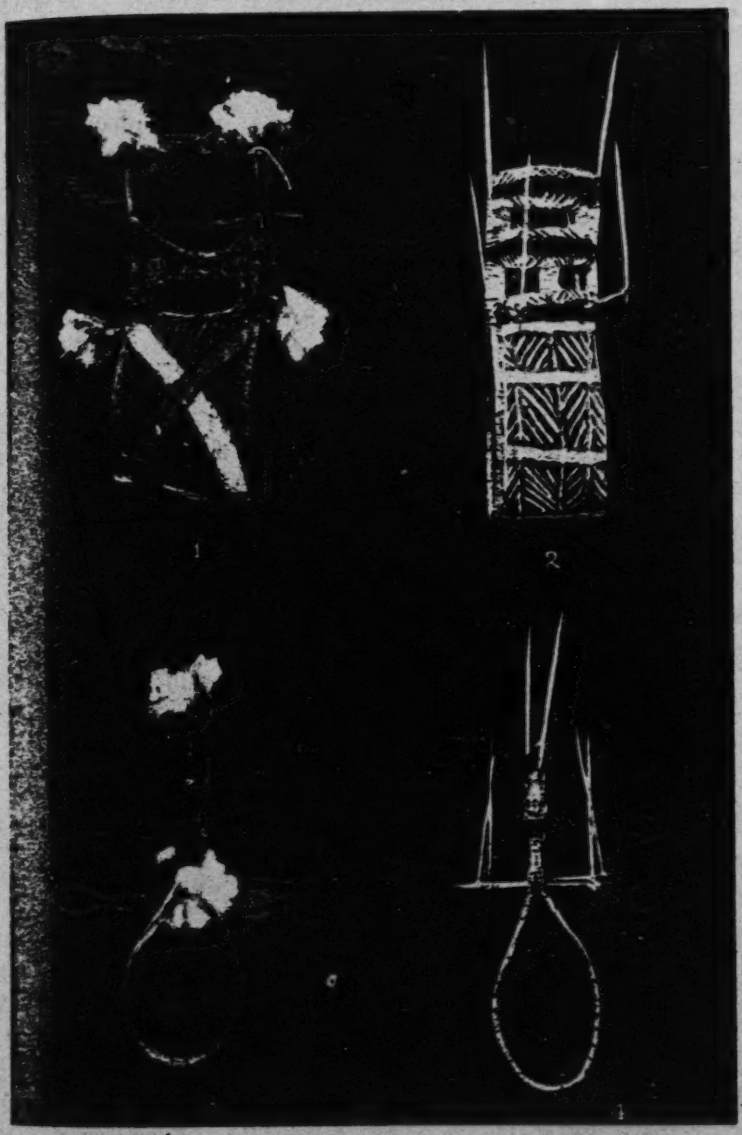

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 1]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 371 - ANALYST]

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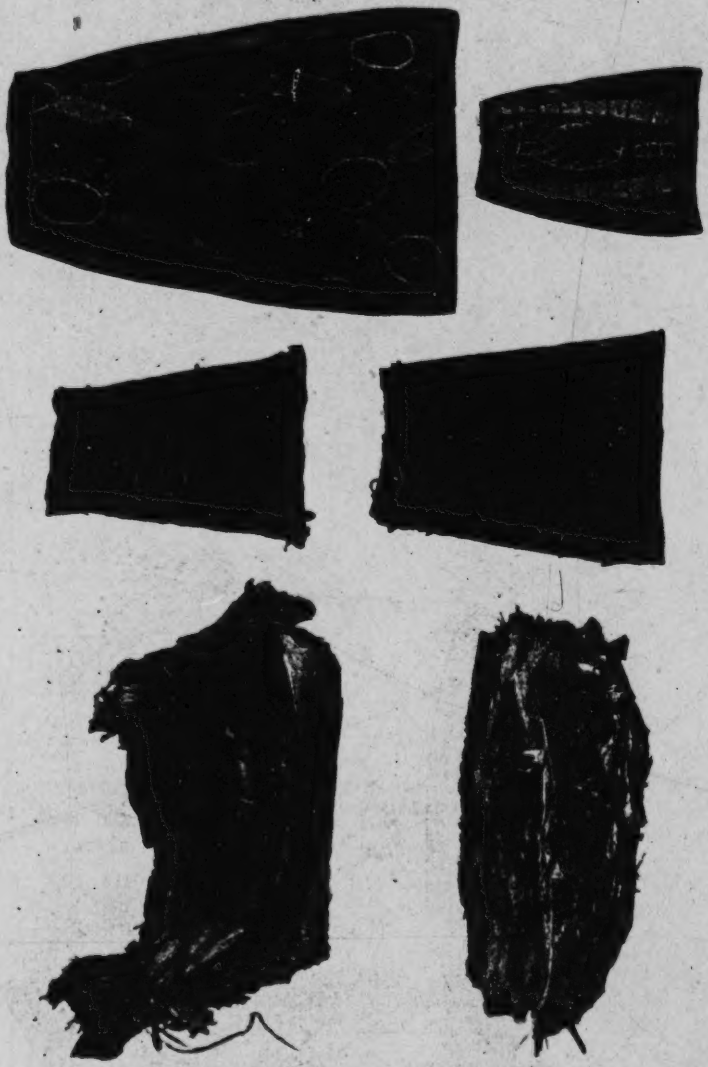

1. 2. 3. 4.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 2]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 321]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate IX.

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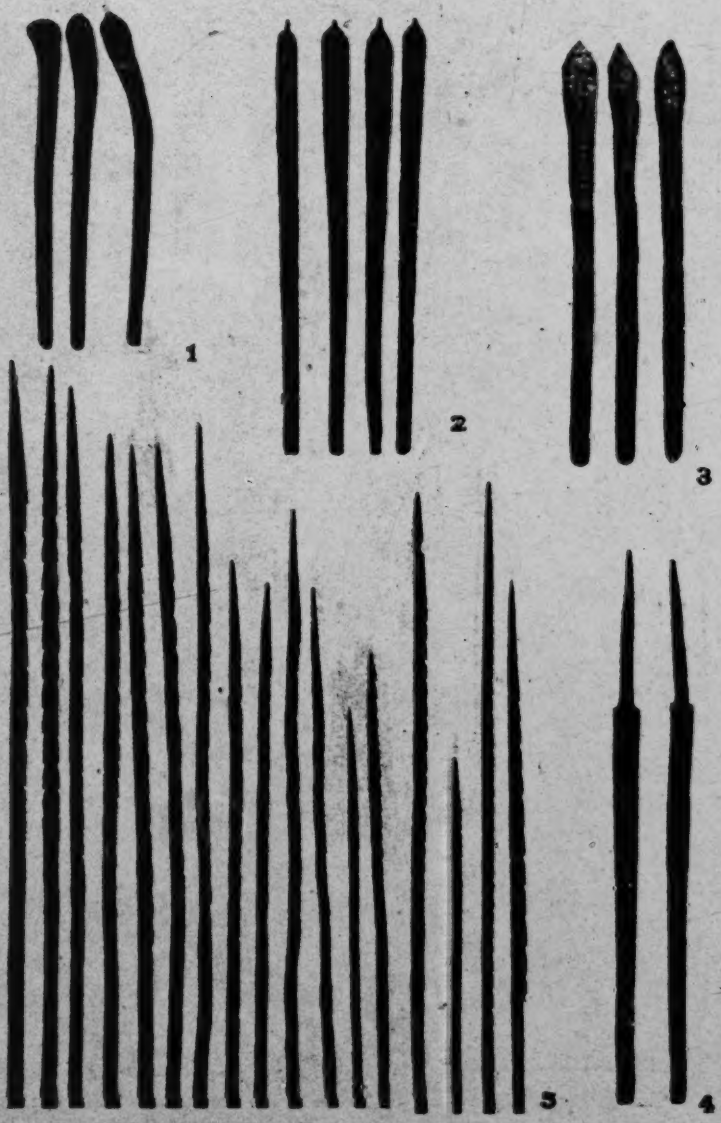

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 3]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 321 - ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate X.

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FIG. 1.

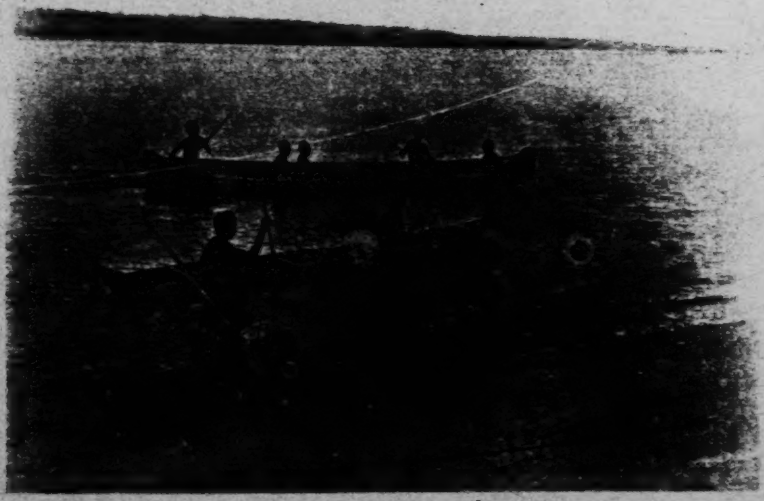

FIG. 2.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 4]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 322 – ANALYSIS]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XI.

501

[END PLATE 5]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 322 – ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XXI.

501

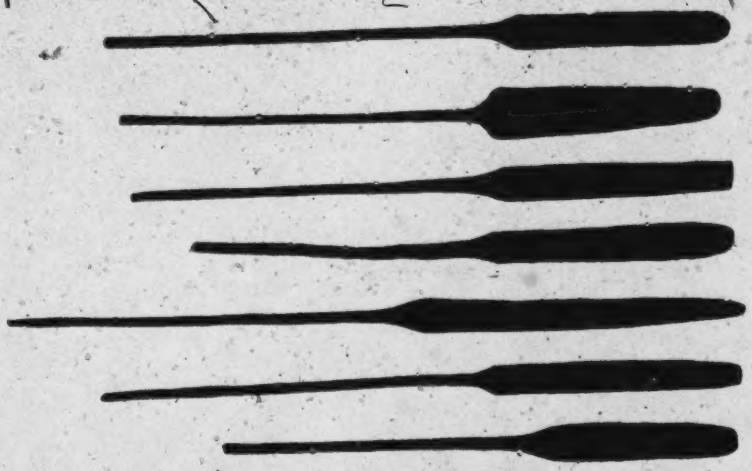

FIG. 2.

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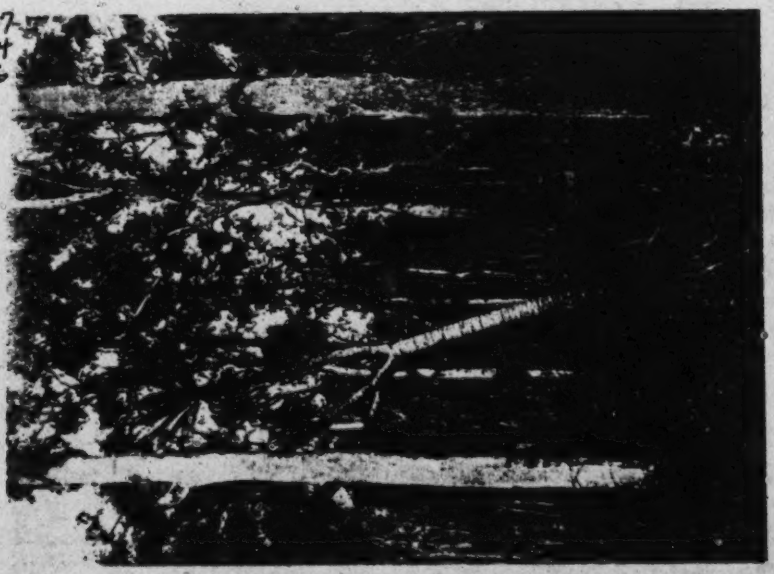

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 6]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 322 - ANALYSE]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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FIG. 1.

FIG. 2.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 7]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 322 – ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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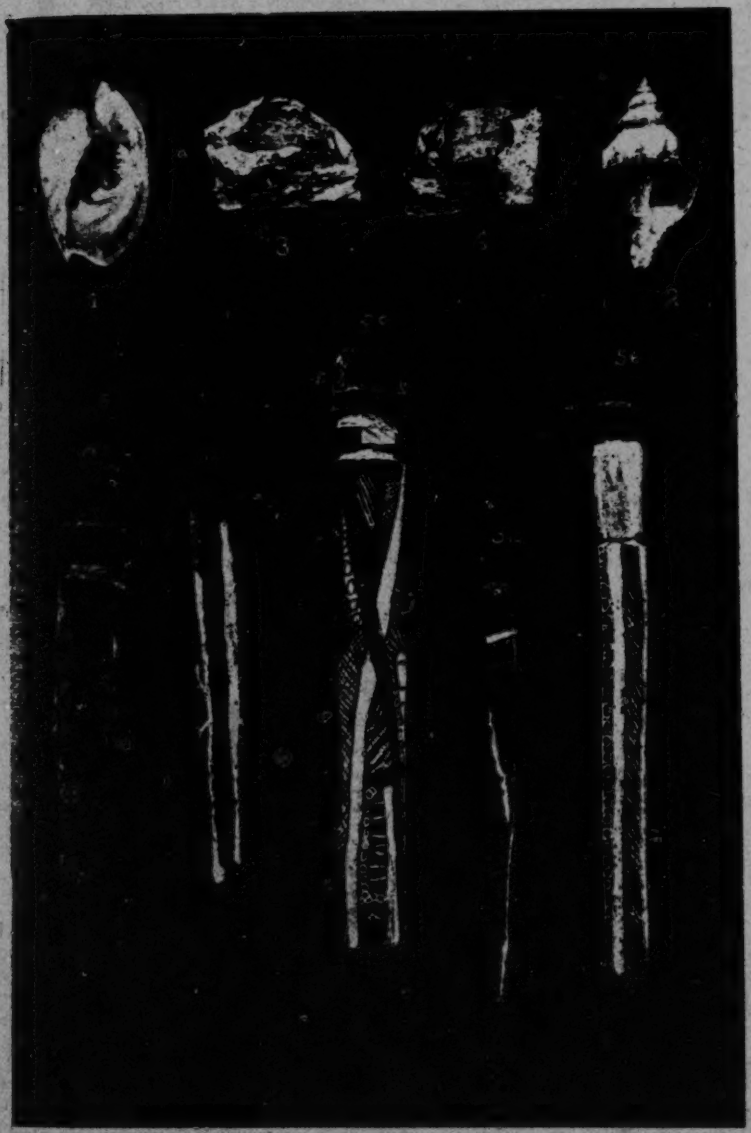

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NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 8]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 322 -ANALYST]

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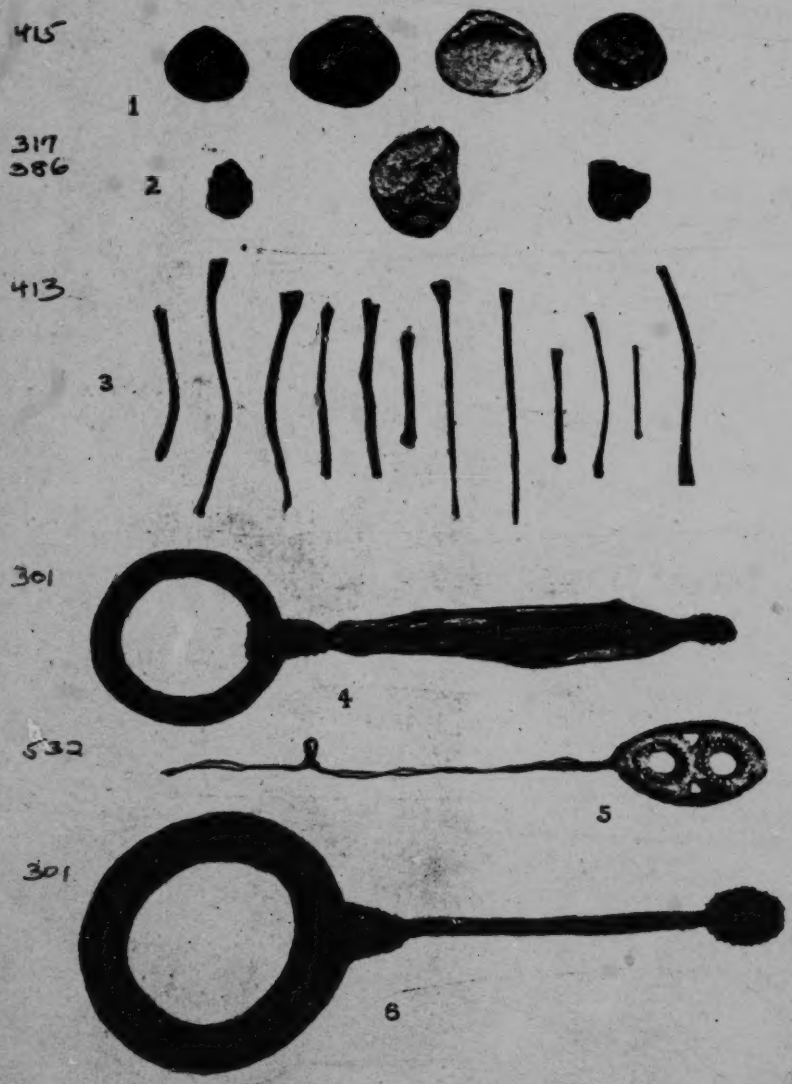
Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XV.



NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 9]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE P. 322 — ANALYST]

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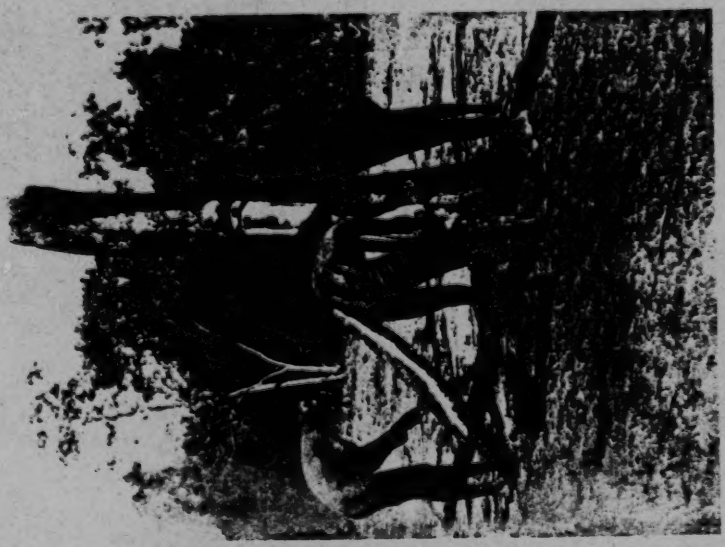

FIG. 2.

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 10]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 322 - ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 Ö120 Tiwi Ö120

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XVII.

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FIG. 2. FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 11]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 323 – ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XVIII.

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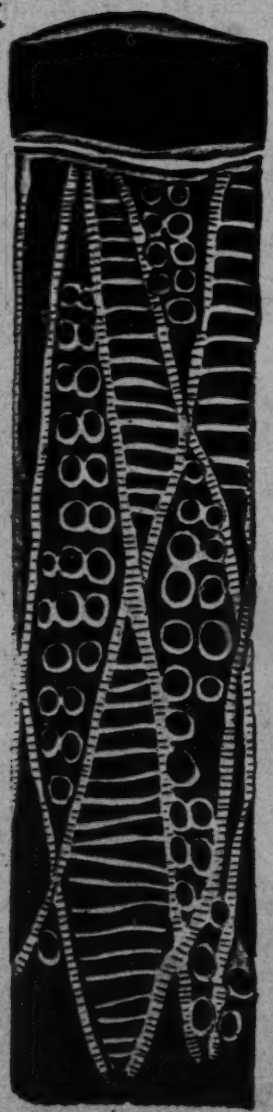

FIG. 2.

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 12]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE P. 323 – ANALYST]

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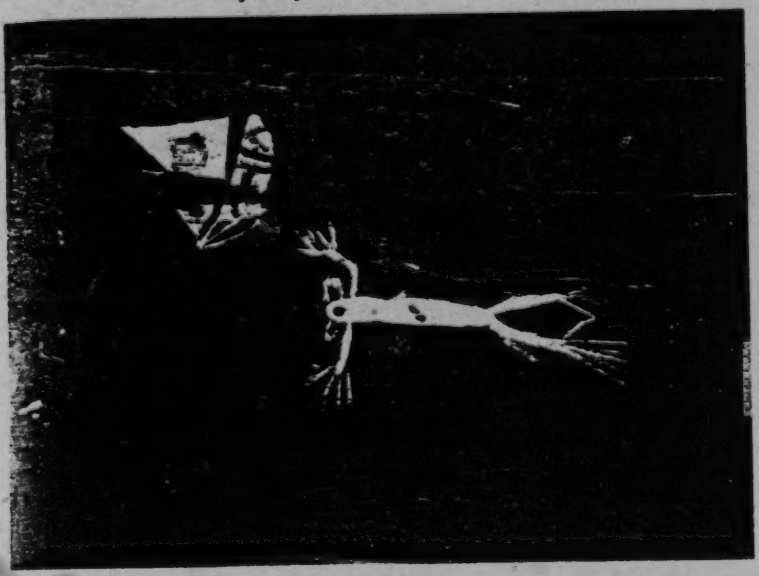

FIG. 2

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 13]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 323 — ANALYST]

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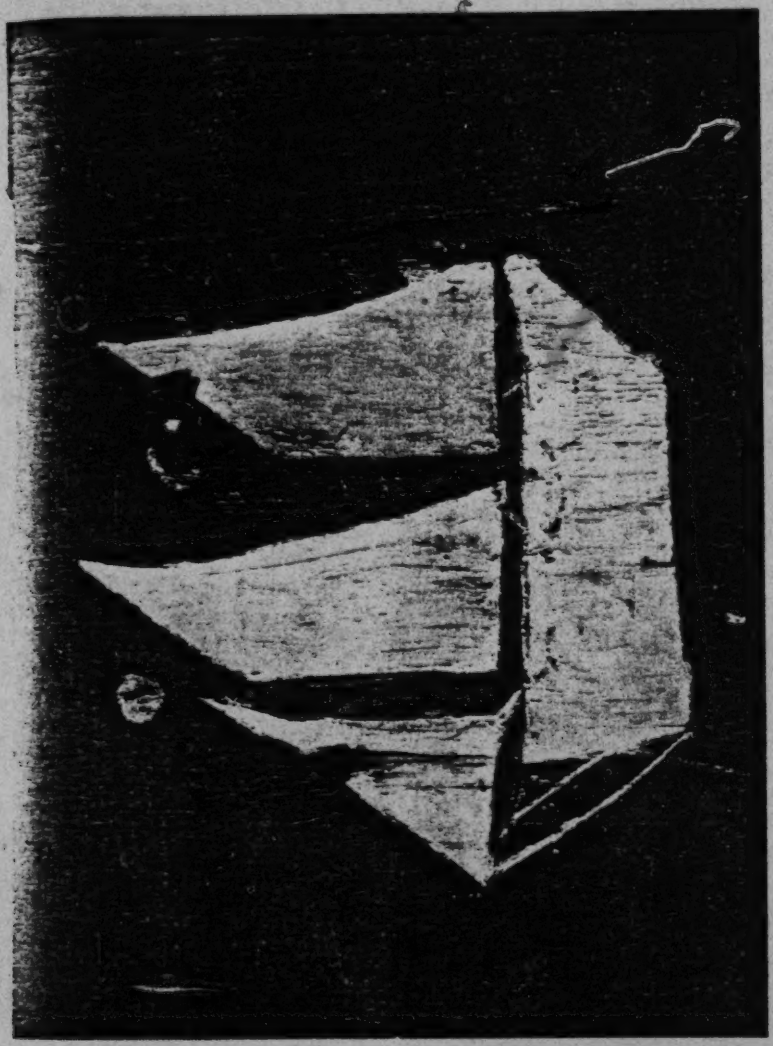

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 14]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 323 – ANALYST]

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 O120 Tiwi O120

The Sons of Turimpi

C. W. M. HART
University of Wisconsin

121 AS HAS been pointed out by a number of critics, most recently by Lindesmith and Strauss (1950), the personality and culture movement in anthropology involves, as one of its cardinal principles, the assertion that in primitive societies there is an essential sameness in the personality of the natives, or at least a very limited range of variation. The favorite argument to prove this view seems to be that since a culture "molds" all the individuals born into it into pretty much the same "basic" psychological shape, therefore the simpler the culture, the more homogeneous in personality are the individuals who use it. The critics have challenged this view largely on the ground that it has not been empirically demonstrated by any anthropologist. It may well be that far from being demonstrated by any anthropologist, it is quite contrary to the fieldwork experience of many, perhaps most of them. At least the "homogeneity of primitive personality" theory can to some extent be checked against a type of material which is possessed by every fieldworker, including the many anthropologists whose interests are not and never were in that rather esoteric branch called "personality and culture." The type of material to which reference is made is that unsystematic, very random, often implicit, but very necessary knowledge of numerous individuals in the culture which he is studying, which every fieldworker has to possess to operate at all. Just as no faculty member can operate very effectively on his committees, or for that matter in his poker games, without some working knowledge of the personalities of his colleagues, so no fieldworker can operate with much success in the field without some similar knowledge of which individuals among the natives are reliable informants, which are liars or bluffers, which panic easily or clam up easily, who is scared of whom and who beholden to whom, who are the leaders and who the yes-men among the native cliques, and innumerable other like pieces of knowledge. Such pragmatic knowledge of individual differences is not only necessary for good research, it is essential for the anthropologist's own safety and comfort (or relative comfort) in the usually primitive and sometimes dangerous environment in which he finds himself. In an African setting, for instance, it may involve the knowledge of who is a reliable man to go lion hunting with; in areas where the lending of firearms or the giving of liquor to natives may lead to trouble with the white authorities it involves evaluation of reliability or trustworthiness of another kind; in most areas where difficult treks, journeys, canoe trips, etc. are required, every fieldworker uses such knowledge in his choice of which natives to take along or whom to go along with. Such routine operations as these as well as the selection of personal attendants, whose house to live in, the discounting of information from some individuals and the high valuation of information from some others,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

all these day-to-day activities of ordinary elementary field work, are, one presumes, based upon some common-sense judgments about the "personalities" of the natives with whom the anthropologist is living in rather intimate association. 121

Unfortunately the conventions of anthropology are such that it is just this sort of material which is never published and yet it would seem to be precisely this sort of material, if organized and systematized a little, which would throw light upon the amount of individual personality variation and the *range of* personality types which are to be found in the simpler societies. Too often the old-fashioned anthropologist, asked what he knows about the "personality" of his tribe, is apt to reply rather defensively, "Well, nothing much; you see I didn't pay much attention to toilet training when I was there, nor was I competent to give Rorschachs and T.A.T.'s." If, instead of being intimidated by the question, he would take the trouble to recall the ten natives he knew best (in the sense of knowing that is involved in the everyday statement "I know him pretty well") and attempt to describe briefly the "personality" of each of the ten, he would, one suspects, be astonished not only at how much common-sense knowledge he has of the personalities of the men he is describing but also at the range of difference that they exhibit.

As a crude sample of what would be revealed if the ordinary fieldworking anthropologist would make some attempt at "personality description" along such lines, there is offered in this paper a very superficial and cursory examination of the "personalities"[1] of five Australian aborigines whom the writer believes (perhaps erroneously) he got to know reasonably well *as people*, in the course of field work among the tribe to which they belonged—the Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands, North Australia. One cannot live with any tribe for two years, especially in the very primitive and intimate living conditions of nomadic Australian life, without getting to know certain individuals better than others, and two of the five men in question were not only trusted informants and advisers but also twenty-four-hour-a-day companions for weeks at a time. The basis of selection of these two, Mariano and Tipperary, is that the writer knew them over a long period of time and was able to observe them under a great variety of circumstances.[2] The addition of the other three—Antonio, Louis and Bob—is suggested by the fact that they were brothers or half-brothers of the first two, all five having a common mother, a woman named Bongdadu. The selection of a group of brothers for intensive study is justified in the present context by the self-evident fact that if, as is alleged by the personality and culture adherents, a common culture, with common toilet training, common family conditioning, etc., produces homogeneous personalities in the simpler societies, then such homogeneity of personality should be all the greater in a group of men who not only are products of the same culture but grew up in the same household, and were suckled, reared and toilet-trained by the same mother. 115 124 [121]

The Tiwi, who numbered 1,262 people in 1928–30, are divided into nine hordes or subtribes scattered over two islands. The southern section of Bathurst 105 000

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 O120 Tiwi O120

The southern section of Bathurst

Island (Hart 1930) is inhabited by a subtribe called the Tikiauila. In 1911 a Roman Catholic Mission station was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island, virtually in Tikiauila territory, and at the time of the present writer's field work this was the only white settlement. In the generation before the missionaries arrived the "big man" among the Tikiauila was Turimpi. Because of their complicated marriage and inheritance regulations the average Tiwi old man in the course of his lifetime accumulates an impressive number of wives and Turimpi was no exception to this rule. At the time of his death, which occurred toward the end of the 1890's at an age which was probably something approaching 70, Turimpi counted as his wives then living or pre-deceasing him no less than 25 females. Of these the only one we need to pay any attention to is the woman named Bongdadu. She, while Turimpi's wife, had borne numerous children, of whom three males grew to manhood—Antonio, born in approximately 1883, Mariano born three or four years later, and Louis born around 1893. Sometime between 1895 and 1900 she was widowed by the death of Turimpi, whereupon she married another elderly man, Murikambunga, to whom she bore two more sons—Tipperary, born around 1900, and Bob born about a year later. Bongdadu of course had numerous other children who did not survive childhood.[8] It is her five adult sons who concern us here.

Turimpi, as the number of wives suggests, was an important tribal figure during his lifetime. Importance, prestige, tendency to be spoken of as a "big man" are in Tiwi functions of a number of factors in which age, number of wives, fighting ability, wisdom in council, and "family" in the sense of having relatives who are also "big men," are all compounded. On all these counts Turimpi was important, and his prestige tended to carry on after his death. Since the horde or subtribe is a comparatively small group, ranging in size from 214 for the Tikiauila (the biggest) to 57 for the Mingwila (the smallest), there will seldom be more than two or three "big men" in a subtribe at the same time, and at certain periods there may be none at all since the few old men who have the age qualification may not have the other qualifications. Turimpi's death left the Tikiauila to some extent in this state. There were few other men with comparable seniority and none of them had the qualifications for informal leadership and local prestige that he had possessed. His death left a gap, and a gap that could hardly be filled by his eldest son Antonio, who at the time of his father's death was a youth of about 16 years of age. About thirty years later, in 1928 to 1930, the field work upon which the present paper is based was carried out.

ANTONIO

It so happened that the present writer had been with the Tiwi for nearly three months before he met Antonio, although during those three months he had been closely associated with two of his brothers, Mariano and Tipperary. These two gave Antonio a great build-up as one of the most important men around, as a "big man" in every possible Tiwi sense. But when encountered in person he proved most disappointing. The only words that fitted Antonio

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 0120 Tiwi 0120

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were words like "insecure" and "uneasy." He was not particularly aggressive nor particularly submissive, but he fluctuated between the two attitudes. One got the impression after associating with him that he was never sure of what was expected of him and acted therefore in contradictory ways according to what *he thought* was expected of him. Or to put the same impression another way, there seemed a constant discrepancy between what people expected of Antonio and what he wanted to do if left alone. In tribal fights, for instance, he acted fiercely and aggressively and with the air of swaggering braggadocio that [554] that all important men are expected to show in fighting, yet at the earliest possible moment he melted into the crowd with visible relief at being able to quit the center of the stage and without a trace of rancor or ill will toward any of the people whom he had been abusing or had been abused by a few minutes before. In council meetings of senior men he was always listened to with respect yet always had to be prodded into speaking at all. He never initiated a policy or offered his opinion until pressure was put upon him to state what he thought, and while his opinion when given was listened to with attention it was always a paraphrase of some opinion already given, usually the majority opinion of the group. He expressed what he thought the group wanted him to say, never an "opinion of his own." In this respect Antonio had many of the characteristics of a "yes-man" and like his counterparts in more civilized societies he seldom took the unpopular side and seldom stood up to opposition.

Two burning political issues agitating the Tiwi in 1928–30 were the issues 595 of (1) plural marriage and (2) the visits of the Japanese pearling luggers. The 797 Catholic missionaries had taken a strong stand on plural marriages and were bringing all the economic and moral pressure they could exert on the younger Tiwi to induce them to restrict themselves to one wife. Failure to bow to Mission pressure resulted in the recalcitrant's being cut off from the European food, tobacco, clothes, etc. which could only be obtained through the Mission. But beginning in the middle 1920's Japanese pearling boats in ever increasing 548 numbers had carried on the practice of anchoring on the further side of Mel- 648 ville Island during the period of high tide (when diving for pearl shell was impossible) and inviting the natives to provide their women as prostitutes for the use of the crews during their stay on the beaches. The Japanese captains [439] paid lavishly in European goods for any women thus provided and the subtribes on the southeast side of Melville, in particular the subtribe called the Yeimpi, proved very susceptible to the Japanese temptations.

These two issues of plural marriage and prostitution for the Japanese rather 548 neatly complemented each other at two points. Not only did the Japanese 648 rival the Mission station as a source of supply for European goods; the posses- 595 sion of a large number of wives was a condition that made a man very unpopu- 668 lar with the missionaries, but, if he were disposed to rent out some of them, 797 made the same man very popular with the Japanese. The plural marriage issue, if alone, would clearly have divided the tribe into the conservatives, staunchly upholding plural marriage as the Tiwi way, and the radicals abandoning it in return for Mission favor. But such an alignment was cut right across

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 0120 Tiwi 0120

548 by the Japanese issue, since it tempted the conservative with several wives to
595 violate all the old tribal sanctions by renting out his wives, and it provided
648 the Mission adherent radicals with a grand opportunity to pose as the real de-
668 fenders of the old culture and to charge the old polygamists with being the real
797 renegades from the ancient ways.

It can be easily guessed how high feelings ran on these issues and how hotly
159 they were debated when a number of Tiwi gathered together. But on neither
177 of these issues or on any aspect of them did Antonio show any signs of leader-
797 ship. He accumulated wives but always apologized in a rather deprecating and apple-polishing way when he met the missionaries, and spent part of his time hanging around the Mission despite the contemptuous attitude which the missionaries adopted toward him. He thus contrasted very unfavorably with some of his contemporaries, notably one Dooley who, having been for years a one-wife man and a Mission favorite, inherited a second wife at around the age of forty. Dooley's decision was clear-cut and highly spectacular. He accepted the second wife, shook the dust of the Mission station from his feet and never set foot near it again, taking up again the traditional life of a Tiwi elder, deep in the bush, with his two wives and later additions, ignoring all white innovations, even tobacco.[4] Dooley's uncompromising behavior was greatly admired by the tribe but few had the strength of character to emulate him, certainly not Antonio.

159 On the Japanese issue Antonio was just as vacillating. Prodded by others to make a statement he would in ringing tones denounce as disgraceful and scandalous the behavior of the Yelmpi wife-renters, but on his visits to the Yelmpi country—ostensibly "to see for himself what was going on"—he shared eagerly in the proceeds of vice which his friends there offered him and was even heard on a few occasions to wonder aloud why the Japanese always went to the Yelmpi country when there were plenty of secluded beaches in Tiklauila country. Instantly challenged, "Would you want the Japanese to come here?" "Would you rent your wives to them if they did?" poor Antonio quickly turned it into a feeble joke, saying deprecatingly, "Oh no, no, no. I just wondered why they always go to those ugly Yelmpi women?"

In summary we might say that Antonio's personal behavior appeared to be that of a man pushed into a position rather too big for him to fill. He was not by nature particularly aggressive or domineering, but as the oldest son of
[554] Turimpi he was constantly being pushed by public opinion onto the center of
[626] the stage, whereas he would have been much happier if public opinion had left him alone to be an ordinary, average member of the crowd. The role he was called on by his status position to play seemed to give him little or no pleasure, little or no personal satisfaction. Such a view of his "personality" is supported by the fact that when alone in the bush with his own family and away from the society of his peers Antonio was relaxed and at ease. As Durkheim pointed out, the basic factor in Australian social psychology is that men
159 spend a great part of their lives hunting and collecting in the bush, completely
571 out of physical contact with all people except members of their own households,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

usually wives and children only, but this life lived in an isolated household is broken in upon at intervals by short interludes of the "collective life," when members of numbers of households gather together for ceremonies, legal proceedings, fights and initiations. If we may call these two types of living the public life and the private life of the adult male Australian, then we may say that Antonio was very happy in private life and uncomfortable in public life. The two activities which made him happiest were playing with his children and hunting with his dogs. When left alone by society to do those two things Antonio was a kindly, patient, gentle, good-natured and relaxed man, but in all social relations with other adult men he was nervous and uncertain of himself. One might hazard the opinion that it was because children and dogs made no great demands upon him that he was happy and at ease with them, but people he found very trying since they were always expecting him to "take a stand" or to make a decision and this was something he had no talent for, something which did not "come naturally" to him, and something which gave him no satisfaction. Turimpi's mantle had fallen on a man who just wanted the world to let him alone, who preferred his home, his family and his dogs to any rewards which public life could give him. 159 [571]

MARIANO

Mariano was first encountered in Port Darwin before the writer had got to the Tiwi. Finding me waiting for transportation to the islands, Mariano offered to come with me and act as my chief interpreter and informant. As he appeared a very intelligent and mature member of the tribe, I promptly hired him. Or so I thought at the time. Events were to prove that what had happened was that Mariano had appropriated me. For Mariano was (in his own opinion, at least) the only possible person fit to escort and advise a white man visiting the Tiwi. He had created something of a monopoly in the job of white man's escort and adviser. The beginning of this not unusual native profession went back, in his case, to the foundation of the Mission station. When the missionaries arrived in 1911 and began to build their mission houses Mariano became almost immediately the principal go-between of Mission and natives. As far as the situation of 1911 can now be reconstructed the factors operating to select Mariano for this position were merely suitability of social status, availability and willingness to undertake it. As already mentioned, the Mission was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island. This was Tiklauila territory and at that time the dominant family among the Tiklauila was that of Turimpi. Of Turimpi's sons, Antonio, the eldest, was about 28 or 29, Mariano was about 25 and Louis, the third son, was a youth not yet 20. Antonio's role as eldest son was already fixed, Mariano's, as second son, was still flexible. Antonio was personally unaggressive except when forced into taking a strong stand, Mariano (we may speculate) was already more forceful and more prone to draw attention to himself by aggressive behavior.[8] Mariano was just ready in 1911 to emerge from the age group of young men who should, according to Tiwi ideas, be seen and not heard into the age group of "junior adult men" who 123 159 [115] 159 [797] [561]

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 [561] have some slight voice in tribal affairs. Antonio had already emerged into this latter group and therefore was already committed to the old way of things to an extent that Mariano was not. This line of reasoning will explain at least why Mariano was chosen rather than Antonio. Louis, on the other hand, was still a boy indistinguishable among the group of 18 year olds.

159 554 797 Students of social organization in small societies are aware that in such societies the status requirements for certain positions are frequently such that often only a very few individuals, sometimes only one individual, are actually available to fill the positions. A similar narrow range of potential holders also pertains, it would seem, to statuses not known to the native culture but thrown up, as it were, by the demands of the culture-contact situation, as in the present case by the arrival of the Mission. What the missionaries needed among the natives was a spokesman for them (a) who had some influence, and influence in Tiwi is a combination of age, family prestige and personal forcefulness; (b) who was a local man in the district in which the Mission was built; (c) who was young enough to be flexible in his actions and thinking and therefore capable of being influenced by them; (d) who was not yet so committed to tribal mores (plural wives, strict observance of taboos, etc.) that once trusted by the Mission and identified in the native mind as a Mission-supporter he would be likely to embarrass the Mission by backsliding; and (e) who was willing to take on the job. They found their man in Mariano. A careful review of all the other possible candidates as they existed in 1911 fails to reveal any other man who had so many of the above desiderata. Dooley had many, but was a person of no family, certainly not a son of Turimpi.

In the early days of the Mission Mariano thus became its main spokesman among the tribe and the most trusted interpreter for and adviser of the priests. By 1928 he to some extent still occupied this position. But by then the Mission had had seventeen years in which to build up wider contacts and find other spokesmen, and its needs were no longer the same needs as in its pioneer days. Moreover, not only had the Mission matured in those seventeen years but so had Mariano. At the age of 42 or so, he was now a man of influence and prestige in the tribe but, like many better-known leaders of men in other societies, he was inclined toward an aggressive, bumptious self-importance and an exaggerated belief in his own indispensability. He had therefore become rather a trial to the missionaries (and to all the other white men to whom he had attached himself). The result was a continued series of quarrels between him and the Mission, which usually ended with Mariano, in a rage, storming off either to the bush or Port Darwin. In Port Darwin he characteristically worked for only the more important whites, senior government officials or at the hospital, until his anger had cooled sufficiently for him to return, self-contained, dignified, completely humorless and rather pompous, to ascertain whether the missionaries realized how foolish they had been to quarrel with him. If they had not, then he simply quit the Mission and waited for the arrival of some white visitor who needed a native sponsor. He thus acquired a greater knowledge of white ways than most of the Tiwi and as a result no doubt of his op-

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

portunities for cultural comparison he at the same time acquired an acute insight into his own culture and into the psychology of his fellow tribesmen. For the anthropologist he was a magnificent informant and a continuous pain in the neck. As increasing years gave him increasing tribal seniority, Mariano became increasingly domineering and touchy about his own importance and increasingly recognised by the younger men as the man who voiced the "pro-mission" and hence "pro-white" point of view in tribal arguments. However, it would be a mistake to think of him as the "detribalized" native of the literature (as another Benelong, e.g., in the magnificent study of culture contact given by the Australian novelist Eleanor Dark, 1941). On the contrary the tough old unacculturated natives who lived deep in the bush and who tried to act much of the time as if white men didn't exist not only accepted Mariano but respected him and paid deep attention to his arguments. The reasons why they did this are, I think, all considerations of "personality," that is, they respected Mariano despite his collaboration with the Mission largely because Mariano was the kind of man he was. He was forceful and determined; he was sincere, he was consistent both in word and in deed, he was intelligent and knew both the psychology of his audience and how to marshal his arguments so as to obtain maximum impact from his material. And he had supreme confidence in his own righteousness. Time and again one was struck by the contrast between him and his elder brother Antonio. When Antonio spoke (always after being prompted or coerced into giving his opinion), people listened hoping to hear wisdom and force and cogency; instead they heard only hackneyed phrases and inconsistent arguments which left them dissatisfied and unconvinced. When Mariano spoke (always without invitation and frequently ahead of many of his seniors), he laid down, in vehement tones, a definite policy, and even though his policy was unacceptable to his hearers as it frequently was, they listened with close attention and voiced their approval at the end, not so much of the policy he outlined as the directness and clearness of the delivery and the logic of his position.

The difference between the two men is well illustrated by their attitudes toward the Japanese wife-renting on the Yeimpi beaches. On this, the burning issue of the day, Antonio never took a stand but shilly-shallied on all sides of it, despite the fact—frequently drawn to his attention—that his small daughter was betrothed to an old Yeimpi who was a notorious wife-renter and he, therefore, in a very short time would be faced with the decision of whether to hand the girl over to her promised husband or not. Mariano on the contrary seized upon the Japanese issue from its first appearance as proof of the essential soundness of the Mission campaign against plural marriages. His speeches were clear-cut and definite. "It all goes to show that the priests are right when they say that having a lot of wives is a bad thing. These old Yeimpi have too many wives. If they had only one each, like white men (and inferentially like Mariano himself), they would not be doing this disgusting thing of renting out their wives to Japanese, they would want to keep their one wife to themselves like decent Tiwi." Most of his hearers (a) considered themselves decent Tiwi, but

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 548 595 668 797 (b) had each a number of wives at home, (c) had not rented any to the Japanese as yet (mainly because of lack of opportunity), but (d) were all suspecting each other of contemplating an early trip to the Yeimpi country and therefore were in chronic indecision on the whole matter. Hence Mariano's arguments were greeted with the applause that any group of people caught among a complicated set of moral alternatives will give to one of their number who has solved for himself the conflicts that beset them and has solved them moreover in a way perfectly consistent with all his previous attitudes. It was the applause and approval that is expressed in our culture by some such phrase as "I may not agree with him but at least he is sincere and you always know where he stands."

159 593 But like similar people elsewhere Mariano inspired no close intimate loyalty. Nobody felt warmly toward him. The missionaries used him but didn't like him, the anthropologist found him invaluable as an informant but intensely irritating in his self-importance and his belief in his own indispensability; among the natives he had no intimates and no close friends. His relations with his wife were much more formal and distant than was usual among monogamous couples and she frequently criticized him both in public and in private for what she called his "failure to talk to her"—undoubtedly the Tiwi equivalent of the American wife's complaint against her husband's absorption in business or politics. He was fond of his children but played with them little and then in a silent, brooding sort of way, confining his caresses to tickling and squeezing them, unlike Antonio whose play with his children was always carried on in an endless flow of chatter and two-way conversations. Child-talk, one surmises, was beneath Mariano's dignity.

177 159 All in all, Mariano was a forceful, domineering, self-important, introverted man, pursuing his dedicated way as the leader of a cause—collaboration with and imitation of the whites—but having personality traits which prevented him from inspiring any of the affection or warm devotion that other types of leaders inspire. There were many Tiwi, especially among the younger men, who were ready and willing to adopt at least the easier aspects of white culture such as clothes, work in Darwin, disrespect for tribal laws, violation of taboos, but in no sense can they be described as Mariano's followers, still less his admirers. Everyone respected Mariano, everybody consulted him, everybody made use of him and listened to him, but nobody warmed to him. He was as sound, as domineering, as aggressive, as humourless, as dedicated, as admirable as one of the Old Testament prophets—and just as difficult to like.

LOUIS

159 Of the five sons of Turimpi, it may be that the two who were most similar in whatever it is that is called personality were the second and third sons, Mariano and Louis. Both were "lonely ones," both had about them a kind of gloomy, inward-focused aura which inhibited warm friendly relations with others. Among a people to whom laughter and gaiety come easily, both were completely devoid of humor. Both were men dedicated to a cause, but in the

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

nature of the cause they diverged sharply. The same single-minded concentration which Mariano devoted to the cultivation of white men, Louis devoted to his sexual activities. Whether two men devoting most of their time one to preaching acculturation, the other to seduction, can be said to have a common basic personality, is a question best left to the personality experts; but at least to the superficial observer there was something vaguely similar in the grim and humorless way in which Louis pursued other men's wives and the way in which Mariano carried on his acculturation campaign. 159

Sexual irregularities are difficult data upon which to obtain accurate information in any culture. When, therefore, Louis is described as an habitual and constant seducer, no claim is made that he was actually as successful in this line of endeavor as tribal opinion maintained. All that we can be sure of is that Louis had an exalted reputation of this sort and he had it in a tribe where a number of circumstances combine to make seduction almost as easy and almost as common as eating or drinking. The seduction situation is largely the result of the marriage customs of the Tiwi which have the effect of forcing most men to remain bachelors until well into their thirties while concentrating all wives, old and young, in the hands of the older men. This means that the older a man gets the more wives he accumulates, and it would appear that the more he accumulates the more suspicious he becomes that some of them (probably the younger and more physically attractive ones) are being unfaithful to him. These suspicions are accentuated by (a) the way in which the day-to-day food gathering activities of the women are necessarily carried out—the women are widely dispersed through the bush, often working singly, well out of sight and hearing of each other; (b) the fact that young unmarried men are frequently hunting (or pretending to hunt) alone in the same general area of country as that in which an old man's numerous wives are gathering wild foods; and (c) the character of the vegetation in large sections of the Tiwi country, great stretches of it being just open enough to make it easy for native eyes to see somebody slipping through the trees, but just thick enough to make it difficult for them to be sure of identities at any distance.[8] 182 837 [222] [224] [37]

In such an atmosphere it is rare for any bachelor to live for more than a few months at most without having to face an accusation by some old man that he has been taking liberties with one of the latter's wives, and it is even rarer for an old man with a number of young wives not to have reason to suspect most or all of them of having been unfaithful to him several times at least in the course of a year. But in this setting of daily[9] seduction Louis' reputation was outstanding. In the period with which we are dealing here he had been suspected and publicly accused of adultery with almost every possible woman for miles around. His demeanor when accused by the outraged husbands was characteristic. Whereas other seducers denied the charge and asserted their essential purity, or tried to laugh it off as silly rumor ("Why, I don't even know the woman"), or alibied themselves and accused other men ("I wasn't even hunting in that direction that day, it must have been so-and-so, he was following a kangaroo down that way at the time in question"), or sometimes even 159 [837]

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 admitted the charge along the age-old line of "the woman tempted me," Louis always faced his accusers silently, sullenly, almost disinterestedly. He never excused himself, never alibied. On the other hand he never gloried in or boasted of his sexual exploits, he merely gave the impression that he was completely disinterested in the whole procedure of argument and punishment and wanted to get it over with as quickly as possible. It was very evident that, despite his sexual reputation, he was not invested with any glamour nor did he excite any hero-worship on the part of the younger men. The role of Don Juan [535] in some cultures can presumably be a role that leads to a successful seducer's [837] being envied and even to some extent hero-worshipped by the young bloods, but this seems quite absent as a cultural possibility in Tiwi values. Successful young seducers never act publicly as if they were proud of themselves nor in any way show off or assume a "look how clever I am" manner. Absence of such behavior was very noticeable in others besides Louis, and certainly he never acted in such a way, despite his obvious suitability for such a role were it culturally available.

In camp and during the periods of the collective life he was silent, gloomy and dour, frequently irritable, unfriendly and hostile to everybody. He was too young, in Tiwi terms, to rate a wife, but the policy of the Mission to dis- [582] courage plural marriages had as its positive correlate the promotion of mar- [797] riages for the wifeless young men and Louis was one of those who had obtained a wife through Mission manipulations. She died after a beating which Louis in one of his frequent fits of anger had administered to her, and while the natives never said so openly, they clearly agreed with the Mission's charges that Louis had murdered his wife. Thus accused to his face by the Mission, Louis shrugged his shoulders in his normal, indifferent way. In council he seldom spoke and what he said carried no weight. This, of course, may well have [561] been due to his age as in Tiwi terms Louis at 31 or 32 was still a young man who should keep silent in the presence of his seniors. But it was very noticeable that even in the quick informal conferences between members of a party on the march involving such petty decisions as whether to camp at this waterhole or try and make the next one before nightfall, or in similar minor decision-making, Louis took no part. He listened silently to the debate, was very quick to foresee correctly what the decision was going to be as was evidenced by his starting off again by himself before the main party had realized where the consensus lay, but he apparently felt no urge to express aloud his own views on the issue. His actions showed that in his private analysis of the situation he was way ahead of most of the debaters but apparently his personal satisfactions came from correct anticipation of majority decision rather than from any desire to participate himself in decision-making. The same ability to listen, analyze what he heard, to act upon his own analysis but never to intervene actively was very noticeable in Louis' reaction to the accusations against him by the outraged husbands. An outraged husband usually begins his charges late at night when the camps are quiet. At such a time he begins to yell his accusations through the darkness at the top of his voice, naming the seducer,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

the wife concerned, the time and place where the event occurred, how sure he is of the truth of his accusations, what he intends to do about it, all this interspersed with insults and abuse of the young man involved. The effectiveness of this type of midnight harangue depends largely upon the offender's being within earshot, since there is not much point in abusing an absentee. The accused almost invariably reacts by shouting back denials. But this was not Louis' way. He remained silent until the ranting old man was forced to pause and ask rather feebly of the darkness, "What's the matter with him? Why doesn't he answer? Is he asleep?" Whereupon from Louis' campfire would come a quiet, "No, I hear you," and very little else. The husbands found this most frustrating, a situation somewhat analogous to the schoolboy situation of our culture expressed in some such phrase as "You can't ever get him to bite."

In addition to this great self-control and his undoubtedly keen intelligence, Louis was a formidable fighting man, the toughest, strongest and most dangerous in battle of all Turimpi's sons. But when he fought, he fought alone. He led no factions and commanded the loyalty of no clique. He was in all things a lone wolf, apparently wanting no friends and seeking to influence no man. These personality traits probably stood him in good stead in his amorous career, though whether that career was the result of possession of such traits, or whether the traits were developed by the requirements of the career is an open question. Certainly, under Tiwi conditions, a person like Louis was peculiarly suited for an amorous reputation, since noisiness and chattersomeness during amours increase the chance of discovery, and close intimate friends are always liable to gossip. Solitary, reserved, intelligent and determined, master of his own fate and accepting the responsibility for his own actions, but saying practically nothing, Louis, one suspects, was the type of man who would have a successful career in whatever line of activity he concentrated upon, and in any culture in the world a man like Louis if he concentrates on sex will be a constant source of uneasiness and suspicion to husbands. He will always get what he goes after.

TIPPERARY

The three oldest sons—Antonio, Mariano and Louis—were over 30 at the time of observation. The two youngest, Tipperary and Bob, were just approaching thirty. Bob, as we shall see later, was definitely lacking in color and definiteness. Louis, as we have pointed out, was a silent, antisocial type of man. It might be inferred from these two facts, especially by those familiar with the increasing importance and prestige that age, *per se*, brings in Australian social life, that all the younger men were rather restrained and unemphasised in personality characteristics just because they were young. Such a view is, I think, contradicted by the fact that Louis, while silent and noninitiatory, was nevertheless far from colorless. Even though he seldom spoke to draw attention to himself people, both men and women, were always well aware of him when he was around. It is also contradicted by the personality of Tipperary.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 Tip, and every white man who came in contact with him immediately shortened his name to the obvious diminutive form, was a person whose whole life was devoted to laughter. No English word fits him so well as the word "gay." This gaiety was not clownishness or buffoonery nor did it contain any element of malice or desire to hurt others; it was simply an enormous sense of fun. The other four brothers were in their different ways rather taut and tense personalities, or at least three were and Antonio was when away from home. Tip alone of the five brothers was always completely relaxed and unself-conscious. He was always looking on the bright side, always trying to banish tension and worry with a quip or a wisecrack, always making a joke. His favorite sentence opening was "perhaps." On one occasion a camp I was in
159 was badly scared by a ghost appearing in the middle of the night in the midst
522 of the camp fires. Everybody, anthropologist included, huddled around their
[715] fires, not daring to look and yet unable to abstain from furtive peeps. Finally the apparition seemed to have gone and there were low whispers from various firesides of, "Has it gone?—I think it's gone—it doesn't seem to be there now." "Perhaps it's gone to Port Darwin to see a movie," said Tip, loudly, and immediately the tension was broken and the whole camp shouted with laughter. On another occasion a group of natives who were escorting an elderly and venerable French priest through the bush, were chased by a herd of wild buffalo[8] and forced to take refuge in the nearby trees. The buffalo pawed and snorted under the trees and a discussion took place as to how to frighten them away. Shouting, swearing and throwing sticks failed to frighten them off. "Perhaps, Father," said Tip, convulsed with laughter at the whole proceeding and addressing the priest, "perhaps they would go away if you cursed at them in the Church language [i.e., Latin]."

159 There are several important things to notice about Tip's humor. One is
522 that much of the time he used it as a means of initiating action, as in the ghost
561 incident where he took the lead over several senior men in dissolving the tension, or in the Warner incident,[9] where the initiating suggestion to play a very old and hackneyed joke came from him. In a culture that looked with disfavor on young men speaking out of turn, Tip was always speaking out of turn, but because such speaking was always in a joking form, few if any natives recognized it as being out of turn. From certain points of view we might say that Tip had found, through his gaiety, a tool which he used to make his presence felt without exciting social disapproval because of his lack of age. But that statement makes the whole matter sound far too conscious and de-
159 liberate. Again we face a constantly recurring problem—how much of "personality" is status-dictated and how much "natural"? Will increasing years and dignity cause Tip to cease laughing at life and its problems? There seem at least two grounds for strongly doubting it. One is the admittedly subjective but strongly held view that Tip didn't laugh and joke and come out with his incongruous "perhaps" to achieve effect or as a means to the end of social recognition, but because he genuinely and naturally enjoyed his own humor. Too many nights have I dozed off to sleep listening to Tip gurgling with sup-

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

pressed laughter on the other side of the fire as he recalled to himself the amusing incidents of the day. Even when alone with his thoughts he was still laughing. This suggests that Tip's gaiety was "natural" rather than contrived for effect, and there is support for the suggestion in the fact that Tip was regarded as a poor hunter, because, as one critic put it, "He doesn't concentrate on killing the kangaroo but plays jokes on the kangaroo and makes a game out of hunting." Another indication that when alone he behaved in the same irresponsible manner that he exhibited in public. 159

The second ground that suggests that fun-loving and gaiety are not incompatible with increasing age and tribal status is the fact that there were many old and venerable Tiwi who loved fun and laughter just as Tipperary did. One such was Tu'untalumi, one of the most elderly of the Tiklauila, a man of weight, dignity and poise. He was a highly respected person, an expert in ceremonial performances and a rigid traditionalist in all things. But despite his age and dignity this man was as given to fun and laughter as Tip was. The main difference was that Tip's laughter was loud, boisterous and prankish; Tu'untalumi's jokes and quips were delivered in low, gentle tones and his laughter was dignified and restrained. But within the limitations imposed by his status he got as much fun and extracted as much humor out of life as Tip, illustrating the point that age and seniority in Tiwi do not at all necessarily mean sourness and lack of humor. Although the two were not related Tipperary played up to the old man and courted and valued his approval while Tu'untalumi clearly liked having Tip around him. They were kindred souls but separated by more than forty years of age. 157 522 561 159 522 572

As is probably the case in most cultures, so among the Tiwi—the genuinely gay person is popular. Tipperary though the next to youngest of Turimpi's sons was the one with most friends. Perhaps significantly, his friends were among both his seniors and juniors, but not among his brothers. Antonio was the only brother who sought Tip's company and this can be accounted for either by the fact that Antonio, when not harassed by his status, was an easy-going, friendly and none too intelligent man who laughed readily even when none too sure of what the joke was, or that he found Tip's company a relaxation from the cares of state. Of the other brothers, the self-righteous and puritanical Mariano considered Tip frivolous and deplored (or was jealous of) the tendency of white men to become fond of him. Louis actively disliked Tip perhaps because his love affairs were an obvious target for some of Tip's better quips. "Perhaps he is going into the bush to take a nap" was one of his comments when he saw Louis disappearing among the trees. With his full brother Bob, Tip had few close ties, perhaps because Bob spent much of his time in Darwin, but even more likely, one suspects, because Bob, an indefinite and colorless youngster, shrank from attracting public notice, whereas Tip was always drawing attention to himself, with the result that Bob to save himself embarrassment avoided his company. 159 593

Outside his siblings, Tipperary's gaiety earned him the liking and companionship of the younger men and made him a favorite younger man of some 159 522 572

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 522 572 of the oldest and most respected seniors, particularly of Tu'untalumi and those swayed by his opinion. It follows from this that Tip though given to jokes and pranks cannot be written off as merely a privileged buffoon. On the contrary his wit and gaiety earned him friends and his friends gave him influence out of proportion to his youth. Some insight into this is supplied by the shadow of the ubiquitous Louis. Tipperary, through the missionaries' efforts on behalf of monogamy, had obtained a wife at a much earlier age than would have been [797] possible under pre-white conditions, and according to the women, who have [582] their own sources of information about such things, Louis was strongly attracted by Tipperary's wife. Since Louis was not noted for restraint or self-discipline in these matters the obvious question was why he did not press his attention on her as he had done on numerous other women, including the wife of Tip's younger brother Bob. "Oh no, he doesn't dare chase after Tipperary's [626] wife. The old men would be very angry if he did anything to her," was the reply of the old hags who were the local gossip columnists. This belief that the "old men" would undoubtedly protect Tip's wife while they had noticeably failed to protect Bob's wife from a similar threat (see below) is a pretty clear indication that the two young men had very different places in tribal estimation—a fact that in turn can be correlated with no status differential between them and leaves only the "personality" difference between the two men to account for it. Tip was popular with the control groups, Bob was not, therefore the control groups would support Tip because they liked him. They were indifferent toward Bob.[10]

159 To summarize Tipperary is relatively easy. He was a cheery, relaxed, fun-loving young man who enjoyed his own humor but enjoyed it all the more if it were shared by an appreciative audience. He was therefore gregarious, friendly, outgoing and extroverted. He would have been a good Rotarian or a better disk-jockey. Because of these traits he was noticed a great deal more by his elders than his age justified and the notice he received was usually favorable. He was popular in a way none of his brothers were, and because of this popularity was able to express opinions and exert influence to an extent unusual for one of his years. In a society where men under 30 are expected to be seen and not heard, Tip was constantly being heard. This was only possible because his natural gaiety and warmth prejudiced almost everybody in his favor. He was the sort of man about whom it is often said in our culture "he always makes a party go," or, "he is the sort of person who just naturally makes friends."

BOB

The youngest brother, Bob, needs only two words to describe him—complete nonentity. About 27 or 28 when I knew him and, because of the Mission's efforts, married a good deal younger than he would have been under pre-white conditions, Bob, whatever the occasion or circumstances, was always part of the background. Like many of the younger Tiwi he was inclined to spend part [464] of each year in Darwin working for the white men, and by them he was regarded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

garded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker. The tribe thought of him in much the same way, the missionaries and anthropologist agreed with the estimate. Bob was essentially a "good boy." He never did anything wrong, never answered back, never spoke out of turn, never stepped out of line, never deviated from the behavior expected of him. He was, of course, too young in Tiwi categories to have any influence or importance. But it is hard to see how age could turn him into anything more positive than he was at 28, at which age he invited the comment that he had very little personality. About all that could be said is that he was a born follower and always tried to do the right thing, the right thing consisting in conforming to the expectations of whatever group he happened to be with at the moment. When with the tribe Bob did what the elders told him to do. If they disagreed among themselves, Bob waited until the majority decision was clear and then added his voice to the chorus of agreement. The same faithfulness which caused his white employers to label Bob "a good boy" caused the tribal elders to regard him as among the sounder of the young men, though they deplored his tendency to spend so much time in Darwin. But even on his trips to Darwin Bob did not depart too much from the norms for men of his age who had been children when the Mission came and who therefore constituted a post-white generation. He did not stay more than three or four months at a time in Darwin, he returned for all the steps of his initiation ceremonies, he observed his food and other taboos even when in Darwin, and during his sojourns there he never caused scandal back-home by getting into the slightest "trouble." He went to Darwin when the tribe could raise no valid objection to his going, he returned whenever his absence led to criticism. Bob was a barometer of which line offered the least resistance at any given time. His chief motivation seemed to be to escape public attention, to always be where he would attract the least notice.

The only occasion I ever saw Bob forced to emerge from the background and take the center of the stage was on one occasion when he returned from Darwin and was told by the local gossips that his wife had been unfaithful to him during his absence. The man involved was—not surprisingly—his brother Louis. This really put Bob on the spot. In pre-white days a youngster like Bob would not have had a wife, and therefore the situation of a man of Bob's tender years calling an older man to account for seducing his wife could not have arisen. The traditional pattern in seduction cases is for the husband, necessarily an older man, to accuse the alleged seducer, necessarily a young man and therefore a bachelor and a person of no importance, and demand vengeance on him. The accuser is, therefore, traditionally a man of weight and prestige and dignity, and carries on his case against the seducer with style and authority. The accused on the other hand, being young and a person of no importance, stands abashed, cowed and silent, looking guilty while the outranged husband showers him with tirades of abuse, followed finally by spears or throwing-sticks. In the case of Bob versus Louis the casting of these traditional roles was all wrong. Bob, overcome with embarrassment, did his best

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 177 183 561 684 to give an imitation of an angry and indignant elder telling off an impertinent "young punk,"[11] but even to the Tiwi, the spectacle of the subservient and retiring Bob trying to overawe and browbeat the formidable and completely self-reliant Louis was such a perversion of the traditional pattern that it bordered on the farcical. As soon as it was over and the conventions were satisfied, Bob, pale and shaken by the unwonted initiative and aggressiveness he had been forced to display, hurried back to the oblivion of Darwin where no such demands were made on a good boy, and, presumably to ensure that he would not be forced to go through such an ordeal again, took the rather unusual step of taking his wife along with him this time.

157 The above brief sketches convey perhaps some idea of the variation in personalities of the five brothers. Obviously no definite conclusions can be drawn from material of this sort. It is merely suggestive of possibilities for theory. What it seems to suggest is, however, at variance with the idea that personality is substantially uniform in the simpler societies. No attempt has been made in this paper to explore the full gamut of personal differences among the Tiwi. By adding half a dozen other individuals (including such as Tu'untalumi and Dooley, already briefly mentioned) to the five siblings we have discussed above, it would be easy to widen the number of "personality types" illustrated. By confining our attention to the sons of Turimpi we have avoided an arbitrary selection of contrasting individuals; the five men selected were chosen *not because* they were different *but because* they were brothers. How different they are in that vaguely defined thing called personality is largely a matter of opinion depending almost entirely upon what is regarded as a "personality" difference. All that we would here claim for them in the way of difference is that on any continuum for a single trait the five sons of Turimpi range themselves about as differentially as any five average men are likely to do in our culture. In aggressiveness, for example, Mariano is well toward one end of the range, Bob well toward the other; Tipperary, Louis and Antonio at different points in between. In decisiveness or decision-making, Mariano, Louis and Tipperary belong to the heavily positive side, Antonio and Bob on the heavily negative side. But if we couple with decisiveness the ability to win friends and influence people, Tipperary, the decisive and popular, must be sharply separated from Louis and Mariano, decisive but unpopular. The three aggressive dominating types differ markedly among themselves in what might be called interest in life or chief motivating force, Mariano expressing his need for dominance through political channels, Louis through sex, Tipperary through laughter and kidding. On an introvert-extrovert continuum, Louis the silent withdrawn lone-wolf has to be placed well toward the introvert pole, with Mariano not very far away from him, but with Tipperary the out-giving friendly "Rotarian" kidder at the other extreme, and Antonio well down toward Tipperary's end. These are of course just a few of the possible ranges along which the sons of Turimpi have to be located.

Whatever facet of behavior we seize on for comparison, we find these five

men markedly different from one another. Nor does that obvious fact seem due in any way to the circumstance that the observations upon them were made in a post-white situation. The presence of the Mission, the arguments about polygyny, the lure of movies and white jobs in Port Darwin, the coming of the Japanese pearlers—such factors as these obviously influenced a great deal the *cultural* situation, but it is difficult to see how they can be held to account for Mariano's vehemence or Antonio's indecision or Tip's gaiety or Louis' amorousness. Such things as the Mission, the Japanese, Port Darwin, were vehicles for or occasions for Mariano's vehemence and Antonio's indecision and Tip's gaiety, but they certainly did not cause them. These men would, one presumes, have displayed those same temperamental traits through other and more "native" cultural vehicles if the whites and the Japanese had not been there. To argue otherwise, that is that such differences appear in the post-white situation but are absent under pre-white conditions, would seem to be a most blatant form of ethnocentricism.

It is equally ethnocentric, though in a different way, to argue that our culture, because of its alleged greater complexity, is able in some mysterious way to produce greater variations in personality traits than other and simpler cultures. What complexity of culture does is increase the number of cultural alternatives or socially acceptable behavior patterns; it cannot increase the number of attitudes which an individual will manifest while choosing a cultural alternative or following a socially acceptable pattern. An individual in any culture will follow a "cultural course" but he will follow it cheerfully or sourly, silently or garrulously, in a relaxed manner or a tense manner, like a leader or like a follower, with his eye on the gallery or regardless of the world's opinion. These alternatives would appear to be human alternatives, since they are ways in which all men respond to cultural stimuli. Since they are human variations they will be present where there are many cultural alternatives and where there are none. They will be present in closed social systems as much as in open social systems. When a man in any culture in the world is practising a cultural pattern, he will still differ from his neighbors—or his brothers—in the way he practises it. "It ain't the horrible things you do, but the horrible way you do 'em," are the words of an old joke which draws attention to the vital difference between the things which a culture requires its people to do and the attitudes with which different people proceed to do them. The five sons of Turimpi all followed Tiwi cultural patterns reasonably closely but as this paper has tried to demonstrate they were far indeed from being "stereotyped personalities." They differed not in what they did but in how they did it.

It follows therefore that since simplicity or complexity of culture is irrelevant to the whole matter, we should expect to find, in any culture in the world, a pretty similar range of variation in what must roughly be called "types of people." If the personality and culture literature is leading young anthropologists into the field expecting to find "stereotyped personalities" in the simpler cultures, they are doomed to disappointment. Years ago, Franz Boas (in a passage that is never quoted nowadays) told them what they *will* find. "Some

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

121 theorists," says Boas, "assume a mental equipment of primitive man distinct from that of civilized man. I have never seen a person in primitive life to whom this theory would apply. There are slavish believers in the teachings of the past and there are scoffers and unbelievers; there are clear thinkers and muddle-headed bunglers; there are strong characters and there are weaklings" (1951). It is noteworthy that this (for Boas) unusually flat and definite statement was made in an attempt to demolish the views of Levy-Bruhl that between civilized man and the primitive there is an impassable psychological gap. Perhaps—as Tipperary would say, if he understood the matter—perhaps, the personality and culture movement is merely Levy-Bruhl in modern dress, perhaps the latent content of the movement is to deny to the people of the simpler cultures the ordinary elementary human qualities of individual difference and human variation, thereby enabling "personality" and "individuality" to be treated as unique creations of the white races to be found only among the followers of the American way of life. If this indeed be the latent content of much "personality and culture" literature, it seems to warrant a flat and unqualified rejection, in terms as emphatic as those of Boas, by all those anthropologists who, like Boas, may not know projective tests but do know something about the simpler native societies.

NOTES

121 [1] In view of the wide discrepancies in the use of the word "personality" it must be made clear again that all that is meant by the word here is the level of description one is apt to get if in ordinary social conversation one asks the question, "What sort of person is he?"

115 [2] The native names of these men are all polysyllabic and difficult for the reader to remember. I use therefore the names bestowed upon them by white men, to aid in keeping them distinctly in mind. The Spanish names, Antonio, etc., were bestowed by certain Filipino carpenters who built the building for the Roman Catholic missionaries when they first arrived. Tipperary is, of course, a white corruption of a native name.

159 [3] It will be noticed by close students of the above information that Turingi must have been born in the 1830's, Bungiado born somewhere around 1865. She had her first child when she was about 16 or 17, at which time her husband Turingi was at least 30. This is a perfectly normal Tiwi marital situation, the commonest marriage arrangement being one in which a newly-born female child is betrothed by her father to a man in his thirties.

159 177 197 [4] Even from the anthropologist Dudley would not accept tobacco until he had convinced himself that in return he would not be required to sacrifice any of his principles. Nor would he take his son, to whom he was passionately attached, to the Mission station for medical treatment—perhaps the most striking proof of the uncompromising attitude that Dudley had adopted toward the Mission.

159 [5] Such a speculation about Mariano's personality at the age of 25, seventeen years before the author knew him, is based upon the general belief of social scientists that personality does not change much between 25 and 42, and the particular evidence of the older missionaries that Mariano was "already inclined to throw his weight around" when they first arrived.

19 182 837 [6] Goodenough (1949) is apparently one of the few anthropologists to discuss the relation between extra-marital sexual activity and the opportunities provided by the nature of the physical environment. The point here is slightly different; whether the Tiwi physical environment encourages adultery is uncertain since a social system such as theirs would promote adultery whatever the physical environment, but it certainly helps to increase the suspiciousness of husbands.

837 [7] That seduction has to be a daytime activity is implied in what has already been said. After sundown the women are concentrated in their husband's camp and have no opportunity. Which

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

leads to the situation—quite foreign to our way of thought and also apparently to that of Polynesian cultures—whereby a young bachelor can prowl around the bush all night without arousing the slightest interest but his daytime wanderings, ostensibly in search of game, are watched by his married seniors with the deepest suspicion.

[8] The buffalo, which are confined to Melville Island, are the wild descendants of domestic East Asian water buffalo which were imported during an early attempt at settlement.

[9] It is perhaps not without interest that one of Tip's jokes is imperishably preserved in the files of the Peabody Museum at Harvard. Tip was in Darwin in 1927 when W. Lloyd Warner was collecting at the Native Compound the anthropometric measurements which were afterwards analyzed by W. W. Howells (1937), and like all other natives in town from many tribes he and a number of Tiwi were measured by Warner. On the card for each subject Warner wished to record the personal name of the native. Led by Tip, all the Tiwi measured bestowed upon themselves the most obscene "native name" they could think of, and years later Tip would shout with laughter when telling how Warner faithfully recorded these obscenities, often repeating them several times to make sure of the correct pronunciation.

[10] This set of sentiments surrounding Tip's wife also gives a little more insight into the sex activities of Louis. His reluctance to move in on her, because of the way "the old men would feel," while showing no such reluctance to move in on Mrs. Bob, supports the view implied above that Louis, while sex dominated, was no fool in his amours. He had an intelligent and realistic appreciation of just how much he could get away with.

[11] I use this slang term deliberately, since it expresses somewhat the Tiwi attitude toward those young bachelors who go about seducing the wives of their elders and betters.

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7: Fry D-5 (1913) 1949 O120 Tiwi O120

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[TITLE PAGE]

7:Fry D-5 (1913) 1949 O120 Tiwi O120

A Bathurst Island Mourning Rite.

Sir:

121 Late in February, 1913, word came to Darwin that a fatal epidemic was prevalent in Bathurst and Melville Islands, and I was instructed to visit the islands and do anything possible to help.

122 I arrived at the Roman Catholic Mission Station at the southern end of Apsley Strait on Bathurst Island on March 2nd, and four days later, with the kindly assistance of Father Coudreau, set off up the Strait in a ten-foot sailing dinghy with a Malay, Matthew Gar, who had a smattering of the native language, two adult islanders, Mari and Dulin, a small native boy, Olinyarra, and stores. On the fourth day at Marinlampi, about two miles from Point Brace, at the northern end of the strait, a native camp was found. There were about thirty natives in the group, variously painted.

765 An old man, later found to be named Kerbo, was sitting chanting beside a small heap of red stones in the centre of a cleared circle about twelve feet in diameter. A pile of cooked yams was beside him and he was [177] scraping them with a mission-given knife. The time of my arrival was about ten in the morning. A small boy squatted beside the old man at times but otherwise the natives lounged about outside the circle indifferently coming and going. It appeared that a death ceremony was in progress. A woman sitting with her three boys under a pandanus palm nearby was pointed out as the mother of the dead man. When all the yams had been peeled the old man walked about in [595] the circle chanting and clacking two sticks together. There was an intermission until about 2 p.m., when the old man resumed his chanting. About 4 p.m. he returned again and proceeded to cut up the yams, placing

[p 79-A]

765 the pieces in a bark bag, with intervals of walking and chanting. The crowd had now invaded his circle and his walking was confined to a small sector of the circle. Once he washed his hands, head and beard with water and retired to eat. When he had finished, the small boy brought a bark bag of water, which he emptied into the bag containing the cut-up yams. After dark, about 7.30, the old man began to chant again [535] within the circle. He was joined by a number of men, and they shuffled around chanting, slapping their buttocks, and dragging one foot. Finally they shouted and then moved off in single file to a small water channel in the grass nearby. The grass was trodden down and the old man tipped the yams into the water, while the chorus beat their buttocks and cried "Broop." A shout was given and they then dispersed.

During the night the old man chanted at intervals. At sunrise he was seen standing beneath a palm rubbing himself with ochre, and the small boy attending him. He chanted and others joined him. They filed down to the creek, where a shout like "R-r-r-r-p" was given. The old man started to eat the yams and others followed. They then returned to the circle and cleared it by scraping outwards with their feet, tufts of grass and pieces of bark being thrown away. The stones from the central pile were placed round the edge of the circle. The old man took three small stones from the centre and threw them a few feet into the air, with the shout of "R-r-r-r-p." The ceremony was finished.

The language difficulty was formidable, but I learned that I had broken in on the third day of the ceremony. On the first day palm nuts (*kwawka*) had been gathered and eaten. On the second day yams had been collected and had been cooked at sunrise on the third day. I was told that

[p 79-B]

I was told that

765 the old man had chanted about the *Tarula*,[1]
533 who had planted magic on the beaches to
754 the north at the beginning of the wet season.
[648] The sun heated the magic, and up it went like smoke and the wind blew it all about. The magic works on the blackfellow with a feeling like a snake crawling up the legs. It moves up to his stomach, and when it reaches his heart he eats no more and dies. He also sang that he was an old man, his wind was short and soon he would die. Later he sang of a fight he had had with another tribe. Later he sang of people who came and fed him while he was sick. When standing in the water he was calling on the others to make the ceremony. When he threw up the stones he called *wei tua*, i.e "finish."

754 During the next four weeks I visited tribes in various parts of the islands and heard the same story. I was shown a sample of the magic. It was a tightly woven string bag about the size of a billiard ball and stuffed with kapok. This was said to have been "sung" before it was buried.

124 Statistics of the mortality of the epidemic
802 presented a problem. The only words for numbers which I could obtain with certainty

[1] The *tarula* were mainland blacks in the employ of local white men. They were called *tarula* ("lightning") after the guns carried by their employers.

[p 80-A]

124 802 were *yadi*, *irrara*, *irradroma*, *arkwawi* and *inalti*, respectively one, two, three, few and many. Some natives had a vague idea of five and ten. A nominal roll of the dead [551] was impossible, as the names of the dead are *ardjidit*, "unlawful," "taboo." A method was arranged whereby flat sticks were used and notched. Separate sticks were taken for males and for females. A group would sit about and the dead identified by relationship with the living. A big notch in the sticks would be made for each adult, a smaller notch for a child, and a tiny notch for a baby. Records obtained in this way 165 showed that at least 56 men, 87 women, 17 boys, 25 girls and one male and one female infant had died. The population of the islands, before the epidemic, was estimated as a result of general enquiries to be about 650, so the known death roll of 187 indicates a high mortality rate.

The original rumour suggested that the natives were dying of measles, as someone had diagnosed some illnesses at the Mission about Christmas time as measles. The extremely low number of infant deaths was entirely against measles being the cause of the holocaust, and supports the native diagnosis of magic.

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[p. 80-B]

8: Fry D-5 (1913) 1950 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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8 :Fry D-5 (1913) 1950 OI20 Tiwi OI20

A Bathurst Island Initiation Rite.

Sir:

000 Not many white men can have had the experience of being tried by a native court. The following story may therefore be of interest.

114 I had visited a native camp in northern Bathurst Island in March 1913, and had made the acquaintance of an adolescent native boy called Cooper. He was smeared 881 from head to foot with red ochre and wore a [301] collar made of a thin piece of wood bent [302] round his neck with the ends tied together with hair string behind with a strand of string about six inches long hanging down his back terminating in a blob of gum.

[p. 167-A]

881 He was in the *kolloponiati* stage of initiation grade and was forbidden in the camp. One
[301] day in great secrecy he showed me some bark arm bracelets known as *tuguti*. A
[114] month later I was on a Malay lugger in the same region and some natives came out to the lugger in canoes. They told me that Cooper was to take the ceremony for his next degree that afternoon. I persuaded the master of the lugger to put me ashore on Papiau beach, opposite old Fort Dundas.
123 The natives were unwilling to take me with them at first, but finally consented. We walked inland for about four miles and met the main group, all painted for the ceremony. Cooper was said to be out in the mangroves, but came in shortly after about midday. He then went out again for a sugar bag. Having learned a few words of the language I attempted conversation. After a time I attempted to ask something about Cooper's *tuguti*. Immediately the cheerful group about me hushed and everyone seemed very concerned. They had gained the impression that I had stolen the *tuguti*. I tried to explain that I had only looked at them. About twenty of the men seated themselves in a circle and proceeded to discuss the problem. I overheard a few recognizable words at times, *ardjidit waitamanna*, no good white men, *paltoa*, dead, *yergobai*, alligator. I was sitting meanwhile with my back to a pandanus facing a salt water inlet. An emissary from the circle visited me from time to time and questioned me anxiously about what I had done with the *tuguti*. One humourist came over several times, tapped me on the shoulder, and grinningly pointed to the water, saying *yergobai*. Suddenly the discussion stopped, everybody stood up, and cordial relations were resumed as if nothing had happened.

881 Cooper returned about 4 p.m. He washed and was smeared all over with red ochre
[313] except the upper part of the face. Mean-

[P. 167-B]

881 while a small trestle had been built of three
[343] upright sticks about 2 ft. 6 in. high in the form of an isosceles triangle, with the apex to the west. Cross sticks were laid across the top of this and the sticks covered with grass. Three old men then took Cooper to a point about twenty yards east of the trestle and faced towards it, two on his right, one on his left. They each held a
[411] flat bladed club, *irruella*, in the left hand horizontally above the head and beat the
[533] point of it with a light round club with a pointed end, *merkunga*. Cooper held three *merkunga* in the crook of his left arm, one being taken and used by one of the old men. The old men advanced towards the trestle, chanting and beating their clubs in the way described. Cooper was slightly behind them. Young men followed the group. Cooper stood before the trestle as at an altar while the old men chanted for about five minutes. Water was called for, and brought by a woman and given to a visitor from the Mugula tribe. He then poured the water over Cooper's head. Cooper rubbed his belly with his *merkunga*. The visitor then pulled the hair string free from one end of the wooden collar, *eladini*, while Cooper made very wry faces. The collar was removed and the ceremony ended. I was
[439] presented with Cooper's *eladini* and *merkunga* in return for gifts, and I was cheerfully escorted back to the beach where the lugger was waiting for me.

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D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.

[p. 168]

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

OCEANIA

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE STUDY OF THE NATIVE PEOPLES OF AUSTRALIA, NEW GUINEA AND THE ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN

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[Title page]

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 0120 Tiwi 0120

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. Harney and A. P. Elkin[1]

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and 136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog 825 (*wongine*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may 757 often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worumguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] [1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. Elkin.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

which is interesting. It means the "Moon People" and is probably the name of the tribe displaced by the Purakapale people in the past. It is Arakitamun-uwi (plural), Arakitamun-ini (masculine), Arakitamun-inga (feminine). 101

Horde Places. Living in isolated groups, these people talk of horde places. A man from the south of Bathurst Island will tell you he is of the Tikaluwila people, in the horde place of Tikalaru, the country. Thus a man is a Tikaluwinala and a woman is a Tikiluwinila of the country of Tikalaru in the tribe of Worunguwi. (Hart writes Tiklauila). 621 361

As it is with this horde so it is with all the groups, three of which are on Bathurst Island; Tikalaru on the south of the Island, Arangu on the north, and Malo on the western shore of the Island. We are not sure of the Melville Island divisions but the following are fairly reliable: Mundiimpu, Anangatera, Yaimpi, being three hordes united as one horde on the southern shore; Turupu and Maruwu, two hordes living as one horde to the north-east of the Island; and Wilarunggu and Munaipu, two hordes living as one local group on the north-west of the Island. (This does not conflict with Hart's list.)

These hordes have indefinite tribal boundaries, yet it is considered a transgression to go too far into them for hunting purposes. One law relating to food gathering is, "He who burns the grass first is considered to own all the food that is caught on that burnt patch; he is a boss as it were and remains such until after the cold weather sets in and the dews bring on a new lot of grass." 423 224

Clans. Although the people are divided into numerous hordes they have only three clans (*aramipi*), but each of these clans has a number of sub-totems, *emuya*.[2] These may be survivals of weaker clans or possibly an example of classificatory totemism. Hart calls the *aramipi*, phratries. The totems are: 614

1. Main totem	*Kudjarli*	Fire
Sub-totems	*Yarinapila*	Red ochre
	Iywati	Honey nest
	Pinkwarui	Stingray
	Ilitui	Tree with red flower
	Woriapila	Sun
2. Main totem	*Tukambani*	Martin
Sub-totems	*Tapitapini*	March fly
	Buygaluwila	Stone
	Ariyguwila	Stone.
3. Main totem	*Miatui*	Pandanus
Sub-totems	*Murukpungama*	Flying fox
	Mudumbila	Mullet
	Mandupowi	Fly
	Andolui	Spring
	Tjilati	Jabaru.

[2] The same name as the gall-bladder and the pulse.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

614 Each of these *emuga*, sometimes called Pukui (sun),[3] has a number of cult
778 centres and in them resides the "old woman" of the clan; these are also called *emuga*. The sacred site of the Tukambani clan is at Morapeanga, Cape Keith; of the Miatui, Irapulanwa, Buchanan Island in the Apsley Straits; of the Kudjali, Padupi; Sanke Bay, or as the natives say in their quaint pidjin, Djenakaba, which is on the north of Melville Island, an old trepang site.

As far as could be ascertained, no fixed belief is associated with these clan centres. They are not burial caves invested with a ritual significance such as we find in parts of the mainland (Wadaman and other tribes), yet the shade or spirit of the dead does
[775] follow the track made by the natives as they come from the sacred centre to "show it the road." Only some natives know this. It is probably a ritual that has become lost with the advent of new ideas.

614 *Clan Relationship.* To marry within a major clan or phratry, *aramipi*, is taboo,
615 *himigari*. A person of one phratry can only marry into the other two major clans. Thus, all Tukambani and their kindred sub-clans are mother, mother's brother,
601 mother's mother, mother's mother's brother, sister's son and daughter, brother and sister. They call people in the other two clans father, father's sister, son, daughter,
[611] wife, wife's brother, wife's mother, wife's mother's brother, wife's mother's mother and wife's mother's brother. In other words, descent is matrilineal.

582 *Marriage Law.* The marriage law is the same as in most tribes: a man marries his mother's mother's brother's daughter's daughter or, as the natives would say, "a man marries his group sister's son's daughter." They have equal exchange in marriage, that is "opposite brothers exchange sisters." An "uncle" (mother's brother) takes his (group) nephew's daughter, and the group nephew receives the
[616] uncle's daughter in exchange (cross-cousin type). There are neither subsections nor sections and indeed, no moieties. A reason may be suggested for this: being isolated on the island, each person knew his or her relationship to the others, and as there was no intertribal exchange, the need for this type of classification never arose. One of the important functions of the section and subsection systems is to facilitate intercourse between tribal groups.

582 The marriage system with relationship terms is explained in the following table:

		1		2
601 A	.. *ubunga* m.m.m.m. or sr.	*UWANI* M.M.M.M.B. or B. (Ego)	*yarbunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.
614 B	.. *yamoriy* m.m.m.	*YARMURDI* M.M.M.B.	*umbreniwa* w.m.	*YAPINAWINI* W.M.B.
C	.. *imaninga* m.m.	*IMANANI* M.M.B.	*tumaliya* w.m.m.	*TAMALITI* W.M.M.B.
D	.. *inari* m.	*ILAMANI* M.B.	*umarani* w.m.m.m.	*IMERANINGA* W.M.M.M.B.
A	.. *ubunga* sr.	*UWANE* B.	*yabunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.

[3] These natives have numerous names for the same object, the result of the taboo on certain words after a death.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 O120 Tiwi O120

All those in number one group belong to the same clan, and are "opposite" to those of number two group, who also belong to one clan. The lines A, B, C and D are intermarrying groups, i.e. Ego marries his *yabunaiya*, etc.

Of course, relationship terms also include others denoting the type of relation or blood tie. For instance, a mother's brother or a sister's son (group) when distantly related to Ego could be his father-in-law and would then be called *YUNARENIWA*. A true father is *ERINGANI*, a father's sister, *yananiya*; father's father *ARMINI*; father's mother, *arnma*; mother's brother's own daughter, *yamuina*, and one son, *YAMUWANINI*[4]; half brother is *INGULABINI* and a half-sister *inguleba*.[5]

This system of marriage is not unlike the Murngin and Anula system and also is the same as the *wadji wadji* (wrong side marriage) of the Mudbara. In one, cross-cousins—not *inguleba*—can marry, while in the true Mudbara cross-cousin marriage is prohibited.

Rites. The rituals centre around the Kulama. The underlying principle of this is to ensure that the Kulama (a small hot yam that embodies the spirit of the "old woman" and guardian of the horde) is cooked correctly, for this ensures her protection against Maradji, the rainbow snake, another old woman who can cause evil to come upon them and "swallow them" up. It is performed during the wet season by each family, and is said to bring about a plentiful supply of food. The Kulama is also used to pass the initiates, both male and female, from a lower to a higher order in the social scale, although I myself could not see that any important results were obtained by the initiates through the ritual.[6]

Some result, or at least protection, however, is obtained: if the Kulama is not sung or danced at the prescribed time or place, the Marakarti (spear grass) and also the ring used for cooking the Kulama yams at the ritual, would give rise to a poison, *Tani*, which would pass into the air and cause sickness; perhaps a youth who had not passed through the Kulama would sicken and die. On the other hand, a youth who has passed through the ritual may gain a certain satisfaction by believing that he can drive the sickness away and protect the family. In addition, the Kulama is not only an increase ritual for yams; in it the father also "sings" the name of his child in a form of song, *apa*, and foretells in a dream that a certain spirit "shade" will be incarnated through one of his wives at some future date; for these children are waiting at that "spirit dreaming" place called Bilawuwi. In other words, it is a human increase ritual.

[4] These are true cousins and cannot marry.

[5] This *inguleba* native is the term for persons who are taboo to Ego; they cannot approach Ego's wives, as their sweat must not touch. They are people who are "out of line" in relationship. For instance, if a Kudjarli man marries two women, one a Tukambaai and the other a Mintui, his children would be of two different *pukui* or totems. These children, half-brothers and half-sisters, are *inguleba* to each other.

[6] It is unlike the Karawadi of the subincised people, in which the initiate is freed of certain food taboos, and again in the Kudidjingara, through which the old men receive magical power to levy tribute from the young people of the tribe, who have not passed through that ritual.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 O120 Tiwi O120

796 An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch
827 his wives or children, because a deadly sweat called *hilawini* comes from his body and will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

[88] Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected
764 with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *eminkey* of
775 the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yatarahs*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

Culture Heroes. They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the
773 "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-
776 tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumereka*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orati*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marakarti*.

The Present Day Spirits. Some spirits vitally affect their present lives.
776 Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain
[82] spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

Magic. Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs
754 slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *hulumpara*. It is interesting to compare the Anula belief; if a person is sung with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 O120 Tiwi O120

Sickness is cured by beating the ground around the victim to hunt the evil spirit away. Likewise, a song, Upripu, is sung by the wives of the sick man to make him better. The *Kuwua*, a pointed bone, or sometimes a tomahawk is used to stab a person's urine or an article his body has touched (e.g. a bark he has lain upon to sleep) and so cause him to die. Blood thrown into the sea will cause a violent wind and a big tide. The Kulama rite will bring about the same result. No instance has been found of magic being used to entice the spirit from a person's body, yet if a person failed to show sympathy for the dead, the dead person's "shade" would cause that person to die and then run away with his "shade." To mention the name of the newly dead is taboo. If a person accidentally does this he must immediately hit his mouth and spit to cleanse it of the evil.

Names. The names given to the women and men are of three types; the first is the actual name and is given to a person at the Kulama rite; this is an ordinary word such as "honey nest," etc., but it is always in a different language from the ordinary one which is used everyday. The child also receives the name of his father, father's brother or father's sister; this is a traditional name. Then, in the case of a male, come the terms denoting his initiation grade in the Kulama. First stage—*Murakmani*; second stage—*Wadjaneta*; third stage—*Migingariya*=first song and *Midjintera*=second song; fourth stage—*Mekearterima*=third song; and finally, *Mahagala*, which denotes that the man is qualified to conduct a Kulama. Likewise, both sexes have grade names denoting their status in the Pukamane death ritual. Male terms: first stage—*waniati*; second stage—*warunerera*; third stage—*wanerterima*; fourth stage—*wanderara*. With girls and women these names are the same except for the ending denoting the sex.

In the case of women there are terms denoting age or condition. *Kudjine*—child; *alinga*—girl; *miriyaleta*—puberty; *murogarbra*—breasts developed; *piramuruka*—first sign of pregnancy; *paprungala*—pregnant woman; *wanantaka*—woman who has a child dead, and *umparu*—widow. Other terms are *pitukwen*—widower; *meniuggini* and *padrubayga*—boy and girl respectively, whose mother is pregnant; *indjula*—a woman whose breasts have fallen; and as on the mainland, a mother is always called by the sex of the child she carries in her arms: *oriowri* if a boy, *kudjine* if a girl.

Language. The language is peculiar. In many instances, owing to the masculine and feminine endings of the words, the women seem to speak a different language to the men. In addition, another language, or set of words, which is very rarely spoken, seems to obtrude itself. Thus one article will have many names. This is brought about by the strong death-taboo on names; as soon as a native dies, his names and his son's names are taboo and others are substituted. In this way every year new words are coined. Only recently at a Kulama two new ones appeared as a consequence of this taboo. *Purinteriya*, new name for tree, and *alepua*, new name for coconut. Or a Kulama name may be given as, say, *wilinkurawa*, the meaning of which will be given as honey nest; and yet numerous words for honey are nothing

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

192 like this word. They also have a strange way of twisting words; for example Port Darwin is called *Pudarnap*.

177 *The Future.* The people themselves are—in Mr. Harney's opinion—mentally lazy, and hold a curious mixture of mission and native teaching. Although 197 Christians—Roman Catholics—believing in God, they have a fixed dread of *Maratdja*, the rainbow serpent. The good that the mission would do is limited by two facts, in spite of the sincere labours of the missionaries: (1) there is no fixed progressive policy with regard to material advancement. The missions are not self-supporting, probably owing to the poor quality of the soil around that part. (2) The younger natives have too easy an entrance into Darwin. They reach it by short stages with canoe from Melville Island. Moreover, their presence in the town is always welcome and encouraged, because it means cheap labour for the white people. Unfortunately, it is the beginning of the end for the native.

000 One thing is urgently required if they are to be saved: (1) complete control forcing them to stay on their Islands; these provide plenty of native food. And (2) subsidizing of the mission to do "controlled work" in line with government policy. Apart from that, but only if necessary, a station, such as at Garden Point, could be opened and attention given to the medical and other needs of the islanders, in particular, of the aged and sick.

W. E. Harney.
A. P. Elkin.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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SUGAR CANE: AN INDIGENOUS PAPUAN CULTIGEN 405
John N. Warner

SONS AND LOVERS: CHARACTEROLOGICAL REQUISITES OF THE ROLES IN A PEASANT SOCIETY 412
George K. Park

SONG STRUCTURE AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE 425
Alan Lomax

MARRIAGE CONTRACTS AMONG THE TIWI 452
Jane C. Goodale

PATRILATERAL CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE: STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS AND ETHNOGRAPHIC CASES 467
Robert B. Lane

CLASS AND KINSHIP IN ARGENTINA 500
Arnold Strickon

MOTIVES IN ESKIMO AND OJIBWA MYTHOLOGY 516
Seymour Parker

SIB AND CLAN AMONG THE PAHARI OF NORTH INDIA 524
Gerald D. Berreman

MOTHER'S BROTHER IN WIKMUNKAN SOCIETY 529
George C. Homans and
David M. Schneider

ETHNOGRAPHIC ATLAS 533
The Editors

University of Pittsburgh Press

[Title page]

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Marriage Contracts Among the Tiwi

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121 It has become an increasingly common practice in recent years to reëxamine earlier analyses of kinship systems and, by selecting slightly different criteria from the ethnographic descriptions or by approaching the system from a different point of reference, to arrive at new interpretations and classifications. This has been particularly true of studies of Australian kinship systems, which have been a fertile field for reinterpretation ever since the day of Spencer and Gillen. Two of the many examples are the reëxamination of the Kariera by Romney and Epling (1958) and the reanalysis of the Wikmunkan by Needham (1962).

No one has yet attempted a reanalysis of the Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands for the simple reason that none of the original investigators has yet attempted a complete preliminary analysis. Spencer visited Bathurst Island in 1912 and subsequently published a few comments and a list of kinship terms (Spencer 1914). Hart visited the Tiwi in 1928-29 and Pilling in 1953-54, and their highly readable joint book (Hart and Pilling 1960) has brought the Tiwi into prominence but has not solved the theoretical problems raised by their description of the social organization and marriage customs. I, too, visited the Tiwi in 1954[1] and ever since have been continually frustrated in attempts to describe their social organization and marriage rules in conventional anthropological terminology.

I have long been convinced—and I believe Hart and Pilling are also so convinced—that the first step in understanding Tiwi social organization is an understanding of Tiwi marriage customs. Accordingly, this paper was first written as an analysis of Tiwi marriage contracts using the age factor as a major underlying determinant of asymmetrical cross-cousin marriage rules.[2] When the original paper was read, at the Tenth Pacific Science Congress in 1961, comments from the floor convinced me that fuller descriptions of certain aspects of Tiwi social organization should be included. After the paper was rewritten to include these aspects, the colleagues[3] who read and commented on it asked for more complete and different data, for each saw in the description different possibilities for abstraction and classification.

121 I have therefore resolved that this paper shall be mainly descrip-
tive rather than analytical. The first section deals with a description
128 of Tiwi marriage contracts with the main emphasis on the factor of relative age as an important consideration. The data, it should be

emphasized, are presented from the point of view of a female Ego, for I strongly feel that it is only by using a female Ego that one can see the Tiwi marriage "game" as a "system." Following this, I present the kinship terminology together with some comments on the system of kin classification that are relevant to the marriage system. The last section discusses some aspects of the exchange of women between descent groups and local groups. 121 128

I am only too well aware that I do not have all the facts necessary to make a complete analysis of Tiwi social organization. It must also be stated that the relative-age analysis was a desk study based largely on what I believe to be logical deductions from the collected factual information pertaining to the age differences between spouses.[4] More field work is obviously necessary, and I hope that others who become interested in the problems of analysis and classification raised by this paper will comment and thereby suggest what they consider to be crucial areas for reinvestigation. 121

The Factor of Relative Age in Marriage Contracts

Hart and Pilling (1960) have described the dynamic nature of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a male Ego. My study supports their conclusion that for a Tiwi male the acquisition of wives and the acquisition of prestige are dependant variables. A Tiwi male will rarely acquire a wife through any form of contract before the age of 30. A bestowed wife, one who is promised before birth and becomes a cohabiting wife before puberty, is a valuable prestige symbol, but difficult to acquire. Thus a young man will frequently start his household with the acquisition of a less valuable but more easily obtainable type of wife, i.e., a widow, often of advanced age. Some Tiwi males never obtain sufficient prestige or political power to become involved in a bestowal contract, while others who are more fortunate may be involved in several such contracts. 554 554 582 [587]

My study of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a female Ego reveals some interesting differences in perspective. First and foremost is the fact that, while involvement in a bestowal contract is a cultural ideal, albeit rarely realized, for a male's first marriage, it is an inescapable norm for every Tiwi woman's first marriage. Thus, while this type of contract can be considered "preferential" but not normative from the point of a male Ego, it is acknowledged by Tiwi women as an inflexible "rule" governing their first marriage before puberty to a man whom they describe as "the one who grew me up, treated me like a father, and made me a woman."[5] 183 582

Thus a marriage contract for a man's first wife need not be—and frequently is not—the same as the initial contract leading to a girl's primary marriage. Furthermore, the form of the contract for a man's first wife is apt to vary considerably, whereas the form of the initial

5 [The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche. Cf. p.465, cat. 116 -- Analyst.]

183 contract for a girl's primary marriage follows a consistent cultural
582 pattern.

In any discussion of a marriage system all the varieties of marriage contracts must be considered. If, however, one variety is [121] found to be more frequent, preferred, prescribed, or invariable, then that is the one to which all the others must be related. In the Tiwi marriage system there is no difficulty in determining which type of contract should be considered basic to the others. The initial contract which leads to a first marriage of a Tiwi girl is prescribed and invariable and is thus necessarily the most frequent from the point of view of a female Ego, and it is also a preferred contract from the point of view of a male Ego. In the following discussion, I shall refer to this type of contract as a Type A contract. Types B, C, and D are all contracts leading to secondary marriages of Tiwi widows and will be briefly discussed later.

584 A Type A contract is made during the five-day period in which
606 a girl is isolated in the bush at the time of her first menstrual period. Although she has been living with her first husband, she is separated [88] from him at this time. When she again returns to her husband's camp, she is not only considered to have reached the status of a woman but also that of a mother-in-law. While she is in the bush, her father places a spear between her legs as she sleeps and then presents it to a boy or man whom he selects to serve his daughter as a son-in-law. The spear is regarded by the recipient as a symbol of a bestowed wife yet to be born to his young mother-in-law. By accepting the spear, the son-in-law becomes obligated to his mother-in-law; from that moment on he must supply her with food and goods and such services as she may request at any time. In return, she is [582] held solely responsible for seeing that her first daughter is sent to his camp when she reaches the wifely age of eight or ten. After receiving the first daughter, the son-in-law is expected to continue his services to his wife's mother, in return for which he can expect to receive other daughters subsequently born to her. The initial contract continues until either the son-in-law or mother-in-law dies. If either fails to honor his obligation, however, the other may terminate the contract. A Type A contract is therefore essentially a contract between a mother-in-law and a son-in-law. The arranger of the contract is the mother-in-law's father.

582 The Tiwi, like the majority of Australian societies, consider cross-cousin marriage to be the proper form of marriage arrangements. For the sake of simplicity, I shall conduct the following analysis as if the preferential marriage pattern involved first cousins, although in fact it generally involves second cousins. For the purpose of viewing the system from the standpoint of relative age the distinction between a first and a second cousin is irrelevant. The question of classificatory cousins will be deferred until the kinship terminology is discussed.

The following analysis of Type A contracts in terms of the factor of relative age will show that the selection of a FaSiSo rather than a

MoBrSo to be the first husband of a girl is not merely a question of preferential choice; a FaSiSo is actually the only cross-cousin of the appropriate age to be considered as a party to a Type A contract. 582

As a first step, let us consider the expected relative ages of the principal parties to a Type A contract: the mother-in-law, the son-in-law, and the expected daughter-wife. A girl becomes a mother-in-law at puberty. For the sake of convenience we may consider this to be at the absolute minimum age of ten. A boy becomes a son-in-law at an age of not less than ten, and he may well be older than this. The minimum age of a Tiwi male is determined by his physical ability to hunt for and otherwise serve his mother-in-law in order to fulfill his part of the contract. 582 606 [581]

We cannot expect the future daughter and wife to be born, on the average, for at least five years and conceivably not for twenty years after the contract is made. However, again for convenience, let us assume that, on the average, the promised daughter will be born ten years from the date of the contract, i.e., when both the mother and the son-in-law are about twenty years old. The young girl will not become a cohabiting wife for approximately another eight or ten years, at which time her promised husband will be at least 28 to 30 years of age. Thus an average difference of twenty years between the ages of a girl and her first husband is to be expected—a difference which is dictated solely by the form and nature of the initial Type A contract. 582

Hart (1930: 282) believed that this twenty-year age difference was largely a result of the excessive practice of polygyny quite evident in his time (ca. 1930). However, in 1954, when most polygynous households had been broken up, an analysis of age differences for all primary unions for women in my sample still reflected the same disparity. Few men under the age of 30 had received wives, and only one girl over the age of ten had not yet been given to her promised husband. The average age difference between wives and first husbands was 18.9 years, with a range of from three to 54 years (Goodale 1959: 72). [114] [595] [593]

I shall next consider the expected relative ages of parents, siblings, and the children of siblings (cousins). If there is a twenty-year age difference between husbands and wives, it logically follows that the same age difference will also exist between the mothers and fathers of children. A woman can expect to have children by the age of twenty, while a man will not be expected to have legitimate children until about the age of 40.. If we assume that siblings are of the same relative age (there being a 50/50 chance that brothers and sisters are older or younger), then we can expect that a sister will, on the average, have a child twenty years before her brother has a child. Thus it can be expected that the FaSiSo of a female Ego will be twenty years older than she is, and that her MoBrSo will be twenty years younger. In arranging the primary marriage of a girl, it is thus virtually impossible that she be promised to a MoBrSo who by expectation is twenty years younger than she, and who indeed is 582 593 582 605

582 probably not even born when she reaches the wifely age of ten. A
605 FaSiSo, on the other hand, is a cross-cousin belonging to the correct age group to be a party to the initial marriage contract. Relative age, therefore, determines that a Type A marriage contract, which is culturally universal for a woman's primary marriage and preferential from the point of view of male prestige, results almost inevitably in unilateral cross-cousin marriage between a MoBrDa and her FaSiSo.

The preferred form for widow remarriage among the Tiwi is to a
582 younger brother of the deceased husband. This type of remarriage
587 contract stems directly from the Type A contract and may be considered a continuation thereof. It is therefore here classified as a Type A2 contract. As a woman grows older, when and if her Type A contract or its continuation runs out, alternative choices for secondary husbands are available to her, and acceptable to the Tiwi, among other cross-cousins.

582 A comparable method of analysis indicates that, as between the sons of a father's elder and younger sisters, a woman's primary marriage under a Type A contract is very much more likely to be with
[595] her FaElSiSo, and that under these circumstances she will probably enter her husband's household as a second and junior wife. Her elder co-wives play an important part in her education as a wife.
582 After she becomes a widow, however, she may become the first wife,
587 with the title of *taramaguta*, of a FaYoSiSo or of a MoElBrSo through a Type A2 or B contract. A MoYoBrSo, however, may be expected
593 to be considerably younger than Ego, and my analysis of all marriages in 1954 showed that only after the age of 30 do we find women married to husbands younger than they. Such a marriage can never be the result of a Type A contract but may occur under contracts of Types B, C, or D (see below).

Not only does the twenty-year average age difference between husband and wife under a Type A contract have the effect of practically limiting the choice among cross-cousins for a woman's first husband to a father's elder sister's son; it also means that a woman may expect to have at least two husbands during her lifetime. Indeed, she is likely to have a series of husbands whose ages relative to her own are successively younger until, as an elderly widow, she may well become the first wife of a man very much younger than herself.

Classification of Tiwi Marriage Contracts

584 The form and nature of Tiwi marriage contracts cannot be understood merely by looking at the results of the contract, i.e., who marries whom. One must also look at who has the authority to make the contract, who are parties to the contract, who implements the contract, and who can change a contract. Among the Tiwi the rights, duties, and obligations that pertain to all these aspects of a marriage contract are specified and reside in different individuals at different times in a woman's life. Here again the age factor must be considered, for while these rights, duties, and obligations lie in the

hands of a limited number of specified relatives of the woman, the 584
privilege of exercising a particular role in a marriage contract depends on the individual's age relative to others holding similar rights and relative to the woman involved in the contract. I have chosen to base the following classification of contracts on the single factor of who has the right to make the contract.

Type A Contracts

A Type A contract involves four individuals. The authority to [603]
make the contract resides solely in the hands of the bride's mother's father. At the time the contract is made, this man is at the expected age of 50—the age when a man is at the height of his political career. Acquiring wives for himself to further his career and maintain his [554 595]
prestige is only one of the activities involving marriage contracts in which a Tiwi male is engaged at this time of life. As a father, he has
a duty to look after the welfare of his daughters even after they are [593]
married. As an elder in a matrilineal descent group, he has a similar
duty toward all younger members of that descent group, male and [614]
female. By arranging a correct Type A marriage contract, a Tiwi man can fulfill two duties at the same time. He can provide his daughter with a son-in-law, whom he selects on the basis of potential economic and political ability and who, if of roughly the same age as the daughter, can be expected to provide her, under the terms of the contract, with continued support throughout her life. By selecting a young man in his own descent group (his sister's daughter's son) to provide this support, he at the same time assures this young man that he will eventually obtain a bestowed and preferred type of wife which will help him on his road to prestige.

The arranger of a Type A contract may be dead by the time the bride is of an age to be given over to her selected groom. The rights to implement the contract, consequently, do not permanently reside with the arranger, but rather they are the duty of the mother of the bride. They are not given to the mother's husband, even if he is also the bride's father. In the space of time that may well elapse between the arrangement of the contract and its implementation, the bride's mother may have a number of husbands, each of whom may have different axes to grind and varying motives for changing the selection of the groom. The right to change any Type A contract belongs to both the mother of the bride and to the groom; if either does not live up to the obligations of the contract the other may consider it void.

A Type A contract, therefore, is one which preferentially and [614]
frequently results in a marriage of a MoFaSiDaSo to a MoMoBrDaDa and in a marital union between two matrilineal descent groups. This arrangement is unaffected either by the death of the arranger or by any secondary marriage of the bride's mother to a man who, though the real father of the bride, might possibly belong to a descent group other than the two originally involved in the contract.

The enduring quality of a Type A contract over a span of two 582
generations is a most important aspect of the total marriage system

582 of the Tiwi. Any variation from the proper, preferred form of a marriage contract in one generation will not normally have any effect on the marriages of the succeeding generation (indeed, there may not be any succeeding generation if the woman is past child-bearing age). When and if the effect is felt in the marriage contracts of the second descending generation, approximately 80 years will have elapsed, i.e., time enough for necessary social adjustments to have been made and accepted. And since a woman's husbands have no control over their daughters' initial marriages, variation from the patterned norm of unilateral cross-cousin and descent-group exchange is not only allowed but is a frequent occurrence. While certain alternatives are preferable, such as a cross-cousin from a different descent group, marriage with relatives other than cross-cousins is permitted with certain limitations.

Type B Contracts

A Type B marriage is one which is arranged by a bride's father
584 or mother's husband. A bride's father has a right and a duty to arrange a daughter's marriage if, and only if, her Type A contract has become void, either because of the death of her promised husband and the lack of any legitimate (A2) heirs to her Type A contract, or because her mother has deemed the contract void because of non-fulfillment of obligations on the part of the promised husband. Although a marriage resulting from a Type B contract may in fact be
582 the first actual marriage of the bride, it is considered a secondary
587 marriage by the Tiwi, and therefore the selection of a groom by the bride's father need not necessarily be confined to the preferential category of FaSiSo. Because the bride's father also has obligations to his own descent group, he may well give his daughter to a member of his matrilineal sib. This may or may not be the same descent group as that from which the first groom was selected. The bride's
[583] father, if he is a man "on the way up," may also make "daughter exchange" an essential part of a Type B contract.

Type C Contracts

584 A Type C contract is one which is arranged by a woman's
587 brothers. When a woman's father dies, her brothers inherit the duty to look after her welfare, and, as this duty applies to their sister's
593 marriage, they may well find themselves in a position to arrange a secondary marriage for her. Since they usually belong to the same descent group as their sister, they need not necessarily consider descent-group obligations in the choice of a groom. Brothers, like fathers, may well make the direct exchange of women an essential part of a Type C contract.

Type D Contracts

A Type D contract is one which is ostensibly arranged by a woman's sons, after the death of her brothers. If a young man who

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

is desirous of starting his household has inherited the right of arranging his mother's remarriage, he may well enter into a contract involving an exchange of mothers with another youth in a similar position. While a son is accorded this right, I suspect that in many of the cases of mother exchange the real arrangers are the mothers. 584 587 593

Tiwi Kinship Terminology

For the sake of the record, I present herewith the kinship terms which I collected in 1954. It must be understood that my major informants on the classification of kin were women. Although most of the terms were also checked with male informants, through oversight this was not done in a few instances. Although a full discussion of the terminology would perhaps be valuable, limitations of time and space compel me to limit my comments to matters directly pertinent to my discussion of the marriage system. Unless otherwise indicated, all the terms listed are employed by male as well as female speakers. 601 [124]

Sibling Terminology

1 *iwuni:* elder brother. Affinal application: WiSiHu, MoBrDaHu (ws).
2 *iwini:* younger brother. Affinal application: WiSiHu, FaSiDaHu (ms).
3 *imbunga:* elder sister. Affinal application: HuBrWi, MoBrSoWi (ws).
4 *imbuka:* younger sister. Affinal application: HuBrWi, FaSiSoWi (ms).
5 *inggalabini:* half brother (see discussion below).
6 *inggalabunga:* half sister (see discussion below).

The regular sibling terms (1 to 4) are differentiated on the basis of sex and relative age, and they are extended on Ego's generation to all parallel cousins, including remote ones. A special set of terms (5 and 6) is restricted to some siblings and parallel cousins. The criterion for their differentiation, as stated by the Tiwi, is that they refer to half siblings by the same father whose mothers belong to different matrisibs. The only parallel cousins to whom they apply, I believe, are first cousins; distant parallel cousins are definitely called by the regular sibling terms (1 to 4) regardless of their sib affiliations.

The terms for full siblings are also extended to certain collateral relatives on the second ascending and descending generations. Thus the distant parallel cousins of MoMo and FaFa are called by the terms for elder sibling, *iwuni* or *imbunga*, and the distant parallel cousins of SoCh (ms), DaCh (ws), SiDaCh (ms), and BrDaCh (ws) are called *iwini* or *imbuka* (younger brother or sister).

Cross-cousin Terminology

7 *imbuni.* Affinal application only: Hu, HuBr, SiHu (ws), WiBr.
8 *imbunjinga.* Affinal application only: Wi, WiSi, BrWi (ms), HuSi.
9 *mamaingu* (or *mamaini*): MoBrSo (ws), FaSiSo (ws). Affinal application: "Z" Hu (ws). My data are inconclusive as to whether male speakers use this and the following term in the same way.
10 *mamungu:* MoBrDa (ws), FaSiDa (ws). Affinal application: "Br" Wi (ws).

601 It became apparent to me, when I was collecting kinship ter-
582 minology, that actual genealogical connection was an important factor in Tiwi kin classification and also, of course, in determining expected behavior. It is perhaps for this reason that I have always viewed the system of preferential marriage as concerned with actual second cross-cousins rather than with classificatory cross-cousins however distantly removed. First cross-cousins are definitely considered a "little-bit-wrong-way." Unfortunately my actual genealogies are too few and too shallow to shed much statistical light on the problem. It has also occurred to me that with extreme polygyny and obligatory remarriage there should be more first and second cross-cousins available to Ego than with monogamy or limited polygyny.

601 With their strong preference for unilateral cross-cousin marriage it might be expected that the Tiwi would have a Sudanese type of cousin terminology in which cross-cousins would be terminologically differentiated on the basis of whom one could and could not marry. When I phrased this question to my women informants, however, I could find no such discrimination. Women do, nevertheless, make a terminological distinction between cross-cousins to whom they are technically married before birth and those whom they may marry in the future when and if their Type A contract lapses.

585 Here I must interject some additional ethnographic information.
881 At the conclusion of a girl's puberty ceremony, she returns to the camp of her husband (*imbunei*), where she is painted. Then her husband and his brothers, all of whom she also calls *imbunei*, line up with the youngest first and the actual husband last. One by one they hit her with a feather pompom (*iokwiinga*) until the husband's turn arrives. At this point the girl runs, and her husband pursues her, catches her, and makes her kneel by a tree, which is marked. I have chosen to regard this ritual as a marriage ceremony in which the Type A contract is finally validated with all its ramifications. The
[582] fact that the husband's brothers are terminologically classed even at this time with the actual husband and play a part in the marriage ceremony may be regarded as validating the continuance of the Type A contract through successive remarriages (of Type A2) to the younger brothers of the original holder of the contract.

587 If a woman survives all her *imbunei*, she becomes eligible to
601 marry any of her other cross-cousins, either matrilateral or patrilateral, through contracts of Types B, C, or D. It is these cross-cousins, who did not become auxiliary "husbands" under her Type A contract, to whom she applies the term *mamoninya* or its variant, *mawuinei*.

601 ## *Terminology in the First Ascending Generation*

11 *iringani*: father; also FaBr, FaFaBr, FaFaBrSo, MoBroFa, MoBroFaBr. Affinal application: MoHu, MoBroMoHu, HuMoBr.

12 *ingwari*: mother; also MoSi, MoMoDa, MoMoSiDa, FaFaSiDa. Affinal application: FaWi, MoBroFaWi, HuFaSi.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 0120 Tiwi 0120

13 *ilimani:* mother's brother; also MoMoSo, MoMoSiSo, MoFaFa. Affinal application: HuFa, FaSiHu, MoFaMoHu. 601
14 *intinganinga:* father's sister; also FaFaDa, FaFaSiDa, MoFaSiDa. Affinal application: HuMo, "MoBr" Wi.
15 *timandinga:* classificatory "father's sister"; also MoMoBrDa. Affinal application: MoBrWi, WiMo (before contract).
16 *ambrinua:* wife's mother (after contract); also DaHu (ws) after contract.

While the Tiwi make no terminological distinction between an actual and a classificatory MoBr (*ilimani*), they do distinguish between an actual FaSi (*intinganinga*), with whom the wife of a classificatory MoBr is classed, and a classificatory "FaSi" (*timandinga*) who is the wife of an actual MoBr. Female informants say: "We cannot marry the son of a real mother's brother, but a long-way mother's brother's son is all right." Male informants phrase the rule differently: "We cannot marry the daughter of a real father's sister; we call our mother-in-law *timandinga* before the contract and *ambrinua* afterwards." This terminology, together with the informants' statements, rather clearly implies unilateral cross-cousin marriage. 582 601

Terminology in the First Descending Generation

17 *imerani:* son (ms); also BrSo (ws), MoBrDaSo, DaDaSo (ms), BrDaDaSo (ws). Affinal application: DaHu (ws) before contract, SiDaHu (ms), SiDaDaDaHu (ms), DaDaDaHu (ws). 601
18 *imeraninga:* daughter (ms); also BrDa (ws), MoBrDaDa, DaDaDa (ms), BrDaDaDa (ws). Affinal application: SoWi (ws), SiSoWi (ms) DaDaSoWi (ws), SiDaDaSoWi (ms).
19 *morti:* son (ws); also SiSo (ms), DaDaSo (ws), SiDaDaSo (ms). Affinal application: DaHu (ms), BrDaHu (ws), DaDaDaHu (ms), BrDaDaDaHu (ws), MoBrDaDaHu.
20 *maringa:* daughter (ws); also SiDa (ms), DaDaDa (ws), SiDaDaDa (ms). Affinal application: SoWi (ms), BrSoWi (ws), DaDaSoWi (ms), MoBrDaSoWi.

Although the terms appropriate to the first ascending and first descending generations are in general kept distinct, they are to some extent interchangeable when warranted by differences in relative age and the behavior associated therewith.

The applications of the terms *morti* and *maringa*, in contrast to those of the terminology in the first ascending generation, suggest a rule of bilateral cross-cousin marriage with sister exchange. The rest of my analysis, however, indicates a strong preference for unilateral cross-cousin marriage and the impossibility of sister exchange in Type A contracts. The seeming inconsistencies may, of course, reflect a period of uncompleted change in social structure, but this lies outside the province of the present paper, which is concerned with showing how the system operates today. 182 582 583

Terminology in the Second Ascending Generation

21 *emini:* mother's father; also MoFaBr, FaMoBr. Affinal application: MoMoHu, FaMoSiHu. 601
22 *ema:* father's mother; also FaMoSi, MoFaSi. Affinal application: MaFaWi, MoMoBrWi.

601 23 *angamani:* father's father; also FaFaBr, MoMoBr. Affinal application: MaMoHu, MoFaSiHu.

24 *imaninga:* mother's mother; also MoMoSi, FaFaSi. Affinal application: MoFaWi, FaMoBrWi.

Unlike *amini* and *ama*, the terms *angamani* and *imaninga* are not indefinitely extended collaterally, the more distant collateral kin being classed as elder siblings, i.e., *iwuni* or *imbunga*.

Terminology in the Second Descending Generation

25 *inimini:* daughter's son (ms); also BrDaSo (ws). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ws), SiDaDaHu (ms), "Si"Hu.

26 *inimunga:* daughter's daughter (ms); also BrDaDa (ws). Affinal application: DaSoWi (ws), SiDaSoWi (ms), "Br"Wi.

27 *intemili:* daughter's child (ws); also SiDaCh (ms). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ms), DaSoWi (ms), BrDaDaHu (ws), BrDaSoWi (ws). This term is used self-reciprocally and is quite often replaced by sibling terms (*iwini* or *imboka*) for distant kin.

Exchange Between Descent Groups

Consideration of symmetrical versus asymmetrical cross-cousin
582 marriage is but one way of looking at the Tiwi marriage system.
Let us now look at marriage as a system of exchange between descent
614 groups and between local groups.

From both the male and female points of view, the preferred marriage is to a member of Ego's father's matrilineal sib. Of all the marriages I recorded in 1954, 66 per cent were to members of the father's matrisib, and there was no significant difference by sex. These figures were substantiated by statements from informants expressing the preference for the exchange of spouses between two sibs. As in some of the kinship terminology, there is no indication here of asymmetry in the system.

Let us examine some of the ethnographic ramifications of sib exchange. Though a girl can be said to marry into her father's sib, it is more correct to view this as a marriage into her mother's father's sib, for it is her actual MoFa who arranges her Type A marriage, and this man is obligated to the men of his sib to help them acquire wives. If Ego's mother has also married correctly, then Ego's father's sib and her mother's father's sib will be the same. However, it is possible that her MoHu may not be a member of the same sib as her MoFa. This might well account for some of the 34 per cent of "incorrect" marriages in my original analysis, which only took account of the father's sib.

From the point of view of a male Ego it is also important, but
614 for different reasons, to marry a woman of his father's sib. A man's
[842] children come to him first in a dream and are then directed by him to their proper mothers. Unborn children (*pitapitui*) already have matrilineal sib affiliations and thus must be born to mothers of the same sib. Tiwi fathers call this dreaming of children "finding," and,
[175] if a man is unable to "find" any children, his deceased father is ex-

pected to help him. If a man has married a woman in his father's matrisib, then his father and his children will be in the same sib. Since only a dead father can so help his son, we have here an expression of the unity and mutual support of a sib and its members in the previous life and the afterlife as well as in the present life. It is important, I believe, to add here that the Tiwi do not believe in reincarnation. 614 775

It is interesting to speculate, on the basis of the above, what happens if a man marries women of different sibs. If his mother has also married men of different sibs, Ego will have "fathers" in different sibs to help him find children for his various wives. 582 614

Thus, as far as sib exchange is concerned, the Tiwi marriage system is a symmetrical one. When we consider the entire social system of the Tiwi, we see a tendency toward atomism. There are 22 matrisibs, grouped today into five exogamous phratries. Sib membership in phratries is subject to change (Pilling 1957), and the phratries themselves have segmented twice since Hart's visit in 1929. We consequently cannot consider the phratries as stable units in the social organization, and indeed the Tiwi themselves do not. If all marriages were correctly arranged as exchanges between two sibs, we would have eleven independent and symmetrical marriage systems. When this possibility is considered in relation to the data on Tiwi local organization, the potentialities for further symmetry and atomism are quite evident. [615]

Exchange Between Local Groups 621

There are ten major land divisions on Melville and Bathurst Islands, called by the Tiwi *tungarima* or "countries." Rights to the land of the *tungarima* are determined, for both males and females, by the location of the grave of one's father, and there is a marked preference for patrilocal residence. The *tungarima* are, in themselves, agamous. They are, however, subdivided into smaller districts, each inhabited either by a single large patrilocal extended family or by a group of closely related smaller households. Since incest regulations dictate that extended families are exogamous, we may consider that in many cases, if not all, the local group will also be exogamous. 631 [591] [582]

Unilateral Type A marriage contracts will therefore involve a minimum of three such households or local groups. But the marriage system might still be symmetrical within the *tungarima* or country organization, and the total effect might be to localize the matrisibs in pairs. Each country could then be considered as comprising an independent marriage system. The *tungarima* do reveal marked political, economic, and ceremonial independence, but at least today the matrisibs are not localized. The mythology on the origin of the sibs (Mountford 1958), however, strongly indicates that they were at one time conceived as being localized, and this would account for the stated existence of local spirit-child centers with sib affiliations 582 614

582 and for Tiwi fathers' statements that they can only "find" children
614 in their own country.

Today, with nonlocalized sibs, both the sib and the local group are
582 considered in the exchange of woman, which is direct with reference
614 to sibs but indirect with reference to local groups. Such exchange may in some cases involve sibs and countries or *tungarima*, in others
621 sibs and districts or subcountries. I found that approximately 50 per cent of local-group exchanges were between *tungarima* and 50 per cent within the *tungarima*.

582 With local-group exchange and unilateral cross-cousin marriage preferred and predominant, we have an indirect but circular marriage exchange system. We cannot, however, consider the entire society as being involved in a single marriage exchange system. The system is best seen from the point of view of a single male Ego, whose marriages are systematized according to rules which are society wide, but whose actual marriages are determined by past affiliations which can be and often are variable with respect to sib and local-group exchange.

554 That the Tiwi system is Ego-oriented is most evident when a male Ego dies and his relatives foregather for his funeral ceremonies
571 (Goodale 1959). If such an Ego has lived a full life, he will be affiliated at the time of his death with a number of social groups. He is affili-
764 ated by birth with a matrilineal sib. By his father's death he is affiliated with a local group and a *tungarima*, which may or may not be the same as the group with whom he currently resides; in either case he is affiliated with the latter and will be buried among them. Through marriage, Ego is likewise affiliated with one or more additional sibs and local groups.

601 Only those persons who belong to the several above-mentioned groups with which the deceased is actually affiliated are expected to
764 honor him by attending his funeral ceremony. When death occurs, these individuals are terminologically reclassified into four cate-
602 gories, from the members of each of which similar behavior is expected. The spouse and spouse's siblings become *ambarui*. Cross-cousins, MoFa, FaMo, BrDaCh (ws), and SiSoCh (ms) all become *yempi*. Siblings and parallel cousins, MoMo, FaFa, BrSoCh (ws), and SiDaCh (ms), regardless of their sib affiliations, are classed together as *pudawi*. All kinsmen in the first ascending and first descending generations are classed as *unandawi*. Since, however, there is a distinct role differentiation between Fa, FaSi, and SoCh (ms), on the one hand, and Mo, MoBr, and SiCh (ms), on the other, I suspect there may be a terminological distinction which escaped me, inasmuch as these "funeral terms," with the exception of *ambarui*, are no longer in use.

Conclusion

582 In this paper I have considered the form and nature of the varying types of contracts that lead to marriage among the Tiwi. I have

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

discussed the factor of relative age as a major determinant of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in the particular type of contract which is universal for first marriages among females and is also the preferred contract for males. I have also described several variant patterns of Tiwi marriage contracts and have shown that these cannot be considered as alternatives to the preferred type but rather as additional patterns which apply only to a woman's secondary marriages. These additional types of contracts are also, to some extent, conditioned by the relative ages of the participants, but the resultant form of marriage may vary from a continuance of patrilateral cross-cousin marriage to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and even to marriage with certain relatives who are not cross-cousins. The wide variation in contracts leading to secondary marriages for women does not affect the continuance of preferred unilateral cross-cousin marriage or the exchange of wives between particular descent and local groups until the second generation after the variant marriage. Consequently, any change in the social organization of the Tiwi brought about by variations in marriage contracts is a gradual change, but it is also an inevitable and accepted form of change. The Tiwi rightly consider that as individuals they have considerable freedom in the selection of mates from almost any descent and local group and even from among a number of categories of kinsmen. Their Ego-oriented marriage system provides both stability and flexibility, and this is reflected in their system of kin classification.

NOTES

1. The field work on which this paper is based was undertaken in 1954 at the Snake Bay Native Settlement on Melville Island and was jointly financed by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.
2. In 1959, I used the relative age of spouses in a preliminary analysis of Tiwi unilateral cross-cousin marriage (Goodale 1959). It was with considerable pleasure that I found that a similar analysis by Rose (1960) had quite independently arrived at the same conclusions. Even more interesting was the fact that in cases where I had to calculate expected ages for many of my kin relations, Rose, with more complete age data, could give the average and range in ages for the same relatives, and that in most cases his "average" and my "estimated" ages were the same or within one or two years of one another.
3. For their valuable comments, criticisms, and advice I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Robbins Burling, Ward H. Goodenough, Edward B. Harper, Barbara S. Lane, and George P. Murdock.
4. Unfortunately, since the only age data collected in the field were for husbands and wives, I have had to use expected ages rather than average or mean ages throughout most of this paper (see note 2 above).
5. The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche.

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11: Goodale E-S (1954, 1962) 1963 OI20 Tiwi OI20

142
302
884

[colors appearing in original:
Hair - left: white, center stripe: red, right: yellow.
Face - left: unpainted, center stripe and dots: yellow, right: red. -- Analyst.]

[Cover]

Il: Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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ARTICLES

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ADULTHOOD *Jane C. Goodale* 10
BEAUTY AND SCIENCE *Meredith L. Jones* 18
ECOLOGY OF THE HEIGHTS *Lawrence W. Swan* 22
BENEFICENT CANNIBALISM *Edwin Way Teale* 30
THE SUN
FAMILIAR SHORE BIRDS IN JAPAN *Dean Amadon* 48
ROOT GROWTH CLAIMS SOIL FROM SEA *Virgil N. Argo* 52

DEPARTMENTS

REVIEWS *William R. Furrand* 3
SKY REPORTER *Simone Dare Gessner* 56
TRAVEL: FAR AND NEAR *Tim Spierings* 60
ABOUT THE AUTHORS 64
NATURE AND THE CAMERA *David Linton* 65

COVER: A man in the group of Tiwi natives living on Melville Island, in the Timor Sea, paints his face while participating in the Tiwi's annual, three-day *Kulama* ceremony, which is named after a toxic yam. The Tiwi who still adhere to tradition believe that great powers for good or evil dwell in *Kulama* yams, and that one must participate in their ritual preparation if one is to benefit from these powers. For those young Tiwi men and women who undergo the six years of instruction in the ritual, it represents a formal initiation into adulthood. Dr. Jane C. Goodale discusses this ceremony in the article that begins on page 10.

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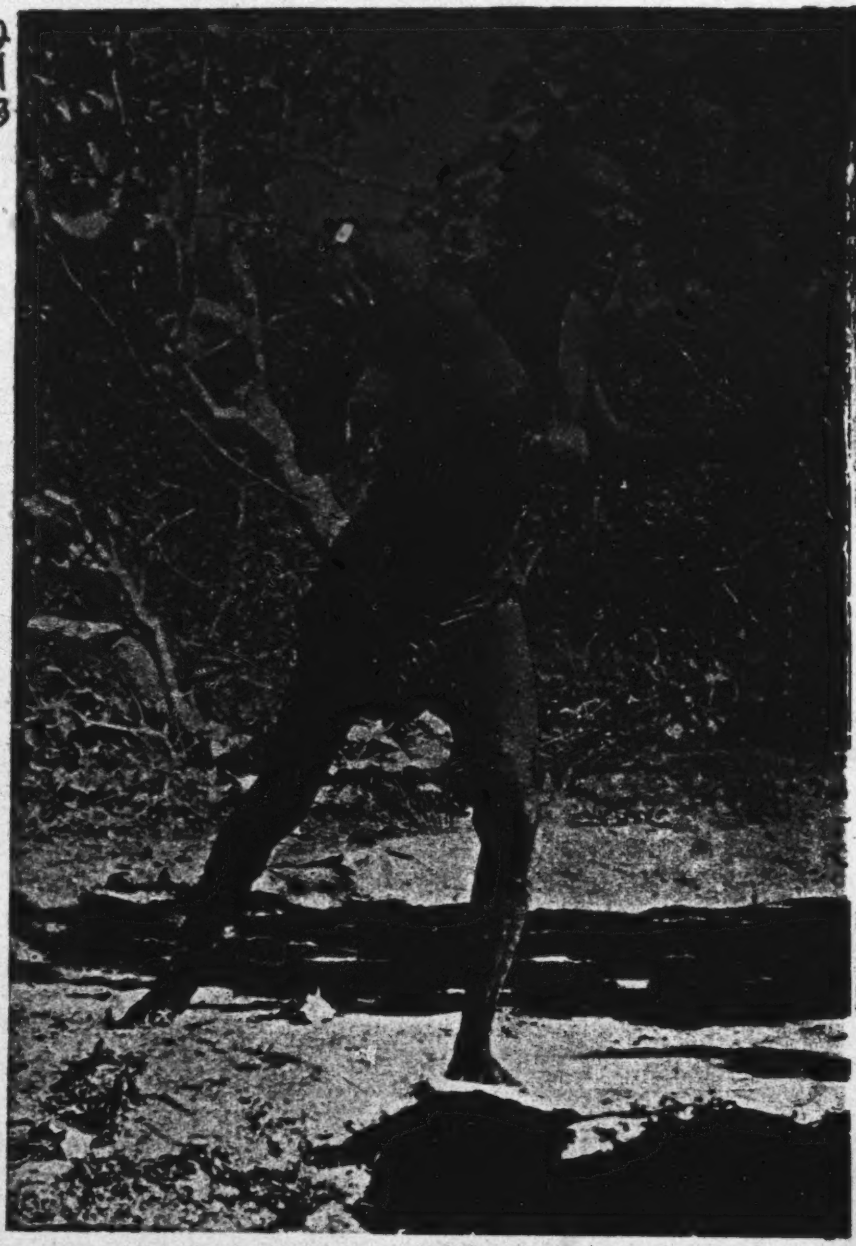
142
302
884

[Title Page]

142
884
533



Tiwi native on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day Kulama ceremony.

[P.10]

11: Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Qualifications for Adulthood

[P. 11,(A)]

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By Jane C. Goodale

884 In 1912 Sir Baldwin Spencer, a professor of biology at the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in [114] the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the [824] ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This [114] statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony, [178] however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe that such participation cannot prepare them adequately [177] for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what 161 the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a 131 thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Melville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well 178 supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Economically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied, [224] and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little 825 physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or 462 digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were 868 taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

Tiwi native on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11, (B)]

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891

SHARK DANCE is among traditional, imitative figures that are performed during ritual preparation of toxic *Kalama* yams.

862 868 ceived additional instruction in spear-fishing and birding, while girls were taught more intensively to locate and identify edible plants. The children, as a result, were generally independent economically in their early teens, by 582 which time the girls were already married. Young males [883] contributed to their parents' larder and to other households, but did not marry and acquire households until they were more than thirty years old. Even now, this late mar- [183] riage age obtains in theory, but not always in practice.

885 THUS, to the Tiwi, economic independence and/or marriage did not alone signify adulthood. The Tiwi adult was intellectually, rather than physiologically, a mature individual who was expected to join actively in the non-economic affairs of the community. An adult was also expected to be almost entirely responsible for his own health, wealth, and future prospects. This included attaining success in hunting and in war and, for the men, in wife-collecting. If an adult became ill or was injured or, as a Tiwi would say, was unlucky in the pursuit of life's benefits, he alone was responsible for not behaving as an adult should.

884 The annual *Kalama* ceremony, held by each community in April at the end of the rainy season, was a most important event to insure individual success. Although a collec-

[P. 11, (C)]

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 12(C)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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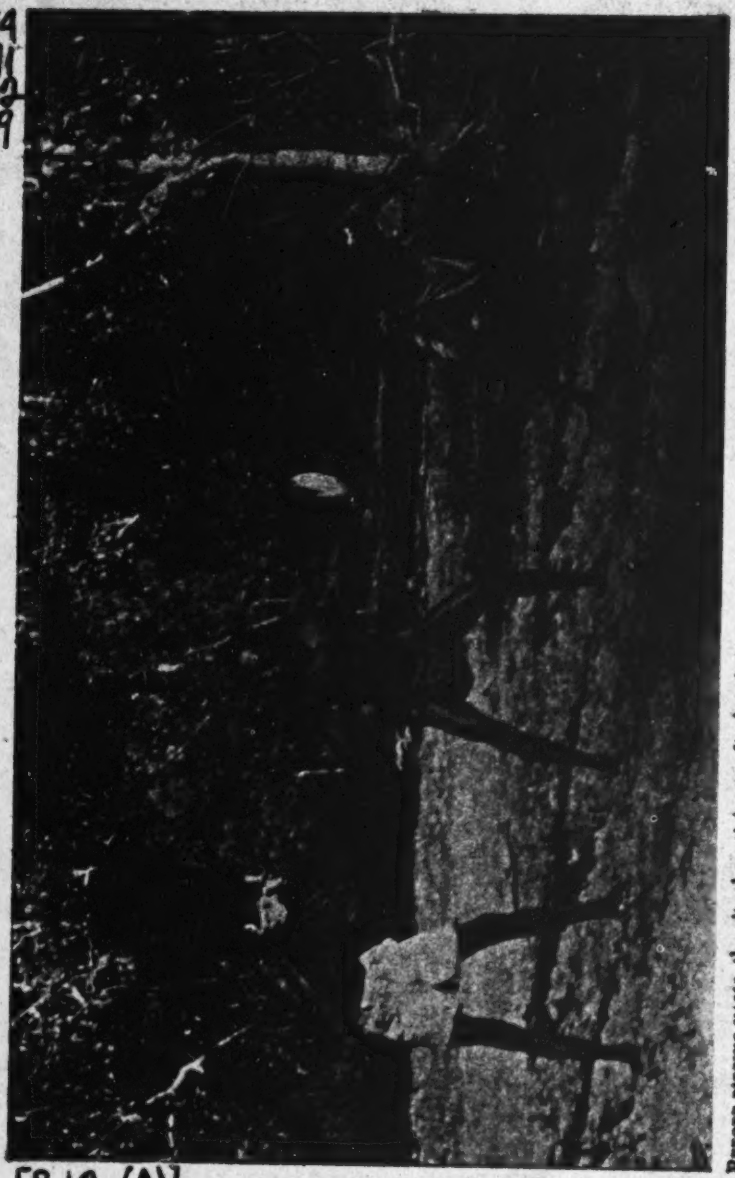

BEFORE DIGGING YAMS, the ritual participants dip hands into white paint and pat it around eyes to insure acute vision.

[P. 12, (A)]

11;Goodale E-8 (1954,1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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Before mocking wake, the ritual participants dip hands into white paint and put it around eyes to insure acute vision.

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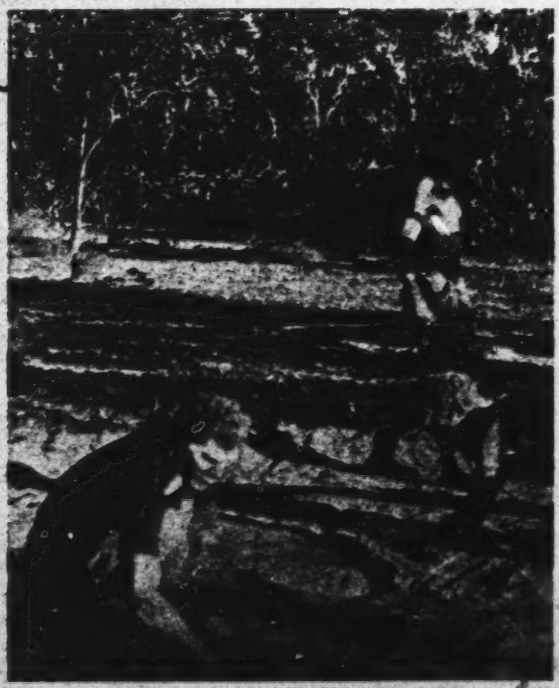

Ceremonial wake is prepared by clearing ground of grass, sticks, and stones. Participants will sing and dance there.

[P. 12, (B)]

884 tive, community ceremony, its benefits accrued only to individual participants, and then only to those who had followed the complex procedures correctly. Thus it was vitally important to every Tiwi individual, male or female, to receive instruction in the *Kulama* ritual before being considered a fully adult member of the tribe. The instruction period lasted six years, during which the initiates, among other requirements, had to participate actively in six *Kulama* rituals. Following this training, the individuals were considered responsible adults by other members of the tribe, but only through continued participation in the ritual could that condition be maintained.

[178] TODAY the ritual is still performed by those who believe in it, and it will probably continue until the last initiated Tiwi dies, or until the underlying meaning is totally lost and is replaced by ideas of how to be successful that have their origins in Western thought.

[962] [854] The ceremony itself takes three days to complete and centers on the preparation of a toxic variety of yam, the *Kulama*. To make this yam edible, it must first be soaked. It is then baked, mashed, and again soaked for a time in fresh water. Even after the poisons have been removed by this elaborate process, an extremely bitter taste remains. The Tiwi say they never eat the yam except at the conclusion of the *Kulama* ceremony. Those who believe in the [778] ritual say the yam has tremendous power for causing good or evil, and thus one must handle the yam carefully during the preparation, speak to it softly, sing to it at times, and always treat it with respect. The individual absorbs the power of the yam by touching it, by rubbing the body with it, and finally by eating it. All these steps are ritualized. [962] Special digging sticks are made, and, contrary to the usual practice of having the women gather plants, only men

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 13(B)..Amiper]

[P. 12, (C)]

11;Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CX20 Tiwi CX20

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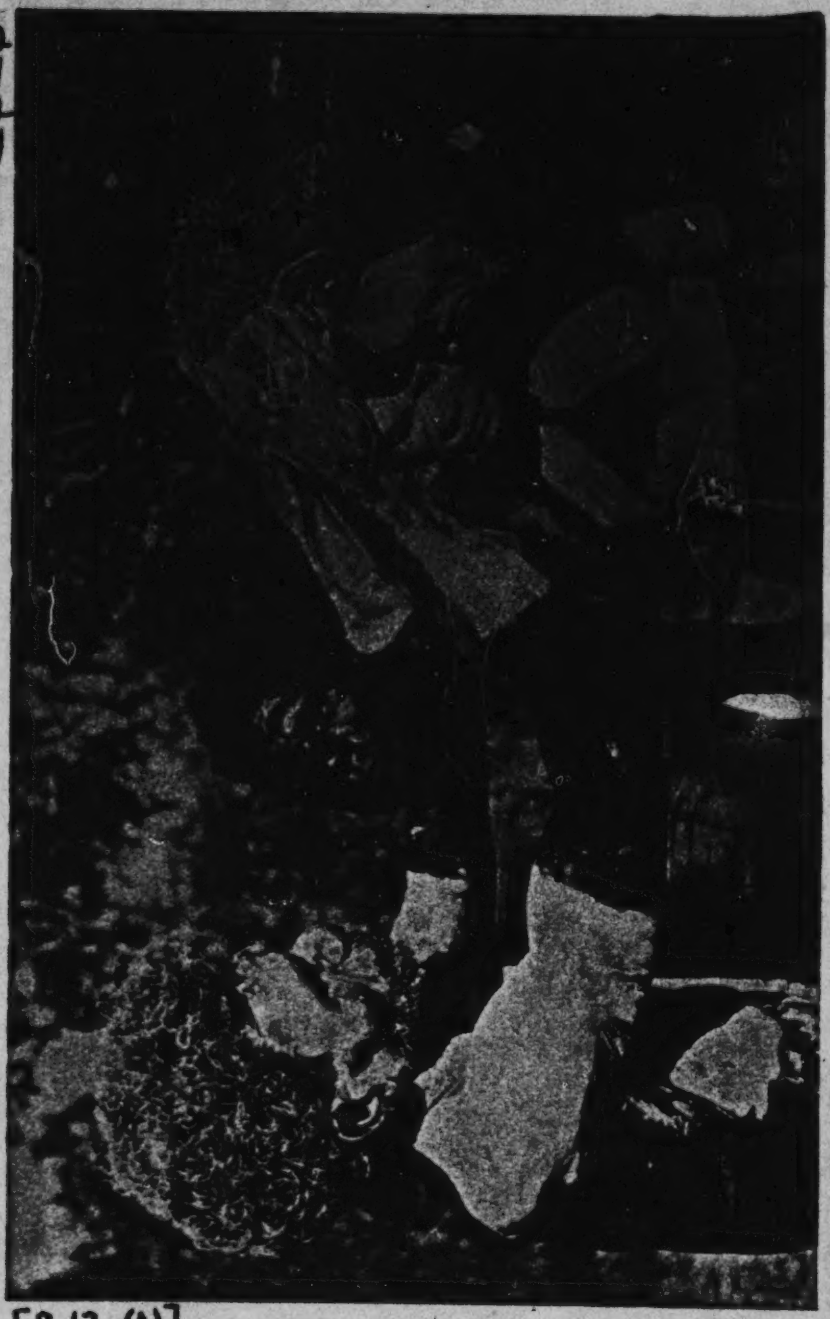

Running paint into the hair is supposed to prevent illness, and daubing it on the arms and legs wards off broken bones.

[P. 13, (A)]

[884] are allowed to dig the yam. A special dance area, or cere-
[460] monial ring, is cleared on the ground and a special cook-
[536] ing fire is built in its center. On each of the three ceremonial
[305] days the participants paint themselves in specified ways
with ocher. During the evening of each day, while the yams
are soaking or cooking, the male participants, singly or
[884] together, walk slowly counterclockwise around the cere-
[533] monial fire, beating sticks together as an accompaniment
[534] to specially composed songs. At times the wives, who re-
main outside the ring, sing with the men, or they may join
their husbands in traditional dances that imitate various
[535] aspects of the natural world around them.

The songs are a vital part of the ritual. They must be newly composed for the occasion and may relate to any event or abstract idea the composer chooses. The songs
[154] often deal with injustices the singer has experienced in the past year, about which he wishes to register an "official" complaint:

[539]

"There was a funeral,
You went first, I came after.
Old people came in first.
I was late because I had a *Kulama*.
Why didn't you wait for me?"

or

"When Dory have baby girl
The old man said, 'That's for you.'
Dory, my mother-in-law, she burns me.
Dory doesn't know the old people way.
I would like to kill her."

Others may be in the nature of news reports, in which the listeners are informed of anything interesting that may have happened to the singer during the preceding year.
CX20 For instance, the composer of the following song had just

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P.10,(A)--(June 1957)
[P.18,(B)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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Stacks are set in the center of cleared area to hold piles of sticks and pieces of earthill that will be burned here.

[P.13,(C)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954,1962) 1963 CE20 Thri CE20

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YAMS TO BE USED in *Kalama* ceremony are retrieved from a fresh-water pool in which they had been soaked overnight.

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[177]

The composer of the following song had just returned from Brisbane, where he and a group of eight other aborigines had performed dances in honor of Queen Elizabeth's 1954 visit to Australia:

[539]

"The Queen was talking in England,
'I would like to see a blackfellow dance.'
When I was in Brisbane, the Queen said,
'I would like to meet a black boy!'
And I went up.
King Philip, he had a good look at me.
He was watching a lot as I danced.
I was singing into a loud-speaker."

[173]

Some songs are historic in nature, retelling an event that must be kept alive according to the traditions of the tribe. One such composition recalls the Japanese attack on Darwin during World War II:

[539]

"An enemy plane flies low over Melville Island.
The men on the ground, at the word 'Standby,'
Shoot it down with a cannon."

The children of the singer are often song subjects. This first example describes how the children behaved in one of their father's dreams.

[539]

"My children have gone to the other side
of the island.
But they must come back as they are hard up
for tobacco.
My children have now come back.
I know this for they have taken the tobacco
which I have held in my hand."

or

"My children will wear clothes and shoes.
They will go to school and learn to write."

All the songs have the same chanting tune, which is associated with the *Kalama* ceremony, and the composer must fit his words to the set meter of the chant. In many cases this requires using archaic words that are no longer a

[P. 14, (A)]

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YOUNG GIRL AND BOY accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

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part of Tiwi speech. Poetic license in pronunciation and syllabification often occurs. The Tiwi have high regard for the linguistic ability needed to become a good Tiwi composer and singer, and instruction in the art of song composition and delivery is given to the initiates. Each initiate must perform in the *Kulama* before he can be considered a "graduate." According to my Tiwi informants, this requirement is the hardest of all, and it is also the reason for there being no set age for initiation. The old people are said to watch the young, and when the observers consider them mature enough, they swoop down upon their choices "like chicken hawks, without warning"—as the Tiwi say—and start the initiates along the path to adulthood.

884
[171]

As far as I know, the *Kulama* ceremony has no parallel elsewhere in Australia. And there are many interesting questions that come to mind concerning the origin of the *Kulama* as it exists today. For instance, why is instruction in the preparation of a poisonous yam that is not part of the daily diet considered so important for initiation into adulthood? What is the origin of the idea that a yam has power over good and evil, and health and sickness? Why is such prominence accorded a yam in what is principally a hunting and gathering society?

[262]
[824]

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Any answers to these questions must be highly speculative, for the origin of the ceremony and its development lie in the unrecorded history of the Tiwi. However, I believe the following statements may well be valid.

Instruction in the natural resources of the land was considered vital to becoming an adult. Because the *Kulama* yam is poisonous and is not widely distributed, it was never part of the regular diet, but it could be used in economic emergencies if properly prepared. Instruction in its preparation was therefore extremely important as a potential survival measure. However, since the Tiwi live in a favorable environment, it is highly probable that such emergencies were very rare, so it was considered expedient to hold annual instruction periods. Because knowledge of

[262]

[SEE P. 15(A) FOR OTHER PART OF CAPTION AND PICTURE -- ANALYST]

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11-Goodale E-6 (1954, 1957) 1963 CEO Tiwi CEO

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Young girl and boy accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

Fig. 15 (A)]

baked by placing them atop pieces of anthill heated to a glow by wood fire, then covering the yams with hot earth.

MAN LIGHTS FIRE beneath chunks of anthill. When the pieces are red-hot, burning wood below them will be brushed away.

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FATHER PAINTS GIRL to show how it would be done if she were to be initiated. Although no children of group were considered ready, ceremony was held to maintain benefits thought to accrue to the Tiwi who had undergone initiation.

[p. 15, (8)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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HOT EARTH over baked *Kulama* yams is removed. Yams that are to be eaten at end of ritual must be resoaked in water.

[824]

SOME COOKED YAMS are cut, peeled, and mashed. Water and paint are then added. Yams are always handled with respect.

[851]
[850]

MEN RUB MASH on bodies to insure health, then do so to the uninitiated young, whose health is paternal responsibility.

[P. 16, (A)]

884 the technique had to be made meaningful to the initiates,
174 the lifesaving qualities of this famine food were explained as health-giving powers. A ceremony accompanied by song and dance was certainly a dramatic and effective means of impressing the initiates in preparation methods. The ritual
[180] served another purpose as well: because traveling is so difficult during the rainy season, each household is isolated from the others. The *Kulama* ritual follows this period, and it is natural to expect a reunion to be an occasion to exchange news, settle differences, and tell stories or sing songs that keep traditions alive.

885 MUCH harder to account for is the Tiwi idea of adulthood. That every adult is solely responsible for his own health and wealth, and that success in life depends entirely on personal behavior and industry, are ideals
[171] strangely similar to those that underlie the American way of life, despite the great gulf between the aboriginal culture and our own. But it is not at all surprising that the Tiwi
177 have a great sympathy for much of Western civilization. Many hold the same views as the *Kulama* singer quoted earlier in this article who saw his children wearing clothes
[181] and shoes and going to school to learn to write, for this is the Tiwi's contemporaneous idea of success in a way of life introduced to them only a few short years ago.

Early in the summer of 1962 I revisited the Tiwi for
[114] two weeks. Although I knew that the Tiwi desired schooling and training in European ways of life and would seize any such opportunity afforded them, I was hardly prepared for the tremendous changes that had taken place during the eight years that had elapsed since my first visit.

Three months after the *Kulama* ceremony of 1954, a
[871] government school was opened. Now all the Tiwi children go to school, and some who have finished the six-year program in the government school have received subsequent training as teaching or nursing assistants. Some others have had "on-the-job" training in various activities connected with a large-scale forestry project that has been started on Melville Island. In fact, all the able-bodied Tiwi men and women are currently employed, and their tasks bear little or no relation to their old life in the bush.

It is perhaps significant—but to me not at all surprising—that I did not hear a single real complaint from the Tiwi regarding their new manner of living. They seem to like it and are anticipating bigger and better things (in the
[224] Western sense) for their children. Hunting has become a week-end diversion and the children receive little or no
[868] real instruction in that traditional skill.

178 SOME aspects of Tiwi life are slow to die, however. Most
784 of the old taboos, the observance of which was considered necessary in the past in order to insure health and wealth, are still observed, although at least one teen-ager expressed doubt that the taboos had any actual effect on the outcome of one's life. Western medicine and public
177 health practices are fast replacing belief in the *Kulama*.
884 During the past eight years only three men have begun the six years of training for *Kulama* initiation, and some of the older men no longer participate in the ceremony. However, as long as even a small number of Tiwi believe in the *Kulama*, the ritual will survive, but I doubt that it will for long.

000 **NEAR END of *Kulama* ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.**

[P. 16, (B)]

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Near end of Kulama ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.

[colors appearing in original:

Body - light purple with white.

Hair and beard - left: yellow, center stripe: red, right: white.

Red across nose and upper cheek. -- Analyst.]

[p. 19]

11:Goodale
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OI20 Tiwi OI20

[For a discussion of the Kulama ceremony of initiation into adulthood see category 116, pp. 10-17.]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

MELVILLE ISLAND
GUATEMALA

Penn. UNIVERSITY MUSEUM

BULLETIN

Volume 21 Number 3

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[Title Page]

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

UNIVERSITY MUSEUM BULLETIN
VOL. 21 SEPTEMBER, 1957 NO. 3

"ALONGA BUSH"

A TIWI HUNT

June Goodale

It was April when I arrived on Melville Island, in the company of a small group of men, with the purpose of studying the culture of the Islanders, and it was eight months later that I packed up my notebooks and flew home. During this time we were amply supported by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum. 114 [122]

In my notebooks was all the information I could gather concerning the way of life, past and present, of this particular tribe of Australian Aboriginals. Much of the information in these diaries will eventually find its way into proper chapters of a Ph.D. thesis concerned with the particular economic system, tribal organization, ceremonial activities, and so on. My hand-written notes of day-by-day observations will be transformed through analysis into scientifically derived generalizations so that the information will be in the form most useful to other ethnographers. Included will be the so-called "typical daily life" of a group of interesting and very primitive hunters and gatherers; but because of the demands of time and space some things will be left out: the account of a succession of days, some of which were perhaps almost "typical," but most of which were unique, made so by the personalities of the particular people I was with, by the weather, and by hundreds of little incidents. Only by mixing the days together can one describe a "typical" day and then it becomes a classification and not a true description.

I think something very real is lost by the scientific demands of ethnological reports, so I would like to take this opportunity and space to record some of the incidents which occurred during a series of seven days when I accompanied a group of Melville

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 1. Snake Bay Settlement

114 Islanders on a hunt. The trip took us to a small clearing on the right bank of the Paluwiunga River, ten miles upstream from where it empties into the Arafura Sea.

131 A brief glance at the map will help to further pinpoint this location. Ten degrees south of the equator and at a distance of twenty to fifty miles due north from the Australian Northern Territory capital of Darwin, lies the relatively large Melville Island (1,000 square miles), named for Viscount Henry Dundas Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, who authorized the coastal survey of 1818 during which the island was circumnavigated. To the west, separated by a narrow strait, lies the smaller Bathurst
101 Island. The group of people with whom I found myself camped by the river bank were members of the Tiwi, a tribe of Australian Aboriginals whose country includes both these islands. Today about
[161 seven hundred members of the tribe live near to the southeast corner
361] of Bathurst Island where they are in various ways administered
797 to by the Sacred Heart Mission. On the northern coast of Melville
161 Island, on a hill overlooking Snake Bay, near the mouth of the

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Tjipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families. 161 361 648

It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace. 361 177 [631] [224] [464]

By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives, 123 [132] [825]

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Fig. 2. Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend, Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

lores and customs, and if the white people were disappointed by his performance in settlement work, the old men of the tribe were just as pleased by his attitude to his native heritage.

Agnes, a slim tall girl of twenty, was even shyer than Albert and to cover up this shyness she always smiled or giggled. She was a cheerful soul to have around. Feeling that the responsibility of the care and feeding of the *murandanga* (female white person) was a little more than their young shoulders could bear, Albert asked Big Jack, his older brother, a "big man" in the tribe to come along. At the last minute a fifth member was added, Tchuwiunga, a tiny black-and-white puppy of about eight weeks old.

Number one canoe was the largest canoe and was considered the safest. The Malay fishermen, a century or more ago, had taught the Melville Islanders how to hew a rough canoe from a single log, but the art had never been perfected. This canoe measured about fifteen feet in length by about three feet in width at the center. There were small platforms in the bow and stern which

Fig. 1. Setting off in Number one canoe

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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served as seats except when the mast was mounted in the forward platform.

It took us quite a while to load, but we finally launched out into the bay about mid-morning. In the stern, sat Albert, his knees folded under so that as he lifted and dipped the heavy ironwood paddle only his arms and back supplied the power. He kept in perfect time with Big Jack who sat just in front of him. They would both paddle on the same side for about six strokes and then bringing the paddles overhead would continue on the other side with perfect rhythm. Agnes and Tchuwiunga sat amidships among the rolls of blankets and cartons of food, while I surveyed the scene from the forward seat, clutching my waterproofed KLM overnight bag containing my camera, toothbrush, and change of clothing and the ever-present supply of pencils and "six-penny" notebooks.

The bay was smooth, too smooth, for not a ripple broke the gently rolling surface. We could, however, see and hear breakers on Piriu Point; so, with the promise of some wind to propel the craft, and incidentally break the close, muggy atmosphere, Albert and Big Jack paddled strongly and swiftly so that soon we reached the opposite shore and began to work our way up to the point. [533 Although the men were silent, Agnes entertained us with the singing 837] of other women's love songs. All women, regardless of the degree of affection they have for their husband, have lovers and compose long love songs extolling the chosen man's virtues. Agnes, however, only sang her song about her lover, Ginger-Two, when out of audible range of her husband.

About noon the canoe rounded the point and at once a strong easterly wind prompted us to raise the sail. This required little effort as the thin and greatly patched canvas was permanently attached to the 12-foot mast and boom with wire. All that was needed was to drop the mast through a hole in the forward platform and let the boom fall into place. Unfortunately it was soon apparent that the forces of nature and the design of the canoe were against us; the wind was too strong and without a keel the canoe could not head into the wind which was dead against us. The mast was unstepped, the sail furled, and the paddles taken up once more, but now instead of a calm sea we faced large rollers, some of which broke under the force of the wind. It was heavy going; Agnes

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

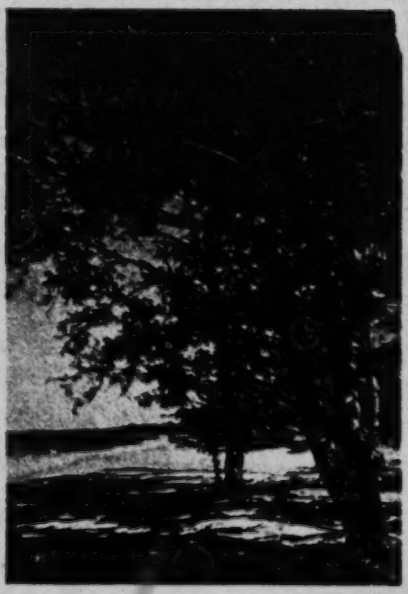

Fig. 4. A casuarina grove

123 clutched Tchuwiunga more tightly
501 and I hugged my KLM bag while the two men worked to head the canoe into the largest waves while trying at the same time to head in
[137] towards the shore. This meant taking a good many not so large waves broadside and we got very wet. Facing sternwards, I could not see the waves, so if a particularly
[823] large one (Agnes called them "female waves!") approached, I would be given a few seconds warning and would duck the breaking spray which would cover the boat and its occupants. The only miserable one was the puppy who presented a very puzzled and hurt expression as he peered out from under the folds of Agnes's *naga*. For the rest of us the cold spray was a welcome relief from the burning sun.

Once in close to the shore, our skilful paddlers brought the canoe safely onto the beach, riding in on one of the breakers. We unloaded everything, although we intended to stop only for lunch, for the canoe would soon be swamped by the sea if left alone. After unloading, Albert swam the canoe out beyond the breakers where he anchored it with a large rock.

123 Then we climbed the low dunes close to the shore and came to a grove of casuarinas. These provided much appreciated shade but a very uncomfortable carpet of spiny seed pods. Taking up our two billy cans, Agnes led me to the back of the grove where she
[312] showed me a small well. There were many footprints around the sandy hole which were identified as belonging to Black Joe's mob, the natives who had preceded us. They had, however, not depleted the well for in the bottom was a small puddle, and since this was at the very end of the six months dry season, it was considered fortunate that there was any water at all. Agnes carefully tasted

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Figs. 5 and 6. Probing in the sand at the head of turtle tracks sometimes locates a nest of eggs

[P. 10]

the water and declared, "it was o. k. for *murandanga*," meaning that it was not too stagnant or brackish for my health. By digging up some of the wet sand from the bottom of the well, the water seeped in to fill the void and soon we had our two containers filled. By this time Albert had started the fire and unpacked our canned rations. 123

One billy was placed on the fire for "tea leaf" and we broke open some corned beef and a loaf of fresh bread thoughtfully provided by the Superintendent's wife. When the billy boiled, a handful of tea and two handfuls of sugar were added and the pot set aside to cool. Big Jack had in the meantime gone over the dunes to look at the sea, and he reported that the wind was still too strong to allow us to continue in comfort and safety. We might as well take it easy for an hour or two and wait for it to calm down, he said. Almost immediately Albert and Agnes were fast asleep, their heads resting on tins of beef. Big Jack, however, took the axe and wandered off into the bush in back of the camp. After an hour it was obvious that the wind had no intention of dying, so we roused ourselves and strolled off down the beach in search of turtle eggs. We saw many tracks of the female turtles where they had lumbered out of the water up to high-water mark, and the mounds of sand kicked up while they dug their deep nests. Using a long, slender stick, Albert probed around these mounds hoping to feel the soft resistance of the rubbery eggs. Time and again he probed in a different nest quite unsuccessfully. Criscrossing one of the tracks leading to a nest were many little ones returning to the water; these eggs had lived to hatch. Finally Albert gave up, remarking, "That Black Joe mob make plenty big feast turtle egg." Late in the afternoon we returned empty handed. 123 222

Fortunately Big Jack, hunting along the little, mangrove-lined creek close by, had not had such bad luck. He soon appeared carrying three of the large mangrove crabs, their massive claws tightly closed with bindings of bark strips. The two main logs of the noon fire were still smouldering, and by adding to them we soon had a fast-burning blaze. When a glowing bed of coals was available, the crabs were thrown on top where they were soon steaming away in their own juices. It was a delicious supper—tender, sweet crab- 123 [252]

123 meat, lukewarm tea, and the remains of the fresh bread smothered in jam for dessert.

The sky by this time was growing dark for thick, heavily laden clouds were fast building up. With what light remained from the setting sun we shifted camp to a small hollow in the dunes, free from the prickly seed pods and protected from the wind. Soon it was quite dark and the wind seemed to blow more strongly. Albert, afraid for the safety of the canoe, decided to remove it to the quiet waters of the little creek where Big Jack had found the crabs. Big Jack accompanied him and while they were gone Agnes prepared to make some "damper." She built the fire up again so that the
123 ground would become very hot. While it was burning down she
252 took the bag of flour, opened it, and made a small depression in the contents. Into this hole she poured baking powder, salt, and
372 water from the billy. (Quite often the first two ingredients are
484 omitted.) With both hands still in the bag she worked the mixture into a large lump of dough which she removed and flattened on the outside of the flour bag. By this time the fire had again burned down, and the burning coals were brushed aside and a hole scooped out in the hot sand. The damper, about the size of a large frying pan, was laid in the hole and covered over with more hot sand. "Tomorrow, we make quick breakfast and no stop for lunch," she explained. In about an hour, during which the damper had been turned once, it was removed and the sand brushed from the rough, tough surface. It was then carefully wrapped in a piece of calico and put away in safety.

It was only then that we realized that the men had not returned.
123 Agnes became quite worried, and I must confess I did also. We walked down to the water's edge and called out, but could hear no reply over the roar of the waves, and because of the inky blackness we could see only a few yards. After about ten minutes we returned to the camp and in a brief time both men appeared. Agnes immediately demanded to know why, if they were so close, they didn't answer our calls? Albert insisted that he had replied, so after a while Agnes changed her question to why had it taken them
[48] so long? "Water bin come in long way," Albert replied, "I swim out; take long time find him canoe." When one considers that,

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 7. Agnes (left) and a friend admire a large mangrove crab

together with sharks, these waters contain the large and dangerous salt-water crocodile and all manner of poisonous jellyfish, one realizes that to swim around in a high sea in the pitch dark requires considerable courage. 123

Soon after we had crawled under the mosquito netting and between the blankets rain began to fall in a gentle and persistent way, but still not hard enough to prevent our falling asleep with little conversation.

It was hardly light the next morning when Agnes stood up and rewrapped her *naga*, a strip of calico, about her waist, then took up the billys and went to the well to draw water for the morning tea. Although the rain had been steady during the night, the well-built fire still had some life in it and after a few minutes of concentrated blowing, Albert had it rejuvenated. While the billy boiled, Big Jack shook as much of the wet sand as was possible from the blankets and rolled them into tight bundles. Then he set off to retrieve the canoe. By the time he reappeared, the tea was ready and it helped to wash down the leathery cold strips of damper sweetened with jam. [291] [372]

123 Although the wind had died and the clouds given way to a clear, light blue sky, the sea still had heavy rollers. However, instead of breaking over the canoe, they gently lifted it high in the air, then let it slide down the incline. We set out as the first rays of the sun appeared over the horizon and soon began to feel revived as our clothes began to dry. We stayed fairly close to the shore, close enough so that landmarks could be easily seen. For a while we coasted by the thin white strip of sand along which we
123 had hunted for turtle eggs the afternoon before. The land in back
133 of the beach was low swampland and all that could be seen was a thin line of green foliage. But soon we approached Tubinu Point. Here the beach gave way to a jutting headland and the steep sea-
[134] ward cliff was a rainbow of colors where bands of ocherous clays of yellow and red were separated by clear white and topped by a
[137] heavy line of dark humus. Tall eucalyptus trees stood right up to the edge of the 75-foot cliff. We stayed well clear of the base, for a short but ragged, rocky reef extended out under the water.

Rounding the point, we came to a small inlet edged with the
123 ever-present tangle of mangrove trees, beyond which was another clean white stretch of sandy beach. About this time the puppy grew restless and started roaming the canoe from stern to bow. Once he had reached the bow he climbed up to the very point and stuck his nose into the wind. As the canoe rose and dipped he would lose his balance and I would grab him and hand him to Agnes. But he would not stay put and soon would again be a live figurehead pointing the way. Finally, Albert said, "Let him go." As was to be expected, the next roller knocked little Tchuwiunga off his perch and into the sea he went. As the canoe passed, Albert leaned over and fished the frightened, struggling puppy out of the water and handed him to Agnes, who began rubbing him down. "Him gotta learn," remarked Albert. "Sea bin teach him more better." Soon Tchuwiunga revived his courage and again ventured forward, but this time instead of standing on the bow, he curled up on the bag of flour and slept soundly until we reached our destination. He had indeed learned his lesson well.

The rolling motion, sun, and inactivity had made both Agnes and me drowsy and we were all but asleep when Big Jack woke
[201] us with, "Black Joe mob. Him camp Anderaningo." I looked in

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 1. Melville Island Coast

123 the direction to which he pointed with his chin, but could see nothing
[20] other than white sand broken in spots with the heavy green of the mangrove jungles. "There," he repeated. "See. Him make big smoke." By straining my eyes and imagination I believed I could see a tiny wisp of white smoke rising above the last patch of green on the furthest point of land.

Distances were deceiving, for the point of land which seemed so many miles away was soon reached. The entrance to the Paluwiunga River was a narrow channel cut through the far edge of a broad sandbank. Rather than circumnavigate the bank, the men decided to go over it, but as the waves breaking over the sand were churned into a tangle of white water by the opposing river current, it was deemed advisable that all surplus passengers disembark. Agnes, clutching the puppy, and I, with my KLM bag, jumped overboard into shoulder-high water and slowly made our way over the bank to the shore. The men also went overboard and, with one on each side, they guided the canoe safely to the quiet water of the river.

123 For a while we all stretched our legs walking up the sandy bank of the river until mangrove roots stopped our progress.

Once back in the canoe, Albert took over my place in the bow [226] and with his fish-spear poised he kept a watchful eye on the deep green waters. Once he spied a barramundi and cautiously directed Big Jack to paddle towards the large fish, but it glided out of reach.

About a half mile up the river we came upon the shaded glen of casuarinas, another camping spot with its fresh-water well, named Anderaningo. Here instead of Black Joe's mob we found the Superintendent, Bill Grimster, his son Billy, and two natives, Billy-Two and Brownie. Black Joe's mob had arrived the afternoon before and had been ferried the ten miles up river to the next camping spot in the motor launch. Bill Grimster, having been told by Black Joe that he had seen our smoke near Piriu, knew that we had camped there, and he came back down river with an invitation for me to join them for a night of crocodile hunting before they returned to Snake Bay.

225 For many people in this area, hunting the large salt-water crocodile is a profession or a sought-after sport. In both cases it is dangerous, for this particular species of crocodile is intimidated by nothing and frequently will attack men or beasts without provocation. The crocodiles, which often measure twenty feet in length, occupy a prominent place in the myths, legends, and art of the [773] Tiwi, and many are the true-life tales of people who have lost their [538] lives in battling these beasts, which are hunted by the natives for their meat and valuable skins. When one considers the size of the animals and the size of the canoes, it is no wonder that Bill had discouraged any requests of mine to accompany them. So this invitation was a most welcome and pleasant surprise.

123 I transferred to the launch for the up-river camp so that I would be in time to leave on the hunt at dusk. For the first six miles the river wound seemingly aimlessly through the deep, dank, and mysterious mangrove swamps. At times the branches almost met across the water, brightly colored birds flitted from branch to branch and a subdued splash indicated a crocodile disturbed from his after- [776] noon slumber on the muddy bank. Adding to this almost evil atmosphere were strange clacking and sucking noises emanating from

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 9. Two young hunters practicing with fish-spears

123 the impenetrable jungle, which were attributed to the *Ningawi*, the
[776] weird and mysterious "little people" of the mangrove. Rounding a curve in the river, we surprised a flock of whistle ducks sitting on an exposed mudbank. Young Billy tried to shoot one for supper but missed, and soon they were well out of range. On a rare piece of solid ground we saw the long tail and massive hips of a startled
[136] wallaby as he hopped to safety. However, a successful throw of the fish-spear brought us a large barramundi, and the .22 rifle provided both a possum and a fruit bat, or flying fox, for supper.

All of a sudden the mangroves disappeared and our view was no longer restricted to the river bank; rather we gazed through
[137] thick, gnarled white paperbarks on the water's edge to wide expanses of marshy grasslands. A few flocks of black and white geese, which had returned to the swamps early in the evening, were startled by the sound of the motor and rose honking in fright.

About five, we reached Minianapi, a landing place about fifteen yards wide, where solid ground reached the river bank. We were

123 met at the water's edge by Black Joe, his wives, Margaret and Filicy, their two children, Dennis and Crissy-Boy, and the rest of his party numbering about twenty. Since it was already growing dark, we made a hasty supper and were soon back in the launch ready for the night's hunt.

I sat in the stern of the 15-foot boat with Bill Sr., while young
123 Billy sat by the motor in the center holding the battery-powered
225 searchlight. Brownie and Billy-Two were in the bow close to the long, heavy, iron-tipped harpoons. As we continued up river, I was carefully instructed as to what I should do. My instructions were to do absolutely nothing, not move, speak, whisper, nor hardly breathe once the signal had been given that a croc was sighted. Soon it was very dark, the stars were blotted out by heavy clouds, and it rained heavily for a short time. After a while, young Billy, who had been swinging the light slowly from bank to bank, said softly, "There!" and held the light steadily on the left bank. Immediately Bill shut off the motor and both he and Brownie took up paddles. Billy-Two meanwhile had eased himself up so that he stood straddling the bow, a foot on each gunwale. The harpoon was poised above his shoulder ready to throw. Extremely slowly and without a sound we approached the two shining red disks, the croc's eyes, held transfixed by the powerful light. When will he ever throw, I silently wondered; but it was not until we were within two or three feet that Billy-Two lunged forward and thrust the harpoon deep into the crocodile's back. Suddenly the silence was broken; Billy-Two wrenched the harpoon shaft loose and laid it in the boat, taking up instead the rapidly-disappearing rope attached to the iron barb. The crocodile sounded and began swimming under the boat. Young Billy gave the light to his father and took up the shot-gun. Brownie helped Billy-Two pull in the rope and suddenly the water broke. The light and shot-gun were aimed and almost simultaneously a shot struck the grotesque head; soon the animal was dead. All hands then heaved and the 14-foot crocodile was laid to rest at our feet.

The night was young, so we continued up river. After a while the moon broke through the clouds and silhouetted the white paperbarks. The river grew quite narrow and wound through a succession of mirror-black pools dotted with water-lilies and criscrossed just

under the surface by the massive roots of the paperbarks. It was in 123
just this sort of pool that the largest of the five crocs landed that [225]
night, was harpooned. The huge 18-foot animal dived into the roots
and it took about twenty tense minutes to dislodge and dispatch him.
Aside from the crocodiles the only wild life seen that night was a
small and very frightened little mouse who suddenly appeared on
my lap and then just as suddenly disappeared over the boat's side.

We returned to Minianapi at daybreak and the hot tea and
roast goose seemed a perfect breakfast, or was it supper? It didn't
matter for we were soon sound asleep.

When we finally awoke in mid-afternoon we found the camp
almost deserted. "Everyone go walkabout; kill geese," Albert
informed us as he and Agnes gathered more wood to build up the
smouldering fire. It was very quiet in the small clearing and only
the little black spots of charcoal spaced in irregular intervals on the
ground were evidence that there were more than our mob in resi-
dence. The clearing itself was quite bare because it had been burned
by the first comers, with the double purpose of clearing out the
four-foot grass itself, and any of the various poisonous snakes [136]
which were quite likely to infest it. In back of the clearing was a
thick tangle of low bushes through which ran a little foot-path.
Agnes started down this path carrying a billy can and I offered to
go with her, but Albert said, "No, by um by we go, him long way,
him only get a little bit now." After one gets used to the pronoun [195]
"him" being used to refer to everything animal, vegetable, and
mineral, this phrase is perfectly understandable: the first "him"
referred to the water, the second to Agnes.

So instead of collecting water, I wandered down to the river
bank where Billy-Two, Brownie, and a few of the other men, were
busy skinning the crocodiles. This they did by cutting the skin first
around the head, then down either side of the rows of bumps
running along the spine to the tail. The skin was then carefully [281]
peeled and cut from the body. Once free it was rubbed with salt
which would act as a preservative until such time as the supply boat
would arrive to carry it to Darwin. There the skins would be sold [439
to the dealer and the proceeds credited to the hunter's account or 452]
sent in the form of hard cash to the settlement for distribution. Now
they were folded into bundles and loaded into the launch, and large [262]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 10. Skinning a large crocodile

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pieces of the white meat were carried into the camp to be roasted for dinner. What was not to be consumed that night was thrown into the water, for meat spoils quickly in this sticky climate.

Darkness came early, and with it came the return of the goose hunters and the departure of the launch with the Grimsters and their crocodile team. Once more they would spend the night hunting crocodiles, this time downstream on their way back to the settlement. Soon many little fires broke up the darkness of the clearing and the smell of fresh roasting meat wafted over to where Albert, Agnes, Jack, and I were opening cans of corned beef. "Tomorrow we go bush," Albert remarked and I heartily assented.

Young Brook, a lean young man, and his wife, Alice,

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 11. Even the youngest respect the teeth of the crocodile

approached our fire. "You savey goose?" he asked me. "Oh yes," I said, "we eat him along America." He handed me a large juicy leg which I gave to Albert to divide, then squatted down at the edge of the fire's glow. I handed my tin of tobacco to Alice and she filled her husband's pipe. Picking up a burning branch from the fire, she knocked a hot coal into the bowl of the pipe and began smoking. Soon she handed it to Young Brook. Suddenly our attention was directed to the opposite side of the clearing where Dennis, the four-year old daughter of Black Joe was crying hysterically. Tuki, a tall powerful man of fifty-five, was doing his best to calm her and disentangle himself from her clinging arms so that he could leave. Tuki and his wife, Fat Alice, were a childless couple and

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 12. A Tiwi family camped for the night

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Black Joe, Fat Alice's brother, had given them his eldest daughter in adoption. However, Dennis spent as much time with her proper parents as with her foster parents and it was quite evident that her affection was at least equally divided. Albert went over and managed to bring the screaming, kicking child back to our camp and asked me to give her some of the hard candy which I had brought with me. It was some time, however, before her attention was sufficiently distracted to allow Tuki and the other men to slip away into the canoe to hunt crocodiles for another night. Agnes commented to me, "Let him cry? That white man rule no good. By and by they go silly."

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We strolled back to Black Joe's camp with Dennis, and listened to a discussion concerning the superiority of crocodile hunting over

settlement work. It seemed the chief advantage was that they received 'money-in-the-finger' from the skins they caught. They didn't understand why they didn't also get paid for the settlement work. I kept silent, but soon they turned to me and said, "You get job; how much you pay?" I told them, and then went on to say that out of that salary I had to pay someone for the food I ate, the clothes I wore, the house I lived in and so on, whereas they did not have to pay for the flour, tea, sugar, meat, blankets, or clothes the welfare people gave them. There was a long silence during which, I believe, each man was figuring how much all these benefits were worth in hard money. Finally Ginger said slowly, "Maybe, this way more better." 123 465 521

Soon the visitors rose and returned to their fires. Someone started a song, a low nasal chant. Another, a woman, began a high-pitched love song, and to this discordant lullaby I soon fell asleep. 123 533

As usual, it was barely light when the camp came to life again. After the customary tea breakfast, the various families discussed among themselves the day's plans. Black Joe and Long Peter, their wives and children, were taking the canoe up-river to hunt. Young Brook and his brothers, Danny Brown and Charlie Cook, their wives and children, soon left to hunt in the area back of Minianapi, Charlie Quiet and Roger also left. "Now we go?" I turned in question to Albert. "No, we stay behind. Build house. No good you go bush. Too much grass, plenty big mob cheeky snake. By and by that mob burn grass; then we go bush." It seemed like a logical explanation, but I was disappointed. 123 512

The day was already sticky and muggy, and tired of inactivity I started off toward the creek, saying I was going for a swim. Both natives jumped up and said, "No. No. Too much crocodile, more better go along billabong." So with Agnes ahead we started down the path leading away from the creek. Soon we were out of the thick tangle of bushes separating the clearing from the true bush. Now the path led over the rocky, dusty ground, which had but recently been burned. The trunks of the large bloodwood and stringy-bark trees were blackened for about four feet up from their base. The spiraled trunks of the screwpalm, as well as their lower dried leaves, also had a charred appearance. Except for an occa- 123 [137]

123 sional patch of grass, which the rushing fire had missed, there was
not a living green plant below the four-foot line. Burning the
country is an annual occurrence and many are the laws governing
221 who may burn and who may subsequently hunt in the newly cleared
224 land. Because the fires are set each year, there is no accumulation
of dry tinder to feed the fire and allow it to rage uncontrollably.
Only the grass and a few fallen logs catch and these will burn rapidly
and fiercely, but for a very short period. Any gap in the vegetation
will stop the fire and the heavy dew, falling in the evening, will also
put out the flames, leaving perhaps only isolated, smouldering logs
to burn through the night. Until the first shoots of new grass push
[421] their way through the charred ground, the individual hunter who
set the fire has exclusive rights to the area he set alight. Of course,
no one except those who belong to that country may burn without
[671] permission of the owners. As far as possible, these laws are
still upheld.

123 We soon came to a branch in the path and Albert indicated
that we two girls should continue straight ahead; he would stop
behind. In front of us stretched the fresh-water swamp. Out of the
almost inky but clear water rose the gnarled paperbark trees, their
roots so intertwined they almost formed a floor, albeit a most
slippery and irregular one, over the rotten vegetation in the bottom
of the swamp. I picked a particularly large rooted tree for my bath
[515] tub, and a short distance away Agnes did the same. If one was care-
ful not to disturb the fine deposit on the bottom but managed to
stay on top of the slippery roots, the clear cool water was as sweet
and soft as one could wish for. We stayed for about an hour, wash-
ing ourselves and our clothes, but finally an impatient call from
Albert put an end to this pleasure. Albert had been hunting for a
possum, but in this area so close to the camp, they had already
been depleted.

123 Instead of returning to camp, Albert decided that now was as
good a time as any to cut his *milingani*, the sticks with which they
411 kill the geese. After another mile or so into the bush, we came to a
322 grove of stout bushes of a kind I had not seen before. They had
[323] long, straight branches of about a half-inch diameter. These Albert

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 13. Gathering water-lilies in a fresh-water swamp

cut and after he had collected about thirty he selected a nice, smooth ledge of rock in the shade to work further on the sticks. First he stripped the bark, then measuring them against his arm he cut them so that each stick was as long as the distance from his fingertips to his elbow. All this he did with his knife, holding it by the tip of its long blade so that the handle would add its weight to each blow. He carefully smoothed off the two ends so there were no loose splinters. We each took a bundle of these sticks, tied them with strips of pandanus, and returned to the camp. Here they were laid in the water close to the bank and weighted down with a rock. This would make them good and heavy, it was explained.

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During the afternoon, the two men worked on the permanent house which Bill Grimster had ordered. Big Jack had spent the morning cutting posts and had brought in about half a dozen. By late afternoon, when the others returned, they had been set upright in holes dug to individual measure so that they stood firm without bracing.

Once everyone had returned, a fire was built. The men collected their individual bundles of *milingani* and placed the ends of the dripping sticks in the flames. They squatted over the sticks and individually started a chant during which they cupped their hands in the smoke and carrying it to their bodies, slapped their necks, then their arms. "Knar. Knar Gerra doo (slap), Gerra doo (slap)." The chant was nothing more than the imitation of the cries of the geese and the whir of the sticks. They explained that to bring the goose down they had to hit it directly on the neck or wings. "Why

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 14. "Cooking milingasi"

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do you cook the sticks?" I asked. "To make them dry so they won't slip in our hands," they replied.

Once the sticks were all well charred on the ends the men took them down to the canoe. For once, I used my status of ethnographer and overruled my role of a woman, and accompanied the men on what was properly men's business. The presence of women or children might bring bad luck. Whether the explanation was simply that women and children are considered to be lacking in the amount of silence or immobility required, or whether the reason was more subtle, I never found out. "This properly men's business," was the only explanation.

We took the canoe a quarter of a mile up stream, where we

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

disembarked on the edge of a large expanse of wet, grassy marsh. On the bank a few low trees provided cover for the hunters, who spread out about fifty yards apart. We waited. Then in the distance the first flock of six geese appeared, flying low over the marsh. They were not headed for us, but passed over the line of hunters about a hundred yards upstream. We could not see the hunters, but the same six geese continued safely after passing the firing line. Now another small group of geese seemed to be heading in our direction. Albert slowly took his position, his legs apart, the left stretched in front, the right somewhat bent as his body arched backward. One *milingani* he held near the charred end in his right arm which was so far back over his head that the tip of the stick almost touched the ground. As counter balance, his left hand, holding several spares, was pointed forward toward the geese. Just as the geese were to pass over our heads, they swerved and went instead over the man to the right of us. You could hear the whir of the stick as it was thrown with tremendous force up into the air, turning end over end, and then the 'thwack' as it reached its mark. A goose, its neck hanging loosely, spiralled down, to land with a splash close to the hunter's feet.

Now the flocks were more numerous as the dusk grew thicker. Soon a group flew directly overhead and Albert aimed and threw, but the spiralling stick slid off the wing tip of the lead goose and he continued, somewhat shaken but quite unharmed. Again and again Albert threw at the increasing numbers of honking homeward-bound geese, but when the last stick was thrown and it was quite dark, we still had no geese. When we gathered, it was found that out of ten hunters with perhaps three hundred sticks thrown, only two sticks had found their mark. This was not good. Albert was worried. "Maybe someone bin die, make me bad luck."

Later that evening Black Joe started singing a chant. "*Mobuditi*, plenty goose here; give us some." I asked him whom he was singing to and, although names of the dead are most infrequently mentioned for fear that the ghost of that person, its *mobuditi*, will hear it, this was one occasion where the *mobuditi* could do more good than harm. So the *mobuditi* of Bangri was called upon. Bangri, it was explained, had been a big man, "Plenty wives, maybe hundred. This his country; him grave close up along

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 15. Weather-worn poles mark the grave of someone long dead but not forgotten

223 bush. He bin die long time ago." This had been his country while
789 alive and it was still his country, for his spirit remains near the
775 grave and still hunts the wild animals and birds, while the spirits of his wives collect the wild yams, and his little spirit children play in the bush. Bangri will share this food with others who come, and their *mobuditiies*, should they die and be buried in the country, for as long as his name is remembered, and until his grave-posts rot with the passing of time.

123 But Bangri was not cooperative. The next day the hunters found little game in the bush and the women turned to the laborious
[222] job of digging six-foot holes with a stick to obtain the small yams
224] that are to be found at this season. Again the grass was too thick, the snakes too cheeky, and Albert advised against our going bush. I decided the more logical explanation was that Albert considered
[152] we ourselves had ample food, and besides he was sincerely worried
[177] about his long run of bad luck. But he left with the others that
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evening to kill geese. When they returned with only three geese, a long conference was held. I offered all the food I could spare and it was decided that, in return for a few yams and some of the goose, I should make dampers and put jam on them for the children, all of whom were under five and very hungry, and give small pieces of tobacco to the men and women. This was Albert's, Agnes's, and Big Jack's tobacco, and so everyone traded something and all pronounced it a fair deal. I cooked the damper, smothered it with jam and, with Agnes prompting, called, "Kakritjui Kali." "Little ones, come." The five who could walk, ran, then stood shyly by while I handed each a piece; then they ran back to their mothers. Soon they were back and, nudged by their mothers, all murmured "Thank you very much." This was a phrase I never heard, either in the native language or in English, when they were receiving from another native. Giving and receiving were so much a part of their life that among themselves "thank you's" seemed unnecessary.

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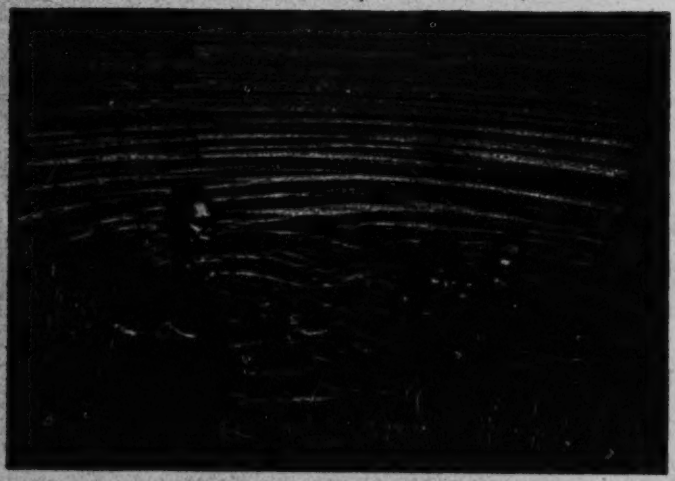

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Fig. 16. Agnes, Filicy, and Crissy-boy cooling off in the river

123 The following day we finally went hunting. Peter, his wife Dorrie, and daughter Althea, Filicy and her son Crissy-Boy, Albert, Agnes and I all squeezed into the canoe and paddled about two miles upstream to the next landing. Tudiunginarim, "white-paint-place," [177] used to be an old camp of the white buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who at the turn of the century was the first white contact for many of these people. It was very hot and the women took their children 123 into the water, waist deep near the bank, for a swim. It was easy 291 for them in their *nagas*, for when they came out they merely wrapped a dry one around and slid the wet one off underneath very 515 modestly. I, in my shorts and shirt, finally gave in to the temptation 609 and, vowing that if I were to live here longer I would take up the native costume, went in fully dressed. This modesty was a funny thing; they who wore no clothes until contact with white men, were being modest only for my sake, and in return I could do no less. So with dripping clothes, which incidentally felt wonderful in the heat, I set off following Albert and Agnes.

123 The nature of the bush was the same as that in back of Minianapi and indeed the same as that around Snake Bay: the same 224 trees, the same burned earth, the same fan palms and pandanus, and the same flatness. The natives always knew where they were; I never did. We were looking for possums and as these furry marsupials sleep in hollow trees during the day, we investigated every likely tree for evidence that they had recently climbed it. Sometimes the little tears in the rough bark could only be seen silhouetted against the sun; at other times the dry ground around the base of the tree would show very definite tracks. Soon Agnes, who was off somewhere to the left of Albert and me, gave two high-pitched calls. [198] In the hunting language I had already learned, one call meant "I'm here, where are you?" and would be answered by their companions with a similar single call. However, two calls meant "Come; I've found something." So we turned in the direction of the call and soon found Agnes standing by a short, hollow tree. Albert took his axe and cut a long pole which he then thrust up through a hole in the tree's base and wiggled. Out popped a large grey possum which sat on the top of the tree trying to make itself as small as possible. Agnes and Albert threw all manner of sticks and stones at it and finally managed to knock it down, when it scuttled away.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

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Fig. 17. "Hunting a possum"

It was soon overtaken by Albert who killed it quickly with a blow from a stick. As he brought it back he said, "Him big mother. See him pickaninni." And he held up a hairless baby barely three inches long, its eyes still closed, but very much alive. "Oh, kill it quick, Albert," I begged. He shook his head, "I can't kill him, I too sorry alonga him." Here we were at an impass, two people too sorry alonga him; one too sorry to kill it, and one too sorry to let it live. Who was right?

Meanwhile, Agnes took the mother possum and pulled the fur from a small area on the belly and then slitting the skin with the sharp end of a broken stick, she withdrew the gall bladder and intestines. "Him make him bad," she explained. We did not stop to cook the animal, but continued our search. This area had all been burned by the previous parties and already little delicate shoots of grass were poking up through the black ground.

During the next hour we wandered slowly through the bush and, although we saw many trees which had been inhabited by possums, they were now empty. One that looked most likely was hollow and Albert hopefully built a fire in the rotten base, then sat back and waited for the smoke to drive the animal out. After half an hour, it was quite obvious that no one was at home.

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Then our luck turned. This time, when Albert gave the "come here" call, it was because he had located a wild honey nest, or "sugar-bag," high in a large stringy-bark eucalyptus. There was little point in cutting this large tree down so Albert prepared to climb. First he cut a small sapling and laid it at a 45-degree angle against a crotch where the massive trunk split in two. Then, grip-

123 ping the axe with his teeth, he ran up the sapling on all fours with
222 as much agility as a monkey. Upon reaching the crotch, he put his
481 arms around the trunk, placed the soles of his feet close together against the bark, and quickly progressed in a sort of leaping motion up to the top of the tree. Once there he casually climbed up, over, and around the various branches, until he reached the object of his climb, the hollow branch with the little hole through which was passing a steady stream of small insects. This branch was quickly cut through and fell crashing to the ground. Soon Albert was down again, investigating this find with Agnes and me. The hole was enlarged and the combs of dark honey exposed, still crawling with the little black bees. We dug in with our fingers or
[133] brushes made by chewing small twigs, quite unmindful of the bees, who obligingly never developed stings in this part of the world.
[262 The honey was dark and very strong, but when mixed with the dry,
237] crumbly, yellow "bee bread" a nice balance of taste was obtained. It took the three of us very little time to finish the sugar-bag and off we went—this time in a homeward direction.

123 The one possum looked very small and Albert again began mut-
224 tering about "someone *mobuditi* make me bad luck." We separated again and when almost to the creek Agnes suddenly held me back
[777] and cautioned silence. Carefully she picked up a stout stick from the ground and then approached what I suddenly noticed was a very fat goana, about two feet long, apparently sound asleep on a nearby tree trunk. One quick blow and the lizard fell to the ground, quite dead. We carried the catch to the landing and quickly had another swim before Albert caught up. We were gathering firewood when Albert arrived and explained his delay by holding up another
123 possum. The second possum was immediately gutted, then both
252 were laid on the fire and turned frequently until all the fur had been burned off and the skin made brittle. The animals were quartered and laid again on the fire until well roasted. The goana received no preliminary treatment before going on the fire. When all were
[264] cooked, they were removed and laid on a "table" of clean, green leaves, and we reached in and tore off pieces of the steaming, juicy
123 meat. It is impossible to describe this meat to someone who has not
262 tasted it. All I can say is that it was tender and tasty and perfectly

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Figs. 18 and 19. With a tomahawk between his teeth, Albert goes after game.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

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262 cooked, with that delicious charcoal-broiled flavor so much sought after in our more elite dining establishments or in our backyards.

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224 Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goanas, they brought over to show us an extremely large water [431] snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tre- [513] mendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minianapi in time to meet the geese. 123 All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's 231 hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we 484 reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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equally entertaining as she sang some risqué love songs she had picked up around camp.

The evening's goose hunt was even more unsuccessful than the earlier hunts. Two of the men separated and went down river and killed three geese, but the others, upstream in the usual place, did not even see any, and there was more talk of *mobudities* by everyone way into the night.

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The following day was the last and, as the Assistant Superintendent was due that evening, feverish work was done by one and all on the long neglected house. Evidently the arrival of Paul scared off the ghosts, for that evening we almost had a goose per person, and my final memory of Minianapi is one of flickering fires in the moonlight and the smell of fresh roasted goose carried on the gentle breezes.

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Fig. 21. After the return trip the launch's motor gets a much needed overhaul

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OL20 Tiwi OL20

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WALKABOUT

AUSTRALIA AND THE SOUTH SEAS

[Title Page]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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BATHURST ISLAND NATIVES PRACTISING A CORROBOREE DANCE.

[p. 12]

13:Barclay 3-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OX20 Tiwi OX20

WALKABOUT

The title has an "age-old" background and signifies a vanish characteristic of the Australian aboriginal who is always on the move. And so, month by month, through the medium of pen and pictures, this journal will take you on a great "walkabout" through a new and fascinating world below the Equator.

Vol. 5 JUNE 1st, 1939 No. 6

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[p. 13 (A)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Life at Bathurst Island Mission

By ARTHUR BARCLAY

000 "I DON'T want to intimidate you," said the pilot; "but this thing is a life-belt. You put it on like a waistcoat, and then you either pull that tap-thing out, or you turn it to one side to inflate the belt. I don't remember which it is; but, anyhow, you'll soon find out!"

With these encouraging remarks, he stowed the neatly-folded life-belt in a position where it was easy to reach, and busied himself with adjusting the wide strap that was to hold me in the front seat of the little red 'plane in which we were starting out for Bathurst Island. There are sixty miles of shark-infested waters between the mainland and the island, and fierce tidal currents to carry off a swimmer; but I had flown before, and I was not nervous. That life-belt was only an extra precaution on the part of a careful pilot, whom I had seen going thoroughly over his machine before he would start out across the sea.

The mechanic knocked away the chocks from the wheels, the whirring propeller increased its pace, the engine roared, and we taxied out from the hangar across Darwin aerodrome. In a moment or two, Fanny Bay gaol was beneath us, with black prisoners staring upwards as we flew low across the prison-yard, and on and out over the smooth blue waters of the great harbour. But the pilot had no intention of flying direct to the island. We swept round in a great curve and flew eastwards across the tree-tops of the jungle. Sandy beaches, mangrove-bordered creeks—the haunt of "big feller" crocodile—and mangrove swamps, waste lands where salt-arms twisted among low green growths, shallow, curving bay and low, projecting headland, we passed over in turn; and then, when we came to the wide estuary of the Adelaide River, whose shining course wound inland, on and on, into the misty distance, we turned north again, and headed for the Vernons.

The Vernons are mere dark patches of mangroves and only just above sea-level. Sometimes there may be a wide, bare, pale-brown, sandy patch in the centre, and always there are many winding creeks through the mangroves.

When the tide is low, long, dark, log-like objects, pointed at each end, and seen stretched on the dry margins of these tidal watercourses, are great salt-water crocodiles, much larger and more ferocious than the fresh-water variety so common in North Australian rivers. Nothing alive can look so dead as a

[p. 13(8)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

[p. 13(c)]

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BATHURST ISLAND ABORIGINAL MOTHER AND CHILD.

600 crocodile, nothing that breathes so utterly immobile; but there are few beasts that can spring more quickly into deadly activity when the occasion warrants a display of strength and agility.

The Vernons do not appear to be the sort of emergency landing-ground that one would choose if it could possibly be avoided. Apart from the crocodiles, the terrain does not promise too safe a landing.

Sea and sky alike were palest blue, and, in the farthest distance, the vast and faintly-wrinkled expanse of ocean mingled softly with the sky in a pearly sea-haze. One could not say where the one began and the other ended, and, partly obscured in the haze, far-distant luggers, with all sail set, headed for Darwin. Beneath the 'plane, rounded boiling swirls, long straight lines of white foam, and darker turbulent streaks in the pale-blue surface of the sea clearly defined the spring-tide currents. Down beneath us, too, shoals and deeps showed emerald or blue, and the long, pale-brown lines of reef that run

OVD out from East Point, and from the nearest island of the Vernon group, were also clearly visible as we passed over them. Straight ahead, Melville and Bathurst Islands now showed up, the hills a darker blue, and every moment they became more and more distinctly visible.

133 We turned west again as we reached the shores of Melville Island. Below, and near at hand, in turn were sandy beaches,
137 cliffs that come straight down to the water's edge, or low mangrove-flats through which wind serpentine inlets of salt water. Inland, low green hills are covered with open tropical forest, denser on the lower slopes and thinning towards the arid, stony summits. Fan-palms grew among the tropical eucalypts, and the familiar pandanus palm borders open grassy flats just as it does on the mainland across the narrow seas. Buffalo, now
[136] so much reduced in numbers that nobody shoots them, feed on the flats, and in the forest-covered hills are many kangaroos and wallabies. Little bays, and now and then projecting lines of reef, make natural boat-harbours, and far away across the tree-tops a wide expanse of shining water seems to be a great lake surrounded by wooded hills—it is actually an arm of the sea on the eastern side of Cape Van Diemen.

The funnel-shaped entrance to Apsley Strait, the mile-wide, fifty-mile-long stretch of fast-flowing waterway that separates the two islands, soon appeared beneath us. Looking towards the north, on the eastern side of this narrow silvery passage, one sees the wooded hills, the dense patches of vivid green jungle, and the open swampy plains of Melville Island. To the west, on the Bathurst Island side of the entrance, dense plantations of coco-nut palms occupy the foreground. There are cleared fields with a wall of forest beside them, white roofs among the palms, and beyond again are thickly-timbered heights.

DENSE mangroves, of a deeper green than that of forest or jungle foliage, give contrast at the water's edge on either side of the narrow strait, which, a silver streak in the blue distance, leads on to the sea, faintly visible far beyond at the height at which we were flying. The tide runs through this strait like a mill-race; but at the moment it was dead-water, and, with sail set, a large dug-out canoe was making across from Melville to
177 Bathurst Island. As the 'plane banked round preparatory to landing, I saw, beyond the canoe and across the strait, the iron roof of the only European dwelling on Melville Island.

It was formerly the permanent camp of Joe Cooper, a famous buffalo-hunter; but, now, since Cooper's death, even this solitary outpost has long been deserted. It is more than a century since the old military settlement of Fort Dundas, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, was abandoned. Nothing of the fort now remains except a few heaps of stone, and, buried in thick scrub, the grass-grown brickwork that faced the surrounding deep trench. The area of Melville Island is 2,240 square miles.
131 Bathurst Island is only half as large. Although Melville
797 Island may, some day, come within the scope of North Australian settlement schemes, the major part of Bathurst Island is vested in perpetuity in the authorities of the Mission of the Sacred Heart, and the latter island will remain, fortunately almost entirely in its virgin state, a sanctuary alike for man and beast.

797 We taxied to a standstill on the well-kept landing-ground of the Sacred Heart Mission in the presence of many spectators. Notified of the time of our arrival by means of the wireless

797 telephone, with which they keep in touch with the Presbytery in Darwin, not only were the good fathers there to greet us, but the children of the mission school had also been given a holiday to celebrate the occasion. Small boys and half-grown lads were there in force and soon crowded round the 'plane. The bearded men against the fence kept in the background, while women and girls peered over the stile that leads into the garden. Men and boys wore only the little naga, women and girls a short sarong [291] —and they are all the better for this lack of clothing.

KINDLY and shrewd old Father Gsell, who founded the mission rather more than a quarter of a century ago, has his own ideas with regard to the black man. He does not ruin his health by dressing him (or her) up in mission clothing, and he sees that the blacks who come into the mission do not become mere spongers and hangers-on. When a black asks for flour or anything else that he requires, Father Gsell replies, "What have you to give for it?" He may have a spear, for which the good father has no use, but he will take it, or anything that the black can offer in payment. If the black's reply is "Nothing," Father Gsell will say "Well, you are a big, strong man; you can dig the garden."

It does not matter that the garden has been dug before. The thing is to keep the blacks from becoming cadgers. Treated so, they retain their self-respect and do not degenerate into useless loafers hanging round the mission station, just for what they can get without any effort. The mission fathers, of course, do all they can for the sick and injured—that is an entirely different matter. Every missionary who has been long on any field in North Australia must recognise that it is impossible to do anything with a full-grown black to alter his outlook in any way, and the methods of the Sacred Heart Mission must appeal to all unbigoted members of any church as admirable commonsense.

It is only with the very young that the missionaries can hope for any success in the inculcating of Christian ideals, and it is towards the little boys and girls that the good fathers look for 797 the reward of their self-sacrificing labours. They are able to get them, too, without pandering to the laziness of their parents. 562 The natives, who are always fond of children, are quite willing 567 to have their little boys well fed and well looked after; but, 439 when it comes to the girls, self-interest enters into the question. Little girls can be sold to the Japanese of the pearling fleets, [855] and the Japanese are liberal in the matter of prices.

FATHER Gsell must therefore buy the girls in competition with the Japanese. It has been said that this is countenancing a shameful and revolting slave-trade, and that to buy the girls is definitely wrong in principle. What would the worthy critics do? Are they content to see this dreadful traffic continued, or have they any practical alternative to offer? Father Gsell is trying at least to save as many girls as possible from the horrible fate in store for them. The regular patrol of North Australian waters by the forces of the Government may eventually put an end to the practice, but what of all these little girls in the meantime? As they grow up, the Christian boys and girls marry one another, and, as the Christians have one wife only, they are unwilling to sell or to hire her out to the Japanese. This, like all the dealings of the Sacred Heart Mission with the islanders, is based on practical common sense.

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 0120 Tiwi 0120

797 The couples marry young without any thought for the future.
They just marry as, and when, they feel inclined, and the mission
582 fathers provide the new home. Under the palms beside the
Strait are many of the queer little iron humpies provided, just a
342 roof, as it were, sloping on each side from the ridge-pole to the
ground. The whole can be picked up and moved to a fresh
position when fleas become too numerous and the surroundings
otherwise unpleasant. These humpies scarcely seem attractive
to white folk, but the islanders like them, and they are at least
a great improvement on the dog-kennels of old iron that the
blacks persist in erecting for themselves on the beach at Darwin.

797 Proper houses are provided in the Kahlin compound there, but
the blacks despise them; and, although the miserable humpies on
342 the beach are demolished from time to time by the authorities,
they are all up again by next evening. The good fathers know
what the islanders prefer, and they have given the married
couples the kind of accommodation in which they feel most
happy. The humpies may be hot and stuffy, but they are dry
inside when it rains.

142 The island blacks, in many respects, differ considerably from
the tribes of the mainland. They are excessively hirsute, and,
144 on attaining maturity, the men grow long beards, many being of
truly patriarchal proportions. The upper lip is kept bare, which
practice seems to emphasize the magnificence of the beard.
Shocks of hair, sometimes standing six inches high, add to a
wildly impressive appearance. They are tall and muscular, and,
as they stride along, they seem the very acme of physical develop-
ment, a living advertisement for the natural, open-air existence.
302 The hairs, by the way, are plucked from the upper lip one by
one, and this painful proceeding is undertaken in the calmest
manner, certainly with less fuss and facial distortion than the
average white man makes during his morning shave.

171 The use of the woomera for throwing spears, and of the
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[p. 15 (A)]

171 boomerang, is unknown to the islanders. Ceremonial customs,
[411] language, origin, and burial rites all differ from those of the mainland tribes, and constitute an interesting study for anthropologists. They are the only aborigines who erect memorials on
764 the graves of the departed, and, in the forest beside the aerodrome, you may see a typical grave surrounded with queerly-
[322 carved ironwood totem-poles. The poles, some eight feet in
532] height, are carved in varying patterns. They had been painted in highly decorative designs with red, yellow, and white ochre, with black bands of charcoal to give sharp and artistic contrast. Each kindred totem to that of the deceased must place a pole at the grave. Failure to erect a pole is supposed to signify that no sorrow is felt for the death, and punishment will follow. Something unpleasant always *does* happen to those who neglect this duty.

797 AFTER these necessary digressions, let us return to my visit to the mission station. We followed the fathers over the stile, up an avenue of palms, and on through the garden, where
[245] pineapples and bananas grow, and there are rows of immense and beautifully shady mango-trees. Sturdy, fuzzy-headed aborigines strode in front (one of them had just come in with
[262] a couple of kangaroos for the larder), and the boys trooped along behind us. The quarters of the fathers are very much those of bachelors, perfectly bare, with guns in the corners and a few native weapons and curios hanging on the walls.

Here two lubras brought us morning tea, and here I learnt much of the foregoing matters. The fathers themselves are entertaining men of the world, and their white cricket shirts and khaki slacks gave no indication of their calling. The boys gathered at the foot of the steps leading up to the quarters,
797 and every now and then black-bearded Father McGrath would
522 banter them in their own language. Like all the native peoples

[p. 15 (B)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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"SIXTY MILES OF SHARK-INFESTED WATERS LIE BETWEEN BATHURST ISLAND AND THE MAINLAND."

[P.15(C)]

797 of North Australia, they are fond of a joke. They chuckled
522 delightedly. Father McGrath can preach in the native language,
but dear old Father Gaell (every one on the north alludes to him
in these affectionate terms) must deliver his sermons in pidgin.
[198] Sometimes this greatly amuses the congregation, and many
spirited and life-like reproductions are enacted again and again
after the service.

797 WHILE taking a walk round the grounds of the mission
753 station, an urchin of no more than three and a half years of age
74 was pointed out. That very morning this little fellow had
plunged into the shark-infested straits and saved his baby sister
from drowning. She was unconscious when brought ashore, and
the usual methods of resuscitation were followed by Father
McGrath, who had hurried to the scene. Then arose one of the
difficulties the mission staff are constantly encountering. All the
[754] ills that befall the islanders are attributed to magic. No black
ever dies a natural death: always there is some evilly-disposed
person responsible!

When treatment was commenced, the child had been laid on her stomach while the water was pushed out of her body. The blacks had seen an apparently drowned boy revived when laid on his back, and immediately became excited and angry. It was necessary to turn the child over for a while, otherwise the mission fathers would have been held responsible if she had not recovered. And, all the time that treatment was in progress, an old woman (very much in the way) had sung in the baby's ear.

In the opinion of the women who had gathered round, it was the singing that brought the little girl back to life, and her recovery had nothing whatever to do with the father's efforts, although he would have been held responsible if he had not been able to save her! The old men have some glimmerings of common sense, but the old women are terrible old witches and it is quite impossible to convince them.

When anyone is sick, it is the invariable custom to sing a monotonous phrase over and over again in the patient's ear to bring him back to health; and, wherever a pain is felt, it is usual to cut the skin down to the third integument to let the sickness out. On one occasion a man was suffering from acute abdominal pains, and his relations, who wanted to cut him open, came to the mission fathers to seek their approval of this drastic treatment. Here was an awkward predicament! If the sick man was cut open, he was sure to die; and, since nothing would induce him to go to the hospital at Darwin for skilled attention, he might die in any case. In either event the fathers would be held responsible. They stood firm and refused their approval. However, while the relations were hesitating in view of the emphatic assertions of the mission fathers, the man made a surprising recovery. The cure was of course ascribed to the singing, not to the good advice that kept the man on a starvation diet of water only.

755 The islanders firmly believe that they will be poisoned if they go to Darwin for treatment, but they will always trust their own people. One man, who had been employed on a pearling lugger (all the islanders are naturally good seamen), had a leg taken by a crocodile, and was forced to find some new way of making a living. He had learnt a lot too much in the years that he was away, and, on his return to Bathurst Island, he set up in practice as a witch-doctor. A woman on the point of

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

755 death was an early patient. The new witch-doctor applied his lips to her chest and appeared to suck out a dirty, rusty rag, a piece of wire, and a few pebbles, together with some blood (which he probably produced by biting his tongue).

The woman died; but all the people uttered loud exclamations of wonderment at the cleverness of the doctor, and a collection, [27X] chiefly of sticks of tobacco, was made to mark their approval of such distinguished surgical attainments. Similarly, when some youngsters had become entangled with a school of jelly fish while bathing in the Strait, one baby at least being quite unconscious, the old fellow performed his ritual, and collected, when the patients had all revived after treatment with ammonia by the mission fathers. Such are some of the trials and problems that have to be faced in dealing with the islanders.

622 And now we encountered Mariano. "This chap calls himself king," I was informed; "but nobody recognizes his authority." Mariano was a fine, upstanding man, and he carried a bundle of many-pronged and gaily-painted spears. "Me king!" said Mariano to me as we came up. "Hullo, King!" said I, and Mariano proudly inflated his chest at this highly proper recognition of his royal status. But, if Mariano is not king, he is at 721 least a person of some importance. They had been holding a 727 war on the islands for the previous six months or so, and arrangements for the next battle were being held up pending Mariano's decision about a corroboree at which his presence was essential. At the moment he could not make up his mind to leave the mission station, so war and corroboree were both in abeyance.

WARS are of frequent occurrence on the islands. The current combat was in connexion with the possession of a very young babe; but, since there had been only two casualties (one man had lost an eye, and another warrior had had a leg broken) in the six months, in all probability she will have died of old age before the matter is settled, unless, of course, the warriors tire of this as a pretext and come to some arrangement. Any old excuse is good enough to start a war. If nothing better offers, they get one up "Married v. Single." Father Gsell approves of the wars.

As he says, they are the only form of manly recreation that the islanders have. It is seldom that anyone is hurt, and the battles are rather in the nature of a somewhat dangerous cricket-match with fast leg-theory permitted and encouraged. A cleared space in the forest is necessary for a battle, and consequently the mission aerodrome is a favourite site for the usually bloodless encounters. When battle is raging there, it is necessary to give the excited small boys of the mission school a holiday. They join in, too, and have great fun throwing stones at their elders.

726 Each engagement of a war is conducted with due regard to ceremony. The opposing factions line up with the width of the chosen battlefield between them. Messengers from each side march out and meet half-way between the two forces and, formal arrangements being made, return majestically each to his own side. Then each army makes a fire, round which the warriors race with spears upheld, getting closer and closer in their frantic circlings. They leap through the flames, burning the hair from their legs, and finally the circle becomes so close that the excited warriors, regardless of hot coals, tramp the fire out. With a yell of defiance, spears are cast in the air as high as the warriors can throw them.

[p. 16(B)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

726 One man will then take a step or two forward, hold up a hand, and stamp vigorously, and all the warriors of his side will copy his actions. "Let 'em all come!" is the attitude adopted. If the enemy does not start hostilities at once, they throw their spears down and jump about like wallabies to show their contempt for the sluggard's marksmanship. They are, however, careful not to get too far away from their own weapons, on which they pounce immediately the first spear is hurled by their opponents. The air is soon thick with flying spears and war-clubs, and the exchange goes on until some unlucky warrior is really hurt, when the engagement ceases.

727 BOTH sides gather round, howling their dismay, until repairs to the injured have been effected. A red-dyed ball of goose-
[781] down, which is hung from the neck by a string woven of human hair, is held before the mouth as a charm to divert the missiles, but the warriors owe their immunity from death or serious injury to their own remarkable eyesight and to the dexterity with which they evade, or turn to one side, the hurtling weapons of the enemy. The war-clubs used by the islanders are far more
411 difficult to dodge than the spears, which come straight at you.

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A BATHURST ISLANDER BRANDISHES HIS CLUB.

The war-club is merely a short, heavy stick with a knob at one end; but, spinning in the air like a boomerang, it can be thrown for amazing distances by the islanders, considerably over a hundred yards, and not far off two hundred. This weapon is not thrown straight at an opponent, but at a cause, or a tuft of

[P. 17(A)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

411 grass, in the foreground, so that the whirling club slithers on in an unfortunate and most unpleasant manner. It may rise as high as a man's head, or it may strike him on the shins.

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NATIVE "HOUSES" UNDER THE COCO-NUT PALMS AT BATHURST ISLAND MISSION.

726 Sometimes, as in the days of chivalry when English and French knights rode out before the main battle, eight men will advance to fight eight men of the other side, one pair at a time, each warrior throwing his spears and clubs in turn. [198] Sentries are then posted to one side, before and behind the combatants. As a warrior with a stock of pidgin English put it, "That feller, him look out front side. That feller, him look out back side."

At times warriors arrive by canoe to fight a duel on the beach close to the mission station. These are frequently more serious combats, and then men who are camped under the palms chase the duellists off; but these always land later farther down, and fight it out in the long run. Just before my visit, there had been fought the only naval battle in the history of the islands. The encounter took place in the mouth of Apsley Strait to the accompaniment of excited yells as canoes overturned when warriors stopped unusually in dodging the flying spears. Nobody

[p. 17(B)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

726 received any serious damage, and it seemed to have been a most enjoyable occasion. An islander, who had seen the world from the decks of many luggers, made a remark that was truer than he knew, "When white feller go to war, he takem rifle, he takem

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HUNTING TURTLE, FROM A DUG-OUT CANOE NEAR BATHURST ISLAND.

bomb. Some feller *must* be killed! White feller silly b——!" It cannot be said that the mission fathers have a dull time at Bathurst Island.

797 These are two sisters of the order at the Mission Station. In addition to teaching the girls, they attend to all household mat-

[p. 18(A)]

797 ters, supervising the lubras' work and ordering stores, which are brought from Darwin by the mission's own lugger *St. Francis*. The pleasant lunch we had at the refectory, where wide windows, open all round, admitted every wandering breeze, was due to their efforts, and later I was to see something of the results of their teaching.

797 School, both for boys and for girls, takes up only two and a half hours each day, but the pupils learn quickly, and the more
871 they are taught the more they can absorb. Reading and writing are mastered without any more difficulty than in the case of white children of the same age, though the pupils were very shy and almost inaudible when exhibiting their prowess. Arithmetic they do not take to so kindly, unless they happen to be interested by some problem that has a definitely practical application to their own lives; but drawing comes natural to the islanders, as it does to the blacks of the mainland, where I had already seen very spirited sketches made by aboriginal children. Of the affection of the children, both for the sisters and the mission fathers, there was no doubt. To be as close to them as possible was an honour they were all bent on securing.

797 THE "blackies," as they call the girls, range in age from tiny
562 tots to those who are practically young women. They were all much excited by the novelty of our visit, bubbling over with laughter, whispering and giggling together. The older "blackies" eye a visitor coyly, smiling over their shoulders with a flash of white teeth; and, when the pilot and I came along with one of the sisters to hear them sing the "Magnificat" and "Adeste Fideles," they fled shrieking, only to turn round and giggle again when they thought that they were far enough away.

"No more gammon!" called the sister, and they lined up demurely to sing their hymns right tunefully, with spasms of giggles in the intervals. To hold up a finger is quite sufficient to bring shrieks of delight from these childish, happy creatures. "Georgie," a very little boy with a very big tummy, so young that he was not yet at the boys' school, sang "Georgie Porgie, puddiny pie, kissed the girls and made them cry" with much aplomb and gesture. If Georgie was at the girls' school, he did not forget
[198 that he was a man. He spoke man's language, not woman's
516] talk such as women by custom must use on Bathurst Island, and he sat down like a man with knees wide apart, not together as a woman must.

535 Then, while the older "blackies" formed a circle, chanting in their own language and clapping their hands in time, little girls,
[562] two by two, performed women's dances, which again differ from those of the men. There were buffalo, bullock, and lugger dances, when they imitated the animals with arms widespread or bent slightly at the elbows to represent the horns, or held at angles such as those at which sails are set on a lugger, while, now and then, two little feet beaten together faithfully copied the "put-put" of Diesel engines.

More ambitious and complicated was the dance of the overseas mail 'plane that flies from Singapore to Darwin, when whirling
[198 arms represented the propellers and stamping feet the beat of
533 the engines. There is, by the way, a sacred language used for
768] songs, and it is only in this language that the name of the dead can be mentioned. If by chance anyone should mention a dead man's name in the ordinary language, every one within hearing will spit with vigour. If defenceless, the maker of such a faux pas will be hit about the head.

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

797 The sisters frequently take their charges into the bush for a day's "walkabout," and all the children go back to their parents at intervals. Thus their education at the mission does not mean that they lose all the bushcraft that is their natural inheritance.

THEY are busy people at the mission. In addition to the fruits already mentioned, lay brothers grow crops of peanuts and sweet potatoes and attend to the pigs, goats, and cattle that form the live-stock of the settlement. They are their own mechanics and electricians, and the tractor used in the farming operations also charges the six-volt battery which, transformed to 360 volts high tension, is employed in radio communication with the mainland. Boats are built in the workshop by the brothers, and a launch, of 26 feet deck measurement, has been completed and very neatly fitted with bunks, cooking shelf for a primus stove, crockery cupboard, and lockers. When fitted with an engine, this launch will replace the old lugger *St. Francis*, so well known in North Australia, and will afford a more rapid and certain passage to the mainland.

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As we walked back to the aerodrome, little black boys drove a long string of white goats through the palm-trees, and the "blackies" waved and called "Um-bung-ie!" (good-bye). Major

[p. 19(A)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 0120 Tiwi 0120

797 Brackley, out of petrol, landed here when the 'drome was not quite completed, and then the wondering Christian blacks of the mission decided that the 'plane must be "motor car belonga God"!

000 With the islands left behind us, we saw our native land as those who come by air first see Australia. It is a wide and beautiful scene, where the misty blue of the sea melts into the misty sky with no clearly defined horizon, and there is Australia, a darker vague and misty patch far away beyond the dark-green mangroves and light sands of the low-lying Vernons.

We circled over Darwin. Seen from the shore, the harbour is beautiful. From the air one is surprised at its ramifications. Great arms penetrate the wooded hills, and innumerable creeks wind into the mangroves. In the evening light, twenty anchored luggers stood out in high relief on the smooth blue water. A grey oil-tanker lay at the jetty close to the huge grey oil-tanks that hid in the yellow cliffs, and the red roads and white roofs of the little town were clean and pretty amongst the trees that cover the promontory.

Brilliant scarlet patches through the green were the glorious poinciana in full flower, white and pink the frangipani. From the air this first glimpse of Australia's front door is entrancing.

[p. 19(B)]

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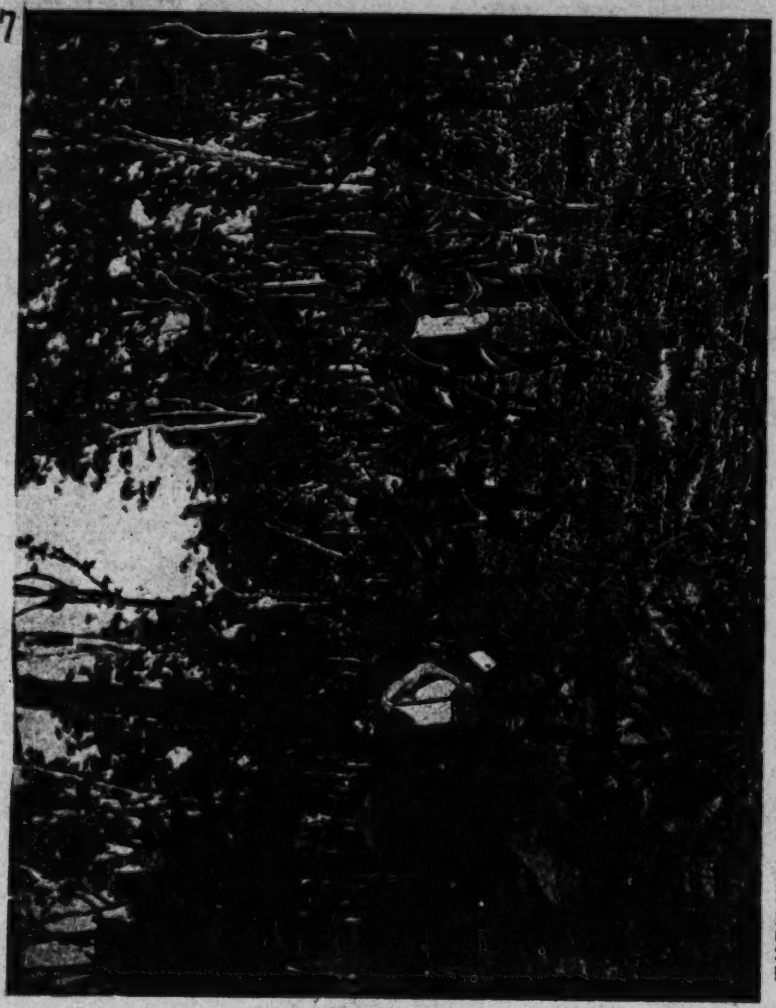

WALKABOUT'S CAMERAMAN GOES ON A "WALKABOUT" THROUGH TYPICAL BATHURST ISLAND COUNTRY.

[p. 19(c)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

About the Authors

C. W. M. HART was born in Australia and became an American citizen in 1933. He studied at the Universities of Sydney, Chicago, and London; and has taught anthropology at the London School of Economics, University of Toronto, and the University of Wisconsin where he is now professor of anthropology. He was associate editor of the *American Anthropologist* from 1949 to 1952 and was recently elected president of the Society for Applied Anthropology. 114

Arnold R. Pilling, a Californian, studied at the University of California at Berkeley. He was a Fulbright Fellow to Australia in 1953 and 1954 and spent most of that time studying the culture of the Tiwi. He is now a member of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Wayne State University in Detroit.

About the Book

This is a case study of a system of influence and power which is based on a strange currency. The currency is woman. Newborn females, nubile marriageable females, toothless old hags — all are valuable in Tiwi terms. Because men compete for prestige and influence through their control over women, women have the value of a scarce commodity. Under this system there are no illegitimate children, no unmarried females of any age, and wives are either very much older or very much younger than their husbands. 562 [557] 848 589]

A vivid picture of Tiwi life, as viewed from within the culture, emerges in this book. The reader is not made an outsider, left to peer into a dimly understood, formalized, alien way of life. Rather, he is taken inside the family group, by the night's campfire. He becomes a witness to angry quarrels, a participant in involved machinations aimed at success — as defined by the Tiwi. He comes to know individual Tiwi as real people. 114

This book is a study of social interaction. But it is also a study of culture change. Much happened between Hart's and Pilling's visits to the Tiwi. These changes are described, and we see them in the context of the period of Tiwi contacts with the outside world. 12 |

GEORGE AND LOUISE SPINDLER
General Editors

Stanford, California
December 1959

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Preface

HART WORKED among the Tiwi during 1928 and 1929, and in Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4 summarizes the main aspects of their culture as it was at that time. Pilling's fieldwork was carried out during 1953 and 1954, and he outlines in Chapter 5 the contacts of the Tiwi with the outside world before and up until the coming of the first missionaries in 1911, and in Chapter 6 describes the modifications in Tiwi culture that have occurred since 1930. It is rare for two anthropologists who have studied the same tribe at widely separated times to collaborate in writing about them, hence it is worth mention (1) that the two anthropologists had never met nor even written to each other until after Pilling had returned to the United States in 1955; (2) that when they finally got together during 1957-1958 to plan and write the present book, they were both astonished at how little basic disagreement there was between them. Arguments about each other's statements have been numerous and prolonged, but almost invariably these concerned matters of detail or emphasis. The chief result of the collaboration has been the discovery, by each author, and exciting for both, of how well the other knows his Tiwi. This is uncommon enough in anthropology to be noteworthy. We are both grateful to the Tiwi for having brought us together and we are both impressed by the fact that the Tiwi who brought us together were the same complicated but delightful people, despite the twenty-five year interval in our respective sojourns among them. 114 121 [18]

C.W.M.H.
A.R.P.

Madison, Wisconsin
Detroit, Michigan
December 1959

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

starvation level than was the case with many of the mainland tribes.[8] Even to talk about the Tiwi in near-starvation terms seems quite incongruous, for there was an abundance of native food available the whole year around and their only problem was to collect or catch it. We regard the development of their large multiple-wife household as essentially their own evolutionary solution to the problem of finding the most efficient unit of food production. Abundant food was there in the bush in its raw state; the most efficient way to extract it was by a work unit represented by such households as those of Ki-in-kumi, or Tu'untalumi, with the old remarried widows directing the young women and the hunting and fish spearing being done by the younger males.

Even the smallest households nearly always contained at least one old female veteran of the food quest who knew the bush like the palm of her hand and could wrestle some food out of the most inhospitable district. The only households that ever went hungry—and they only overnight or at worst for twenty-four hours or so—were the small households of only one or two wives, especially if both wives were young and inexperienced or young and flighty or both. Such households were uneconomic and were rare. On the other hand, the apparently absurd households such as those in which two young men shared their respective elderly mothers as wives, made good economic sense. Any attempt by two such young men to substitute two young wives or even four young wives for the two old ladies would have drastically reduced the standard of living of the household. When young wives arrived in Tiwi households they were not regarded as replacements for the old crones but joined as reinforcements and apprentices to the skilled workers—the veterans. The sexual aspects of marriage were necessarily subordinated to the housekeeping or food-production aspects, which is why in the previous section we spoke of every young man laying the foundation of his household by marrying an elderly widow usually long before there was any young wife in sight.

Since the bigger the household the more food it produced for its own consumption, there was a tendency for the smaller and therefore hungrier households to hang around the fringes of the bigger ones. Though every household was autonomous and could camp and collect food anywhere in the band territory in which it roamed, it was rare to find all the households in a band distributed evenly over the available territory. In Malau, Enquirio's household and that of Merapanui were usually to be found camped together, since the two men were full brothers and not in competition with each other. Also camped with or near them on any given occasion would be a few other small households. Such a combined group as this would, all told, amount to between forty and fifty people camping at the same spot and remaining together for weeks at a time. Under mainland conditions in most areas, a gathering of forty people for ten days at a time in the same locality was unheard of, except on

[8] As was pointed out earlier, the best-watered and most fertile areas of the mainland were the areas attractive to white settlement, and the tribes who inhabited such areas (for example, Victoria or coastal Queensland) were wiped out quickly. Most of the mainland tribes who survived long enough to be studied by modern anthropologists were tribes whose habitats were unfavorable both for native and for white occupation.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Women were, however, a form of capital that possessed the power of talking back to the investors. As daughters or as wives they were quite thoroughly subordinate to the wishes of their fathers or husbands, and Tiwi wives were as frequently and as brutally beaten by their husbands as wives in any other savage society. But as mothers and as sisters the women were not coerced by their sons and their brothers. On the contrary, sons or brothers wishing to use their mothers or their sisters in their political schemes (typically when those mothers or sisters became or were about to become widows) could only do so with the active collaboration of the women concerned. Tough-minded young widows could drive a hard bargain with their brothers as to where they remarried, since each needed the other to make the remarriage acceptable to the tribe at large and to beat down the other competitors (the dead husbands' brothers, for example) who wished to control the remarriage of the widows. Young girls thus had no bargaining power but young widows had a good deal. Old mothers with influential senior sons were extremely powerful. Any affront to an old woman was an affront to her sons, and some of the strongest influence networks were alliances of several senior brothers, in which their old mother seemed to be the mastermind and the senior sons largely the enforcers of what the old mother and her middle-aged daughters (their sisters) had decided among themselves. 562 593 [587]

Thus, for women, as for men, age and political skill were the crucial factors in determining their position. Young girls were chattels and as such were passed around from husband to husband. But with increasing age, smart young women, especially in alliance with their smart young brothers, could control their own fate with some firmness, and if they and their brothers had a shrewd old mother (also with powerful senior brothers still alive) to advise them and support them, then the decisions of such a group as to where the girls remarried were very difficult decisions for anybody else to combat or oppose. Not as independent operators, but as behind-the-scenes allies of their sons and brothers, Tiwi mothers and sisters enjoyed much more essential freedom in their own careers as often-remarried widows than would appear at first sight in a culture which ostensibly treated all women as currency in the political careers of the men. No matter how males, both old and young, might connive, they were constantly aware that no remarriage of a widow could ever be arranged and made to stick unless the widow herself was agreeable. 562 888 553 [587]

In the limited space available, all we can offer are a few samples of how the influence game was played by a few selected individuals of various ages. Age was of great importance in Tiwi careers and therefore we select our samples from all the adult male age-groups. We have selected them all from the same band—the Malauila—so as to show as clearly as possible the interplay between one career and another for men of the same band. And finally we select men of the Malauila band for our examples because in 1928-29 it was a band little affected as yet by the outside influences—Catholic missionaries and Japanese pearl divers—which were beginning to modify Tiwi marriage customs among some of the other bands. 557 888 [177 797 121]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

After Cooper had established himself a number of investigators, Brown in 1905, Klaatsch in 1906, Spencer and Basedow in 1912, and Fry in 1913, paid short visits to the Islands, and recorded valuable information on the aborigines and their ceremonial life. 175 114

Following their departure no research work was carried out until 1929, when Hart spent a year or more among the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands. But though Hart must have collected a great deal of data among the almost untouched aborigines of those times, he has published only two short papers on their customs. (Hart, 1930, pp. 167–80; pp. 280–290.)

Again there was a lag in time, except for a short paper by Harney and Elkin (1942, pp. 228–34), until Pilling in 1953, stationed at the Bathurst Island Sacred Heart Mission, spent over a year studying aboriginal life and social organisation.[8]

In 1954 the National Geographic Society's expedition established a camp at Snake Bay on the north coast of Melville Island (Fig. 1), and for six months studied the ethnology, the geology and the ornithology of the area. Although the National Geographic Society of America provided the bulk of the funds, Mr. John Bonython of Adelaide financed the geological survey of Melville and Bathurst Islands. 121 114 [122]

The expedition party of American and Australian scientists was an excellent example of international co-operation. It was made up of Miss Jane Goodale, ethnologist, and Dr. Carleton Coon, Professor of Anthropology, both from the University of Pennsylvania; Mr. David Parsons, ornithologist from Yale University; Mr. Brian Daily, geologist from the University of Adelaide; Mr. William E. Harney, guide, Mr. George Joy, cook, and myself, as leader and ethnologist.

Our combined research covered a wide field. Miss Goodale concentrated on the place of the women and children in the community, Mr. Parsons collected and studied the birds of the island, Mr. Daily, by an examination of the outcropping rocks, established the geological history of Melville and Bathurst Islands, whilst I, apart from the duties of leadership, concentrated on the art, myth, and particularly the burial ceremonies.

During their visit, Dr. Carleton Coon and his wife made a special study of the physical characteristics of the aborigines.

I chose Melville Island as a centre of research, because it was evident from the scattered writings of Basedow, Fry, Hart, Harney, Spencer and 121 101

[8] The Sacred Heart Mission was established on Bathurst Island, opposite Cooper's camp, during 1911. [797]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired
[175] the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indi-
[177] cate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even
[609] had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

101 Like other concrete things in this culture, the hordes have a multi-
621 plicity of names, and this has caused a certain amount of confusion and doubt as to their actual number. A full list of these names is as follows. The name most commonly used in each case by the natives themselves is given first in each case, as these are the names used throughout this account of the Tiwi culture.

1. *Tiklauila*: *Arupula, Matjulauila, Mulinyabila, Tuyalimbila, Talpauila, Pilamirumbila, Aritui, Wayiyui, Adauinabila, Payondiyalawila, Pukuginabila, Primandawila.*
2. *Wrangwila*: *Mungwaiunabila, Puianarurwila, Tintauwila.*
3. *Minggwila*: *Wonuruwila, Kaliprainyawila, Malamikwariinyabila.*
4. *Malauila*: *Mirkalambila, Pulundawila, Iwiriwila, Malamunyerinyabila, Papinyabila.*
5. *Wilrangwila*: *Panodjiwila, Mirkawinyabila, Marawauila, Kambuyambila.*
6. *Munupula*: *Urumaiawila, Tunuyabila, Imalawila, Parumunupula.*
7. *Turupula*: *Yuyandawila, Tikampula.*
8. *Yeimpi*: *Arupontawila, Arangitarila, Palwinyabila.*
9. *Mandiimbula*: *Tumulambila, Tilambila, Urumaiinyabila, Uruwinapila, Ilubinyabila.*

101 If Spencer's list[8] is compared with mine it will be seen that allowing
114 for our different spellings, his "Kambuambulla" are really the *Marawauila*,
621 his "Cherupulla" are the *Turupula*, his "Purumunupulla" are really the *Munupula*, his "Mindaluulla" probably mean the *Minggwila*. "Ulobu" (or *Ilubi*) is a place-name of a favourite camping ground in the country of the Mandiimbula slightly to the north-west of Cape Gambier; hence *Ilubinyabila*. "Marungallambu" similarly is a camping ground in the territory of the *Malauila*. "Barranpunalli" I am unable to trace; *Punali* (or *Bunali*) is, however, the name for the district around the English Point Alley. "Arangijerulla" is an alternative name for the *Yeimpi*, but I prefer to spell it *Arangitarila*, while "Balauiungambulla" is obviously a misspelling of the *Palwinyabila*, which is another alternative name for the *Yeimpi*.

121 To explain this multiplicity of horde names, and also to throw some light on the actual composition of the horde, I propose to consider one of the hordes in detail, taking for this purpose the *Tiklauila*.

[8] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, 1914, page 45.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

PERSONAL NAMES AMONG THE TIWI[1]

By C. W. M. HART

[171] 551 THE Tiwi, who inhabit Melville and Bathurst Islands in North Australia, are in many respects unlike the other Australian peoples. So little is known, however, about the subject of personal names among Australian tribes that it is impossible to say whether in this respect also they are atypical. [121] Among the Tiwi at any rate personal names and the customs attaching to them play a very important part in the life of the tribe, and in this paper an attempt is made to describe this element of their culture and to explain it.

Every member of the Tiwi has not one name but many, each of which belongs to him or her alone and each having an equal validity as a term of address or of description, though naturally some are used more frequently than others. This is to say, although a man with five different names may be addressed or referred to by any one of those five names, nevertheless the normal thing is for one name to be much more generally used than any of the others, it being for a native, as for us, much easier to think of a person by a single name than by several.

553 602 The multiplicity of names is accounted for by the fact that quite a number of the relatives have the right to bestow names upon a new-born child and a certain proportion of them will always exercise that right. The father may always bestow names upon his own children, and the father's brothers, who are of course the classificatory fathers of the child, have the same power. The mother's brothers may also bestow names upon a child, should they so desire, and less frequently children will be found bearing names given to them by the older men of their own totem clan, that is not only the mother's brothers but also other

[122] [1] This paper, which was presented to Section F, Anthropology, of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science at the Brisbane Meeting, May 1930, contains part of the results of research carried out in 1928 and 1929 as Science Research Scholar of Sydney University, and with the aid of a grant from the Australian National Research Council.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

By Herbert Basedow, M.D., M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., etc.

With Plates VII-XX.

Local Correspondent of the Royal Anthropological Institute, London, and Honorary Fellow of the Anthropological Society, Göttingen; late Chief Medical Inspector and Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Introduction.

In August of last year (1911), I visited Bathurst Island to inspect the natives on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. Accompanied by one of my inspectors (Mr. J. H. Kelly) and a crew consisting of a Chinaman, a Manilaman, and three natives of the Larrekiya Tribe,[1] I left Port Darwin at eleven o'clock in the evening and entered Apsley Strait early the next morning. We spent nine days in the examination of the island, entering the numerous salt-water arms and rivers, effecting a landing wherever possible and traversing the island on foot. Landing was, in most places, difficult on account of the thick growth of mangroves that fringes the island on the east. It had been my intention to circumnavigate the island, but a heavy monsoonal gale prevented us from even making the attempt in the small motor-craft at our disposal. I therefore decided to return *viâ* Apsley Strait and inspect part of Melville Island.

The plates included in this paper are all reproductions of my original photographs and coloured drawings.

Condition of Natives.

I estimate the population of the island to be about 500. Their isolation and, no doubt in a measure also, their reputation as being cannibalistic and treacherous in their habits, have guarded their primitive condition to the present day.[2] Before

[1] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. of S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 1.

[2] Compare the statement:—

"Melville Island, about 30 miles north of Port Darwin, is inhabited by a tribe of which very little is known. They do not circumcise, and speak a different language from those on the mainland. They are represented as a very strong and powerful race.

"Before the arrival of the Hon. B. T. Finniss at Escape Cliffs in 1864, the Melville Island natives occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras, in which they invariably succeeded; but they have not done so since. This tribe is of a very hostile nature, and on several occasions have attacked Europeans visiting the island. Their canoes and weapons are similar to those on the mainland." P. Foelsche: "Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia," *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 17.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 O120 Tiwi O120

The Sons of Turimpi

C. W. M. HART
University of Wisconsin

121

AS HAS been pointed out by a number of critics, most recently by Lindesmith and Strauss (1950), the personality and culture movement in anthropology involves, as one of its cardinal principles, the assertion that in primitive societies there is an essential sameness in the personality of the natives, or at least a very limited range of variation. The favorite argument to prove this view seems to be that since a culture "molds" all the individuals born into it into pretty much the same "basic" psychological shape, therefore the simpler the culture, the more homogeneous in personality are the individuals who use it. The critics have challenged this view largely on the ground that it has not been empirically demonstrated by any anthropologist. It may well be that far from being demonstrated by any anthropologist, it is quite contrary to the fieldwork experience of many, perhaps most of them. At least the "homogeneity of primitive personality" theory can to some extent be checked against a type of material which is possessed by every fieldworker, including the many anthropologists whose interests are not and never were in that rather esoteric branch called "personality and culture." The type of material to which reference is made is that unsystematic, very random, often implicit, but very necessary knowledge of numerous individuals in the culture which he is studying, which every fieldworker has to possess to operate at all. Just as no faculty member can operate very effectively on his committees, or for that matter in his poker games, without some working knowledge of the personalities of his colleagues, so no fieldworker can operate with much success in the field without some similar knowledge of which individuals among the natives are reliable informants, which are liars or bluffers, which panic easily or clam up easily, who is scared of whom and who beholden to whom, who are the leaders and who the yes-men among the native cliques, and innumerable other like pieces of knowledge. Such pragmatic knowledge of individual differences is not only necessary for good research, it is essential for the anthropologist's own safety and comfort (or relative comfort) in the usually primitive and sometimes dangerous environment in which he finds himself. In an African setting, for instance, it may involve the knowledge of who is a reliable man to go lion hunting with; in areas where the lending of firearms or the giving of liquor to natives may lead to trouble with the white authorities it involves evaluation of reliability or trustworthiness of another kind; in most areas where difficult treks, journeys, canoe trips, etc. are required, every fieldworker uses such knowledge in his choice of which natives to take along or whom to go along with. Such routine operations as these as well as the selection of personal attendants, whose house to live in, the discounting of information from some individuals and the high valuation of information from some others,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

all these day-to-day activities of ordinary elementary field work, are, one presumes, based upon some common-sense judgments about the "personalities" of the natives with whom the anthropologist is living in rather intimate association. 121

Unfortunately the conventions of anthropology are such that it is just this sort of material which is never published and yet it would seem to be precisely this sort of material, if organized and systematized a little, which would throw light upon the amount of individual personality variation and the range of personality types which are to be found in the simpler societies. Too often the old-fashioned anthropologist, asked what he knows about the "personality" of his tribe, is apt to reply rather defensively, "Well, nothing much; you see I didn't pay much attention to toilet training when I was there, nor was I competent to give Rorschachs and T.A.T.'s." If, instead of being intimidated by the question, he would take the trouble to recall the ten natives he knew best (in the sense of knowing that is involved in the everyday statement "I know him pretty well") and attempt to describe briefly the "personality" of each of the ten, he would, one suspects, be astonished not only at how much common-sense knowledge he has of the personalities of the men he is describing but also at the range of difference that they exhibit.

As a crude sample of what would be revealed if the ordinary fieldworking anthropologist would make some attempt at "personality description" along such lines, there is offered in this paper a very superficial and cursory examination of the "personalities"[1] of five Australian aborigines whom the writer believes (perhaps erroneously) he got to know reasonably well *as people*, in the course of field work among the tribe to which they belonged– the Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands, North Australia. One cannot live with any tribe for two years, especially in the very primitive and intimate living conditions of nomadic Australian life, without getting to know certain individuals better than others, and two of the five men in question were not only trusted informants and advisers but also twenty-four-hour-a-day companions for weeks at a time. The basis of selection of these two, Mariano and Tipperary, is that the writer knew them over a long period of time and was able to observe them under a great variety of circumstances.[2] The addition of the other three—Antonio, Louis and Bob—is suggested by the fact that they were brothers or half-brothers of the first two, all five having a common mother, a woman named Bongdadu. The selection of a group of brothers for intensive study is justified in the present context by the self-evident fact that if, as is alleged by the personality and culture adherents, a common culture, with common toilet training, common family conditioning, etc., produces homogeneous personalities in the simpler societies, then such homogeneity of personality should be all the greater in a group of men who not only are products of the same culture but grew up in the same household, and were suckled, reared and toilet-trained by the same mother. 115 124 [121]

The Tiwi, who numbered 1,062 people in 1928–30, are divided into nine hordes or subtribes scattered over two islands. The southern section of Bathurst 105 000

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

men markedly different from one another. Nor does that obvious fact seem due in any way to the circumstance that the observations upon them were made in a post-white situation. The presence of the Mission, the arguments about polygyny, the lure of movies and white jobs in Port Darwin, the coming of the Japanese pearlers—such factors as these obviously influenced a great deal the *cultural* situation, but it is difficult to see how they can be held to account for Mariano's vehemence or Antonio's indecision or Tip's gaiety or Louis' amorousness. Such things as the Mission, the Japanese, Port Darwin, were vehicles for or occasions for Mariano's vehemence and Antonio's indecision and Tip's gaiety, but they certainly did not cause them. These men would, one presumes, have displayed those same temperamental traits through other and more "native" cultural vehicles if the whites and the Japanese had not been there. To argue otherwise, that is that such differences appear in the post-white situation but are absent under pre-white conditions, would seem to be a most blatant form of ethnocentricism.

It is equally ethnocentric, though in a different way, to argue that our culture, because of its alleged greater complexity, is able in some mysterious way to produce greater variations in personality traits than other and simpler cultures. What complexity of culture does is increase the number of cultural alternatives or socially acceptable behavior patterns; it cannot increase the number of attitudes which an individual will manifest while choosing a cultural alternative or following a socially acceptable pattern. An individual in any culture will follow a "cultural course" but he will follow it cheerfully or sourly, silently or garrulously, in a relaxed manner or a tense manner, like a leader or like a follower, with his eye on the gallery or regardless of the world's opinion. These alternatives would appear to be human alternatives, since they are ways in which all men respond to cultural stimuli. Since they are human variations they will be present where there are many cultural alternatives and where there are none. They will be present in closed social systems as much as in open social systems. When a man in any culture in the world is practising a cultural pattern, he will still differ from his neighbors—or his brothers—in the way he practises it. "It ain't the horrible things you do, but the horrible way you do 'em," are the words of an old joke which draws attention to the vital difference between the things which a culture requires its people to do and the attitudes with which different people proceed to do them. The five sons of Turimpi all followed Tiwi cultural patterns reasonably closely but as this paper has tried to demonstrate they were far indeed from being "stereotyped personalities." They differed not in what they did but in how they did it.

It follows therefore that since simplicity or complexity of culture is irrelevant to the whole matter, we should expect to find, in any culture in the world, a pretty similar range of variation in what must roughly be called "types of people." If the personality and culture literature is leading young anthropologists into the field expecting to find "stereotyped personalities" in the simpler cultures, they are doomed to disappointment. Years ago, Franz Boas (in a passage that is never quoted nowadays) told them what they *will* find. "Some

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

121 theorists," says Boas, "assume a mental equipment of primitive man distinct from that of civilized man. I have never seen a person in primitive life to whom this theory would apply. There are slavish believers in the teachings of the past and there are scoffers and unbelievers; there are clear thinkers and muddle-headed bunglers; there are strong characters and there are weaklings" (1951). It is noteworthy that this (for Boas) unusually flat and definite statement was made in an attempt to demolish the views of Levy-Bruhl that between civilized man and the primitive there is an impassable psychological gap. Perhaps—as Tipperary would say, if he understood the matter—perhaps, the personality and culture movement is merely Levy-Bruhl in modern dress, perhaps the latent content of the movement is to deny to the people of the simpler cultures the ordinary elementary human qualities of individual difference and human variation, thereby enabling "personality" and "individuality" to be treated as unique creations of the white races to be found only among the followers of the American way of life. If this indeed be the latent content of much "personality and culture" literature, it seems to warrant a flat and unqualified rejection, in terms as emphatic as those of Boas, by all those anthropologists who, like Boas, may not know projective tests but do know something about the simpler native societies.

NOTES

121 [1] In view of the wide discrepancies in the use of the word "personality" it must be made clear again that all that is meant by the word here is the level of description one is apt to get if in ordinary social conversation one asks the question, "What sort of person is he?"

115 [2] The native names of these men are all polysyllabic and difficult for the reader to remember. I use therefore the names bestowed upon them by white men, to aid in keeping them distinctly in mind. The Spanish names, Antonio, etc., were bestowed by certain Filipino carpenters who built the building for the Roman Catholic missionaries when they first arrived. Tipperary is, of course, a white corruption of a native name.

159 [3] It will be noticed by close students of the above information that Turimpi must have been born in the 1830's, Bongladu born somewhere around 1865. She had her first child when she was about 16 or 17, at which time her husband Turimpi was at least 50. This is a perfectly normal Tiwi marital situation, the commonest marriage arrangement being one in which a newly-born female child is betrothed by her father to a man in his thirties.

159 177 797 [4] Even from the anthropologist Dooley would not accept tobacco until he had convinced himself that in return he would not be required to sacrifice any of his principles. Nor would he take his son, to whom he was passionately attached, to the Mission station for medical treatment—perhaps the most striking proof of the uncompromising attitude that Dooley had adopted toward the Mission.

159 [5] Such a speculation about Mariano's personality at the age of 25, seventeen years before the author knew him, is based upon the general belief of social scientists that personality does not change much between 25 and 42, and the particular evidence of the older missionaries that Mariano was "already inclined to throw his weight around" when they first arrived.

13 182 837 [6] Goodenough (1949) is apparently one of the few anthropologists to discuss the relation between extra-marital sexual activity and the opportunities provided by the nature of the physical environment. The point here is slightly different; whether the Tiwi physical environment encourages adultery is uncertain since a social system such as theirs would promote adultery whatever the physical environment, but it certainly helps to increase the suspiciousness of husbands.

837 [7] That seduction has to be a daytime activity is implied in what has already been said. After sundown the women are concentrated in their husband's camp and have no opportunity. Which

7:Fry D-5 (1913) 1949 OI20 Tiwi OI20

A Bathurst Island Mourning Rite.

Sir:

121 Late in February, 1913, word came to Darwin that a fatal epidemic was prevalent in Bathurst and Melville Islands, and I was instructed to visit the islands and do anything possible to help.

122 I arrived at the Roman Catholic Mission Station at the southern end of Apsley Strait on Bathurst Island on March 2nd, and four days later, with the kindly assistance of Father Coudreau, set off up the Strait in a ten-foot sailing dinghy with a Malay, Matthew Gar, who had a smattering of the native language, two adult islanders, Mari and Dulin, a small native boy, Olinyarra, and stores. On the fourth day at Marinlampi, about two miles from Point Brace, at the northern end of the strait, a native camp was found. There were about thirty natives in the group, variously painted. 765 An old man, later found to be named Kerbo, was sitting chanting beside a small heap of red stones in the centre of a cleared circle about twelve feet in diameter. A pile of cooked yams was beside him and he was [177] scraping them with a mission-given knife. The time of my arrival was about ten in the morning. A small boy squatted beside the old man at times but otherwise the natives lounged about outside the circle indifferently coming and going. It appeared that a death ceremony was in progress. A woman sitting with her three boys under a pandanus palm nearby was pointed out as the mother of the dead man. When all the yams had been peeled the old man walked about in [593] the circle chanting and clacking two sticks together. There was an intermission until about 2 p.m., when the old man resumed his chanting. About 4 p.m. he returned again and proceeded to cut up the yams, placing

[p 79-A]

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

Marriage Contracts Among the Tiwi

Jane C. Goodale
Bryn Mawr College

121 It has become an increasingly common practice in recent years to reëxamine earlier analyses of kinship systems and, by selecting slightly different criteria from the ethnographic descriptions or by approaching the system from a different point of reference, to arrive at new interpretations and classifications. This has been particularly true of studies of Australian kinship systems, which have been a fertile field for reinterpretation ever since the day of Spencer and Gillen. Two of the many examples are the reëxamination of the Kariera by Romney and Epling (1958) and the reanalysis of the Wikmunkan by Needham (1962).

No one has yet attempted a reanalysis of the Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands for the simple reason that none of the original investigators has yet attempted a complete preliminary analysis. Spencer visited Bathurst Island in 1912 and subsequently published a few comments and a list of kinship terms (Spencer 1914). Hart visited the Tiwi in 1928-29 and Pilling in 1953-54, and their highly readable joint book (Hart and Pilling 1960) has brought the Tiwi into prominence but has not solved the theoretical problems raised by their description of the social organization and marriage customs. I, too, visited the Tiwi in 1954[1] and ever since have been continually frustrated in attempts to describe their social organization and marriage rules in conventional anthropological terminology.

I have long been convinced—and I believe Hart and Pilling are also so convinced—that the first step in understanding Tiwi social organization is an understanding of Tiwi marriage customs. Accordingly, this paper was first written as an analysis of Tiwi marriage contracts using the age factor as a major underlying determinant of asymmetrical cross-cousin marriage rules.[2] When the original paper was read, at the Tenth Pacific Science Congress in 1961, comments from the floor convinced me that fuller descriptions of certain aspects of Tiwi social organization should be included. After the paper was rewritten to include these aspects, the colleagues[3] who read and commented on it asked for more complete and different data, for each saw in the description different possibilities for abstraction and classification.

121 I have therefore resolved that this paper shall be mainly descrip-
tive rather than analytical. The first section deals with a description
128 of Tiwi marriage contracts with the main emphasis on the factor of relative age as an important consideration. The data, it should be

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 0120 Tiwi 0120

emphasized, are presented from the point of view of a female Ego, for I strongly feel that it is only by using a female Ego that one can see the Tiwi marriage "game" as a "system." Following this, I present the kinship terminology together with some comments on the system of kin classification that are relevant to the marriage system. The last section discusses some aspects of the exchange of women between descent groups and local groups.

I am only too well aware that I do not have all the facts necessary to make a complete analysis of Tiwi social organization. It must also be stated that the relative-age analysis was a desk study based largely on what I believe to be logical deductions from the collected factual information pertaining to the age differences between spouses.[4] More field work is obviously necessary, and I hope that others who become interested in the problems of analysis and classification raised by this paper will comment and thereby suggest what they consider to be crucial areas for reinvestigation.

The Factor of Relative Age in Marriage Contracts

Hart and Pilling (1960) have described the dynamic nature of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a male Ego. My study supports their conclusion that for a Tiwi male the acquisition of wives and the acquisition of prestige are dependant variables. A Tiwi male will rarely acquire a wife through any form of contract before the age of 30. A bestowed wife, one who is promised before birth and becomes a cohabiting wife before puberty, is a valuable prestige symbol, but difficult to acquire. Thus a young man will frequently start his household with the acquisition of a less valuable but more easily obtainable type of wife, i.e., a widow, often of advanced age. Some Tiwi males never obtain sufficient prestige or political power to become involved in a bestowal contract, while others who are more fortunate may be involved in several such contracts.

My study of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a female Ego reveals some interesting differences in perspective. First and foremost is the fact that, while involvement in a bestowal contract is a cultural ideal, albeit rarely realized, for a male's first marriage, it is an inescapable norm for every Tiwi woman's first marriage. Thus, while this type of contract can be considered "preferential" but not normative from the point of a male Ego, it is acknowledged by Tiwi women as an inflexible "rule" governing their first marriage before puberty to a man whom they describe as "the one who grew me up, treated me like a father, and made me a woman."[5]

Thus a marriage contract for a man's first wife need not be—and frequently is not—the same as the initial contract leading to a girl's primary marriage. Furthermore, the form of the contract for a man's first wife is apt to vary considerably, whereas the form of the initial

5 [The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche. Cf. p.465, cat. 116 -- Analyst.]

183 contract for a girl's primary marriage follows a consistent cultural
582 pattern.

In any discussion of a marriage system all the varieties of marriage contracts must be considered. If, however, one variety is [121] found to be more frequent, preferred, prescribed, or invariable, then that is the one to which all the others must be related. In the Tiwi marriage system there is no difficulty in determining which type of contract should be considered basic to the others. The initial contract which leads to a first marriage of a Tiwi girl is prescribed and invariable and is thus necessarily the most frequent from the point of view of a female Ego, and it is also a preferred contract from the point of view of a male Ego. In the following discussion, I shall refer to this type of contract as a Type A contract. Types B, C, and D are all contracts leading to secondary marriages of Tiwi widows and will be briefly discussed later.

584 A Type A contract is made during the five-day period in which
606 a girl is isolated in the bush at the time of her first menstrual period. Although she has been living with her first husband, she is separated [88] from him at this time. When she again returns to her husband's camp, she is not only considered to have reached the status of a woman but also that of a mother-in-law. While she is in the bush, her father places a spear between her legs as she sleeps and then presents it to a boy or man whom he selects to serve his daughter as a son-in-law. The spear is regarded by the recipient as a symbol of a bestowed wife yet to be born to his young mother-in-law. By accepting the spear, the son-in-law becomes obligated to his mother-in-law; from that moment on he must supply her with food and goods and such services as she may request at any time. In return, she is [582] held solely responsible for seeing that her first daughter is sent to his camp when she reaches the wifely age of eight or ten. After receiving the first daughter, the son-in-law is expected to continue his services to his wife's mother, in return for which he can expect to receive other daughters subsequently born to her. The initial contract continues until either the son-in-law or mother-in-law dies. If either fails to honor his obligation, however, the other may terminate the contract. A Type A contract is therefore essentially a contract between a mother-in-law and a son-in-law. The arranger of the contract is the mother-in-law's father.

582 The Tiwi, like the majority of Australian societies, consider cross-cousin marriage to be the proper form of marriage arrangements. For the sake of simplicity, I shall conduct the following analysis as if the preferential marriage pattern involved first cousins, although in fact it generally involves second cousins. For the purpose of viewing the system from the standpoint of relative age the distinction between a first and a second cousin is irrelevant. The question of classificatory cousins will be deferred until the kinship terminology is discussed.

The following analysis of Type A contracts in terms of the factor of relative age will show that the selection of a FaSiSo rather than a

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

discussed the factor of relative age as a major determinant of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in the particular type of contract which is universal for first marriages among females and is also the preferred contract for males. I have also described several variant patterns of Tiwi marriage contracts and have shown that these cannot be considered as alternatives to the preferred type but rather as additional patterns which apply only to a woman's secondary marriages. These additional types of contracts are also, to some extent, conditioned by the relative ages of the participants, but the resultant form of marriage may vary from a continuance of patrilateral cross-cousin marriage to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and even to marriage with certain relatives who are not cross-cousins. The wide variation in contracts leading to secondary marriages for women does not affect the continuance of preferred unilateral cross-cousin marriage or the exchange of wives between particular descent and local groups until the second generation after the variant marriage. Consequently, any change in the social organization of the Tiwi brought about by variations in marriage contracts is a gradual change, but it is also an inevitable and accepted form of change. The Tiwi rightly consider that as individuals they have considerable freedom in the selection of mates from almost any descent and local group and even from among a number of categories of kinsmen. Their Ego-oriented marriage system provides both stability and flexibility, and this is reflected in their system of kin classification.

NOTES

1. The field work on which this paper is based was undertaken in 1954 at the Snake Bay Native Settlement on Melville Island and was jointly financed by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.
2. In 1959, I used the relative age of spouses in a preliminary analysis of Tiwi unilateral cross-cousin marriage (Goodale 1959). It was with considerable pleasure that I found that a similar analysis by Rose (1960) had quite independently arrived at the same conclusions. Even more interesting was the fact that in cases where I had to calculate expected ages for many of my kin relations, Rose, with more complete age data, could give the average and range in ages for the same relatives, and that in most cases his "average" and my "estimated" ages were the same or within one or two years of one another.
3. For their valuable comments, criticisms, and advice I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Robbins Burling, Ward H. Goodenough, Edward B. Harper, Barbara S. Lane, and George P. Murdock.
4. Unfortunately, since the only age data collected in the field were for husbands and wives, I have had to use expected ages rather than average or mean ages throughout most of this paper (see note 2 above).
5. The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche.

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I MUST first thank the National Geographic Society, who, for the second time, honoured me with the leadership of one of their Australian expeditions.

To my companions, I am most grateful for their friendliness and co-operation; our stay on Melville Island was indeed a happy experience. I should like however specifically to acknowledge the help I received, in my research, from Miss Jane Goodale and Mr. William Harney, and my appreciation of the appetizing meals prepared by Mr. George Joy from the strange flesh food of Melville Island.

I also wish to thank Mr. John Bonython for providing the funds for the geological survey, Sir Douglas Mawson for obtaining a refund of my salary which had been deducted for the period of the expedition, the Hon. Paul Hasluck, Minister for Territories, for his assistance, the Trans-Australian Air-lines for granting me several free air passages to Darwin, the South Australian Museum for the use of their facilities and the services of an artist, Miss Patricia Catcheside for her skill and care in preparing the drawings for this book, and the National Geographic Society and Mr. Harold L. Sheard for the gifts of the colour blocks of the frontispiece and Plate 28 respectively.

Again, my thanks are due to Mrs. Jean Truran for typing the final manuscript, to my wife for undertaking the onerous task of checking manuscript and printers' proofs in all stages, and preparing the index, Miss Jane Goodale for permission to use her photographs, Plates 23C and 26C, and the National Geographic Society for permission to use photographs made by me of Plates 1, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 44, 45, and frontispiece.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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After Cooper had established himself a number of investigators, Brown in 1905, Klaatsch in 1906, Spencer and Basedow in 1911, and Fry in 1913, paid short visits to the Islands, and recorded valuable information on the aborigines and their ceremonial life. 175 114

Following their departure no research work was carried out until 1929, when Hart spent a year or more among the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands. But though Hart must have collected a great deal of data among the almost untouched aborigines of those times, he has published only two short papers on their customs. (Hart, 1930, pp. 167–80; pp. 280–290.)

Again there was a lag in time, except for a short paper by Harney and Elkin (1942, pp. 228–34), until Pilling in 1953, stationed at the Bathurst Island Sacred Heart Mission, spent over a year studying aboriginal life and social organization.[8]

In 1954 the National Geographic Society's expedition established a camp at Snake Bay on the north coast of Melville Island (Fig. 1), and for six months studied the ethnology, the geology and the ornithology of the area. Although the National Geographic Society of America provided the bulk of the funds, Mr. John Bonython of Adelaide financed the geological survey of Melville and Bathurst Islands. 121 114 [122]

The expedition party of American and Australian scientists was an excellent example of international co-operation. It was made up of Miss Jane Goodale, ethnologist, and Dr. Carleton Coon, Professor of Anthropology, both from the University of Pennsylvania; Mr. David Parsons, ornithologist from Yale University; Mr. Brian Daily, geologist from the University of Adelaide; Mr. William E. Harney, guide, Mr. George Joy, cook, and myself, as leader and ethnologist.

Our combined research covered a wide field. Miss Goodale concentrated on the place of the women and children in the community, Mr. Parsons collected and studied the birds of the island, Mr. Daily, by an examination of the outcropping rocks, established the geological history of Melville and Bathurst Islands, whilst I, apart from the duties of leadership, concentrated on the art, myth, and particularly the burial ceremonies.

During their visit, Dr. Carleton Coon and his wife made a special study of the physical characteristics of the aborigines.

I chose Melville Island as a centre of research, because it was evident from the scattered writings of Basedow, Fry, Hart, Harney, Spencer and 121 101

[8] The Sacred Heart Mission was established on Bathurst Island, opposite Cooper's camp, during 1911. [797]

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

THE TIWI OF MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDS

By C. W. M. HART[1]

MELVILLE and Bathurst Islands lie off the north coast of Australia (3) some fifty to eighty miles north-east of Port Darwin. They are divided from the mainland by Dundas Straits, which at their narrowest part are about twenty-five miles wide, this being the approximate distance between the Vernon Group and Cape Gambier on Melville Island. The latter is the largest island in the Commonwealth of Australia with the exception of Tasmania, being some seventy miles long by forty miles wide, and containing about one and a half million acres. Bathurst Island is about one-third of that size, and is separated from its neighbour by Apsley Strait, which varies in width from about a quarter of a mile opposite the mission to two or three miles below Fort Dundas.

The first settlement in Northern Australia was made on Melville 175 Island at a spot named Fort Dundas in Apsley Strait. It was founded on the 26th September, 1824, by Captain Gordon Bremer, R.N., of H.M.S. *Tamar*, who had been specially sent from Sydney for the purpose. Chiefly owing to difficulties with the natives, the settlement was abandoned on 31st March, 1829, when the convicts, troops, stores, etc., were transferred to Fort Wellington, on the Coburg Peninsula of the mainland. To-day a few piles of stones and a dilapidated ramparted ditch are all that is to be seen of this outpost of empire.

From 1829 until 1911, when the Sacred Heart Mission Station was established on Bathurst Island, no permanent settlement was made on either of these islands, though they were visited from time to time, and various buffalo shooters and timber-getters resided there for varying periods, the best-known of them, R. J. Cooper, having lived on Melville (where his house still stands) from 1894 until 1914. At present Bathurst 648 Island is a native reserve with the missionaries as protectors, and hence

[1] This paper contains some of the results of research carried out as Science Research Scholar of the University of Sydney and with the aid of a grant from the Australian National Research Council. [122]

[P. 167]

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 0120 Tiwi 0120

PERSONAL NAMES AMONG THE TIWI[1]

By C. W. M. HART

[171] 551 THE Tiwi, who inhabit Melville and Bathurst Islands in North Australia, are in many respects unlike the other Australian peoples. So little is known, however, about the subject of personal names among Australian tribes that it is impossible to say whether in this respect also [121] they are atypical. Among the Tiwi at any rate personal names and the customs attaching to them play a very important part in the life of the tribe, and in this paper an attempt is made to describe this element of their culture and to explain it.

Every member of the Tiwi has not one name but many, each of which belongs to him or her alone and each having an equal validity as a term of address or of description, though naturally some are used more frequently than others. This is to say, although a man with five different names may be addressed or referred to by any one of those five names, nevertheless the normal thing is for one name to be much more generally used than any of the others, it being for a native, as for us, much easier to think of a person by a single name than by several.

553 602 The multiplicity of names is accounted for by the fact that quite a number of the relatives have the right to bestow names upon a new-born child and a certain proportion of them will always exercise that right. The father may always bestow names upon his own children, and the father's brothers, who are of course the classificatory fathers of the child, have the same power. The mother's brothers may also bestow names upon a child, should they so desire, and less frequently children will be found bearing names given to them by the older men of their own totem clan, that is not only the mother's brothers but also other

[122] [1] This paper, which was presented to Section F, Anthropology, of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science at the Brisbane Meeting, May 1930, contains part of the results of research carried out in 1928 and 1929 as Science Research Scholar of Sydney University, and with the aid of a grant from the Australian National Research Council.

A Bathurst Island Mourning Rite.

Sir :

121 Late in February, 1913, word came to Darwin that a fatal epidemic was prevalent in Bathurst and Melville Islands, and I was instructed to visit the islands and do anything possible to help.

● 122 I arrived at the Roman Catholic Mission Station at the southern end of Apsley Strait on Bathurst Island on March 2nd, and four days later, with the kindly assistance of Father Coudreau, set off up the Strait in a ten-foot sailing dinghy with a Malay, Matthew Gar, who had a smattering of the native language, two adult islanders, Mari and Dulin, a small native boy, Olinyarra, and stores. On the fourth day at Marinlampi, about two miles from Point Brace, at the northern end of the strait, a native camp was found. There were about thirty natives in the group, variously painted. 765 An old man, later found to be named Kerbo, was sitting chanting beside a small heap of red stones in the centre of a cleared circle about twelve feet in diameter. A pile of cooked yams was beside him and he was [177] scraping them with a mission-given knife. The time of my arrival was about ten in the morning. A small boy squatted beside the old man at times but otherwise the natives lounged about outside the circle indifferently coming and going. It appeared that a death ceremony was in progress. A woman sitting with her three boys under a pandanus palm nearby was pointed out as the mother of the dead man. When all the yams had been peeled the old man walked about in [595] the circle chanting and clacking two sticks together. There was an intermission until about 2 p.m., when the old man resumed his chanting. About 4 p.m. he returned again and proceeded to cut up the yams, placing

[p 79-A]

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

discussed the factor of relative age as a major determinant of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in the particular type of contract which is universal for first marriages among females and is also the preferred contract for males. I have also described several variant patterns of Tiwi marriage contracts and have shown that these cannot be considered as alternatives to the preferred type but rather as additional patterns which apply only to a woman's secondary marriages. These additional types of contracts are also, to some extent, conditioned by the relative ages of the participants, but the resultant form of marriage may vary from a continuance of patrilateral cross-cousin marriage to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and even to marriage with certain relatives who are not cross-cousins. The wide variation in contracts leading to secondary marriages for women does not affect the continuance of preferred unilateral cross-cousin marriage or the exchange of wives between particular descent and local groups until the second generation after the variant marriage. Consequently, any change in the social organization of the Tiwi brought about by variations in marriage contracts is a gradual change, but it is also an inevitable and accepted form of change. The Tiwi rightly consider that as individuals they have considerable freedom in the selection of mates from almost any descent and local group and even from among a number of categories of kinsmen. Their Ego-oriented marriage system provides both stability and flexibility, and this is reflected in their system of kin classification.

NOTES

1. The field work on which this paper is based was undertaken in 1954 at the Snake Bay Native Settlement on Melville Island and was jointly financed by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.
2. In 1959, I used the relative age of spouses in a preliminary analysis of Tiwi unilateral cross-cousin marriage (Goodale 1959). It was with considerable pleasure that I found that a similar analysis by Rose (1960) had quite independently arrived at the same conclusions. Even more interesting was the fact that in cases where I had to calculate expected ages for many of my kin relations, Rose, with more complete age data, could give the average and range in ages for the same relatives, and that in most cases his "average" and my "estimated" ages were the same or within one or two years of one another.
3. For their valuable comments, criticisms, and advice I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Robbins Burling, Ward H. Goodenough, Edward B. Harper, Barbara S. Lane, and George P. Murdock.
4. Unfortunately, since the only age data collected in the field were for husbands and wives, I have had to use expected ages rather than average or mean ages throughout most of this paper (see note 2 above).
5. The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche.

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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"ALONGA BUSH"

A TIWI HUNT

Jane Goodale

It was April when I arrived on Melville Island, in the company of a small group of men, with the purpose of studying the culture of the Islanders, and it was eight months later that I packed up my notebooks and flew home. During this time we were amply supported by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum. 114 [122]

In my notebooks was all the information I could gather concerning the way of life, past and present, of this particular tribe of Australian Aboriginals. Much of the information in these diaries will eventually find its way into proper chapters of a Ph.D. thesis concerned with the particular economic system, tribal organization, ceremonial activities, and so on. My hand-written notes of day-by-day observations will be transformed through analysis into scientifically derived generalizations so that the information will be in the form most useful to other ethnographers. Included will be the so-called "typical daily life" of a group of interesting and very primitive hunters and gatherers; but because of the demands of time and space some things will be left out: the account of a succession of days, some of which were perhaps almost "typical," but most of which were unique, made so by the personalities of the particular people I was with, by the weather, and by hundreds of little incidents. Only by mixing the days together can one describe a "typical" day and then it becomes a classification and not a true description.

I think something very real is lost by the scientific demands of ethnological reports, so I would like to take this opportunity and space to record some of the incidents which occurred during a series of seven days when I accompanied a group of Melville

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

natural features. At *v*, *v*, etc. (right), are her piles of yellow ochre; at *g* (left), her baskets of red ochre, and at *aa*, *aa* (upper right), the cockle shells in which she mixed the colours. These deposits of ochres are still used by aborigines to decorate themselves. 532x 778 [202]

Other natural features created by *Kudjatumpi* are: *u* (lower right), Bonkaitji Creek, on the banks of which she placed many trees as homes for the opossums; *ff* (centre) a reef under the water, made from the stones which the mythical woman threw away whilst digging for yams, and the dots on the background, the forests of trees growing on the highlands at Bonkaitji. A hill, *dd* (upper right), is the place where the March-fly woman stood when she created the watercourses, Bailai-intara, *cc*, and Pimaltji, *bb*. The latter is a tributary of Bonkaidji creek.

Pl. 18c, one side of a female *pukamuni* basket (indicated by the square openings), pictures the totemic place of the March-fly woman, at the Kudjatumpi lagoon.

The line of rectangles, *b*, *b*, and *d*, *d*, *d*, represents the water in the lagoon; *a*, *a*, *a*, the patches of sand on the bottom; and *c*, *c*, etc., are white cliffs on the adjacent sea-coast. The vertical lines, *f*, and the horizontal lines, *e*, indicate the water running from the Kudjatumpi lagoon over the beach, into the sea.

DISCUSSION

Although this research on the creation period and its related phases must be regarded as incomplete, the data gathered does provide a general picture of the beliefs of the Tiwi in their totemic heroes, and the relationship of those beliefs to the topography of their land. Not being able to visit any of the totemic places, their position on the map (Fig. 1), must also be regarded as approximate. 771 123

It is to be hoped that, before the Tiwi lose their culture, some ethnologist, with ample time, will both fully investigate their remarkable culture and visit each of their totemic localities to collect, in detail, the mythical story of the area and its associated natural features. 000

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CHAPTER III

The Pukamuni Ceremony

765 THE burial ceremonies of the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands,
182 based on the *pukamuni* of the mythical man, *Purukupali*, are, by far, the most important events in their ceremonial life.

These ceremonies, which allow the aborigines full expression for their grief, provide, at the same time, a complete cultural outlet for their philosophical beliefs, their music, their art and their dancing. No one, watching these
[781] primitive rituals, night after night, could fail to be impressed by the obvious pleasure experienced by both the participants and the onlookers.

114 Spencer (1928, pp. 647–52), is the only investigator to describe and illus-
768 trate any details of the *pukamuni* ceremony. Although he saw but one day of the ceremonials, and that of the closing rituals, he records, briefly, many of the procedures which we witnessed in 1954, i.e., the rite of fire-jumping (p. 73), the spearing of the grave (p. 83), and (p. 84) the "spearing" of one of the participants and the erecting of the poles. This evidence shows
177 that, in spite of the disturbing effects of civilization and the complete
765 ecclesiastical ban on Bathurst Island, the *pukamuni* ceremony is still a vital force in the lives of the Tiwi people.

During the six months the expedition was on Melville Island, Miss Jane
●123 Goodale, Mr. W. E. Harney and I witnessed some, or all of the rituals of four *pukamuni* ceremonies; one of a man, *Waniamperi*, who had been buried within half a mile of our camp; another of an old woman, *Makapini*, who, against the wishes of her relatives, had been buried in the mission cemetery on Bathurst Island; still another of a premature infant; and, only a few weeks before I left Melville Island, one of *Nulatini*, the deceased wife of our helper, *Pulanimbuwi*.

I will describe the burials of *Waniamperi* and *Nulatini*, and the final rituals
123 of *Waniamperi* and *Makapini*. However, as we saw, in all, twenty-seven
128 *ilenias*, the general pattern of which was similar, I will describe but five of them; three belonging to *Waniamperi*, one to *Makapini* and one to *Nulatini*.[46] The short rituals, associated with the dead infant, will be treated as a separate unit.

[46] The final rituals took place after my departure from Melville Island. These will be dealt with by Miss Goodale.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing. 768 [428] [783] [825]

(2) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulaninkuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers". 764

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[83] from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *tatwiangu* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs. 302 751 775

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[84] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground 764

[83] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[84] After the death of *Nulatini*, I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditis* fear the light. 123 775

For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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761 [825] [761] wallaby, so that he could see the grave of his victim without being recognised.

On one occasion, when I was travelling with *Pulanimbuwi*, just after the death of his wife, he went to her grave, carefully searched the ground for tracks, then lifting up the sheets of paper-bark, examined the mound. Later, *Pulanimbuwi* announced that a *Marayi* (p. 154) had killed his wife, *Nulatini*, by getting inside of her body. But, although still there when she was buried, the *Marayi* had escaped through the hole *Pulanimbuwi* had seen in the mound.[57]

(2) *The Seclusion of the Grave*

769 The grave of *Waniamperi* was about a hundred yards from the road between our camp and the Snake Bay aboriginal settlement. Although aborigines, who were only distantly related to the dead man, walked backward and forward along this road, all the *pukamuni* people had to take a roundabout path from which it was not possible to see the grave site.

One night, *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, had to pass along the road to our camp. When he was approaching the position from which the grave site could be seen in the day-time, his wife, wrapping his head in a blanket, led him past the spot. This practice was only allowed at night; it was prohibited during the day.[58]

[775] [784] No aboriginal man hunted the creatures, or woman gathered the plant foods adjacent to the grave, so that, should the *mopaditi* of *Waniamperi* return to his burial place for a while he would find ample food.

4. THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONIES, THE ILANIAS

(1) *The Ilanias of Waniamperi*

765 About two months after the burial of *Waniamperi*, *Wurarbuti*, the ceremonial leader of the Melville Island people, sent message sticks to Bathurst Island aborigines telling them that the *ilanias* (preliminary rituals) of *Waniamperi* were about to start.

[123] We saw eleven of *Waniamperi's ilanias*. But, as they were more or less the same, I will describe only three.

[765] [57] *Pulanimbuwi's* action was viewed with considerable disfavour. He, as a near relative, should not have gone near the grave until the final rituals. Only the *wanaras* (workers) who cut the poles are allowed to do that.

[183] [58] Under the normal tribal conditions, these precautions would have been unnecessary, because the place of burial would then have been in some distant, unfrequented locality.

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765 (2) *The Ilanias of Nulatini*

[123] We were able to see the opening mourning rituals, *iramparimi*[66] of *Nulatini* and six of her *ilanias*.

[128] Rather than deal with all of these ceremonies in detail, I will describe the *iramparimi* rituals and a typical *ilania*, in which the aborigines carried out all phases of the rituals, with the exception of the appointment of the "workers". Although the rite of *pumuti*, *wandiatapinda*, or feeding the "workers", did not take place at every *ilania*, they will be included in this description.

(a) *The Opening Mourning Ritual, Iramparimi of Nulatini*

Ten days after the burial of *Nulatini*, the aborigines of Melville Island performed the ritual of *iramparimi*. The function of that ceremony was to express [775] grief over *Nulatini's* death, and to tell her spirit that, as she did not now belong to the same realm as themselves, she must leave her grave and return to her totemic country.

The ceremony was held about thirty yards from the camp of the dead woman. Most of the aborigines were present, but two men, *Pulanimbuwi*, the husband, and *Tupiatira*, *Nulatini's* nearest relative, took the leading parts.

The rituals opened in the late afternoon with *Pulanimbuwi*, painted in [302] white, elaborately decorated and carrying a long stick, walking slowly to- [533] ward the assembled people, singing the *amburu*, the women's song of mourning (Pl. 23A).

Every now and again, the husband stopped, leaned on his stick and looked round (apparently for his wife's *mopaditi*), before continuing on his way to the place of ceremony.

Coming out of the forest in an almost opposite direction was *Tupiatira*, also painted in white, waving green branches in his hands. About fifty yards from the old camp of *Nulatini*, *Tupiatira* called her name loudly, and, after listening for a while, announced that, as she had not answered, she must be dead.

As *Tupiatira* walked forward he continued to call, while *Pulanimbuwi*, now accompanied by his sister, *Kundi*, came in from the opposite direction, both singing the *amburu*. When the men were only a few yards apart the aborigines formed themselves into two lines, facing each other.

At a signal and a loud "*Book, book*" from *Pulanimbuwi*, an old man, [535] *Malumerinita*, accompanied by six to eight of the men, danced between the

[66] The *iramparimi* of *W'aniamperi* was performed before our arrival.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

When all the "workers" had been paid, *Wurarbui* called my name and presented me with a number of *pukamuni* arm and chest ornaments (Pl. 31), which normally would have been left on the grave. 431 765 123

These ornaments, *Wurarbui* explained, were a gift from the dead man, *Wanimpari*, because I had assisted in making his *pukamuni* a success.[88]

In the Bathurst Island *milimika* the three "workers" were also receiving their payments. 765

Jikungfialumi, although he did not have as good a story to tell as *Wurarbui*, danced around the poles with some of the presents in his hand, singing, "Here I come in an expensive motor-car, with lots of money to pay the 'workers' for cutting such beautiful poles."[88] [535] [539] [177]

(d) *Erecting the Poles around the Graves*

The distribution of the last of the presents was a signal for the "workers" to carry the poles from the respective *milimikas* to the grave. 765

Some of the poles were both large and heavy; in particular that illustrated on Pl. 34D, which was eighteen feet long, and so heavy that it took seven "workers" to carry it from the *milimika* and up-end it in the hole prepared for it at the grave (Pl. 26A).

As the poles were carried past the Bathurst Island ceremonial ground, *Jikungfialumi* threw short sticks over them to commemorate the time when the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, took part in a spear-throwing contest at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* (p. 33).

While the "workers" nonchalantly carried the poles to the grave, the women, with tears running down their cheeks, beat themselves with sticks (until someone restrained them), and the close male relatives, mourning loudly, hysterically cut their heads with steel knives. 765 785

Katopi, the son of the dead man, had washed the painted decorations from his body, and was about to cut his head when he was stopped by his stepmother, *Dominas*. On seeing this, *Marawani*, one of the chief *pukamuni* men, took the knife from the woman and gave it to *Katopi*, who gashed his head two or three times, and, with blood pouring down his face, threw himself on the ground in a paroxysm of grief.

[88] To help them in their payments I had given the *pukamuni* men some printed calico.

[88] Although these stories about great wealth to pay the "workers" are much Europeanised, they are probably following a traditional pattern, when, instead of referring to money and the goods of the white man, the ceremonial leaders exaggerated the number of spears, ornaments, and other goods they had collected to pay the "workers".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The ceremony opened with the honey call, then, as the men stepped across a fire lit in the centre of the *milimika* (Pl. 24a), a long sustained mosquito call. Following this, the men formed a circle around the fire, and chanted a song which described the bombing of a ship off the coast of Bathurst Island. 765 [533] [177]

Close female relatives, standing in a line facing the poles, sang the *amburu*, while three men, painted white, each carrying a spear, rushed toward the screen of boughs, peered through them, then returned to the *milimika*. Three other men were given spears, one of whom, with a *tokwiange* (goose-feather ball) in his mouth, took a stand as if to throw a spear at the poles, remarking to his companions as he did so, that he was about to spear a *mopaditi*.

As soon as the "workers" removed the boughs which shielded the poles from view, an old woman, *Jibandaui*, ran forward and beat the ground near the poles, while the six men, with spears poised ready, followed and stabbed around the base of the poles. These rituals, the signal for all the participants to rush to the grave poles and (Pl. 27a) mourn, were carried out to frighten the *mopaditis* from the vicinity of the grave.

A young man with his head and shoulders through an opening in one of the poles, and his arm around an old woman, sobbed bitterly (Pl. 27c) while others stood around either crying or singing the *amburu*.

As the sounds of grief became less, a young man, miming a killing which had taken place some time ago, sneaked up with great stealth, and "speared" *Tjamalampua* who was lying on the ground in the *milimika*.[24] Shortly afterwards the ceremony closed with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

(*b*) *Songs and Dances*

The next morning about 10 a.m., the ceremonies started afresh. On this occasion, all of the songs and dances dealt with secular incidents; a crocodile creeping upon a man to kill him, an aboriginal sailing a European racing boat, another paddling a bark canoe, still another spearing an enemy, and so on. 177 765 [533]

Several of the aborigines created much laughter by miming the actions of our physical anthropologist, Dr. Carleton Coon, who had just completed a series of body measurements and observations on the Melville Islanders. [123] [535]

One man, using a short stick, measured the arms, legs and body of old *Tjamalampua* as he lay stretched out full length on the ground; he then danced around the *milimika* with his hands round his head, in imitation of the head callipers; another mimed Dr. Coon weighing an aboriginal, cutting his hair and looking at his teeth.

[24] Spencer, 1928, p. 651, describes a similar episode. No doubt the spearing of Tjamalampua had a much deeper symbolism than appeared at the time.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

on sheets of paper to illustrate the body markings used at each stage of initiation. 115 881

To give a complete account of the full *kulama* which included initiation as well as the preparation of the yam for food, I have included both groups of rituals, as they would have been performed in the original *kulama* ceremony. However, it must be borne in mind that we witnessed only the rituals belonging to the *kulama* yam. As stated before, the details of initiation were obtained from the fully initiated men. 128 881 123

I. THE MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGIN

(1) *The first Kulama Ceremony*

During *palaneri* (creation) times, not long before the death of *Purukupali*, when all the animals and birds were still men and women, *Purutjikini*, a boobook owl-man, and his wife, *Pintoma*, a barn owl-woman, decided to perform the first *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina, in Port Hurd, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1). They invited *Jirakati*, later the white-headed sea-eagle, and *Tupatupini*, the small owl, to be present, planning to make them the first initiates. Many other people assisted in the ceremony, the *Ningauis*, a small spirit people who still live in the mangrove swamps nearby; *Inwati*, *Meanwini* and *Taparalili*, three groups of the honey people; *Jirakupai*, the sea-going crocodile; *Narina*, the black cockatoo, and *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle. 773 881

Tukinikini, *Wuriuprinili* and a number of ancestral people from the eastern end of Melville Island, being opposed to the holding of the *kulama* ceremony, did not attend.

At the ceremony, the white-headed eagle, *Jirakati*, was the first *Wadjeniati* initiate (he still wears the ceremonial paint), and the owl, *Tupatupini*, the first *Mikinatrina*. There is no mention in the creation myths of the other grades of initiation.

When the first *kulama* ceremony was finished[16] the participants returned to their homes until the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, which was performed at the end of the *palaneri* (creation period). It was then that *Purutjikini*, the leader

[16] Some informants referred to a fight which took place at the first *kulama* in which *Purutjikini* was attacked because he did not wait for some late-comers. Others described another quarrel which started when one of the *kulama* men followed a woman of the Kulabumrunlei group into the mangrove swamps and raped her so badly that she died.

The Kulabumrunlei people attacked the performers of the *kulama*, killing some and driving others into the mangrove swamps where they live today as the *Ningauis*. The more elderly informants, *Tjamalampua* and *Mahumerinia*, however, said that there were no quarrels at the first *kulama*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

776 The *Maratjis* belong to the totem of *Andjahi* (fresh water), in common with *Pakadringa* (thunderstorms), *Tomituka* (monsoon rain) and *Bumerali* (lightning). They are mortal creatures who die and disintegrate like everything else (Pl. 48D).

[123] I collected bark paintings and crayon drawings of a number of *Maratjis*, living with their wives and families in three lagoons on Melville and Bathurst Islands, i.e., Maundu, southern Bathurst Island, and Kulimbini, north-western, and Maratjiana, northern Melville Island.

776 778 The *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands are not always of the same temperament. For instance, the *Maratjis* who live at Kulimbini (Pl. 48A) are so dangerous that should any aboriginal dare approach their water, they will steal his *imunka* (spirit), and he will die.

Although the *Maratjis* of Maundu (Pl. 48C) are feared, it is possible, if certain rituals are performed, for even a stranger to drink the water without harm; while those who live in the Maratjiana lagoon at Goose Creek, are looked upon by the aborigines as "properly quiet fellow".[40]

776 821 The rainbow, as a *Maratji*, however, is universally feared, the aborigines believing that the primary bow is the *imunka* (spirit) of a male, and the secondary bow, that of a female *Maratji*.

If a rainbow goes too near an aboriginal camp, the occupants will quickly [789] build up their fire[50] and call out to frighten *Maratji* away, but should he come too close, the people will feel ill and break out into a cold perspiration. If an aboriginal is overtaken by a rainbow,[51] it will kill him by taking his spirit.

Should some aboriginal be so foolish as to throw a spear at a rainbow and injure it, the *Maratjis* would destroy the whole country and the people who live in it.

776 821 648 Two heavy wind-storms, which occurred whilst the expedition was at Melville Island, were supposed to have been caused by angry *Maratjis*. The first was due to some foolish aboriginal who broke a *kulama* ceremony taboo (p. 142) by throwing some of the termite mound from the *kulama* oven into the sea. The second happened when a *pukamuni* pole, taken from a grave by one of the senior officers of the Native Affairs Branch, was being loaded on a boat for transport to Darwin.

The aborigines explained that as these poles are a gift from the living to

[40] Further research will no doubt reveal other waterholes on Melville and Bathurst Islands, inhabited by *Maratjis*.

[50] This would suggest that *Maratji*, like the *Wonambi* of the Central Australian deserts, [171] is afraid of fire (Mountford, 1948, p. 138).

[51] These conditions are, of course, impossible because the rainbow is always several feet from the observer.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly
412 limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe
[177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of
[415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the
[245] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[66]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[66] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female
[114] ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This
[173] information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

usually wives and children only, but this life lived in an isolated household is broken in upon at intervals by short interludes of the "collective life," when members of numbers of households gather together for ceremonies, legal proceedings, fights and initiations. If we may call these two types of living the public life and the private life of the adult male Australian, then we may say that Antonio was very happy in private life and uncomfortable in public life. The two activities which made him happiest were playing with his children and hunting with his dogs. When left alone by society to do these two things Antonio was a kindly, patient, gentle, good-natured and relaxed man, but in all social relations with other adult men he was nervous and uncertain of himself. One might hazard the opinion that it was because children and dogs made no great demands upon him that he was happy and at ease with them, but people he found very trying since they were always expecting him to "take a stand" or to make a decision and this was something he had no talent for, something which did not "come naturally" to him, and something which gave him no satisfaction. Turimpi's mantle had fallen on a man who just wanted the world to let him alone, who preferred his home, his family and his dogs to any rewards which public life could give him.

MARIANO

Mariano was first encountered in Port Darwin before the writer had got to the Tiwi. Finding me waiting for transportation to the islands, Mariano offered to come with me and act as my chief interpreter and informant. As he appeared a very intelligent and mature member of the tribe, I promptly hired him. Or so I thought at the time. Events were to prove that what had happened was that Mariano had appropriated me. For Mariano was (in his own opinion, at least) the only possible person fit to escort and advise a white man visiting the Tiwi. He had created something of a monopoly in the job of white man's escort and adviser. The beginning of this not unusual native profession went back, in his case, to the foundation of the Mission station. When the missionaries arrived in 1911 and began to build their mission houses Mariano became almost immediately the principal go-between of Mission and natives. As far as the situation of 1911 can now be reconstructed the factors operating to select Mariano for this position were merely suitability of social status, availability and willingness to undertake it. As already mentioned, the Mission was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island. This was Tiklauila territory and at that time the dominant family among the Tiklauila was that of Turimpi. Of Turimpi's sons, Antonio, the eldest, was about 28 or 29, Mariano was about 25 and Louis, the third son, was a youth not yet 20. Antonio's role as eldest son was already fixed, Mariano's, as second son, was still flexible. Antonio was personally unaggressive except when forced into taking a strong stand, Mariano (we may speculate) was already more forceful and more prone to draw attention to himself by aggressive behavior.[5] Mariano was just ready in 1911 to emerge from the age group of young men who should, according to Tiwi ideas, be seen and not heard into the age group of "junior adult men" who

881 He was in the *kolloponiati* stage of initiation grade and was forbidden in the camp. One
[901] day in great secrecy he showed me some bark arm bracelets known as *tuguti*. A
[114] month later I was on a Malay lugger in the same region and some natives came out to the lugger in canoes. They told me that Cooper was to take the ceremony for his next degree that afternoon. I persuaded the master of the lugger to put me ashore on Papiau beach, opposite old Fort Dundas.
● 123 The natives were unwilling to take me with them at first, but finally consented. We walked inland for about four miles and met the main group, all painted for the ceremony. Cooper was said to be out in the mangroves, but came in shortly after about midday. He then went out again for a sugar bag. Having learned a few words of the language I attempted conversation. After a time I attempted to ask something about Cooper's *tuguti*. Immediately the cheerful group about me hushed and everyone seemed very concerned. They had gained the impression that I had stolen the *tuguti*. I tried to explain that I had only looked at them. About twenty of the men seated themselves in a circle and proceeded to discuss the problem. I overheard a few recognizable words at times, *ardjidit waitamanna*, no good white men, *paltoa*, dead, *yergobai*, alligator. I was sitting meanwhile with my back to a pandanus facing a salt water inlet. An emissary from the circle visited me from time to time and questioned me anxiously about what I had done with the *tuguti*. One humourist came over several times, tapped me on the shoulder, and grinningly pointed to the water, saying *yergobai*. Suddenly the discussion stopped, everybody stood up, and cordial relations were resumed as if nothing had happened.

881 Cooper returned about 4 p.m. He washed and was smeared all over with red ochre
[313] except the upper part of the face. Mean-

[P. 167-B]

Tjipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families. 161 361 648

It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace. 361 177 [631] [224] [464]

By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives, 123 [132] [825]

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Fig. 2. Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

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As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend, Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

lores and customs, and if the white people were disappointed by his performance in settlement work, the old men of the tribe were just as pleased by his attitude to his native heritage.

Agnes, a slim tall girl of twenty, was even shyer than Albert and to cover up this shyness she always smiled or giggled. She was a cheerful soul to have around. Feeling that the responsibility of the care and feeding of the *murandanga* (female white person) was a little more than their young shoulders could bear, Albert asked Big Jack, his older brother, a "big man" in the tribe to come along. At the last minute a fifth member was added, Tchuwiunga, a tiny black-and-white puppy of about eight weeks old.

Number one canoe was the largest canoe and was considered the safest. The Malay fishermen, a century or more ago, had taught the Melville Islanders how to hew a rough canoe from a single log, but the art had never been perfected. This canoe measured about fifteen feet in length by about three feet in width at the center. There were small platforms in the bow and stern which

Fig. 3. Setting off in Number one canoe

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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served as seats except when the mast was mounted in the forward platform.

It took us quite a while to load, but we finally launched out into the bay about mid-morning. In the stern, sat Albert, his knees folded under so that as he lifted and dipped the heavy ironwood paddle only his arms and back supplied the power. He kept in perfect time with Big Jack who sat just in front of him. They would both paddle on the same side for about six strokes and then bringing the paddles overhead would continue on the other side with perfect rhythm. Agnes and Tchuwiunga sat amidships among the rolls of blankets and cartons of food, while I surveyed the scene from the forward seat, clutching my waterproofed KLM overnight bag containing my camera, toothbrush, and change of clothing and the ever-present supply of pencils and "six-penny" notebooks.

The bay was smooth, too smooth, for not a ripple broke the gently rolling surface. We could, however, see and hear breakers on Piriu Point; so, with the promise of some wind to propel the craft, and incidentally break the close, muggy atmosphere, Albert and Big Jack paddled strongly and swiftly so that soon we reached the opposite shore and began to work our way up to the point. Although the men were silent, Agnes entertained us with the singing of other women's love songs. All women, regardless of the degree of affection they have for their husband, have lovers and compose long love songs extolling the chosen man's virtues. Agnes, however, only sang her song about her lover, Ginger-Two, when out of audible range of her husband.

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About noon the canoe rounded the point and at once a strong easterly wind prompted us to raise the sail. This required little effort as the thin and greatly patched canvas was permanently attached to the 12-foot mast and boom with wire. All that was needed was to drop the mast through a hole in the forward platform and let the boom fall into place. Unfortunately it was soon apparent that the forces of nature and the design of the canoe were against us; the wind was too strong and without a keel the canoe could not head into the wind which was dead against us. The mast was unstepped, the sail furled, and the paddles taken up once more, but now instead of a calm sea we faced large rollers, some of which broke under the force of the wind. It was heavy going; Agnes

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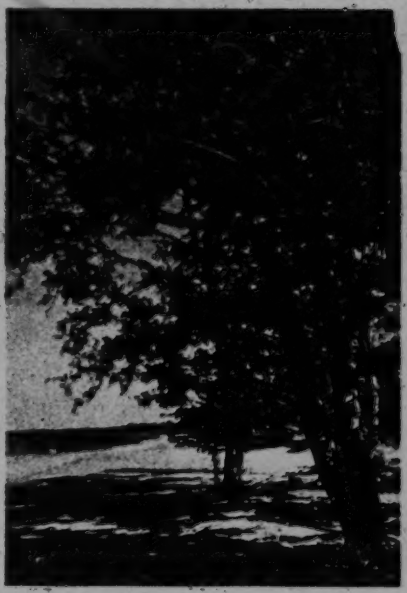

Fig. 4. A casuarina grove

clutched Tchuwiunga more tightly and I hugged my KLM bag while the two men worked to head the canoe into the largest waves while trying at the same time to head in towards the shore. This meant taking a good many not so large waves broadside and we got very wet. Facing sternwards, I could not see the waves, so if a particularly large one (Agnes called them "female waves!") approached, I would be given a few seconds warning and would duck the breaking spray which would cover the boat and its occupants. The only miserable one was the puppy who presented a very puzzled and hurt expression as he peered out from under the folds of Agnes's *nagu*. For the rest of us the cold spray was a welcome relief from the burning sun.

Once in close to the shore, our skilful paddlers brought the canoe safely onto the beach, riding in on one of the breakers. We unloaded everything, although we intended to stop only for lunch, for the canoe would soon be swamped by the sea if left alone. After unloading, Albert swam the canoe out beyond the breakers where he anchored it with a large rock.

Then we climbed the low dunes close to the shore and came to a grove of casuarinas. These provided much appreciated shade but a very uncomfortable carpet of spiny seed pods. Taking up our two billy cans, Agnes led me to the back of the grove where she showed me a small well. There were many footprints around the sandy hole which were identified as belonging to Black Joe's mob, the natives who had preceded us. They had, however, not depleted the well for in the bottom was a small puddle, and since this was at the very end of the six months dry season, it was considered fortunate that there was any water at all. Agnes carefully tasted

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

the water and declared, "it was o. k. for *murandanga*," meaning that it was not too stagnant or brackish for my health. By digging up some of the wet sand from the bottom of the well, the water seeped in to fill the void and soon we had our two containers filled. By this time Albert had started the fire and unpacked our canned rations. 123

One billy was placed on the fire for "tea leaf" and we broke open some corned beef and a loaf of fresh bread thoughtfully provided by the Superintendent's wife. When the billy boiled, a handful of tea and two handfuls of sugar were added and the pot set aside to cool. Big Jack had in the meantime gone over the dunes to look at the sea, and he reported that the wind was still too strong to allow us to continue in comfort and safety. We might as well take it easy for an hour or two and wait for it to calm down, he said. Almost immediately Albert and Agnes were fast asleep, their heads resting on tins of beef. Big Jack, however, took the axe and wandered off into the bush in back of the camp. After an hour it was obvious that the wind had no intention of dying, so we roused ourselves and strolled off down the beach in search of turtle eggs. We saw many tracks of the female turtles where they had lumbered out of the water up to high-water mark, and the mounds of sand kicked up while they dug their deep nests. Using a long, slender stick, Albert probed around these mounds hoping to feel the soft resistance of the rubbery eggs. Time and again he probed in a different nest quite unsuccessfully. Criscrossing one of the tracks leading to a nest were many little ones returning to the water; these eggs had lived to hatch. Finally Albert gave up, remarking, "That Black Joe mob make plenty big feast turtle egg." Late in the afternoon we returned empty handed. 123 222

Fortunately Big Jack, hunting along the little, mangrove-lined creek close by, had not had such bad luck. He soon appeared carrying three of the large mangrove crabs, their massive claws tightly closed with bindings of bark strips. The two main logs of the noon fire were still smouldering, and by adding to them we soon had a fast-burning blaze. When a glowing bed of coals was available, the crabs were thrown on top where they were soon steaming away in their own juices. It was a delicious supper—tender, sweet crab- 123 [252]

123 meat, lukewarm tea, and the remains of the fresh bread smothered in jam for dessert.

The sky by this time was growing dark for thick, heavily laden clouds were fast building up. With what light remained from the setting sun we shifted camp to a small hollow in the dunes, free from the prickly seed pods and protected from the wind. Soon it was quite dark and the wind seemed to blow more strongly. Albert, afraid for the safety of the canoe, decided to remove it to the quiet waters of the little creek where Big Jack had found the crabs. Big Jack accompanied him and while they were gone Agnes prepared to make some "damper." She built the fire up again so that the
123 ground would become very hot. While it was burning down she
252 took the bag of flour, opened it, and made a small depression in
372 the contents. Into this hole she poured baking powder, salt, and
484 water from the billy. (Quite often the first two ingredients are omitted.) With both hands still in the bag she worked the mixture into a large lump of dough which she removed and flattened on the outside of the flour bag. By this time the fire had again burned down, and the burning coals were brushed aside and a hole scooped out in the hot sand. The damper, about the size of a large frying pan, was laid in the hole and covered over with more hot sand. "Tomorrow, we make quick breakfast and no stop for lunch," she explained. In about an hour, during which the damper had been turned once, it was removed and the sand brushed from the rough, tough surface. It was then carefully wrapped in a piece of calico and put away in safety.

It was only then that we realized that the men had not returned.
123 Agnes became quite worried, and I must confess I did also. We walked down to the water's edge and called out, but could hear no reply over the roar of the waves, and because of the inky blackness we could see only a few yards. After about ten minutes we returned to the camp and in a brief time both men appeared. Agnes immediately demanded to know why, if they were so close, they didn't answer our calls? Albert insisted that he had replied, so after a while Agnes changed her question to why had it taken them
[481] so long? "Water bin come in long way," Albert replied, "I swim out; take long time find him canoe." When one considers that,

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 7. Agnes (left) and a friend admire a large mangrove crab

together with sharks, these waters contain the large and dangerous salt-water crocodile and all manner of poisonous jellyfish, one realizes that to swim around in a high sea in the pitch dark requires considerable courage. 123

Soon after we had crawled under the mosquito netting and between the blankets rain began to fall in a gentle and persistent way, but still not hard enough to prevent our falling asleep with little conversation.

It was hardly light the next morning when Agnes stood up and rewrapped her *nagu*, a strip of calico, about her waist, then took up the billys and went to the well to draw water for the morning tea. Although the rain had been steady during the night, the well-built fire still had some life in it and after a few minutes of concentrated blowing, Albert had it rejuvenated. While the billy boiled, Big Jack shook as much of the wet sand as was possible from the blankets and rolled them into tight bundles. Then he set off to retrieve the canoe. By the time he reappeared, the tea was ready and it helped to wash down the leathery cold strips of damper sweetened with jam. [291] [372]

123 Although the wind had died and the clouds given way to a clear, light blue sky, the sea still had heavy rollers. However, instead of breaking over the canoe, they gently lifted it high in the air, then let it slide down the incline. We set out as the first rays of the sun appeared over the horizon and soon began to feel revived as our clothes began to dry. We stayed fairly close to the shore, close enough so that landmarks could be easily seen. For a while we coasted by the thin white strip of sand along which we 123 had hunted for turtle eggs the afternoon before. The land in back 133 of the beach was low swampland and all that could be seen was a thin line of green foliage. But soon we approached Tubinu Point. Here the beach gave way to a jutting headland and the steep sea- [134] ward cliff was a rainbow of colors where bands of ocherous clays of yellow and red were separated by clear white and topped by a [137] heavy line of dark humus. Tall eucalyptus trees stood right up to the edge of the 75-foot cliff. We stayed well clear of the base, for a short but ragged, rocky reef extended out under the water.

Rounding the point, we came to a small inlet edged with the 123 ever-present tangle of mangrove trees, beyond which was another clean white stretch of sandy beach. About this time the puppy grew restless and started roaming the canoe from stern to bow. Once he had reached the bow he climbed up to the very point and stuck his nose into the wind. As the canoe rose and dipped he would lose his balance and I would grab him and hand him to Agnes. But he would not stay put and soon would again be a live figurehead pointing the way. Finally, Albert said, "Let him go." As was to be expected, the next roller knocked little Tchuwiunga off his perch and into the sea he went. As the canoe passed, Albert leaned over and fished the frightened, struggling puppy out of the water and handed him to Agnes, who began rubbing him down. "Him gotta learn," remarked Albert. "Sea bin teach him more better." Soon Tchuwiunga revived his courage and again ventured forward, but this time instead of standing on the bow, he curled up on the bag of flour and slept soundly until we reached our destination. He had indeed learned his lesson well.

The rolling motion, sun, and inactivity had made both Agnes and me drowsy and we were all but asleep when Big Jack woke [201] us with, "Black Joe mob. Him camp Anderaningo." I looked in

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 8. Melville Island Coast

123 the direction to which he pointed with his chin, but could see nothing
[201] other than white sand broken in spots with the heavy green of the mangrove jungles. "There," he repeated. "See. Him make big smoke." By straining my eyes and imagination I believed I could see a tiny wisp of white smoke rising above the last patch of green on the furthest point of land.

Distances were deceiving, for the point of land which seemed so many miles away was soon reached. The entrance to the Paluwiunga River was a narrow channel cut through the far edge of a broad sandbank. Rather than circumnavigate the bank, the men decided to go over it, but as the waves breaking over the sand were churned into a tangle of white water by the opposing river current, it was deemed advisable that all surplus passengers disembark. Agnes, clutching the puppy, and I, with my KLM bag, jumped overboard into shoulder-high water and slowly made our way over the bank to the shore. The men also went overboard and, with one on each side, they guided the canoe safely to the quiet water of the river.

123 For a while we all stretched our legs walking up the sandy bank of the river until mangrove roots stopped our progress.

Once back in the canoe, Albert took over my place in the bow [226] and with his fish-spear poised he kept a watchful eye on the deep green waters. Once he spied a barramundi and cautiously directed Big Jack to paddle towards the large fish, but it glided out of reach.

About a half mile up the river we came upon the shaded glen of casuarinas, another camping spot with its fresh-water well, named Anderaningo. Here instead of Black Joe's mob we found the Superintendent, Bill Grimster, his son Billy, and two natives, Billy-Two and Brownie. Black Joe's mob had arrived the afternoon before and had been ferried the ten miles up river to the next camping spot in the motor launch. Bill Grimster, having been told by Black Joe that he had seen our smoke near Piriu, knew that we had camped there, and he came back down river with an invitation for me to join them for a night of crocodile hunting before they returned to Snake Bay.

225 For many people in this area, hunting the large salt-water crocodile is a profession or a sought-after sport. In both cases it is dangerous, for this particular species of crocodile is intimidated by nothing and frequently will attack men or beasts without provocation. The crocodiles, which often measure twenty feet in length, [773] occupy a prominent place in the myths, legends, and art of the Tiwi, and many are the true-life tales of people who have lost their [538] lives in battling these beasts, which are hunted by the natives for their meat and valuable skins. When one considers the size of the animals and the size of the canoes, it is no wonder that Bill had discouraged any requests of mine to accompany them. So this invitation was a most welcome and pleasant surprise.

123 I transferred to the launch for the up-river camp so that I would be in time to leave on the hunt at dusk. For the first six miles the river wound seemingly aimlessly through the deep, dank, and mysterious mangrove swamps. At times the branches almost met across the water, brightly colored birds flitted from branch to branch and a subdued splash indicated a crocodile disturbed from his after- [776] noon slumber on the muddy bank. Adding to this almost evil atmosphere were strange clacking and sucking noises emanating from

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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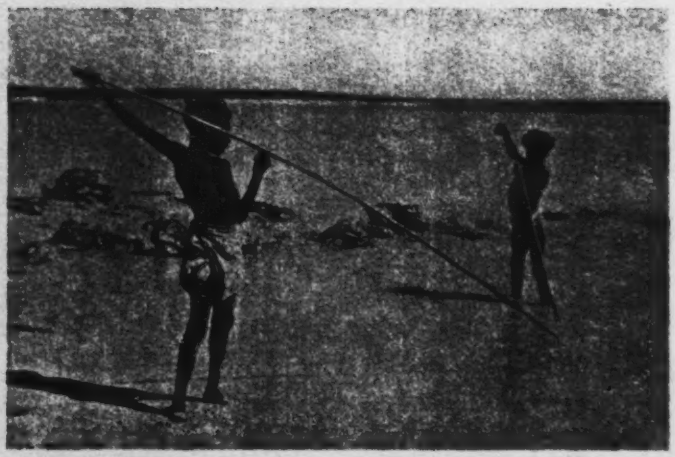

Fig. 9. Two young hunters practicing with fish-spears

123 the impenetrable jungle, which were attributed to the *Ningawi*, the
[776] weird and mysterious "little people" of the mangrove. Rounding a curve in the river, we surprised a flock of whistle ducks sitting on an exposed mudbank. Young Billy tried to shoot one for supper but missed, and soon they were well out of range. On a rare piece of solid ground we saw the long tail and massive hips of a startled
[136] wallaby as he hopped to safety. However, a successful throw of the fish-spear brought us a large barramundi, and the .22 rifle provided both a possum and a fruit bat, or flying fox, for supper.

All of a sudden the mangroves disappeared and our view was no longer restricted to the river bank; rather we gazed through
[137] thick, gnarled white paperbarks on the water's edge to wide expanses of marshy grasslands. A few flocks of black and white geese, which had returned to the swamps early in the evening, were startled by the sound of the motor and rose honking in fright.

About five, we reached Minianapi, a landing place about fifteen yards wide, where solid ground reached the river bank. We were

● 123 met at the water's edge by Black Joe, his wives, Margaret and Filicy, their two children, Dennis and Crissy-Boy, and the rest of his party numbering about twenty. Since it was already growing dark, we made a hasty supper and were soon back in the launch ready for the night's hunt.

123 225 I sat in the stern of the 15-foot boat with Bill Sr., while young Billy sat by the motor in the center holding the battery-powered searchlight. Brownie and Billy-Two were in the bow close to the long, heavy, iron-tipped harpoons. As we continued up river, I was carefully instructed as to what I should do. My instructions were to do absolutely nothing, not move, speak, whisper, nor hardly breathe once the signal had been given that a croc was sighted. Soon it was very dark, the stars were blotted out by heavy clouds, and it rained heavily for a short time. After a while, young Billy, who had been swinging the light slowly from bank to bank, said softly, "There!" and held the light steadily on the left bank. Immediately Bill shut off the motor and both he and Brownie took up paddles. Billy-Two meanwhile had eased himself up so that he stood straddling the bow, a foot on each gunwale. The harpoon was poised above his shoulder ready to throw. Extremely slowly and without a sound we approached the two shining red disks, the croc's eyes, held transfixed by the powerful light. When will he ever throw, I silently wondered; but it was not until we were within two or three feet that Billy-Two lunged forward and thrust the harpoon deep into the crocodile's back. Suddenly the silence was broken; Billy-Two wrenched the harpoon shaft loose and laid it in the boat, taking up instead the rapidly-disappearing rope attached to the iron barb. The crocodile sounded and began swimming under the boat. Young Billy gave the light to his father and took up the shot-gun. Brownie helped Billy-Two pull in the rope and suddenly the water broke. The light and shot-gun were aimed and almost simultaneously a shot struck the grotesque head; soon the animal was dead. All hands then heaved and the 14-foot crocodile was laid to rest at our feet.

The night was young, so we continued up river. After a while the moon broke through the clouds and silhouetted the white paperbarks. The river grew quite narrow and wound through a succession of mirror-black pools dotted with water-lilies and criscrossed just

under the surface by the massive roots of the paperbarks. It was in 123
just this sort of pool that the largest of the five crocs landed that [225]
night, was harpooned. The huge 18-foot animal dived into the roots
and it took about twenty tense minutes to dislodge and dispatch him.
Aside from the crocodiles the only wild life seen that night was a
small and very frightened little mouse who suddenly appeared on
my lap and then just as suddenly disappeared over the boat's side.

We returned to Minianapi at daybreak and the hot tea and
roast goose seemed a perfect breakfast, or was it supper? It didn't
matter for we were soon sound asleep.

When we finally awoke in mid-afternoon we found the camp
almost deserted. "Everyone go walkabout; kill geese," Albert
informed us as he and Agnes gathered more wood to build up the
smouldering fire. It was very quiet in the small clearing and only
the little black spots of charcoal spaced in irregular intervals on the
ground were evidence that there were more than our mob in resi-
dence. The clearing itself was quite bare because it had been burned
by the first comers, with the double purpose of clearing out the
four-foot grass itself, and any of the various poisonous snakes [136]
which were quite likely to infest it. In back of the clearing was a
thick tangle of low bushes through which ran a little foot-path.
Agnes started down this path carrying a billy can and I offered to
go with her, but Albert said, "No, by um by we go, him long way,
him only get a little bit now." After one gets used to the pronoun [195]
"him" being used to refer to everything animal, vegetable, and
mineral, this phrase is perfectly understandable: the first "him"
referred to the water, the second to Agnes.

So instead of collecting water, I wandered down to the river
bank where Billy-Two, Brownie, and a few of the other men, were
busy skinning the crocodiles. This they did by cutting the skin first
around the head, then down either side of the rows of bumps
running along the spine to the tail. The skin was then carefully [281]
peeled and cut from the body. Once free it was rubbed with salt
which would act as a preservative until such time as the supply boat
would arrive to carry it to Darwin. There the skins would be sold [439 452]
to the dealer and the proceeds credited to the hunter's account or
sent in the form of hard cash to the settlement for distribution. Now
they were folded into bundles and loaded into the launch, and large [262]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 10. Skinning a large crocodile

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pieces of the white meat were carried into the camp to be roasted for dinner. What was not to be consumed that night was thrown into the water, for meat spoils quickly in this sticky climate.

Darkness came early, and with it came the return of the goose hunters and the departure of the launch with the Grimsters and their crocodile team. Once more they would spend the night hunting crocodiles, this time downstream on their way back to the settlement. Soon many little fires broke up the darkness of the clearing and the smell of fresh roasting meat wafted over to where Albert, Agnes, Jack, and I were opening cans of corned beef. "Tomorrow we go bush," Albert remarked and I heartily assented.

Young Brook, a lean young man, and his wife, Alice,

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 11. Even the youngest respect the teeth of the crocodile

approached our fire. "You savey goose?" he asked me. "Oh yes," I said, "we eat him along America." He handed me a large juicy leg which I gave to Albert to divide, then squatted down at the edge of the fire's glow. I handed my tin of tobacco to Alice and she filled her husband's pipe. Picking up a burning branch from the fire, she knocked a hot coal into the bowl of the pipe and began smoking. Soon she handed it to Young Brook. Suddenly our attention was directed to the opposite side of the clearing where Dennis, the four-year old daughter of Black Joe was crying hysterically. Tuki, a tall powerful man of fifty-five, was doing his best to calm her and disentangle himself from her clinging arms so that he could leave. Tuki and his wife, Fat Alice, were a childless couple and

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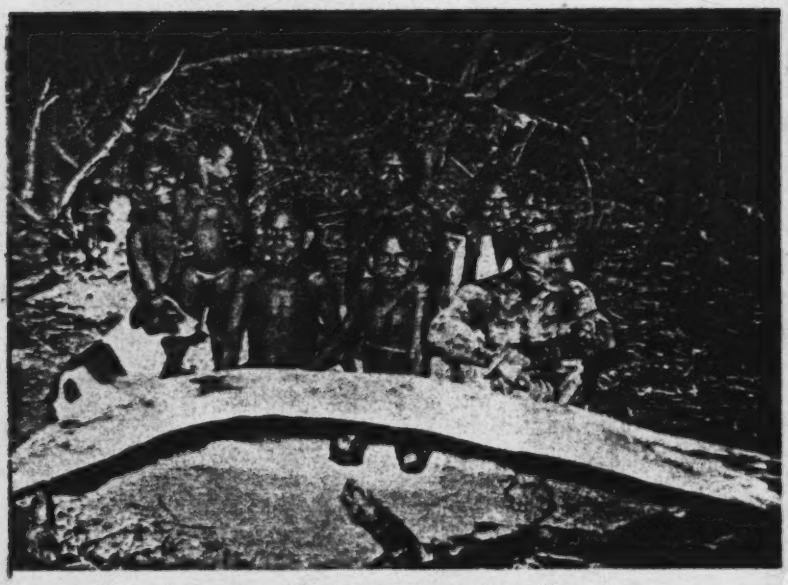

Fig. 12. A Tiwi family camped for the night

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Black Joe, Fat Alice's brother, had given them his eldest daughter in adoption. However, Dennis spent as much time with her proper parents as with her foster parents and it was quite evident that her affection was at least equally divided. Albert went over and managed to bring the screaming, kicking child back to our camp and asked me to give her some of the hard candy which I had brought with me. It was some time, however, before her attention was sufficiently distracted to allow Tuki and the other men to slip away into the canoe to hunt crocodiles for another night. Agnes commented to me, "Let him cry? That white man rule no good. By and by they go silly."

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We strolled back to Black Joe's camp with Dennis, and listened to a discussion concerning the superiority of crocodile hunting over

settlement work. It seemed the chief advantage was that they received 'money-in-the-finger' from the skins they caught. They didn't understand why they didn't also get paid for the settlement work. I kept silent, but soon they turned to me and said, "You get job; how much you pay?" I told them, and then went on to say that out of that salary I had to pay someone for the food I ate, the clothes I wore, the house I lived in and so on, whereas they did not have to pay for the flour, tea, sugar, meat, blankets, or clothes the welfare people gave them. There was a long silence during which, I believe, each man was figuring how much all these benefits were worth in hard money. Finally Ginger said slowly, "Maybe, this way more better." 123 465 521

Soon the visitors rose and returned to their fires. Someone started a song, a low nasal chant. Another, a woman, began a high-pitched love song, and to this discordant lullaby I soon fell asleep. 123 533

As usual, it was barely light when the camp came to life again. After the customary tea breakfast, the various families discussed among themselves the day's plans. Black Joe and Long Peter, their wives and children, were taking the canoe up-river to hunt. Young Brook and his brothers, Danny Brown and Charlie Cook, their wives and children, soon left to hunt in the area back of Minianapi. Charlie Quiet and Roger also left. "Now we go?" I turned in question to Albert. "No, we stay behind. Build house. No good you go bush. Too much grass, plenty big mob cheeky snake. By and by that mob burn grass; then we go bush." It seemed like a logical explanation, but I was disappointed. 123 512

The day was already sticky and muggy, and tired of inactivity I started off toward the creek, saying I was going for a swim. Both natives jumped up and said, "No. No. Too much crocodile, more better go along billabong." So with Agnes ahead we started down the path leading away from the creek. Soon we were out of the thick tangle of bushes separating the clearing from the true bush. Now the path led over the rocky, dusty ground, which had but recently been burned. The trunks of the large bloodwood and stringy-bark trees were blackened for about four feet up from their base. The spiraled trunks of the screwpalm, as well as their lower dried leaves, also had a charred appearance. Except for an occa- 123 [137]

123 sional patch of grass, which the rushing fire had missed, there was not a living green plant below the four-foot line. Burning the country is an annual occurrence and many are the laws governing 221 who may burn and who may subsequently hunt in the newly cleared 224 land. Because the fires are set each year, there is no accumulation of dry tinder to feed the fire and allow it to rage uncontrollably. Only the grass and a few fallen logs catch and these will burn rapidly and fiercely, but for a very short period. Any gap in the vegetation will stop the fire and the heavy dew, falling in the evening, will also put out the flames, leaving perhaps only isolated, smouldering logs to burn through the night. Until the first shoots of new grass push [421] their way through the charred ground, the individual hunter who set the fire has exclusive rights to the area he set alight. Of course, no one except those who belong to that country may burn without [671] permission of the owners. As far as possible, these laws are still upheld.

123 We soon came to a branch in the path and Albert indicated that we two girls should continue straight ahead; he would stop behind. In front of us stretched the fresh-water swamp. Out of the almost inky but clear water rose the gnarled paperbark trees, their roots so intertwined they almost formed a floor, albeit a most slippery and irregular one, over the rotten vegetation in the bottom of the swamp. I picked a particularly large rooted tree for my bath [515] tub, and a short distance away Agnes did the same. If one was careful not to disturb the fine deposit on the bottom but managed to stay on top of the slippery roots, the clear cool water was as sweet and soft as one could wish for. We stayed for about an hour, washing ourselves and our clothes, but finally an impatient call from Albert put an end to this pleasure. Albert had been hunting for a possum, but in this area so close to the camp, they had already been depleted.

123 Instead of returning to camp, Albert decided that now was as good a time as any to cut his *milingani*, the sticks with which they 411 kill the geese. After another mile or so into the bush, we came to a 322 grove of stout bushes of a kind I had not seen before. They had [223] long, straight branches of about a half-inch diameter. These Albert

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Fig. 13. Gathering water-lilies in a fresh-water swamp

cut and after he had collected about thirty he selected a nice, smooth ledge of rock in the shade to work further on the sticks. First he stripped the bark, then measuring them against his arm he cut them so that each stick was as long as the distance from his fingertips to his elbow. All this he did with his knife, holding it by the tip of its long blade so that the handle would add its weight to each blow. He carefully smoothed off the two ends so there were no loose splinters. We each took a bundle of these sticks, tied them with strips of pandanus, and returned to the camp. Here they were laid in the water close to the bank and weighted down with a rock. This would make them good and heavy, it was explained.

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During the afternoon, the two men worked on the permanent house which Bill Grimster had ordered. Big Jack had spent the morning cutting posts and had brought in about half a dozen. By late afternoon, when the others returned, they had been set upright in holes dug to individual measure so that they stood firm without bracing.

Once everyone had returned, a fire was built. The men collected their individual bundles of *milingani* and placed the ends of the dripping sticks in the flames. They squatted over the sticks and individually started a chant during which they cupped their hands in the smoke and carrying it to their bodies, slapped their necks, then their arms. "Knar. Knar Gerra doo (slap), Gerra doo (slap)." The chant was nothing more than the imitation of the cries of the geese and the whir of the sticks. They explained that to bring the goose down they had to hit it directly on the neck or wings. "Why

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 14. "Cooking milingani"

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do you cook the sticks?" I asked. "To make them dry so they won't slip in our hands," they replied.

Once the sticks were all well charred on the ends the men took them down to the canoe. For once, I used my status of ethnographer and overruled my role of a woman, and accompanied the men on what was properly men's business. The presence of women or children might bring bad luck. Whether the explanation was simply that women and children are considered to be lacking in the amount of silence or immobility required, or whether the reason was more subtle, I never found out. "This properly men's business," was the only explanation.

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We took the canoe a quarter of a mile up stream, where we

disembarked on the edge of a large expanse of wet, grassy marsh. On the bank a few low trees provided cover for the hunters, who spread out about fifty yards apart. We waited. Then in the distance the first flock of six geese appeared, flying low over the marsh. They were not headed for us, but passed over the line of hunters about a hundred yards upstream. We could not see the hunters, but the same six geese continued safely after passing the firing line. Now another small group of geese seemed to be heading in our direction. Albert slowly took his position, his legs apart, the left stretched in front, the right somewhat bent as his body arched backward. One *milingani* he held near the charred end in his right arm which was so far back over his head that the tip of the stick almost touched the ground. As counter balance, his left hand, holding several spares, was pointed forward toward the geese. Just as the geese were to pass over our heads, they swerved and went instead over the man to the right of us. You could hear the whir of the stick as it was thrown with tremendous force up into the air, turning end over end, and then the 'thwack' as it reached its mark. A goose, its neck hanging loosely, spiralled down, to land with a splash close to the hunter's feet. 123 223

Now the flocks were more numerous as the dusk grew thicker. Soon a group flew directly overhead and Albert aimed and threw, but the spiralling stick slid off the wing tip of the lead goose and he continued, somewhat shaken but quite unharmed. Again and again Albert threw at the increasing numbers of honking homeward-bound geese, but when the last stick was thrown and it was quite dark, we still had no geese. When we gathered, it was found that out of ten hunters with perhaps three hundred sticks thrown, only two sticks had found their mark. This was not good. Albert was worried. "Maybe someone bin die, make me bad luck." [763 777]

Later that evening Black Joe started singing a chant. "*Mobuditi*, plenty goose here; give us some." I asked him whom he was singing to and, although names of the dead are most infrequently mentioned for fear that the ghost of that person, its *mobuditi*, will hear it, this was one occasion where the *mobuditi* could do more good than harm. So the *mobuditi* of Bangri was called upon. Bangri, it was explained, had been a big man, "Plenty wives, maybe hundred. This his country; him grave close up along 223 789 775

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Fig. 15. Weather-worn poles mark the grave of someone long dead but not forgotten

223 bush. He bin die long time ago." This had been his country while
789 alive and it was still his country, for his spirit remains near the
grave and still hunts the wild animals and birds, while the spirits
775 of his wives collect the wild yams, and his little spirit children play
in the bush. Bangri will share this food with others who come, and
their *mobudities*, should they die and be buried in the country, for
as long as his name is remembered, and until his grave-posts rot
with the passing of time.

● 123 But Bangri was not cooperative. The next day the hunters
found little game in the bush and the women turned to the laborious
[222 job of digging six-foot holes with a stick to obtain the small yams
224] that are to be found at this season. Again the grass was too thick,
the snakes too cheeky, and Albert advised against our going bush.
[152 I decided the more logical explanation was that Albert considered
777] we ourselves had ample food, and besides he was sincerely worried
[223] about his long run of bad luck. But he left with the others that

evening to kill geese. When they returned with only three geese, a long conference was held. I offered all the food I could spare and it was decided that, in return for a few yams and some of the goose, I should make dampers and put jam on them for the children, all of whom were under five and very hungry, and give small pieces of tobacco to the men and women. This was Albert's, Agnes's, and Big Jack's tobacco, and so everyone traded something and all pronounced it a fair deal. I cooked the damper, smothered it with jam and, with Agnes prompting, called; "Kakritjui Kali." "Little ones, come." The five who could walk, ran, then stood shyly by while I handed each a piece; then they ran back to their mothers. Soon they were back and, nudged by their mothers, all murmured "Thank you very much." This was a phrase I never heard, either in the native language or in English, when they were receiving from another native. Giving and receiving were so much a part of their life that among themselves "thank you's" seemed unnecessary.

123 [223] [437] [431 576]

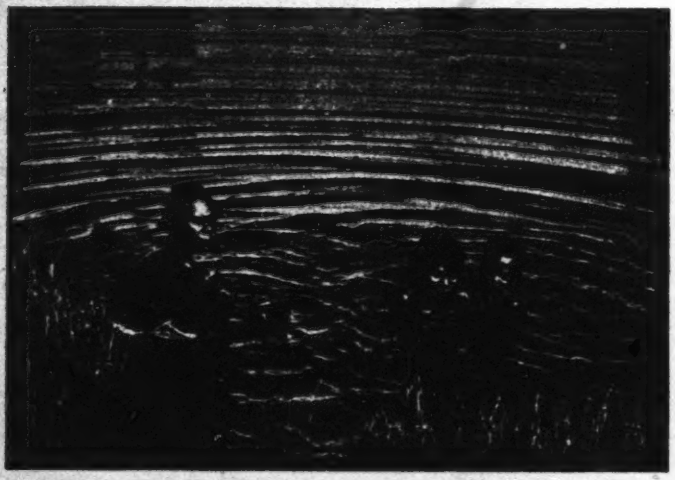

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Fig. 16. Agnes, Filicy, and Crissy-boy cooling off in the river

123 The following day we finally went hunting. Peter, his wife Dorrie, and daughter Althea, Filicy and her son Crissy-Boy, Albert, Agnes and I all squeezed into the canoe and paddled about two miles upstream to the next landing. Tudiunginarim, "white-paint-place," [177] used to be an old camp of the white buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who at the turn of the century was the first white contact for many of these people. It was very hot and the women took their children 123 into the water, waist deep near the bank, for a swim. It was easy 291 for them in their *nagas*, for when they came out they merely wrapped a dry one around and slid the wet one off underneath very 515 modestly. I, in my shorts and shirt, finally gave in to the temptation 609 and, vowing that if I were to live here longer I would take up the native costume, went in fully dressed. This modesty was a funny thing; they who wore no clothes until contact with white men, were being modest only for my sake, and in return I could do no less. So with dripping clothes, which incidentally felt wonderful in the heat, I set off following Albert and Agnes.

123 The nature of the bush was the same as that in back of Minianapi and indeed the same as that around Snake Bay: the same 224 trees, the same burned earth, the same fan palms and pandanus, and the same flatness. The natives always knew where they were; I never did. We were looking for possums and as these furry marsupials sleep in hollow trees during the day, we investigated every likely tree for evidence that they had recently climbed it. Sometimes the little tears in the rough bark could only be seen silhouetted against the sun; at other times the dry ground around the base of the tree would show very definite tracks. Soon Agnes, who was off somewhere to the left of Albert and me, gave two high-pitched calls. [198] In the hunting language I had already learned, one call meant "I'm here, where are you?" and would be answered by their companions with a similar single call. However, two calls meant "Come; I've found something." So we turned in the direction of the call and soon found Agnes standing by a short, hollow tree. Albert took his axe and cut a long pole which he then thrust up through a hole in the tree's base and wiggled. Out popped a large grey possum which sat on the top of the tree trying to make itself as small as possible. Agnes and Albert threw all manner of sticks and stones at it and finally managed to knock it down, when it scuttled away.

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Fig. 17. "Hunting a possum"

It was soon overtaken by Albert who killed it quickly with a blow from a stick. As he brought it back he said, "Him big mother. See him pickaninni." And he held up a hairless baby barely three inches long, its eyes still closed, but very much alive. "Oh, kill it quick, Albert," I begged. He shook his head, "I can't kill him, I too sorry alonga him." Here we were at an impass, two people too sorry alonga him; one too sorry to kill it, and one too sorry to let it live. Who was right?

Meanwhile, Agnes took the mother possum and pulled the fur from a small area on the belly and then slitting the skin with the sharp end of a broken stick, she withdrew the gall bladder and intestines. "Him make him bad," she explained. We did not stop to cook the animal, but continued our search. This area had all been burned by the previous parties and already little delicate shoots of grass were poking up through the black ground.

During the next hour we wandered slowly through the bush and, although we saw many trees which had been inhabited by possums, they were now empty. One that looked most likely was hollow and Albert hopefully built a fire in the rotten base, then sat back and waited for the smoke to drive the animal out. After half an hour, it was quite obvious that no one was at home.

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Then our luck turned. This time, when Albert gave the "come here" call, it was because he had located a wild honey nest, or "sugar-bag," high in a large stringy-bark eucalyptus. There was little point in cutting this large tree down so Albert prepared to climb. First he cut a small sapling and laid it at a 45-degree angle against a crotch where the massive trunk split in two. Then, grip-

123 ping the axe with his teeth, he ran up the sapling on all fours with
222 as much agility as a monkey. Upon reaching the crotch, he put his
481 arms around the trunk, placed the soles of his feet close together against the bark, and quickly progressed in a sort of leaping motion up to the top of the tree. Once there he casually climbed up, over, and around the various branches, until he reached the object of his climb, the hollow branch with the little hole through which was passing a steady stream of small insects. This branch was quickly cut through and fell crashing to the ground. Soon Albert was down again, investigating this find with Agnes and me. The hole was enlarged and the combs of dark honey exposed, still crawling with the little black bees. We dug in with our fingers or
[133] brushes made by chewing small twigs, quite unmindful of the bees, who obligingly never developed stings in this part of the world.
[262 The honey was dark and very strong, but when mixed with the dry,
237] crumbly, yellow "bee bread" a nice balance of taste was obtained. It took the three of us very little time to finish the sugar-bag and off we went—this time in a homeward direction.

123 The one possum looked very small and Albert again began mut-
224 tering about "someone *mobnditi* make me bad luck." We separated again and when almost to the creek Agnes suddenly held me back
[777] and cautioned silence. Carefully she picked up a stout stick from the ground and then approached what I suddenly noticed was a very fat goana, about two feet long, apparently sound asleep on a nearby tree trunk. One quick blow and the lizard fell to the ground, quite dead. We carried the catch to the landing and quickly had another swim before Albert caught up. We were gathering firewood when Albert arrived and explained his delay by holding up another
123 possum. The second possum was immediately gutted, then both
252 were laid on the fire and turned frequently until all the fur had been burned off and the skin made brittle. The animals were quartered and laid again on the fire until well roasted. The goana received no preliminary treatment before going on the fire. When all were
[264] cooked, they were removed and laid on a "table" of clean, green leaves, and we reached in and tore off pieces of the steaming, juicy
123 meat. It is impossible to describe this meat to someone who has not
262 tasted it. All I can say is that it was tender and tasty and perfectly

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Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

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262 cooked, with that delicious charcoal-broiled flavor so much sought after in our more elite dining establishments or in our backyards.

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224 Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goanas, they brought over to show us an extremely large water [431] snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tre- [513] mendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minianapi in time to meet the geese. 123 All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless 231 baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's 484 hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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equally entertaining as she sang some risqué love songs she had picked up around camp.

The evening's goose hunt was even more unsuccessful than the earlier hunts. Two of the men separated and went down river and killed three geese, but the others, upstream in the usual place, did not even see any, and there was more talk of *mobudities* by everyone way into the night.

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The following day was the last and, as the Assistant Superintendent was due that evening, feverish work was done by one and all on the long neglected house. Evidently the arrival of Paul scared off the ghosts, for that evening we almost had a goose per person, and my final memory of Minianapi is one of flickering fires in the moonlight and the smell of fresh roasted goose carried on the gentle breezes.

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Fig. 21. After the return trip the launch's motor gets a much needed overhaul

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

right of her clansmen and more specifically her sons (in consultation with her own wishes) to arrange her remarriage became restored as a sort of residual or reanimated right. Moreover, as we shall see, it was in line with their own political interests for the sons to insist on exercising such a right. 584 587 614

Naming Rules

Such a way of integrating the two forms of marriage is supported by the Tiwi rules for naming children, which are very relevant to the issue. We mentioned earlier that the right to bestow a daughter was vested, strictly speaking, not in the actual father, but in the man who named her. Personal names were important in the Tiwi value system[8] and were given to every child a few weeks after its birth by its father or the man currently married to its mother. But whenever a husband died and the widows remarried, all the personal names given to their children by the dead man became strictly taboo, and the new husbands of the widows had the duty (or right) of providing all the children with new names. Since most women were widowed several times in their lives, most children were thus renamed several times in *their* lives, and the names given them by the earlier husbands of their mother dropped completely out of use.[9] Logically under this system nobody would get a permanent name until his or her mother was dead, since as long as she were alive she would remarry and her new husband would rename all her children, no matter how aged they might be. The Tiwi insisted that logically this was how the naming system was supposed to work, and, in fact, the personal names of even prominent senior men did become taboo whenever their mothers' current husbands died. But convenience proved stronger than logic and the personal names of most men and women became well established in their early adulthood as people became used to them. While such names did become taboo when the man who had given them died, the taboo in such cases was temporary rather than permanent, and after a decent interval the name would creep back into use replacing some new and unfamiliar one which might be bestowed by the widow's new husband. In general, the name which thus became permanently or irrevocably attached to a person was the name which a person held when he or she first emerged into tribal prominence or first began to get talked about. For a male, this was most usually the name he was bearing in his late twenties and early thirties; for a female, the name she was known by in her early adolescence when she first left her father's household to take up residence with her earliest husband. 553 768 587 [183] [551]

That convenience thus overbore logic in the Tiwi naming system by

[8] See Hart 1931.

[9] It can easily be seen what headaches this naming system created for an anthropologist trying to collect genealogies. Individuals would occur in one genealogy under one name and in another under another name, making the task of cross-indexing and cross-checking enormously difficult. [124]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

3

The Prestige and Influence System

To become a really big man, or even a minor figure among the elders, a Tiwi had to devote all his adult life to that goal. Careers were built up and influential positions gained not by executing spectacular coups at any one time, but by slow, devious maneuvering and dealing in influence throughout adulthood. Men in their early thirties invested their very small assets in the hope of large returns twenty years later, and if the anthropologist witnessed the initial investment he was not around to witness the final return; or if he witnessed the return he found it difficult to reconstruct all the relevant details of the initial investment. A man in 1928 bestowed his daughter in a certain direction because of some deal back in 1900, arranged by men many of whom were now dead. And the bestowal in 1928 was done in such a way as to bind the hands of men negotiating in 1960, some of whom were infants in 1928.[1] 557

The Tiwi influence and career patterns can best be compared to a sort of nonstop bridge game wherein the scores were never totaled up nor a new game ever started on a clean slate.[2] Whenever an observer came in, he always

[1] A typical illustration of this situation arose during the writing of this book. In 1928-29 Hart had observed Padimo beginning to acquire a number of bestowed wives. Being interested in the status of Padimo twenty-five years later, he included Padimo in a list of inquiries to Pilling. Pilling's reply: "Re Padimo. I am almost certain that he was the 'Paddy' who died leaving several widows, in February, 1953, about three months before I got to the Islands. The natives did not like to talk much about him while I was there (because of the taboo on dead men's names) and his widows were still being fought over. The fights over his widows did not end until the week I left (if they really did then)." Thus the deals which Hart saw in 1928-29 were having delayed repercussions when Pilling was there in 1953-54. 124 768 551 578

[2] We use bridge rather than poker as our analogy because nobody ever "went broke" in Tiwi influence competition and nobody ever "won the pot," because there was no pot to win. The scoring was always, so to speak, on a comparative basis and everybody, even the most unsuccessful man, had some score relative to his competitors.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 773 [124] Although, in the interpretation of the paintings on this basket, gathered in the early days of the expedition, the designs were not given topographical meanings, there is little doubt that fuller inquiries would have shown that the designs and the topography were linked.

On Pl. 8c, D, *e*, pictures the body of the turtle-woman, *a*, *a*, being the front flippers, *d*, *d*, the hind flippers, *b*, the carapace, *g*, the head, and *c*, *c*, *c*, etc., the bones of the creature; the dotted background, *f*, represents the marks on the tortoise-shell of the carapace.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala, at Wuriupi

821 773 Every morning, the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,[29] climbs a high mountain in the east, and, carrying her blazing torch of bark, travels across the sky, parallel to the earth. Sometimes, the sun-woman, to please her husband, powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which, flying into the sky, reddens the early morning clouds.

On reaching the western horizon the sun-woman extinguishes her bark torch, and, by the light from its glowing end, finds her way back to the east through the underground world, Ilara.[30] But, before setting out on that journey, *Wuriupranala* again decorates herself with powdered ochres thereby colouring both the western sky and the clouds.

532 773 Nine bark paintings, i.e. Pls. 5A, B, C, D, 6A, B, 7B, C, D, illustrate the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, and the topography of Wuriupi. The remainder of the paintings dealing with the sun are described under Astronomy, Chapter 7.

Pl. 5A is a painting on a small bark basket, which deals with the myth of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

The circle in the centre of each disc, of which there are sixteen, symbolizes the sun-woman, the radiating lines being the rays of light at sunrise and sunset. The three wide vertical bands represent the track of the sun-woman as she moves across the sky, and the lines, linking the discs, the path in the underground world, Ilara, along which *Wuriupranala* returns to the east. The cross-hatched areas are rain, the dots, stars (*sapalinga*), and the short parallel lines, top and bottom, rain falling from the clouds.

The central dot on Pl. 5B, is the "eye" of the sun-woman seated in her paper-bark hut (the inner circle). The five radiating lines within the circle are the posts of her hut, the cross-hatching is her hair, and the five outer concentric circles are her hair-string belts.

[29] In one bark painting, Pl. 6OA, B, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala* alternately travel across the sky. This is the only time that *Murupiangkala* was referred to as a sun-woman.
[30] The moon returns to the east by a similar road.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 the background is the sea. The white central transverse panel is the beach at
776 Wulrungku.

The meaning of the designs on the lower panel are similar, the black central and branching lines representing the tracks made by the *Piripiruis* as they travel to and from their camps (the black discs); the encircling lines represent the sand around those camps, and the painted background, the jungle which shelters the little people.

3. THE PARAMANUAS[48]

776 The *Paramanuas* are short, particularly active, agile men, about three feet high, with thick, powerful limbs, tusk-like teeth, and projecting toe and finger nails.

In general, except for these details, they resemble the aborigines in appearance, eat the same foods and follow a similar way of life.

They live in many places throughout Melville and Bathurst Islands, but no one except those captured by the *Paramanuas*, has seen either them or
[753] their homes. As they dislike being talked about, and often make those people ill who do so, I found it somewhat difficult to gather information about the
● [124] *Paramanuas*.

The homes of the *Paramanuas*, their wives and their children, are spacious underground caves, the entrances to which are openings either in the side of termite mounds, or hollow trees. In these caves, the men store their utensils,
[343] weapons and food (Fig. 14). Their cooking fire, like that of the aborigines, is always outside of their camp.

Occasionally a *Paramanua*, wishing to befriend an aboriginal, will watch
776 him for some time. Then one day when the aboriginal is hunting by himself,
787 the *Paramanua* will cast a spear at him. But, before the spear has reached its mark, the *Paramanua* will have caught it and, standing at the back of the aboriginal, will be tickling his ribs. The aboriginal, thoroughly scared, turns to strike his opponent, only to find him again at his back. This game goes on until the aboriginal is exhausted, dizzy and confused. Then hitting him on the side of the head with an open hand, rendering the aboriginal unconscious, the spirit man picks up the prostrate man and carries him to the underground home of the *Paramanuas*.

Awaking to find himself in a dark place, the aboriginal is terrified, but on receiving plenty of food from the *Paramanuas*, and treated with every kindness, the aboriginal loses all fear, and as the weeks go by, all sense of time.

[48] Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to these little people as Barminuar.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Juwuku; while the sun-woman, the men of the Milky Way, the star women and the moon-man (except for a short period each month) travel daily across its surface. 772 776 821

Above the sky is another world, Tuniruna. This is the day-time home of numberless star women, the *Tapalinga*, and the men of the Milky Way, the *Mahdaiamini*. During the dry season, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*, with her family leave the sky-world, Juwuku, and make their homes in Tuniruna.

Unlike the Ilara, the lowest world, Tuniruna resembles the earth except that there is no sea, although there are many freshwater streams and swamps. All the creatures and plants that live on Melville Island, with the exception of the saltwater fish, are also at Tuniruna.

Every morning the inhabitants of the upper world leave their camps, the women to gather the plant foods of the forest, the men to hunt and capture the creatures, such as freshwater fish and the geese, ducks, pelicans and jabirus, that live in the extensive swamps. Also, many fruits grow at Tuniruna, some of which were specifically named, i.e., *rakarina*, the wild plum; *tauraruina*, the white-fruited eugenia; *kinamia*, the red-fruited eugenia; *putatakuma*, a small egg-shaped fruit about three-eighths of an inch long; *kwerka*, cycad fruit, and the various yams.

By the time the sun-woman has sunk below the western horizon and extinguished her torch, the inhabitants of Tuniruna, the upper world, have returned from their foodgathering and are lighting their camp-fires to cook the food they have brought in. The light from these fires illuminates the upper world as brightly during the night-time as the sun-woman, with her blazing torch, illuminates the earth during the day-time.

About November, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali* leave Tuniruna and travel from place to place in the sky-world, shedding rain on the parched earth. During this time, the aborigines claim that those with good hearing can distinguish a low "Sh . . . sh . . .", the pleasure call of the thirsty trees as their roots drink the moisture from the sodden ground. It is then that the trees and plants of the upper world, using the raindrops as a vehicle, send their spirits (analogous to the human *Piripituis*) (p. 146), to the ground beneath, where they grow into plants similar to their progenitors in the upper world.[17] That is, all the plants and trees in the land of the Tiwi were once, as tiny spirits, dropped from the upper world, Tuniruna. 776 821 [824]

[17] I did not specifically inquire whether the creatures in the upper world also sent down their spirits in the same manner as the plants. However, as both plants and human beings have a spirit origin, it is reasonable to assume that the creatures originate in a similar manner. Further research on this subject will be of considerable interest. [124]

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

all these day-to-day activities of ordinary elementary field work, are, one presumes, based upon some common-sense judgments about the "personalities" of the natives with whom the anthropologist is living in rather intimate association. 121

Unfortunately the conventions of anthropology are such that it is just this sort of material which is never published and yet it would seem to be precisely this sort of material, if organized and systematized a little, which would throw light upon the amount of individual personality variation and the range of personality types which are to be found in the simpler societies. Too often the old-fashioned anthropologist, asked what he knows about the "personality" of his tribe, is apt to reply rather defensively, "Well, nothing much; you see I didn't pay much attention to toilet training when I was there, nor was I competent to give Rorschachs and T.A.T.'s." If, instead of being intimidated by the question, he would take the trouble to recall the ten natives he knew best (in the sense of knowing that is involved in the everyday statement "I know him pretty well") and attempt to describe briefly the "personality" of each of the ten, he would, one suspects, be astonished not only at how much common-sense knowledge he has of the personalities of the men he is describing but also at the range of difference that they exhibit.

As a crude sample of what would be revealed if the ordinary fieldworking anthropologist would make some attempt at "personality description" along such lines, there is offered in this paper a very superficial and cursory examination of the "personalities"[1] of five Australian aborigines whom the writer believes (perhaps erroneously) he got to know reasonably well *as people*, in the course of field work among the tribe to which they belonged—the Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands, North Australia. One cannot live with any tribe for two years, especially in the very primitive and intimate living conditions of nomadic Australian life, without getting to know certain individuals better than others, and two of the five men in question were not only trusted informants and advisers but also twenty-four-hour-a-day companions for weeks at a time. The basis of selection of these two, Mariano and Tipperary, is that the writer knew them over a long period of time and was able to observe them under a great variety of circumstances.[2] The addition of the other three—Antonio, Louis and Bob—is suggested by the fact that they were brothers or half-brothers of the first two, all five having a common mother, a woman named Bongdadu. The selection of a group of brothers for intensive study is justified in the present context by the self-evident fact that if, as is alleged by the personality and culture adherents, a common culture, with common toilet training, common family conditioning, etc., produces homogeneous personalities in the simpler societies, then such homogeneity of personality should be all the greater in a group of men who not only are products of the same culture but grew up in the same household, and were suckled, reared and toilet-trained by the same mother. 115 124 [121]

The Tiwi, who numbered 1,062 people in 1928-30, are divided into nine hordes or subtribes scattered over two islands. The southern section of Bathurst 105 000

I was told that

765 the old man had chanted about the *Tarula*,[1]
533 who had planted magic on the beaches to
754 the north at the beginning of the wet season.
[648] The sun heated the magic, and up it went like smoke and the wind blew it all about. The magic works on the blackfellow with a feeling like a snake crawling up the legs. It moves up to his stomach, and when it reaches his heart he eats no more and dies. He also sang that he was an old man, his wind was short and soon he would die. Later he sang of a fight he had had with another tribe. Later he sang of people who came and fed him while he was sick. When standing in the water he was calling on the others to make the ceremony. When he threw up the stones he called *wei tua*, i.e "finish."

754 During the next four weeks I visited tribes in various parts of the islands and heard the same story. I was shown a sample of the magic. It was a tightly woven string bag about the size of a billiard ball and stuffed with kapok. This was said to have been "sung" before it was buried.

● 124 Statistics of the mortality of the epidemic
902 presented a problem. The only words for numbers which I could obtain with certainty

[1] The *tarula* were mainland blacks in the employ of local white men. They were called *tarula* ("lightning") after the guns carried by their employers.

[p 80-A]

124 802 were *yadi*, *irrara*, *irradroma*, *arkwawi* and *inalti*, respectively one, two, three, few and many. Some natives had a vague idea of five and ten. A nominal roll of the dead [551] was impossible, as the names of the dead are *ardjidit*, "unlawful," "taboo." A method was arranged whereby flat sticks were used and notched. Separate sticks were taken for males and for females. A group would sit about and the dead identified by relationship with the living. A big notch in the sticks would be made for each adult, a smaller notch for a child, and a tiny notch for a baby. Records obtained in this way 165 showed that at least 56 men, 87 women, 17 boys, 25 girls and one male and one female infant had died. The population of the islands, before the epidemic, was estimated as a result of general enquiries to be about 650, so the known death roll of 187 indicates a high mortality rate.

The original rumour suggested that the natives were dying of measles, as someone had diagnosed some illnesses at the Mission about Christmas time as measles. The extremely low number of infant deaths was entirely against measles being the cause of the holocaust, and supports the native diagnosis of magic.

H. K. Fry,
D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.

[p. 80-B]

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 0120 Tiwi 0120

is desirous of starting his household has inherited the right of arranging his mother's remarriage, he may well enter into a contract involving an exchange of mothers with another youth in a similar position. While a son is accorded this right, I suspect that in many of the cases of mother exchange the real arrangers are the mothers. 584 587 593

Tiwi Kinship Terminology

For the sake of the record, I present herewith the kinship terms which I collected in 1954. It must be understood that my major informants on the classification of kin were women. Although most of the terms were also checked with male informants, through oversight this was not done in a few instances. Although a full discussion of the terminology would perhaps be valuable, limitations of time and space compel me to limit my comments to matters directly pertinent to my discussion of the marriage system. Unless otherwise indicated, all the terms listed are employed by male as well as female speakers. 601 [124]

Sibling Terminology

1 *iwuni:* elder brother. Affinal application: WiSiHu, MoBrDaHu (ws).
2 *iwini:* younger brother. Affinal application: WiSiHu, FaSiDaHu (ms).
3 *imbunga:* elder sister. Affinal application: HuBrWi, MoBrSoWi (ws).
4 *imboka:* younger sister. Affinal application: HuBrWi, FaSiSoWi (ms).
5 *inggalabini:* half brother (see discussion below).
6 *inggalabunga:* half sister (see discussion below).

The regular sibling terms (1 to 4) are differentiated on the basis of sex and relative age, and they are extended on Ego's generation to all parallel cousins, including remote ones. A special set of terms (5 and 6) is restricted to some siblings and parallel cousins. The criterion for their differentiation, as stated by the Tiwi, is that they refer to half siblings by the same father whose mothers belong to different matrisibs. The only parallel cousins to whom they apply, I believe, are first cousins; distant parallel cousins are definitely called by the regular sibling terms (1 to 4) regardless of their sib affiliations.

The terms for full siblings are also extended to certain collateral relatives on the second ascending and descending generations. Thus the distant parallel cousins of MoMo and FaFa are called by the terms for elder sibling, *iwuni* or *imbunga*, and the distant parallel cousins of SoCh (ms), DaCh (ws), SiDaCh (ms), and BrDaCh (ws) are called *iwini* or *imboka* (younger brother or sister).

Cross-cousin Terminology

7 *imbuni.* Affinal application only: Hu, HuBr, SiHu (ws), WiBr.
8 *imbunjinga.* Affinal application only: Wi, WiSi, BrWi (ms), HuSi.
9 *mamaniaya* (or *mamanini*): MoBrSo (ws), FaSiSo (ws). Affinal application: "Sr" Hu (ws). My data are inconclusive as to whether male speakers use this and the following term in the same way.
10 *mamaya:* MoBrDa (ws), FaSiDa (ws). Affinal application: "Br" Wi (ws).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending
535 over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milimiha* to the
766 rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first
[177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[90]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten-
[114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and
[775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[91] the fundamental idea
[517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the
[775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[92]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon
[126] drawings[93] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[90] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.

[832] [91] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women were attracted to them.

[92] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.

[93] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

202 765 *palmatjinis*, and cane armlets, *jairinis*. Then, taking a female *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaguni*, in his hand he seated himself within sight of the camp.

[301] [302] The local aborigines went out to welcome him, but on seeing the message stick and hearing the news, they mourned hysterically, cutting their heads [785] and beating themselves with sticks.

When the mourning died down, the aborigines gave the messenger a meal, [574] after which he returned to his own camp.

Although the general distribution of the totemic *purunkitas* has been dis- [126] continued in recent years, the aborigines who knew them well, made nine [184] examples for me. It would seem that each totemic place had its own particular [794] design, for when I showed the *purunkita* (Fig. 7D) to old *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, neither of whom had seen it previously, they recognized it immediately as a message stick which would have been sent to the *Mudungkala* totemic group of Buchanan Island, at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. However, other *purunkitas*, i.e. (Fig. 5C; Fig. 5F, G, H; and Fig. 6A, E) are still being used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

During the early days of our stay, when the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were about to start, three men, two of them, *Marawani* and *Uramatjina*, being the chief mourners, made a journey to the Bathurst Island people for the purpose of giving them a *purunkita* and telling them the news.

A few days later a Bathurst Island man returned with the message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H, and verbal instructions relating to the forthcoming burial rituals.

Although I did not see the message stick which *Marawani* and his com- [126] panions carried to Bathurst Island, I was able to make a rubbing of another (Fig. 7C), which was sent to the same locality on the death of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife.

Later, old *Tjamalampua* sent another message stick (Fig. 7A, B), to the men of the *Mudungkala* totem of Buchanan Island, asking for European goods and food to pay the "workers" at the final rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*.

Notification of Death

202 The designs on message stick, Fig. 7C, which an aboriginal carried to the 211 Bathurst Island people, together with the news of the death of *Nulatini*, did ×532 not, in any way, refer to the message that accompanied it, but to topographical details along the motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point on Apsley Straits.

The upper section, *d*, is the aboriginal camp at Snake Bay, and the indentations, *a*, *a*, are the rocks on its shores. The cross-hatched rectangle in the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 they do have one which explains, to their satisfaction, the origin of the small
×732 figures.[15]
765

On the occasion of the first *pukamuni* at Tapararimi, a man, *Piamatilid-jara*, who later become the tawny frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*), made and painted a small figure, similar to Pl. 40c, *r*. This he placed on the grave to impersonate *Purukupali*, whose body was not buried there, he having walked into the sea and drowned himself.

×532 At present these human figures, both large and small, are made, either at
765 the request of the chief mourner, or by the "worker" himself. This happens if the man cutting the pole, holding the dead person in especial esteem, wishes to please his spirit. The smaller figures may represent either a son of the dead or mythical men and women of creation times.

When the burial poles are being erected, one of them, in human form, or a smaller figure, is occasionally placed at the head of the grave.[16] The *mopaditi*,
[775] on leaving its body, sees the wooden figure, and thinking it is either its son, or one of its old companions, stays at the grave and talks to it about old times. These wooden figures have no *imunka* (life essence), nevertheless the *mopaditi*, who is believed to be stupid and easily misled, thinks it is talking to a living person.

I collected two burial poles (Pl. 39) in the form of highly conventionalized
●[126] human beings, and six smaller, full-length figures (Pl. 40, 41). I also photographed a pole, in human form, on an old grave (Pl. 38A, B, C).

Pl. 39A, B, C, is a *pukamuni* pole representing a performer, ready to take part in the final burial rituals. The projection *m* (39B), is his hair; *n*, *n*, are his ears, and *o*, *o*, his arms; *p* is a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball), and *s*, (39A), his backbone.

The cross-hatched squares, *a*, *a*, *a* (39A), represent patches of grass on the floor of the jungle; the designs, *e*, *e*, *e*, jungle trees, and *b*, *b*, *b*, spider webs in the branches.

The waves of the sea are indicated by the bands of short vertical lines, *c*, *c*, *c*; a boulder on the sea-shore by oval *f* (39A); oysters on the rocks by the squares with diagonal lines, *d*, *d*, and paper-bark trees by the groups of intersecting lines at *e*, *e*.

The designs on the face and head (39C) are: *k*, edible fruit, *h*, grass in

[174] [15] This myth does not necessarily indicate great age because those of non-literate people tend to keep up-to-date. Mountford, 1956, p. 98, and Worsley, 1955, p. 856, both give examples of how the Groote Eylandt aborigines have incorporated foreign elements in their creation stories.

[16] This is only one of many safeguards used by the Tiwi to keep the *mopaditi* away from the camp of its old companions, particularly during the first few days after death.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

level, further material has been cut away to reduce its thickness by about 1 centimetre all round. The top portion, which has the appearance of a knob, has been daubed with red ochre; the sunken portion, immediately beneath, is white (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 2). The lower surface of the post bears five vertical bands, three being of white pipe-clay and two of yellow ochre. Two of the former have a border of red, the third one of yellow; and both of the latter (yellow) are bordered with white. Three of the intervening spaces are shaded with inclined lines of white, the remaining two are each filled with a vertical row of white cricoid figures. The original surface upon which the pattern was drawn is charred. 532 764

Having persuaded the natives to repaint the designs on the tomb-posts, in places where they were defective or missing, they set about the work with enthusiasm and did not rest until they had repainted the whole of the surfaces. To accomplish this they leaned the posts against trees and divided themselves into small groups of two to four, each of which undertook part of the work (*vide* Plate XVI, Figs. 1 and 2). Youths were sent to the main camp, whence they soon after returned with lumps of red and yellow ochre and white pipe-clay (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 2). From these they broke off small pieces and crushed them by hand in the strong concave shells of the bivalve mollusc *Cyrena essingtonensis*.[1] To this crumbled pigment sufficient water was added to make a thick paint, more water being added from time to time as required. One might look upon these shells containing the mixed paint as representing primitive palettes (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 1). The paint is applied to the surface by means of crudely made, yet effective, brushes. Short pieces of the creeping calamus are cut with the sharp edge of a shell and one or both of their ends chewed until all the fibres have become separated (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 3); much in the same way as the flower-stalks of the fan-palm are chewed when feeding on honey (*vide* p. 300). Both of these small artists' requisites are highly interesting inasmuch as they show us a decidedly primitive, yet to the present day practically unaltered stage in the evolution of art. [126] 386 [413] 532 [413]

It is evident that the posts have been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk. Captain Flinders[2] as far back as 1803 noticed that the natives on the north coast (Caledon Bay) were familiar with the use of iron instruments and that they tried to steal his axes. He, therefore, suspected that "they had been previously visited by people possessing iron instruments." Later, he was himself able to confirm this supposition when he discovered, near to Cape Wilberforce, a fleet of proas from Macassar, the crew of which were in the habit of visiting the north coast of Australia to collect trepang, which they took to Timor and sold to the Chinese.[3] 412 [322] 177 171

[1] We have before us an interesting analogy, when we recollect that in our own country the shells of fresh-water mussels were, in former days, much used and are still used as a receptacle for mixing water-colours; whence also the name *Unio pictorum*.

[2] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, pp. 213 and 228–231.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

fifty was likely to be left a widow by him within the next fifteen years, and 587
even if she remarried a man of the same age as her first husband, she could easily be widowed for the second time while still herself a comparatively young woman. There were several different patterns, most of them intermingled in the same household, for a female matrimonial career, but the situation may be illustrated by the concrete case of one of Turimpi's widows, an ancient crone (in 1930) named Bongdadu. Born about 1865, she was betrothed at birth to a powerful old man named Walitaumi who was at least the same age as her father, if not older. Not unnaturally, he died while she was still a child and well before she was old enough to join his household. Her betrothal was then reassigned, so to speak, to Walitaumi's half-brother, Turimpi, then in his early forties. About seven years later, she joined Turimpi's household as a blushing bride of fourteen, her husband then being close to fifty. In the next twenty years she became Turimpi's most prolific wife and bore numerous children, three of whom, Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, all born between 1883 and 1900, were men of importance in Tiwi politics in 1930, and one of whom, Louis, is still alive today.[6] Around 1900, when Bongdadu was still only about thirty-five, she passed to M., a middle-aged Tiklauila, and was his wife until his death around 1925. By this date, Bongdadu was over sixty and had borne ten children, four of whom died young. Not unnaturally, she was beginning to approach the hag or crone stage of Tiwi womanhood. Nonetheless, she had to remarry, but by now all of the people who might have claimed any rights of bestowal in her were long since dead, her eldest sons were adult men of some importance and able to protect their mother's interests, and clearly she was unlikely to produce any more children.[7] Her chief value was as a food producer and housekeeper and female politician, roles for which she had been well trained in her long years as wife of Turimpi and M.

Old women in Bongdadu's position had to remarry, but they were in 587
a good position to exercise some choice of their own as to whom they re- 888
married, especially if they had strong influential sons to support them in their wishes. There was a frequent pattern in such cases for the widow, aided and abetted (or perhaps even forced) by her sons, to arrange a marriage of convenience with some obscure nonentity much younger than herself and usually a friend or contemporary of her sons. In 1925, then, Bongdadu, widowed [554]
three times already, married as her fourth husband one Dominico, a man of no importance whatever, as was shown by the fact that at this time he was nearly forty and had not been able to attract even one bestowed wife. He had, 587
however, already married one widow, so that his marriage to Bongdadu gave 595

[6] Tiwi personal names are polysyllabic and hard for the reader to remember; hence, whenever possible, we have used "whiteman names" for individuals. The frequency of Spanish names among these "whiteman names," such as Mariano or Dominico, derives from the fact that the original buildings for the Mission Station were built by a number of Filipino workmen whom the priests brought with them. [551 128 797]

[7] The Tiwi saw no inconsistency between believing in spirit impregnation and believing at the same time that an old woman was unlikely to bear children. It was to them a matter of probabilities, and of course with them as with us, occasionally an elderly lady did—disconcertingly—have a baby, proving the logic of their position. [842]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER III

The Pukamuni Ceremony

765 THE burial ceremonies of the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands,
182 based on the *pukamuni* of the mythical man, *Purukupali*, are, by far, the most important events in their ceremonial life.

These ceremonies, which allow the aborigines full expression for their grief, provide, at the same time, a complete cultural outlet for their philosophical beliefs, their music, their art and their dancing. No one, watching these
[781] primitive rituals, night after night, could fail to be impressed by the obvious pleasure experienced by both the participants and the onlookers.

114 Spencer (1928, pp. 647–52), is the only investigator to describe and illus-
765 trate any details of the *pukamuni* ceremony. Although he saw but one day of the ceremonials, and that of the closing rituals, he records, briefly, many of the procedures which we witnessed in 1954, i.e., the rite of fire-jumping (p. 73), the spearing of the grave (p. 83), and (p. 89), the "spearing" of one of the participants and the erecting of the poles. This evidence shows
177 that, in spite of the disturbing effects of civilization and the complete
765 ecclesiastical ban on Bathurst Island, the *pukamuni* ceremony is still a vital force in the lives of the Tiwi people.

During the six months the expedition was on Melville Island, Miss Jane
123 Goodale, Mr. W. E. Harney and I witnessed some, or all of the rituals of four *pukamuni* ceremonies; one of a man, *Waniamperi*, who had been buried within half a mile of our camp; another of an old woman, *Makapini*, who, against the wishes of her relatives, had been buried in the mission cemetery on Bathurst Island; still another of a premature infant; and, only a few weeks before I left Melville Island, one of *Nulatini*, the deceased wife of our helper, *Pulanimbuwi*.

I will describe the burials of *Waniamperi* and *Nulatini*, and the final rituals
123 of *Waniamperi* and *Makapini*. However, as we saw, in all, twenty-seven
128 *ilanias*, the general pattern of which was similar, I will describe but five of them; three belonging to *Waniamperi*, one to *Makapini* and one to *Nulatini*.[44] The short rituals, associated with the dead infant, will be treated as a separate unit.

[44] The final rituals took place after my departure from Melville Island. These will be dealt with by Miss Goodale.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 (2) *The Ilanias of Nulatini*

[123] We were able to see the opening mourning rituals, *iramparimi*[30] of *Nulatini* and six of her *ilanias*.

[128] Rather than deal with all of these ceremonies in detail, I will describe the *iramparimi* rituals and a typical *ilania*, in which the aborigines carried out all phases of the rituals, with the exception of the appointment of the "workers". Although the rite of *punuti*, *wandiatapinda*, or feeding the "workers", did not take place at every *ilania*, they will be included in this description.

(a) *The Opening Mourning Ritual, Iramparimi of Nulatini*

Ten days after the burial of *Nulatini*, the aborigines of Melville Island performed the ritual of *iramparimi*. The function of that ceremony was to express [775] grief over *Nulatini's* death, and to tell her spirit that, as she did not now belong to the same realm as themselves, she must leave her grave and return to her totemic country.

The ceremony was held about thirty yards from the camp of the dead woman. Most of the aborigines were present, but two men, *Pulanimbuwi*, the husband, and *Tupiatira*, *Nulatini's* nearest relative, took the leading parts.

The rituals opened in the late afternoon with *Pulanimbuwi*, painted in [302] white, elaborately decorated and carrying a long stick, walking slowly to- [533] ward the assembled people, singing the *amburu*, the women's song of mourning (Pl. 23A).

Every now and again, the husband stopped, leaned on his stick and looked round (apparently for his wife's *mopaditi*), before continuing on his way to the place of ceremony.

Coming out of the forest in an almost opposite direction was *Tupiatira*, also painted in white, waving green branches in his hands. About fifty yards from the old camp of *Nulatini*, *Tupiatira* called her name loudly, and, after listening for a while, announced that, as she had not answered, she must be dead.

As *Tupiatira* walked forward he continued to call, while *Pulanimbuwi*, now accompanied by his sister, *Kundi*, came in from the opposite direction, both singing the *amburu*. When the men were only a few yards apart the aborigines formed themselves into two lines, facing each other.

[535] At a signal and a loud "*Book, book*" from *Pulanimbuwi*, an old man, *Malumerinita*, accompanied by six to eight of the men, danced between the

[30] The *iramparimi* of *W'aniamperi* was performed before our arrival.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

on sheets of paper to illustrate the body markings used at each stage of initiation. 115 881

To give a complete account of the full *kulama* which included initiation as well as the preparation of the yam for food, I have included both groups of rituals, as they would have been performed in the original *kulama* ceremony. However, it must be borne in mind that we witnessed only the rituals belonging to the *kulama* yam. As stated before, the details of initiation were obtained from the fully initiated men. 128 881 123

I. THE MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGIN

(1) *The first Kulama Ceremony*

During *palaneri* (creation) times, not long before the death of *Purukupali*, when all the animals and birds were still men and women, *Purutjikini*, a boobook owl-man, and his wife, *Pintoma*, a barn owl-woman, decided to perform the first *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina, in Port Hurd, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1). They invited *Jirakati*, later the white-headed sea-eagle, and *Tupatupini*, the small owl, to be present, planning to make them the first initiates. Many other people assisted in the ceremony, the *Ningauis*, a small spirit people who still live in the mangrove swamps nearby; *Inwati*, *Mauwini* and *Taparalili*, three groups of the honey people; *Jirakupai*, the sea-going crocodile; *Narina*, the black cockatoo, and *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle. 773 881

Tukimbini, *Wuriuprinili* and a number of ancestral people from the eastern end of Melville Island, being opposed to the holding of the *kulama* ceremony, did not attend.

At the ceremony, the white-headed eagle, *Jirakati*, was the first *Wadjeniati* initiate (he still wears the ceremonial paint), and the owl, *Tupatupini*, the first *Mikinatrina*. There is no mention in the creation myths of the other grades of initiation.

When the first *kulama* ceremony was finished[18] the participants returned to their homes until the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, which was performed at the end of the *palaneri* (creation period). It was then that *Purutjikini*, the leader

[18] Some informants referred to a fight which took place at the first *kulama* in which *Purutjikini* was attacked because he did not wait for some late-comers. Others described another quarrel which started when one of the *kulama* men followed a woman of the Kulalumruniri group into the mangrove swamps and raped her so badly that she died.

The Kulalumruniri people attacked the performers of the *kulama*, killing some and driving others into the mangrove swamps where they live today as the *Ningauis*. The more elderly informants, *Tjamalampua* and *Malumirinita*, however, said that there were no quarrels at the first *kulama*.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

Marriage Contracts Among the Tiwi

Jane C. Goodale
Bryn Mawr College

It has become an increasingly common practice in recent years to reëxamine earlier analyses of kinship systems and, by selecting slightly different criteria from the ethnographic descriptions or by approaching the system from a different point of reference, to arrive at new interpretations and classifications. This has been particularly true of studies of Australian kinship systems, which have been a fertile field for reinterpretation ever since the day of Spencer and Gillen. Two of the many examples are the reëxamination of the Kariera by Romney and Epling (1958) and the reanalysis of the Wikmunkan by Needham (1962).

No one has yet attempted a reanalysis of the Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands for the simple reason that none of the original investigators has yet attempted a complete preliminary analysis. Spencer visited Bathurst Island in 1912 and subsequently published a few comments and a list of kinship terms (Spencer 1914). Hart visited the Tiwi in 1928-29 and Pilling in 1953-54, and their highly readable joint book (Hart and Pilling 1960) has brought the Tiwi into prominence but has not solved the theoretical problems raised by their description of the social organization and marriage customs. I, too, visited the Tiwi in 1954[1] and ever since have been continually frustrated in attempts to describe their social organization and marriage rules in conventional anthropological terminology.

I have long been convinced—and I believe Hart and Pilling are also so convinced—that the first step in understanding Tiwi social organization is an understanding of Tiwi marriage customs. Accordingly, this paper was first written as an analysis of Tiwi marriage contracts using the age factor as a major underlying determinant of asymmetrical cross-cousin marriage rules.[2] When the original paper was read, at the Tenth Pacific Science Congress in 1961, comments from the floor convinced me that fuller descriptions of certain aspects of Tiwi social organization should be included. After the paper was rewritten to include these aspects, the colleagues[3] who read and commented on it asked for more complete and different data, for each saw in the description different possibilities for abstraction and classification.

I have therefore resolved that this paper shall be mainly descriptive rather than analytical. The first section deals with a description of Tiwi marriage contracts with the main emphasis on the factor of relative age as an important consideration. The data, it should be

emphasized, are presented from the point of view of a female Ego, for I strongly feel that it is only by using a female Ego that one can see the Tiwi marriage "game" as a "system." Following this, I present the kinship terminology together with some comments on the system of kin classification that are relevant to the marriage system. The last section discusses some aspects of the exchange of women between descent groups and local groups. 121 128

I am only too well aware that I do not have all the facts necessary to make a complete analysis of Tiwi social organization. It must also be stated that the relative-age analysis was a desk study based largely on what I believe to be logical deductions from the collected factual information pertaining to the age differences between spouses.[4] More field work is obviously necessary, and I hope that others who become interested in the problems of analysis and classification raised by this paper will comment and thereby suggest what they consider to be crucial areas for reinvestigation. 121

The Factor of Relative Age in Marriage Contracts

Hart and Pilling (1960) have described the dynamic nature of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a male Ego. My study supports their conclusion that for a Tiwi male the acquisition of wives and the acquisition of prestige are dependant variables. A Tiwi male will rarely acquire a wife through any form of contract before the age of 30. A bestowed wife, one who is promised before birth and becomes a cohabiting wife before puberty, is a valuable prestige symbol, but difficult to acquire. Thus a young man will frequently start his household with the acquisition of a less valuable but more easily obtainable type of wife, i.e., a widow, often of advanced age. Some Tiwi males never obtain sufficient prestige or political power to become involved in a bestowal contract, while others who are more fortunate may be involved in several such contracts. 554 554 582 [587]

My study of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a female Ego reveals some interesting differences in perspective. First and foremost is the fact that, while involvement in a bestowal contract is a cultural ideal, albeit rarely realized, for a male's first marriage, it is an inescapable norm for every Tiwi woman's first marriage. Thus, while this type of contract can be considered "preferential" but not normative from the point of a male Ego, it is acknowledged by Tiwi women as an inflexible "rule" governing their first marriage before puberty to a man whom they describe as "the one who grew me up, treated me like a father, and made me a woman."[5] 183 582

Thus a marriage contract for a man's first wife need not be—and frequently is not—the same as the initial contract leading to a girl's primary marriage. Furthermore, the form of the contract for a man's first wife is apt to vary considerably, whereas the form of the initial

5 [The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche. Cf. p.465, cat. 116 -- Analyst.]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked
789 what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on
[754] the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation.
●13 Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because
[182] they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life—
[789] for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals
[164 (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws)
731] scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago.
[761 Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle
764] that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their
101 cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next
131 door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature,
182 though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic
754 making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

784 The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; graveposts were *pukimani*

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

121 theorists," says Boas, "assume a mental equipment of primitive man distinct from that of civilized man. I have never seen a person in primitive life to whom this theory would apply. There are slavish believers in the teachings of the past and there are scoffers and unbelievers; there are clear thinkers and muddle-headed bunglers; there are strong characters and there are weaklings" (1951). It is noteworthy that this (for Boas) unusually flat and definite statement was made in an attempt to demolish the views of Levy-Bruhl that between civilized man and the primitive there is an impassable psychological gap. Perhaps—as Tipperary would say, if he understood the matter—perhaps, the personality and culture movement is merely Levy-Bruhl in modern dress, perhaps the latent content of the movement is to deny to the people of the simpler cultures the ordinary elementary human qualities of individual difference and human variation, thereby enabling "personality" and "individuality" to be treated as unique creations of the white races to be found only among the followers of the American way of life. If this indeed be the latent content of much "personality and culture" literature, it seems to warrant a flat and unqualified rejection, in terms as emphatic as those of Boas, by all those anthropologists who, like Boas, may not know projective tests but do know something about the simpler native societies.

NOTES

121 [1] In view of the wide discrepancies in the use of the word "personality" it must be made clear again that all that is meant by the word here is the level of description one is apt to get if in ordinary social conversation one asks the question, "What sort of person is he?"

115 [2] The native names of these men are all polysyllabic and difficult for the reader to remember. I use therefore the names bestowed upon them by white men, to aid in keeping them distinctly in mind. The Spanish names, Antonio, etc., were bestowed by certain Filipino carpenters who built the building for the Roman Catholic missionaries when they first arrived. Tipperary is, of course, a white corruption of a native name.

159 [3] It will be noticed by close students of the above information that Turimpi must have been born in the 1830's, Bongdadu born somewhere around 1865. She had her first child when she was about 16 or 17, at which time her husband Turimpi was at least 50. This is a perfectly normal Tiwi marital situation, the commonest marriage arrangement being one in which a newly-born female child is betrothed by her father to a man in his thirties.

159 177 797 [4] Even from the anthropologist Dooley would not accept tobacco until he had convinced himself that in return he would not be required to sacrifice any of his principles. Nor would he take his son, to whom he was passionately attached, to the Mission station for medical treatment—perhaps the most striking proof of the uncompromising attitude that Dooley had adopted toward the Mission.

159 [5] Such a speculation about Mariano's personality at the age of 25, seventeen years before the author knew him, is based upon the general belief of social scientists that personality does not change much between 25 and 42, and the particular evidence of the older missionaries that Mariano was "already inclined to throw his weight around" when they first arrived.

13 182 837 [6] Goodenough (1949) is apparently one of the few anthropologists to discuss the relation between extra-marital sexual activity and the opportunities provided by the nature of the physical environment. The point here is slightly different; whether the Tiwi physical environment encourages adultery is uncertain since a social system such as theirs would promote adultery whatever the physical environment, but it certainly helps to increase the suspiciousness of husbands.

837 [7] That seduction has to be a daytime activity is implied in what has already been said. After sundown the women are concentrated in their husband's camp and have no opportunity. Which

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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Tiwi Marriage

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Cultural Isolation

PEOPLE WHO LIVE in the congested cities and towns of the modern world have difficulty in realizing how different life can be at the hunting and gathering level of human existence. The basic fact about the life of hunters and gatherers is the thinly spread-out manner in which they live and the isolation of families and households from each other. In the case of the Tiwi, these conditions of isolation and dispersal were accentuated by their island habitat. Melville and Bathurst Islands lie off the northern coast of Australia some fifty to eighty miles from Darwin, which is the administrative capital of the empty north. They are separated from the mainland by about twenty-five miles of open sea at the narrowest part. This distance is slightly greater than the distance that separates England from France at the Straits of Dover, and just as the dim outline of coastal France can be seen from England on clear days, so the dim outline of the Australian mainland can be seen from the southern edges of the islands. However, Tiwi tradition is firm and certain that before the white man's arrival there was no contact between the islands and the mainland. To them, the dimly seen coastline of Australia was *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead, to which all Tiwi souls went after death. It follows from this they they regarded the inhabited world as composed of their own two islands, and on those islands they lived a self-contained and exclusive existence. Occasionally outsiders appeared, either castaways from surrounding areas, including presumably the Australian mainland, and in recent centuries, fishing boats and pirates from Indonesia, loosely called "Malays" in the literature. To such visitors from outside, the Tiwi were consistently and implacably hostile. Their own traditions and what little written history there is of "Malay" penetration into the Arafura Sea both tell the same story. Outsiders who landed on the islands were massacred or vigorously resisted. Whether they were classified as *Malai-ui* ("Malays") or *Wona-rui*

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tralian tribe that was able to develop within the general Australian type of culture a number of distinct features, some of them unique, while at the same time lacking entirely other features which were widespread on the mainland. Tiwi isolation from the mainland explains the differences and the lacks; their favorable environment explains why they were able to develop certain traits along their own unique lines. 171

The Tribe and the Bands

Because they were isolated and few outsiders came near them, they did very little as a united tribe. Everybody on the two islands was a Tiwi, and the Tiwi world stopped at the water's edge. Fuzziness on the edges of tribal territory—a chronic headache to anthropologists working with mainland tribes—did not exist, nor did the problem of marriage outside the tribe. All Tiwi, of course, spoke the same language and practiced the same customs and regarded themselves as *the* people; these were almost the only respects in which they could be said to do anything as a tribal unit. There was no tribal government, there were no tribal officials, and no occasions which required the whole tribe to assemble together as a collective entity. For daily and yearly living, the important group was the band or horde,[2] of which there were nine. The total area of the two islands is about 3000 square miles, but some of this is swampy, some of it waterless, some of it mosquito-infested mangrove jungle, and the suitability of the rest for native living varies a good deal. Hence, the actively used and lived-in areas for each band probably averaged about two hundred square miles each and, in any case, there was not a very close relationship between band size and area occupied. Details of band size at various times are given in a later chapter, but, typically, Tiwi bands probably varied in size between a hundred and three hundred people. 619 [131] 619

The band was the territorial group with which a man most closely identified himself. Though the band lived from day to day spread out over a wide area and a man might not see many of his fellow band-members for weeks at a time, the average Tiwi thought of the two or three hundred square miles of band territory as his "own country" and of his fellow members as his own people. This is why the tribal name—Tiwi—so seldom needed to be used at home on the islands. It did not identify one group as distinct from another, since all locals were Tiwi. Just as in a New York suburb one does not say that there are some Americans in the house next door, but may say that there are some Texans or some Californians or some people from Michigan next door, so a Tiwi, seeing a group of visitors arriving in his band territory, would immediately identify them as Malauila or Rangwila or by whatever band they belonged to. A father would say casually, "I have betrothed my daughter to a 621 [423]

[2] Radcliffe-Brown, the great authority on Australian tribal society, tried to introduce the word "horde" for the Australian local group, but probably because of its suggestion to the popular mind of a dense concentration of people, it has never become established and in these pages we have used the more neutral word "band."

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

5

Friend and Foe
(1600-1928)

ON NEARLY ALL SIDES, the emptiness of a great sea surrounded the Tiwi; 131
to the south, the only path which might have led to the outside was blocked by the hostility of their nearest mainland neighbors. The Tiwi retained this isolation until the very end of the last century, even though for several centuries outsiders had been seen by them; ships passed along the coast and occasionally strangers landed or were cast ashore. Changes in the 177
life on the islands were few, however, until about 1900, when the Tiwi began their integration into the modern world.

Hostility toward Outsiders (1600-1900)

Although in June of 1636 the sailor Pieter Pieterszoon in command of 175
the ships *Cleen Amsterdam* and *Wesel* sailed along the western twenty miles of the north coast of Melville Island and named the region Van Diemensland,[1] our first real knowledge of the natives of Bathurst and Melville islands was gained by the Dutch expedition to this region in 1705 under Maarten van Delft. Men from his three ships spent about two weeks in surveying the north coast of Melville Island, the northern two-thirds of Apsley Strait between Bathurst and Melville islands, and the entire west coast of Bathurst Island.[2] They met natives several times and even allowed them aboard their ships.

Following this meeting between islanders and Europeans was a period 648
during which the natives became extremely hostile to outsiders. Tiwi distrust of 175
foreigners probably stemmed from these decades when the Portuguese on Timor were raiding Melville Island for slaves. Although very little has been

[1] Heeres 1899.
[2] *Ibid.* See also Mander Jones 1948 for some further data concerning Dutch knowledge of Melville Island.

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

INTRODUCTION

MELVILLE ISLAND (Fig. 1), the research field of the 1954 National Geographic expedition, is, with the exception of Tasmania, the largest of the Australian islands. Eighty miles from east to west, and seventy from north to south, it rises barely five hundred feet above the sea. Its level surface is covered with a monotonous grey-green forest of eucalypts and acacias, whose monotony is broken only by the steep cliffs and sandy beaches of the coastline, the salt-water creeks which cut deeply into the northern coasts, and the almost impenetrable mangrove swamps that line those waterways. 131 133 137

Between Melville Island and the mainland are the swiftly running tideways, the reefs and shoals of the Clarence and Dundas Straits, tideways so dangerous that, before the installation of a series of flashing light-buoys, no ocean-going ship would attempt to navigate their broken waters in the darkness.

Abel Tasman, in 1644, was the first European to sail along the east, north, and west coasts of Melville Island and the adjacent Bathurst Island,[1] naming Cape Van Diemen and Van Diemen Gulf after the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. As Tasman's account of that journey was lost, we do not know whether he actually landed on the islands, or only saw them in the distance. 175

Sir Philip King circumnavigated the two islands in 1818 and in 1824 the British Government, both to prevent the French from settling along the northern coasts of Australia and to protect British commerce from the rapidly expanding Dutch trade, established a military post at Fort Dundas, on the Apsley Straits. After five unhappy years the authorities moved the garrison to Port Essington, on the Coburg Peninsula, on the mainland, but not before both Sir Gordon Bremer (12th Nov. 1824) and Major Campbell (1834, pp. 135–60) had made some excellent observations on aboriginal graves, burial poles, bark paintings and canoes. [114]

In the early days of this century, a buffalo hunter, Joe C. Cooper, having gained the confidence of the warlike people of Melville Island, known as the Tiwi tribe, established a camp near Cockle Point (Fig. 1) on the south-western corner of Melville Island. There he earned a living shooting buffaloes for their hides, buffaloes whose forbears had escaped from the settlement at Fort Dundas.

[1] Melville and Bathurst Islands, separated by the narrow Apsley Strait, are both a geographic and cultural unit. [101]

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●131
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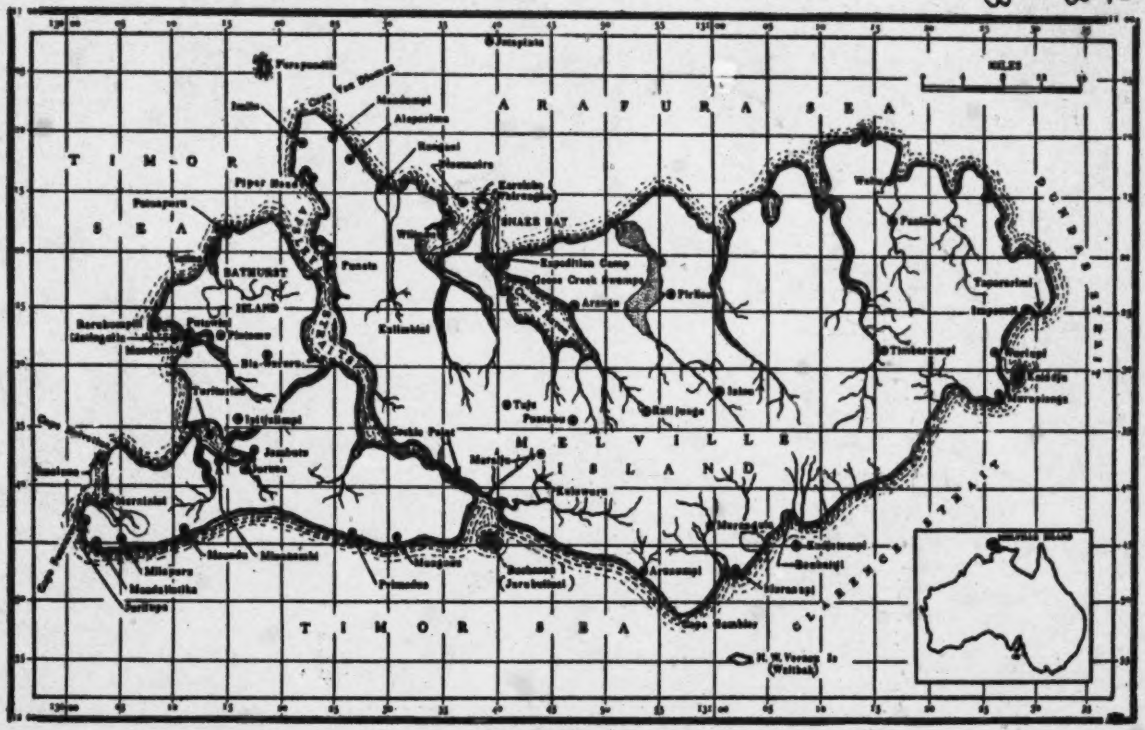
2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20


A R A F U R A S E A
T I M O R
S E A
T I M O R S E A
M E L V I L L E
I S L A N D
BATHURST
ISLAND
SNAKE BAY
Expedition Camp
Green Creek Swamp
Arnaga
Pirlaw
Tuja
Pustow
Kalimbiai
Pustoke
Tapuarimi
Timbarumpi
Tiwi
Pipar Head
Punapura
Mandumpi
Alapurima
Kerakin
Pirlangimpi
Mirarangi
Mirangi
Cape Bumbier
H. M. Verney Is
(Wattiak)
Mirangi
Arnumpi
Bathumpi
(Jarabatumpi)
Primudna
Mangalara
Mandumbi
Mandumbitha
Milapura
Kerimpa
Kerimpa
Kerimpa
Mandu
Mandumbi
Jemkuta
Jarumba
Ipitumpi
Tarimbiai
Tarimbiai
Pirlangimpi
Pirlangimpi
Punapura
Bira-Bira
Pirlangimpi
Pirlangimpi
Mandumbi
Mandumbi
Tiwi
Pustow
Pustoke
Pustoke
Pustoke

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b) the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indicate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER I

The Art of the Tiwi

1. THE ART FORMS

ALTHOUGH Melville Island is separated from the mainland of Australia by the Dundas Strait, only fourteen miles in width, the art forms on either side of this swift-running tideway bear little resemblance to each other. That of the mainland, of which the bark and cave paintings of Oenpelli are typical (Mountford, 1956, pp. 112–264; Spencer, 1928, pp. 802–24), is representational, and among the most decorative art forms employed by the Australian aborigines, while that of Melville Island is highly formalized, and cannot be interpreted without the aid of the artist. In this respect (although they employ different motifs) the art of the Melville Islanders resembles that of the aborigines of Central Australia (Mountford, 1937, pp. 84–95). 171 531 [131]

2. MEDIUMS OF EXPRESSION

The aborigines of Melville Island,[8] like those on the mainland (Spencer, 1928, p. 793) painted designs on the inside of the sheets of bark that made up their wet-weather shelters. Basedow (1913, p. 320, Pls. 19–20) figured bark paintings he collected from bark shelters on Melville Island, and Campbell (1834, p. 151), referring to shelters he saw near Fort Dundas (Punata), in Apsley Straits, writes, "Some of them were ornamented with figures drawn in white pipeclay; one, in particular, was neatly and regularly done all over, representing the cross-bars of a cell."[9] 171 353 531

Under normal tribal conditions, however, it is in the carving and painting of the elaborate burial poles and the ceremonial spears, coupled with the decorating of the large bark baskets, that the aborigines of Melville Island find an outlet for their artistic efforts. 531

The effect of the *pukamuni* burial ceremony was evident in many of the bark paintings collected on the expedition. For example, Pl. 3D, Pl. 54F, and Pl. 54A, are essentially the same designs as a Melville Island artist would use to

[8] For the sake of simplicity I will, in future, use the term, Melville Island, or the tribal name, Tiwi, to indicate the Melville and Bathurst Island culture, both of which are part of the same tribal unit. [101]

[9] This would have been a design similar to that on bark painting (Pl. 52D).

[p. 18 blank]

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

THE TIWI OF MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDS

By C. W. M. HART[1]

MELVILLE and Bathurst Islands lie off the north coast of Australia some fifty to eighty miles north-east of Port Darwin. They are divided from the mainland by Dundas Straits, which at their narrowest part are about twenty-five miles wide, this being the approximate distance between the Vernon Group and Cape Gambier on Melville Island. The latter is the largest island in the Commonwealth of Australia with the exception of Tasmania, being some seventy miles long by forty miles wide, and containing about one and a half million acres. Bathurst Island is about one-third of that size, and is separated from its neighbour by Apsley Strait, which varies in width from about a quarter of a mile opposite the mission to two or three miles below Fort Dundas. (3)

The first settlement in Northern Australia was made on Melville Island at a spot named Fort Dundas in Apsley Strait. It was founded on the 26th September, 1824, by Captain Gordon Bremer, R.N., of H.M.S. *Tamar*, who had been specially sent from Sydney for the purpose. Chiefly owing to difficulties with the natives, the settlement was abandoned on 31st March, 1829, when the convicts, troops, stores, etc., were transferred to Fort Wellington, on the Coburg Peninsula of the mainland. To-day a few piles of stones and a dilapidated ramparted ditch are all that is to be seen of this outpost of empire. 175

From 1829 until 1911, when the Sacred Heart Mission Station was established on Bathurst Island, no permanent settlement was made on either of these islands, though they were visited from time to time, and various buffalo shooters and timber-getters resided there for varying periods, the best-known of them, R. J. Cooper, having lived on Melville (where his house still stands) from 1894 until 1914. At present Bathurst Island is a native reserve with the missionaries as protectors, and hence 648

[1] This paper contains some of the results of research carried out as Science Research Scholar of the University of Sydney and with the aid of a grant from the Australian National Research Council. [122]

[p. 167]

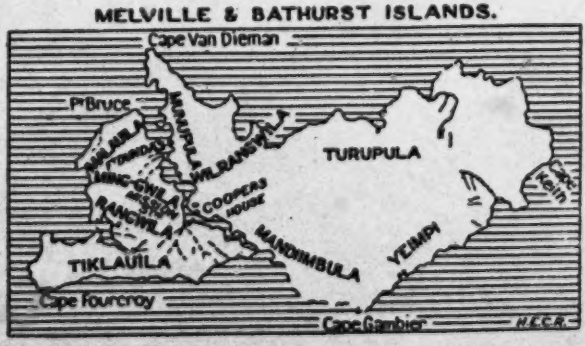
3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the same way as such words as Larakia, Worgaits, Uwaidja, etc., are 101
used. For example, if a Melville Islander at home is asked who a certain 619
group of natives are, he will reply in his own language that there are, *e.g.*, two *Tiklawila* and two *Mumupula*, these being horde names. Ask him the same question in Darwin about another group and he will reply, *e.g.*, "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira Larakia*" (four Tiwi and two Larakia); he does not mean to insult the Larakia by denying them the status of men; he is merely applying the term *Tiwi* to men of his own tribe. Should he be uncertain of the tribe of the other, he will say "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira wanarui*" (literally "four Tiwi and two blackfellows"); *wanarui* being a term denoting black fellows as distinct from white men.

In other words, when at home on the Islands, a man thinks of himself as a *Tiklawila* or a *Mumupula*, or whatever his horde may be, since there he feels strongly his bond of solidarity with the fellow members of his horde. When in contact with other tribes, however, as in Darwin, he thinks of himself as Tiwi, a member of a group which despite the divisions inside it, is nevertheless a group distinct from other tribes, and this seems quite an adequate reason for us to adopt Tiwi as the tribal name.

The hordes number nine, five on Melville and four on Bathurst Island. 101
This division is not strictly accurate, as may be seen from the accompany- 131 ●
ing map; the *Malawila* territory, while mainly on Bathurst stretches across 621
Apsley Strait on to Melville, while a portion of Bathurst Island, including the site of the Mission Station, is *Mandiimbula* territory.

MELVILLE & BATHURST ISLANDS. [102]



MAP SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF THE TIWI HORDES

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The southern section of Bathurst

[131] Island (Hart 1930) is inhabited by a subtribe called the Tiklauila. In 1911 a
[797] Roman Catholic Mission station was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island, virtually in Tiklauila territory, and at the time of the present writer's field work this was the only white settlement. In the generation before the missionaries arrived the "big man" among the Tiklauila was Turimpi.
159 Because of their complicated marriage and inheritance regulations the average Tiwi old man in the course of his lifetime accumulates an impressive number of wives and Turimpi was no exception to this rule. At the time of his death, which occurred toward the end of the 1890's at an age which was probably something approaching 70, Turimpi counted as his wives then living or pre-deceasing him no less than 25 females. Of these the only one we need to pay any attention to is the woman named Bongdadu. She, while Turimpi's wife, had borne numerous children, of whom three males grew to manhood—Antonio, born in approximately 1883, Mariano born three or four years later, and Louis born around 1893. Sometime between 1895 and 1900 she was widowed by the death of Turimpi, whereupon she married another elderly man, Murikambunga, to whom she bore two more sons—Tipperary, born around 1900, and Bob born about a year later. Bongdadu of course had numerous other children who did not survive childhood.[3] It is her five adult sons who concern us here.

Turimpi, as the number of wives suggests, was an important tribal figure
[554] during his lifetime. Importance, prestige, tendency to be spoken of as a "big man" are in Tiwi functions of a number of factors in which age, number of wives, fighting ability, wisdom in council, and "family" in the sense of having relatives who are also "big men," are all compounded. On all these counts Turimpi was important, and his prestige tended to carry on after his death.
554 Since the horde or subtribe is a comparatively small group, ranging in size
62 from 214 for the Tiklauila (the biggest) to 57 for the Mingwila (the smallest), there will seldom be more than two or three "big men" in a subtribe at the same time, and at certain periods there may be none at all since the few old men who have the age qualification may not have the other qualifications. Turimpi's death left the Tiklauila to some extent in this state. There were few other men with comparable seniority and none of them had the qualifications for informal leadership and local prestige that he had possessed. His death left a gap, and
[768] a gap that could hardly be filled by his eldest son Antonio, who at the time of his father's death was a youth of about 16 years of age. About thirty years
[114] later, in 1928 to 1930, the field work upon which the present paper is based was carried out.

ANTONIO

159 It so happened that the present writer had been with the Tiwi for nearly three months before he met Antonio, although during those three months he had been closely associated with two of his brothers, Mariano and Tipperary. These two gave Antonio a great build-up as one of the most important men around, as a "big man" in every possible Tiwi sense. But when encountered in person he proved most disappointing. The only words that fitted Antonio

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By Jane C. Goodale

884 In 1912 Sir Baldwin Spencer, a professor of biology at
[114] the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the
[824] ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This
[114] statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony,
[178] however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe
[197] that such participation cannot prepare them adequately for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what
161 the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a
● 131 thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Melville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well
178 supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Economically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied,
[224] and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little
825 physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or
462 digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were
868 taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

000 Tiwi native on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11, (B)]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 1. Snake Bay Settlement

114 Islanders on a hunt. The trip took us to a small clearing on the right bank of the Paluwiunga River, ten miles upstream from where it empties into the Arafura Sea.

131 A brief glance at the map will help to further pinpoint this location. Ten degrees south of the equator and at a distance of twenty to fifty miles due north from the Australian Northern Territory capital of Darwin, lies the relatively large Melville Island (1,000 square miles), named for Viscount Henry Dundas Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, who authorized the coastal survey of 1818 during which the island was circumnavigated. To the west, separated by a narrow strait, lies the smaller Bathurst Island. The group of people with whom I found myself camped by the river bank were members of the Tiwi, a tribe of Australian Aboriginals whose country includes both these islands. Today about seven hundred members of the tribe live near to the southeast corner of Bathurst Island where they are in various ways administered to by the Sacred Heart Mission. On the northern coast of Melville Island, on a hill overlooking Snake Bay, near the mouth of the

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OVO out from East Point, and from the nearest island of the Vernon group, were also clearly visible as we passed over them. Straight ahead, Melville and Bathurst Islands now showed up, the hills a darker blue, and every moment they became more and more distinctly visible.

133 We turned west again as we reached the shores of Melville Island. Below, and near at hand, in turn were sandy beaches,
137 cliffs that come straight down to the water's edge, or low mangrove-flats through which wind serpentine inlets of salt water. Inland, low green hills are covered with open tropical forest, denser on the lower slopes and thinning towards the arid, stony summits. Fan-palms grow among the tropical eucalypts, and the familiar pandanus palm borders open grassy flats just as it does on the mainland across the narrow seas. Buffalo, now
[136] so much reduced in numbers that nobody shoots them, feed on the flats, and in the forest-covered hills are many kangaroos and wallabies. Little bays, and now and then projecting lines of reef, make natural boat-harbours, and far away across the tree-tops a wide expanse of shining water seems to be a great lake surrounded by wooded hills—it is actually an arm of the sea on the eastern side of Cape Van Diemen.

The funnel-shaped entrance to Apsley Strait, the mile-wide, fifty-mile-long stretch of fast-flowing waterway that separates the two islands, soon appeared beneath us. Looking towards the north, on the eastern side of this narrow silvery passage, one sees the wooded hills, the dense patches of vivid green jungle, and the open swampy plains of Melville Island. To the west, on the Bathurst Island side of the entrance, dense plantations of coco-nut palms occupy the foreground. There are cleared fields with a wall of forest beside them, white roofs among the palms, and beyond again are thickly-timbered heights.

DENSE mangroves, of a deeper green than that of forest or jungle foliage, give contrast at the water's edge on either side of the narrow strait, which, a silver streak in the blue distance, leads on to the sea, faintly visible far beyond at the height at which we were flying. The tide runs through this strait like a mill-race; but at the moment it was dead-water, and, with sail set, a large dug-out canoe was making across from Melville to
177 Bathurst Island. As the 'plane banked round preparatory to landing, I saw, beyond the canoe and across the strait, the iron roof of the only European dwelling on Melville Island.

It was formerly the permanent camp of Jee Cooper, a famous buffalo-hunter; but, now, since Cooper's death, even this solitary outpost has long been deserted. It is more than a century since the old military settlement of Fort Dundas, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, was abandoned. Nothing of the fort now remains except a few heaps of stone, and, buried in thick scrub, the grass-grown brickwork that faced the surrounding deep trench. The area of Melville Island is 2,240 square miles.
131 Bathurst Island is only half as large. Although Melville
797 Island may, some day, come within the scope of North Australian settlement schemes, the major part of Bathurst Island is vested in perpetuity in the authorities of the Mission of the Sacred Heart, and the latter island will remain, fortunately almost entirely in its virgin state, a sanctuary alike for man and beast.

797 We taxied to a standstill on the well-kept landing-ground of the Sacred Heart Mission in the presence of many spectators. Notified of the time of our arrival by means of the wireless

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13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

"SIXTY MILES OF SHARK-INFESTED WATERS LIE BETWEEN BATHURST ISLAND AND THE MAINLAND."

[P.15(C)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

disappeared entirely from much of the landscape. Since the British settled first in the well-watered fertile areas of the east and southeast, it was the tribes of these regions who disappeared earliest, so that in the present state of Victoria which once contained a comparatively dense native population, an aborigine at the present time is about as rare as a full-blood Indian in Massachusetts and for much the same reasons.

White settlement in Australia since Cook's discovery of the fertile southeast corner has tended, however, to be very localized and uneven. The lack of water in the desert and semidesert areas has continued to hamper or inhibit white occupation. Moreover, even in some places where the rainfall is relatively high, such as the northern and northwestern coastlines, isolation has continued to make these regions unattractive to any heavy white intrusion. In American terms, such lands have remained until the present day as frontier areas ("The Outback" is what the Australian city dwellers call them) and in such regions the native or aborigine ("abo" in Australian slang) can still be found, often in surprisingly large numbers and in many cases still practicing and adhering to many of the traditional customs of his ancestors. In the central desert regions the western neighbors of the Arunta continue to practice something not far removed from their aboriginal tribal life on land which the white man regards as useless for settlement purposes. Further north, in the area called Arnhem Land, on the western side of the Gulf of Carpentaria, there exists an enormous stretch of inaccessible but not at all hopeless country in which the whites have shown very little interest and in which native tribes such as the Murngin (studied by Lloyd Warner) still retain much of their traditional culture. Similarly, to the west of Arnhem Land, along the coastline and on islands lying offshore, isolation and lack of white settlement have permitted a number of tribes to continue down to the present time relatively untouched by European influences. Since the annual rainfall along the northern coast is [132] appreciable and reliable, some of these tribes live in country that is much more favorable to hunters and gatherers than is the desert area inhabited by the Arunta and their neighbors. Among these north-coast tribes the people occupying Melville and Bathurst Islands and who call themselves Tiwi have twice been studied by modern anthropologists—by Hart in 1928-30 and by Pilling in 1953-54. The brief account which follows is presented with two main objectives in view: first, to explain how this Australian culture operated as a going concern in aboriginal times, and second, to analyze what has happened to it as it was brought into contact with the modern world.

Tjipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families. 161 361 648

It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace. 361 177 [631] [224] [464]

By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives, 123 [132] [825]

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Fig. 2 Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend, Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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621 Tiklauila" or "My wife is a Munupula woman"; a mourner would say, "He
619 died when visiting the Munupula and therefore we will have to go to Munupi for the funeral"; an old man would reminisce about being brought up as a youth by his mother's brother, who was a Turupula, and the good times he had in Turupi; and another would recount details of big battles between the Munupula and the Malauila. All of these were band names or band territories. The nine bands thus acted, psychologically, as small tribelets or semisovereign groups, since it was with one of them that every Tiwi most closely identified in his day-to-day life on the islands. It is only when, as nowadays, he leaves the islands to go to work for the white man in Darwin that he has to think of himself as a Tiwi, since there he mingles with men of other tribes. Even then,
[177] work and residence in the white man's town does not entirely obliterate band identification. A Tiklauila in Darwin prefers to work with and to consort in the evenings with other Tiklauila, and Malauila with Malauila.[8]

Because of certain peculiar features of Tiwi domestic life, to be dis-
621 cussed below, it is difficult to sum up the Tiwi band in any simple formula.
591 People, especially women, changed their band residence frequently in the course of their lives, and being born into a band did not at all require permanent residence with that band, either for males or for females. Thus the district (for example, Tiklaru or Malau) was a firm, fixed, known quantity, but the people who "owned" the district (for example, Tiklauila or Malauila) were a flexible and constantly shifting collection of individuals.

423 The territorial boundaries between bands were clear and well known
621 to everybody, though they were not the sharp lines on a map such as we regard as essential for a frontier or a land boundary. All pieces of country—clumps of jungle, stretches of grassland, sections of thick woods—had names. One such piece of country, say a thickly wooded area, belonged to one band, while the more open country that began where the woods thinned out belonged to another; thus the boundary was not a sharp line but a transitional zone—
[137] perhaps of several miles—where the change from trees to open savannah became noticeable, with the band territories thus fusing into one another rather
[823] than being separated by sharp lines. The Tiwi, so to speak, thought of the landscape as a sort of spectrum where a man moved gradually out of one district into another as he passed from one type of horizon to the next. Since
[133] rivers, and even Apsley Strait, a very narrow arm of the sea separating Melville from Bathurst Island, usually have similar types of vegetation on *both* sides or banks, none of the island rivers nor Apsley Strait was a boundary or frontier between bands. The Mandiimbula, predominantly a Melville Island

[8] In the early 1930's the situation at the Government Hospital in Darwin offered
177 a good illustration of this. The hospital authorities said they gave preference for house-
797 boy jobs to "Melville Islanders because of their greater intelligence and reliability." In
181 point of fact, some of the younger Tiklauila had established a monopoly on hospital jobs and no Tiwi other than a Tiklauila was ever hired there. The whites thought they were hiring Tiwi but the Tiklauila saw to it that they hired only Tiklauila and felt no vestige of obligation to other Tiwi to help them get these desirable jobs. The alleged greater intelligence of the islanders was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Tiklauila, having had a Catholic mission in their territory since 1911, were more used to white requirements.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

INTRODUCTION

MELVILLE ISLAND (Fig. 1), the research field of the 1954 National Geographic expedition, is, with the exception of Tasmania, the largest of the Australian islands. Eighty miles from east to west, and seventy from north to south, it rises barely five hundred feet above the sea. Its level surface is covered with a monotonous grey-green forest of eucalypts and acacias, whose monotony is broken only by the steep cliffs and sandy beaches of the coastline, the salt-water creeks which cut deeply into the northern coasts, and the almost impenetrable mangrove swamps that line those waterways. 131 133 137

Between Melville Island and the mainland are the swiftly running tideways, the reefs and shoals of the Clarence and Dundas Straits, tideways so dangerous that, before the installation of a series of flashing light-buoys, no ocean-going ship would attempt to navigate their broken waters in the darkness.

Abel Tasman, in 1644, was the first European to sail along the east, north, and west coasts of Melville Island and the adjacent Bathurst Island,[1] naming Cape Van Diemen and Van Diemen Gulf after the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. As Tasman's account of that journey was lost, we do not know whether he actually landed on the islands, or only saw them in the distance. 175

Sir Philip King circumnavigated the two islands in 1818 and in 1824 the British Government, both to prevent the French from settling along the northern coasts of Australia and to protect British commerce from the rapidly expanding Dutch trade, established a military post at Fort Dundas, on the Apsley Straits. After five unhappy years the authorities moved the garrison to Port Essington, on the Coburg Peninsula, on the mainland, but not before both Sir Gordon Bremer (12th Nov. 1824) and Major Campbell (1834, pp. 135–60) had made some excellent observations on aboriginal graves, burial poles, bark paintings and canoes. [114]

In the early days of this century, a buffalo hunter, Joe C. Cooper, having gained the confidence of the warlike people of Melville Island, known as the Tiwi tribe, established a camp near Cockle Point (Fig. 1) on the south-western corner of Melville Island. There he earned a living shooting buffaloes for their hides, buffaloes whose forbears had escaped from the settlement at Fort Dundas.

[1] Melville and Bathurst Islands, separated by the narrow Apsley Strait, are both a geographic and cultural unit. [107]

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

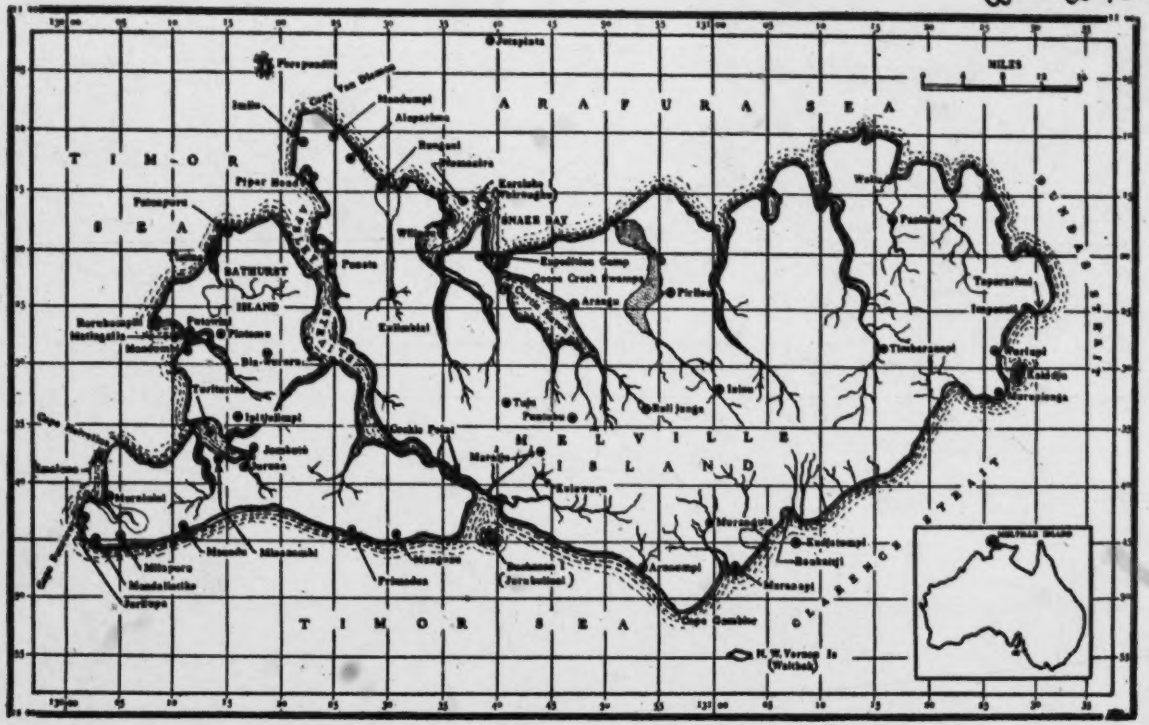

FIG. 1. *Totemic Map of Melville and Bathurst Islands*

[p. 14]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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mangrove creeks in which the crocodiles live. The red, yellow and white bands, *h*, *h*, etc., are boulders of various colours on the beach, and the dotted diamond shapes, on *m*, *m*, *m*, the pattern which the turtle-woman, *Garagalani*, painted on her bark basket at *Purukupali's* ceremony, and which, when she changed herself into a turtle, became the shell design on her carapace (p. 39).

The pole shapes of Pl. 34B are: the projections, *f*, the fork of a tree, the bosses, *a*, *a*, breasts of women and the three cylindrical sections, rocks on the sea-coast.

The painted designs at *a*, *a*, are, as before, women's breasts, and the radiating designs and central dot on the bosses, the eyes of women. The vertical bands, such as *d*, etc., on the two upper cylindrical sections, and the horizontal bands, *e*, etc., on the lower section, are women's trade belts, the discs on the upper and lower sections, silver coins, and the dots on the background, stars in the sky.

The pole shapes of Pl. 35A, B, are: the two forked projections, *a*, *a*, the throwing sticks used by the moon-man, *Tjapara*, in his fight against *Purukupali*; the rectangular opening immediately below, is a window, and the lower section, a large boulder.

The painted decorations on the pole (Pl. 35A, B), are, by far, the most elaborate and best executed I have examined. On the upper section, the diagonal and transverse red and white lines, *b*, symbolise the native roads near Imilu, north-western Melville Island, the source of the red ochre so valued by the Melville Islanders; the cone-shaped figures, *d*, outcrops of red and white rocks, and the bands, *c*, *c*, grass on the top of the cliffs at Imilu.

The many designs on the lower section illustrate, in detail, the topography at Imilu. On Fig. 9, the key to Pl. 35A, B, these designs are arranged in topographical levels.[1]

Level 1, pictures the highlands; 2, the jungle at the top of the cliffs; 3, an aboriginal road; 4, the trees on the sea-coast; 5, the surface of the sea; 6, the creatures in the sea, and 7, the waves breaking on the sea-shore.

On level 1, *g*, *g*, *g*, represent the eucalypts of the highlands and on level 2, *j*, *j*, etc., the jungle trees which grow along the edge of the cliff. At *y*, is a

[133]

[1] Brown (1905, p. 28), writing about the appearance of these cliffs, when viewed from the sea, states, "... they often appear thus: four parallel lines—top of timber, top of cliff, top of beach, edge of water; the first, green, the second, red, the third, white, greyish-blue water in front and blue sky above." Brown and *Pulaimduwi*, the artist of the pole, were both impressed with the same parallel lines of colour, which extend for miles along the shore of Cape Van Diemen.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER VI

The Secular Bark Paintings

×532 THE designs used by the Tiwi on many of their secular bark paintings are strongly influenced by those employed in decorating the poles and the large bark baskets of the *pukamuni* ceremony. For instance, all of the patterns on Pl. 49 would be similar to those used on a burial pole, while a number of the paintings of the totemic places, for example, those shown on Pl. 10, have the same fundamental designs as those on the *pukamuni* baskets.

As mentioned previously, one of the remarkable aspects of the art of the [171] Tiwi is that it is highly formalized, whereas, on the mainland, only fourteen miles away, across the dangerous waterway of Dundas Strait, the art is fully representational. This difference in the art forms of the Tiwi and that of the aborigines of the adjacent mainland is an excellent example of how a natural barrier can isolate one culture from the influence of another.

1. TOPOGRAPHY

×532 The obverse side of a large *pukamuni* basket (Pl. 49A, B), illustrates the trees ●133 and shrubs of Cape Van Diemen, arranged in a decorative pattern, and on 137 the reverse side (Pl. 49C, D), the natural features at Imilu, in the same locality.

Cape Van Diemen

On Pl. 49A, B, the series of rectangles at *a*, on the top of the basket, represent a forest of stringybark trees, and the groups of vertical and sloping lines at *k*, *k* (bottom), many bloodwood trees. The vertical lines, *f*, *f*, etc., are also stringybarks and the horizontal lines, *c*, *c*, etc., bloodwood trees.

The many circles, *d*, *d*, etc., are *pukamuni* arm ornaments, *palmajinas* (Pl. 31E, F); the cross-hatching in rectangles *e*, *e*, etc. (upper) are spider webs, and the dots at *b*, *b*, etc., black and red seeds of a jungle vine lying on the ground.

Imilu

On Pl. 49C, D, the circles *a*, *a*, etc., in the border, represent the many hives of wild bees in the trees at Imilu, and the intervening panels, *f*, *f*, etc., red

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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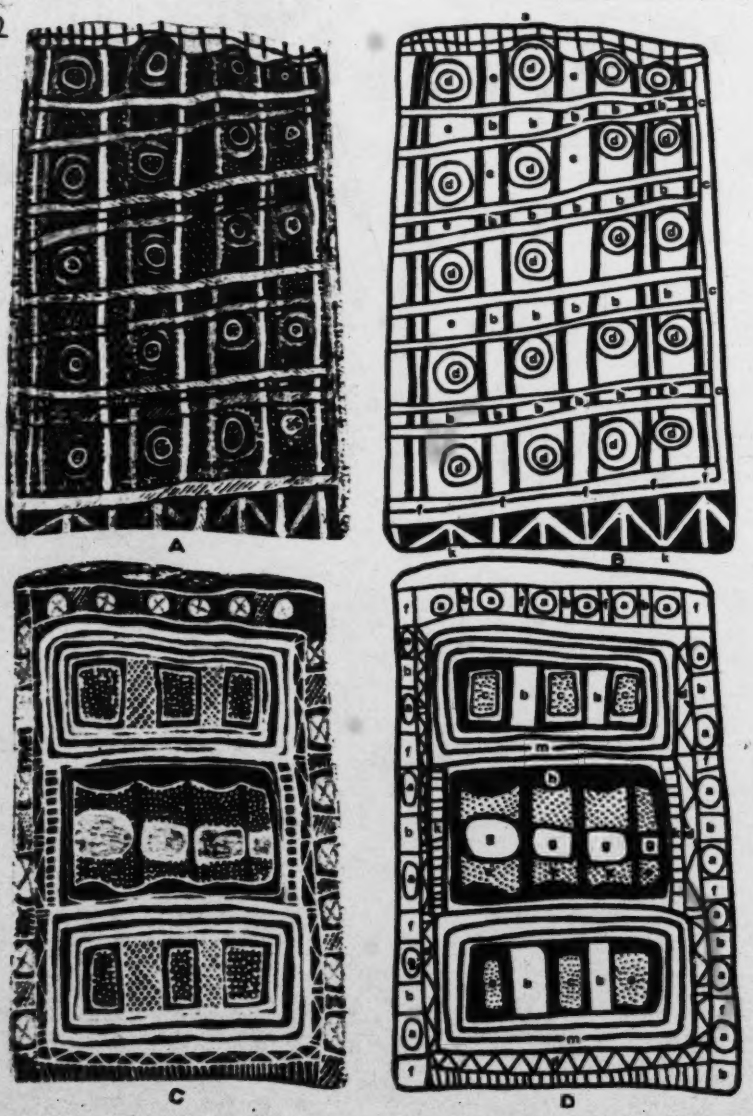

PLATE 49. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Topography, Cape Van Diemen; C, D, Topography, Imilu.

[p. 160 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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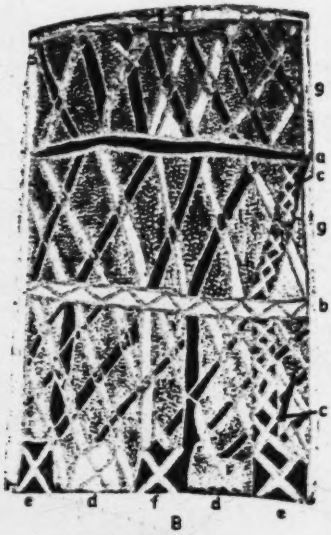

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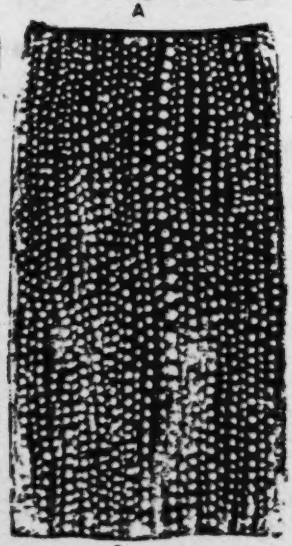

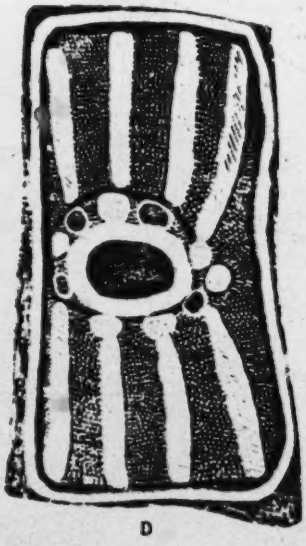

PLATE 50. *Secular Bark Paintings:*
A, Sea-floor; B, Mangrove Swamp; C, Fish-man, Kumunga; D, Topography, Bathurst Island.

Cp. 160 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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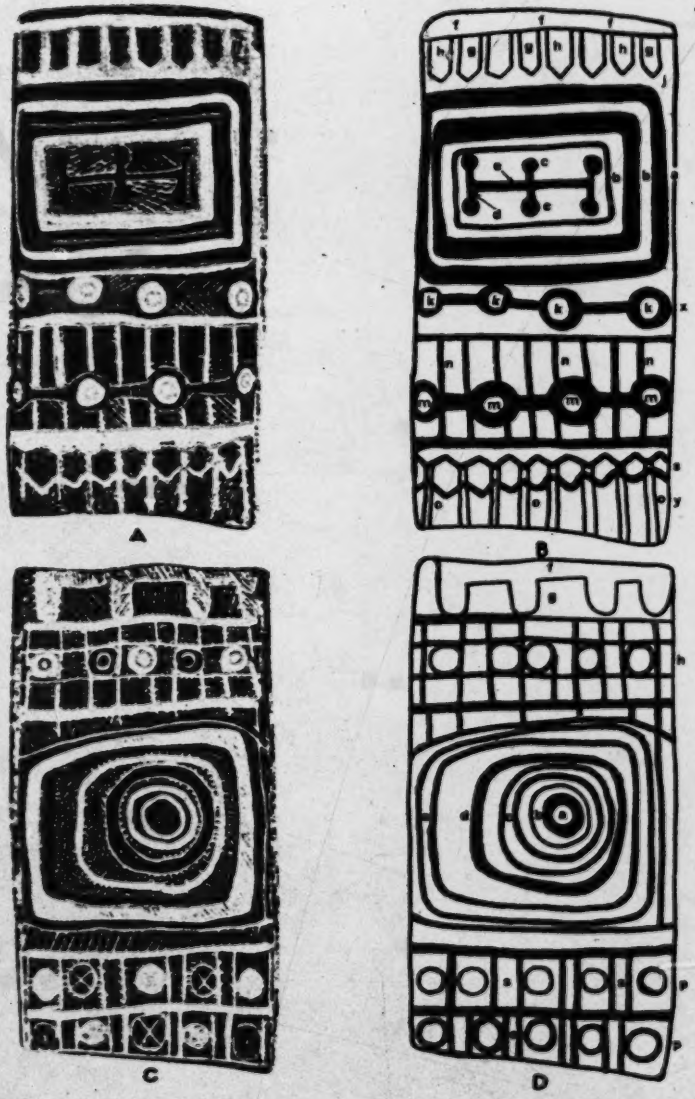

PLATE 51. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Topography, Garden Point; C, D, Topography, Snake Bay.

[p. 160 C]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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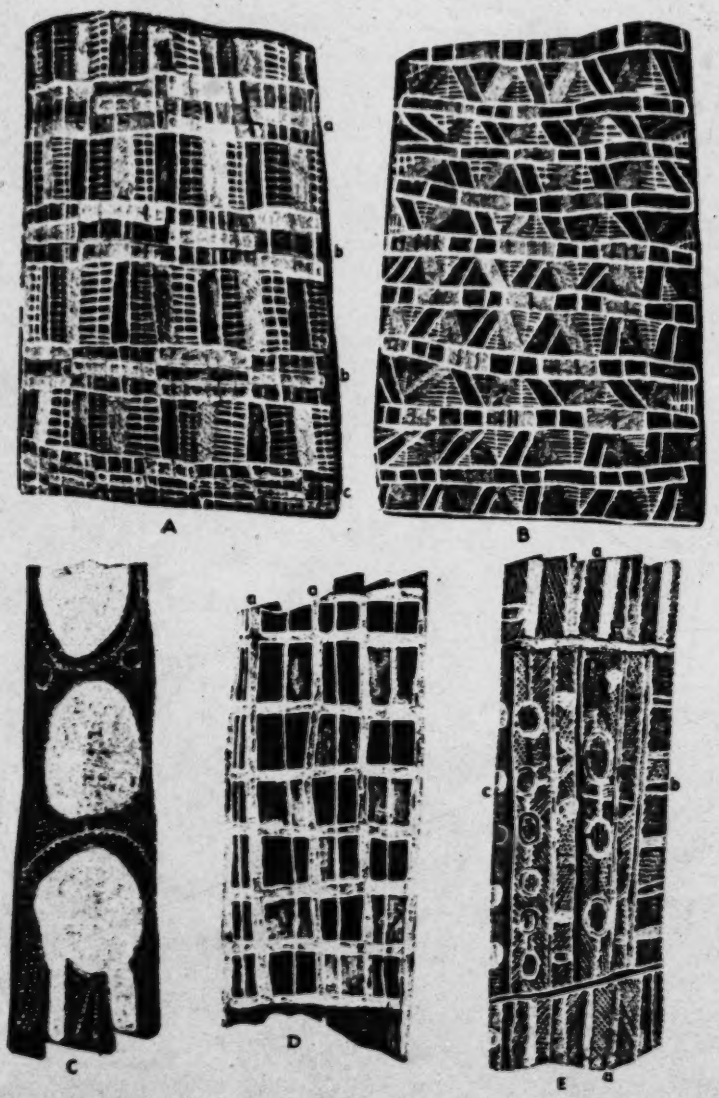

PLATE 52. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Sea-coast, Cape Van Diemen; C, Lagoons and Swamps; D, The Sea-shore; E, Jungle Scene.

[p. 160 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[136]

PLATE 53. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Forest, Curtis Haven; B, C, Topography, Snake Bay; D, Fresh and Salt-water Streams; E, Topography, Goose Creek; F, Sea-scape.

[p. 160 E]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

and black seeds. The dotted rectangles, *c*, *c*, at the top and bottom of the paintings are lily-covered lagoons (dots represent the blossoms); the cross-hatched panels, *b*, *b*, etc., between them are spider webs in the trees and the meandering lines, *d*, *d*, etc., along the outer edge, a jungle vine hanging from the branches of the trees. The black design *h*, in the middle of the painting, is the beach at Imilu; the irregular circles, *g*, *g*, etc., are large rocks on the shore, and the dots, the eucalyptus trees that grow along the top of the cliff. The series of large rectangles, *m*, *m* (top and bottom) indicate the sandy shores of the lagoons, and the short vertical lines at *k* (bottom), a forest of eucalypts. 532x 133 137

A large *pukamani* basket, Pl. 51A, B, C, D, pictures (*a*) Pl. 51A, B, the topography near the mission station at Garden Point, near Punata (Fig. 1), and (b) Pl. 51C, D, the surroundings near the expedition camp.

Punata (Garden Point)

The series of rectangles on the obverse side of the basket (Pl. 51A, B), represent a house at Garden Island mission. At *a*, are the foundations; *b*, *b*, the walls; *c*, *c*, the upright posts of the house; *d*, the beams of the roof, and at *e*, is the ridge pole. [177]

At *f*, *f*, etc., on the upper edge, are the tall eucalyptus trees of the surrounding forest. At *j*, is the red ground on which the trees grow; at *g*, the dots are black and red seeds on the ground, and at *h*, the cross-hatching is the spider-webs in the trees.

At the bottom of the painting, *n*, *n*, etc., and *o*, *o*, etc., are more large eucalyptus trees. Symbols *k*, *k*, etc., and *m*, *m*, etc., represent hives of wild honey in the trees; the meandering lines at *s*, are jungle vines hanging from the branches; the cross-hatched areas are spider webs among the leaves, and the dots, as before, red and black seeds on the ground.

Snake Bay

The central black circle, *a*, on the reverse side of the basket, Pl. 51C, D, is a black rock in the sea, and the circle, *b*, immediately surrounding it, the broken water at its base, while circle *c*, indicates large rocks at the bottom of the cliffs, the white outer rectangle, *e*, being the sea-sand and the rectangle, *d*, the waves breaking on them. The white dots are the pebbles on the shore.

The upper and lower panels of the painting deal with the land. The white design *f*, on the upper edge, is a forest of large eucalyptus trees, and the cross-hatching, *g*, spider-webs on their branches. The five circles at *h*, are hives

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

X532 of wild honey in the hollow trees, and the dots, the red and black seeds of a
● 133 jungle vine.

137 On the lower panel, *s*, *s*, etc., indicate another forest of eucalyptus trees; the two rows of five circles at *p*, *p*, hives of wild bees, the cross-hatched panels between them spider webs, and the dots, the red and black seeds.

Biru Creek

Pl. 53E refers to a water-course, Biru, near the Goose Creek swamps, which is fresh in the southern and salt in the northern section, where it enters the sea.

The white panel *a*, is the saltwater end of Biru Creek, which is near the entrance of the Goose Creek swamps (Fig. 1), and the white band *c*, the freshwater end of the same creek. The black band *b*, is its banks. Panels *d*, *d*, etc., are white patches of sand and the dots, on the upper panel, patches of water-grass on the floor of the swamp. The bottom panel represents the open sea, the dots indicating patches of seaweed on the bottom.

Snake Bay

Pl. 53B, C, deals with the topography of Snake Bay.

Karslake Island (Wulrungku) is shown at *m*, on the lower edge; a sandbar (upper), the home of the spirit dogs, the *Wankuis* (p. 154) is at *f*; Iluwara inlet, in the Curtis Haven, is at *h* (middle right); a beach on the opposite shore of Iluwara inlet is at *j*, and Tjipripu Point at *w* (lower left). The long vertical line *s*, on the left, is Banjo beach, on which we camped; and *k* (lower right), a mangrove creek to the east.

Designs *e*, *e*, etc. (upper right), are mangrove trees growing on Karslake Island, and crosses, *o*, *o* (upper left), dead trees on the shore. Basket sponges, growing on rocks at the sea-bottom, are indicated at *c*, *c*, etc. (centre).
[136] Turtles are at *a*, *a*, etc.; dugongs at *b*, *b*, etc., and canoes at *d*, *d*, etc. Many casuarina trees, *g*, *g*, etc., grow along the shore lines.

Lagoons and Swamps

This simple bark painting, Pl. 52C, pictures the lagoons at the rear of the expedition camp.

The upper white semi-circle is the swamp, immediately behind our camp, in which there are many paper-bark trees (*Melaleuca* sp.); the white dots are water-lilies growing in the swamp. The central white oval indicates an open lagoon from which the water runs into the sea.

The lower design indicates a swamp further inland, which is fed by two

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

freshwater streams (projections on the lower edge). The dots around this design are also water-lilies. 532x 133 137

Western Bathurst Island

Pl. 50D illustrates a hill, Ipitjulimpi, on western Bathurst Island.

The central black oval is Ipitjulimpi Hill, and the white outline, the tall annual grass which grows at its base. The circle of small discs are groups of boulders on the sides of the hill. The eight long ovals on the upper and lower sections of the paintings, are cabbage palms; the white outer border symbolizes red cliffs near by, and, the dots, the grass on the hillside.

2. THE SEA AND THE SWAMP-LANDS

The Sea and Sea-shore

Three bark paintings, Pl. 54C, Pl. 53F, and Pl. 52D, deal with the sea and the sea-shore.

Pl. 54C refers to the sea and the sea-coast. The outer plain vertical panels symbolize the white sand on the sea-shore, and the outer black panels, batches of sea-weed. The light-coloured ovals are rocks under the water, covered with the sea-weed, and the black ovals are reefs of dark-coloured rocks on the bottom, which shelter the parrot fish and the rock cod. The cross-hatching indicates the white sand on the bottom of the ocean.

Pl. 53F depicts in a simple manner, the sea and the beach.

The intersecting lines on the upper panel represent an octopus, the dots, throughout the painting, small stones on the floor of the ocean; *a*, indicates the waves breaking on the beach; *b*, is a salt-water creek, and *c*, *c*, are its banks. [136]

Pl. 52D is a bark painting of the sea. The horizontal bars symbolize the waves breaking on the beach; the black rectangles, the dark-coloured stones, and the lighter-coloured rectangles, the red stones exposed at low water. The five vertical bands such as *a*, *a*, indicate the lines of debris, left by the retreating tide.

The Ocean Floor

Pl. 50A pictures the floor of the ocean. The light and dark coloured discs throughout the painting are boulders on the bottom, black projections on the dark-coloured discs, pearl-shell oysters, and those on the lighter discs, star-fish. The dots indicate the sea-sand. [136]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

A Salt-water Creek

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Pl. 53D pictures a salt-water creek, Tunangabupi, which flows into the sea at north-eastern Melville Island.

The central panel is the Tunangabupi creek, the rectangles along it alternately representing sandbanks and outcrops of rocks in its bed. The lines forming the diamond patterns, indicate a series of freshwater streams which flow into the Tunangabupi Creek, and the white dots, the shrubs growing on their banks.

A Mangrove Swamp

Pl. 50B depicts a mangrove swamp at Cape Fourcroy.

Transverse band *a*, is a dry creek bed whose waters run into the swamp during the wet season, and *b*, a salt-water creek among the mangroves. The lines of diamond-like patterns at *c*, *c*, indicate a muddy salt-water creek, and the crossed designs *d*, *d*, muddy patches among the trees. At *e*, *e*, are fallen trees with mud on their roots, and *f*, is a large tree with its roots exposed. The intersecting lines in panels, *g*, *g*, indicate a forest of mangrove trees, and the dotted background, edible mangrove fruit lying on the ground.

The Sea-coast at Cape Van Diemen

Both sides of a large *pukamani* basket, Pl. 52A and Pl. 52B, picture the sea-coast adjacent to Imilu, at Cape Van Diemen, north-western Melville Island.

The horizontal lines, *a*, on Pl. 52A, the obverse side of the basket, indicate the grass and fallen leaves on the sea-shore; the two bands, *b*, *b*, represent the sharp eroded rocks on the water's edge, and the lower band, *c*, weeds growing on the rocks under the water.

Throughout the design, the darker-coloured barred rectangles, with white lines, are black trepang, and those with grey lines, white trepang. The plain rectangles indicate the sandy bed of the ocean.

[136]

On Pl. 52B, the reverse side of the same *pukamani* basket, the series of transverse bands picture flat rocks on the edge of the sea, and the barred triangles, the water surging through them. The high cliffs at Imilu, Cape Van Dieman, are indicated by the many v-shaped designs.

The Sea and Mangrove Creeks

Pl. 54B is a particularly simple design which the artist once used to decorate a *pukamani* pole.

The plain panels at the top and bottom of the paintings, represent the open sea; the transverse panels, *a*, *c*, *e*, *g*, *j*, refer to the salt-water creeks in the man-

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

not only in physique but also in intelligence. I should be surprised to 153
find in any other Australian tribe a man with the intelligence and adaptability of my own head boy Mariano.

The flora and fauna of the two islands is very similar to that of the 133
rest of the Northern Territory. The country is mostly flat with a low range of rocky hills between Cape Gambier and Cape Keith on Melville Island, and a still lower range in the centre of Bathurst. The timber 137
consists of the usual Australian trees; gums, stringy-bark, woolly-butt, bloodwood and ironwood cover most of the two islands, broken here and there by patches of open grassland and in other places by dense patches of jungle where snakes and "devils" thrive and the natives seldom enter. Wallabies are extraordinarily plentiful, but there are no kangaroos. 136
Buffaloes are found on Melville in small numbers. These are the wild descendants of the domestic Indian buffaloes imported for agricultural purposes by the early settlers at Fort Dundas. At one time they had increased and multiplied to such effect that thousands were shot every year without any appreciable effect upon their numbers. At the present time, however, probably owing to many of the cows being killed, there are probably not more than a thousand on the island. The natives are seldom able to kill a buffalo though they realise the fact that it is good to eat.

Not only are wallabies plentiful, but there is also an abundant supply 262
of the other native articles of food, fish, crocodile, birds of all kinds, wild honey, yams and other native vegetables. As a result of this abundance 161
of foods, it would seem that the two islands had a greater density of population than is to be found in almost any other part of Australia.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The people inhabiting Melville and Bathurst Islands are subdivided 621
into a number of local groups. These local groups are the important sections of the population since they act as land-owning groups, war-making groups, have a solidarity of their own which is far stronger than any tribal solidarity that may exist and even to some extent regulate marriage.

Before considering these hordes in detail, however, something must 184
be said about the tribal name. All the hordes practise the same customs, 619
speak the same language and inter-marry. The boundaries of the people speaking this language are of course strictly defined by the sea. In other words, the people of Melville and Bathurst have a solidarity of their own,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some of the designs being very pleasing to the eye. Some spears, moreover, have human 471
hair strings wound round the shaft, immediately below the head, for a distance of [531]
10 centimetres or more, and this is kept in place with beeswax.

Canoes.

Elsewhere I have referred to the marked absence among the northern 501
Australian tribes of anything but the most primitive crafts and such innovated forms as have resulted from the contact with the white and yellow races. They are, therefore, not to be considered as truly indigenous canoes. On Bathurst Island, however, conditions are different; due, perhaps, in the first place, to its insularity (as well as the numerous estuaries and rivers that cross [133]
the land), and, secondly, to the proximity of Melville Island, which is separated from it by only a narrow stretch of calm water known as Apsley Strait. The latter is barely a mile in width at its narrowest points. Numerous canoes are in use within this Strait, and occasionally, when wind and water are favourable, they venture a short distance out to sea. One type is principally in use, namely, a large bark-canoe measuring about 560 centimetres in length (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). It is made of a single sheet of bark, usually from suitable, straight, clear 396
trunks of the woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*) or the stringy-bark (*E. tetradonta*) 501
(*vide* Plate XII, Fig. 1). It is cut from the tree by chopping transversely at the respective distances from the ground, then slitting it once vertically for the whole length and removing it by forcing the edge of the instrument under the bark and finally levering it off with pointed saplings. The outer side of this oblong piece of bark, which is rough, will become the inside surface of the canoe. At a distance of from 65 to 70 centimetres from either end, transverse cuts are made on the inside to a depth of half the thickness of the bark, and such thickness is removed from the whole of the surface lying away from the centre at either incision. Each end is thus reduced by half its original strength and material thereby becoming more pliable. The cutting is done with the sharp edge of a [237 412]
bivalve shell, usually a *Cyrena*. The subtilized ends of the sheet may, or may not, be held over a glowing fire to render them more pliant still. The sheet is folded lengthwise along its middle, and one or both ends kept together by vertical stakes, stuck in the ground and tied together at the top. The bottom corner of the fold is cut away in a very gentle upward slope. The two pieces of the fold are next held firmly together and cut in a more decisive upward direction from a point some 30 to 50 centimetres from the bottom edge end. The two freshly cut edges are neatly sewn with close, overcast stitches, and the same is done along the top horizontal edge for a distance of some 15 or 20 centimetres from the end. From the intervening space between the sewn parts at the top and bottom, an angular or curved segment is cut out in imitation of a fish-tail and its edges laced together in a like manner (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). The thread used for these "run-on" stitches is in the form of strips from the split sheets of the

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 0120 Tiwi 0120

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. Harney and A. P. Elkin[1]

●133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and 136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog (*wonginc*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. 825 According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts 757 of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] [1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. Elkin.

123 Although the wind had died and the clouds given way to a clear, light blue sky, the sea still had heavy rollers. However, instead of breaking over the canoe, they gently lifted it high in the air, then let it slide down the incline. We set out as the first rays of the sun appeared over the horizon and soon began to feel revived as our clothes began to dry. We stayed fairly close to the shore, close enough so that landmarks could be easily seen. For a while we coasted by the thin white strip of sand along which we
• 123 had hunted for turtle eggs the afternoon before. The land in back
●133 of the beach was low swampland and all that could be seen was a thin line of green foliage. But soon we approached Tubinu Point. Here the beach gave way to a jutting headland and the steep sea-
[134] ward cliff was a rainbow of colors where bands of ocherous clays of yellow and red were separated by clear white and topped by a
[137] heavy line of dark humus. Tall eucalyptus trees stood right up to the edge of the 75-foot cliff. We stayed well clear of the base, for a short but ragged, rocky reef extended out under the water.

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123 ever-present tangle of mangrove trees, beyond which was another clean white stretch of sandy beach. About this time the puppy grew restless and started roaming the canoe from stern to bow. Once he had reached the bow he climbed up to the very point and stuck his nose into the wind. As the canoe rose and dipped he would lose his balance and I would grab him and hand him to Agnes. But he would not stay put and soon would again be a live figurehead pointing the way. Finally, Albert said, "Let him go." As was to be expected, the next roller knocked little Tchuwiunga off his perch and into the sea he went. As the canoe passed, Albert leaned over and fished the frightened, struggling puppy out of the water and handed him to Agnes, who began rubbing him down. "Him gotta learn," remarked Albert. "Sea bin teach him more better." Soon Tchuwiunga revived his courage and again ventured forward, but this time instead of standing on the bow, he curled up on the bag of flour and slept soundly until we reached our destination. He had indeed learned his lesson well.

The rolling motion, sun, and inactivity had made both Agnes and me drowsy and we were all but asleep when Big Jack woke
[201] us with, "Black Joe mob. Him camp Anderaningo." I looked in

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

●133

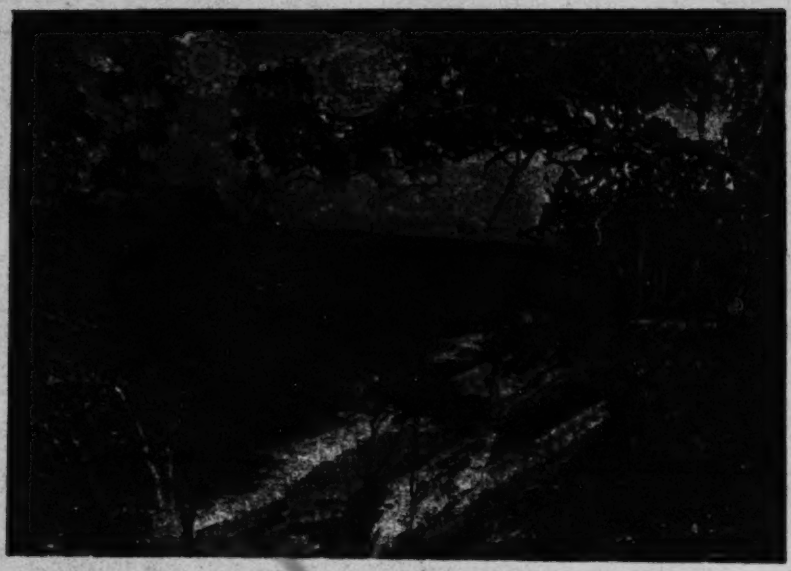

Fig. 2. Melville Island Coast

123 the direction to which he pointed with his chin, but could see nothing
[201] other than white sand broken in spots with the heavy green of the mangrove jungles. "There," he repeated. "See. Him make big smoke." By straining my eyes and imagination I believed I could see a tiny wisp of white smoke rising above the last patch of green on the furthest point of land.

Distances were deceiving, for the point of land which seemed so many miles away was soon reached. The entrance to the Paluwiunga River was a narrow channel cut through the far edge of a broad sandbank. Rather than circumnavigate the bank, the men decided to go over it, but as the waves breaking over the sand were churned into a tangle of white water by the opposing river current, it was deemed advisable that all surplus passengers disembark. Agnes, clutching the puppy, and I, with my KLM bag, jumped overboard into shoulder-high water and slowly made our way over the bank to the shore. The men also went overboard and, with one on each side, they guided the canoe safely to the quiet water of the river.

123 ping the axe with his teeth, he ran up the sapling on all fours with
222 as much agility as a monkey. Upon reaching the crotch, he put his
481 arms around the trunk, placed the soles of his feet close together against the bark, and quickly progressed in a sort of leaping motion up to the top of the tree. Once there he casually climbed up, over, and around the various branches, until he reached the object of his climb, the hollow branch with the little hole through which was passing a steady stream of small insects. This branch was quickly cut through and fell crashing to the ground. Soon Albert was down again, investigating this find with Agnes and me. The hole was enlarged and the combs of dark honey exposed, still crawling with the little black bees. We dug in with our fingers or [133] brushes made by chewing small twigs, quite unmindful of the bees, who obligingly never developed stings in this part of the world. [262 The honey was dark and very strong, but when mixed with the dry, 237] crumbly, yellow "bee bread" a nice balance of taste was obtained. It took the three of us very little time to finish the sugar-bag and off we went—this time in a homeward direction.

123 The one possum looked very small and Albert again began mut-
224 tering about "someone *mobnditi* make me bad luck." We separated
[777] again and when almost to the creek Agnes suddenly held me back and cautioned silence. Carefully she picked up a stout stick from the ground and then approached what I suddenly noticed was a very fat goana, about two feet long, apparently sound asleep on a nearby tree trunk. One quick blow and the lizard fell to the ground, quite dead. We carried the catch to the landing and quickly had another swim before Albert caught up. We were gathering firewood when Albert arrived and explained his delay by holding up another
123 possum. The second possum was immediately gutted, then both
252 were laid on the fire and turned frequently until all the fur had been burned off and the skin made brittle. The animals were quartered and laid again on the fire until well roasted. The goana received no preliminary treatment before going on the fire. When all were [264] cooked, they were removed and laid on a "table" of clean, green leaves, and we reached in and tore off pieces of the steaming, juicy
123 meat. It is impossible to describe this meat to someone who has not
262 tasted it. All I can say is that it was tender and tasty and perfectly

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

123
equally entertaining as she sang some risqué love songs she had 533
picked up around camp.

The evening's goose hunt was even more unsuccessful than the 123
earlier hunts. Two of the men separated and went down river and
killed three geese, but the others, upstream in the usual place, did 223
not even see any, and there was more talk of *mobudities* by everyone
way into the night.

The following day was the last and, as the Assistant Super- 123
intendent was due that evening, feverish work was done by one
and all on the long neglected house. Evidently the arrival of Paul 648
scared off the ghosts, for that evening we almost had a goose per
person, and my final memory of Minianapi is one of flickering fires
in the moonlight and the smell of fresh roasted goose carried on
the gentle breezes.

133
361

Fig. 21. After the return trip the launch's motor gets a much needed overhaul

OVO out from East Point, and from the nearest island of the Vernon group, were also clearly visible as we passed over them. Straight ahead, Melville and Bathurst Islands now showed up, the hills a darker blue, and every moment they became more and more distinctly visible.

133 We turned west again as we reached the shores of Melville Island. Below, and near at hand, in turn were sandy beaches, 137 cliffs that come straight down to the water's edge, or low mangrove-flats through which wind serpentine inlets of salt water. Inland, low green hills are covered with open tropical forest, denser on the lower slopes and thinning towards the arid, stony summits. Fan-palms grow among the tropical eucalypts, and the familiar pandanus palm borders open grassy flats just as it does on the mainland across the narrow seas. Buffalo, now [136] so much reduced in numbers that nobody shoots them, feed on the flats, and in the forest-covered hills are many kangaroos and wallabies. Little bays, and now and then projecting lines of reef, make natural boat-harbours, and far away across the tree-tops a wide expanse of shining water seems to be a great lake surrounded by wooded hills—it is actually an arm of the sea on the eastern side of Cape Van Diemen.

The funnel-shaped entrance to Apsley Strait, the mile-wide, fifty-mile-long stretch of fast-flowing waterway that separates the two islands, soon appeared beneath us. Looking towards the north, on the eastern side of this narrow silvery passage, one sees the wooded hills, the dense patches of vivid green jungle, and the open swampy plains of Melville Island. To the west, on the Bathurst Island side of the entrance, dense plantations of coco-nut palms occupy the foreground. There are cleared fields with a wall of forest beside them, white roofs among the palms, and beyond again are thickly-timbered heights.

DENSE mangroves, of a deeper green than that of forest or jungle foliage, give contrast at the water's edge on either side of the narrow strait, which, a silver streak in the blue distance, leads on to the sea, faintly visible far beyond at the height at which we were flying. The tide runs through this strait like a mill-race; but at the moment it was dead-water, and, with sail set, a large dug-out canoe was making across from Melville to 177 Bathurst Island. As the 'plane banked round preparatory to landing, I saw, beyond the canoe and across the strait, the iron roof of the only European dwelling on Melville Island.

It was formerly the permanent camp of Joe Cooper, a famous buffalo-hunter; but, now, since Cooper's death, even this solitary outpost has long been deserted. It is more than a century since the old military settlement of Fort Dundas, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, was abandoned. Nothing of the fort now remains except a few heaps of stone, and, buried in thick scrub, the grass-grown brickwork that faced the surrounding deep trench. The area of Melville Island is 2,240 square miles. 131 Bathurst Island is only half as large. Although Melville 797 Island may, some day, come within the scope of North Australian settlement schemes, the major part of Bathurst Island is vested in perpetuity in the authorities of the Mission of the Sacred Heart, and the latter island will remain, fortunately almost entirely in its virgin state, a sanctuary alike for man and beast.

797 We taxied to a standstill on the well-kept landing-ground of the Sacred Heart Mission in the presence of many spectators. Notified of the time of our arrival by means of the wireless

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

411 grass, in the foreground, so that the whirling club slithers on in an unforeseen and most unpleasant manner. It may rise as high as a man's head, or it may strike him on the shins.

● 133
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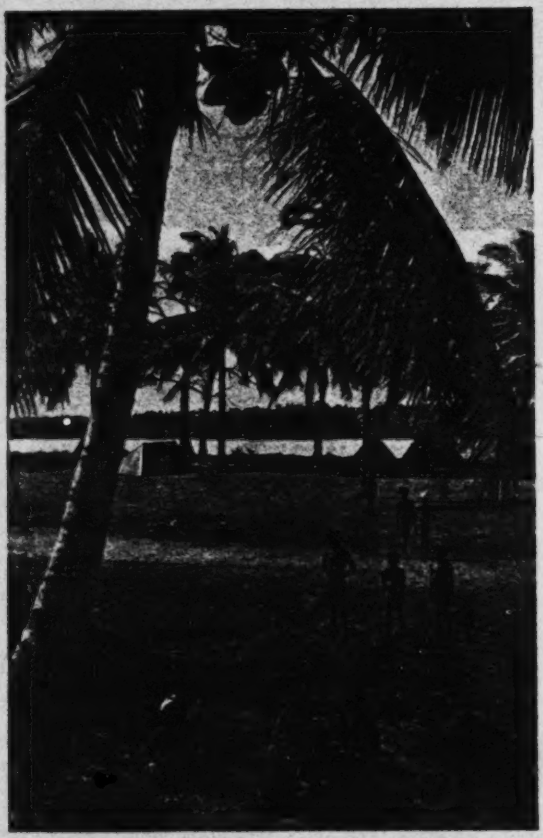

NATIVE "HOUSES" UNDER THE COCO-NUT PALMS AT BATHURST ISLAND MISSION.

726 Sometimes, as in the days of chivalry when English and French knights rode out before the main battle, eight men will advance to fight eight men of the other side, one pair at a time, each warrior throwing his spears and clubs in turn. [198] Sentries are then posted to one side, before and behind the combatants. As a warrior with a stock of pidgin English put it, "That feller, him look out front side. That feller, him look out back side."

At times warriors arrive by canoe to fight a duel on the beach close to the mission station. These are frequently more serious combats, and then men who are camped under the palms chase the duellists off; but these always land later farther down, and fight it out in the long run. Just before my visit, there had been fought the only naval battle in the history of the islands. The encounter took place in the mouth of Apsley Strait to the accompaniment of excited yells as canoes overturned when warriors stopped unevenly in dodging the flying spears. Nobody

[p. 17(B)]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

123 Although the wind had died and the clouds given way to a clear, light blue sky, the sea still had heavy rollers. However, instead of breaking over the canoe, they gently lifted it high in the air, then let it slide down the incline. We set out as the first rays of the sun appeared over the horizon and soon began to feel revived as our clothes began to dry. We stayed fairly close to the shore, close enough so that landmarks could be easily seen. For a while we coasted by the thin white strip of sand along which we 123 had hunted for turtle eggs the afternoon before. The land in back of the beach was low swampland and all that could be seen was a 133 thin line of green foliage. But soon we approached Tubinu Point. Here the beach gave way to a jutting headland and the steep sea-[134] ward cliff was a rainbow of colors where bands of ocherous clays of yellow and red were separated by clear white and topped by a [137] heavy line of dark humus. Tall eucalyptus trees stood right up to the edge of the 75-foot cliff. We stayed well clear of the base, for a short but ragged, rocky reef extended out under the water.

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The rolling motion, sun, and inactivity had made both Agnes and me drowsy and we were all but asleep when Big Jack woke [261] us with, "Black Joe mob. Him camp Anderaningo." I looked in

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

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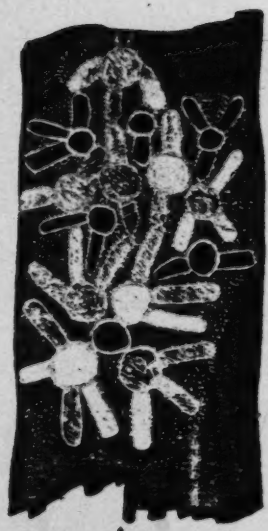

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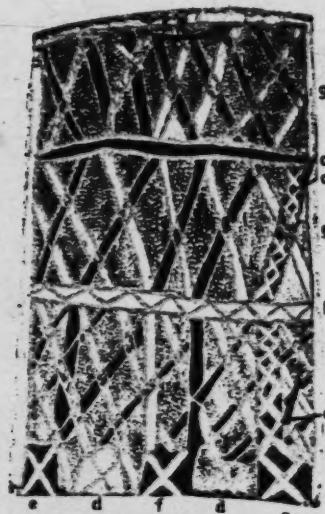

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[136]
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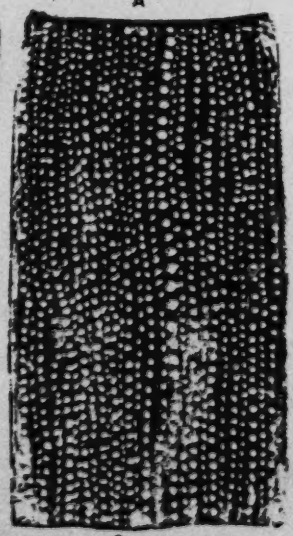

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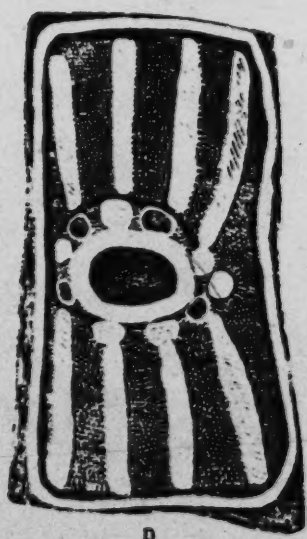

D

PLATE 50. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Sea-floor; B, Mangrove Swamp; C, Fish-man, Kumunga; D, Topography, Bathurst Island.

Cp. 160 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

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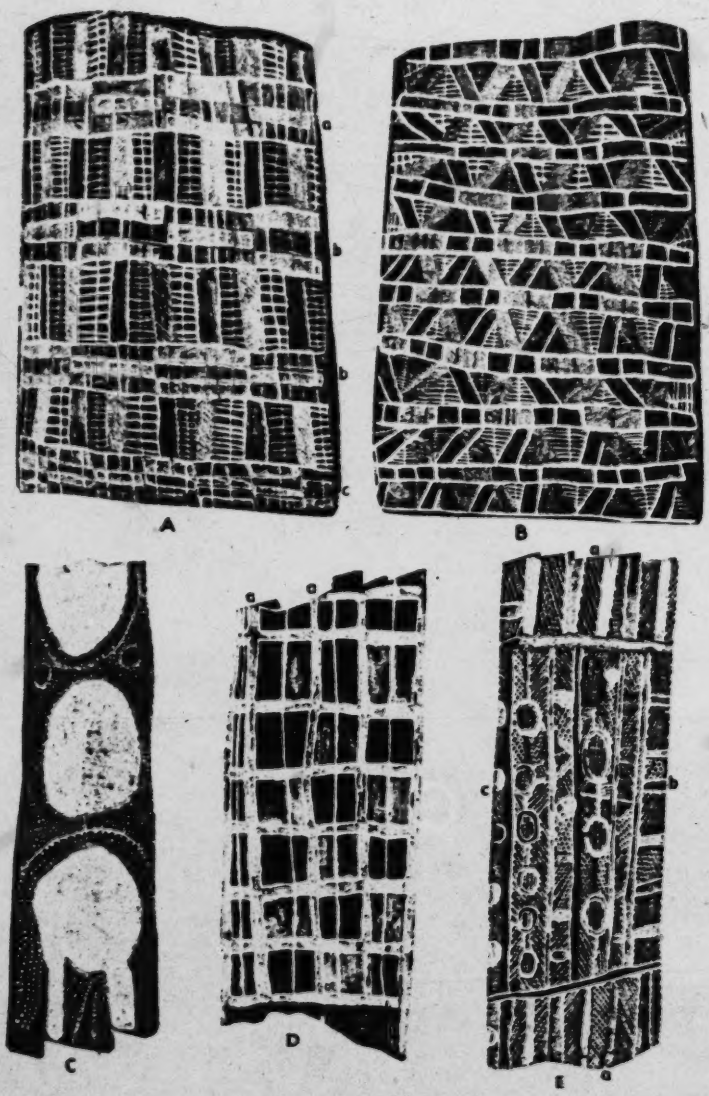

PLATE 52. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Sea-coast, Cape Van Diemen; C, Lagoons and Swamps; D, The Sea-shore; E, Jungle Scene.

[p. 160 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[136]

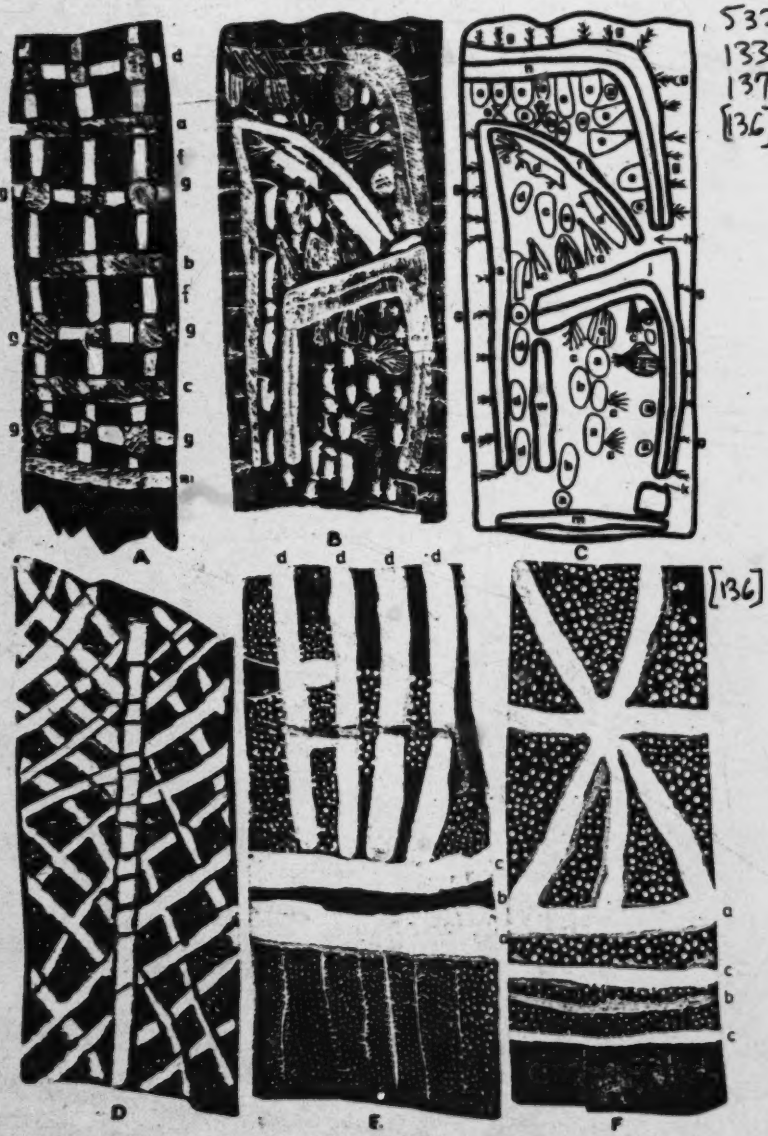

PLATE 53. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Forest, Curtis Haven; B, C, Topography, Snake Bay; D, Fresh and Salt-water Streams; E, Topography, Goose Creek; F, Sea-scape.

[p. 160 E]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[821]

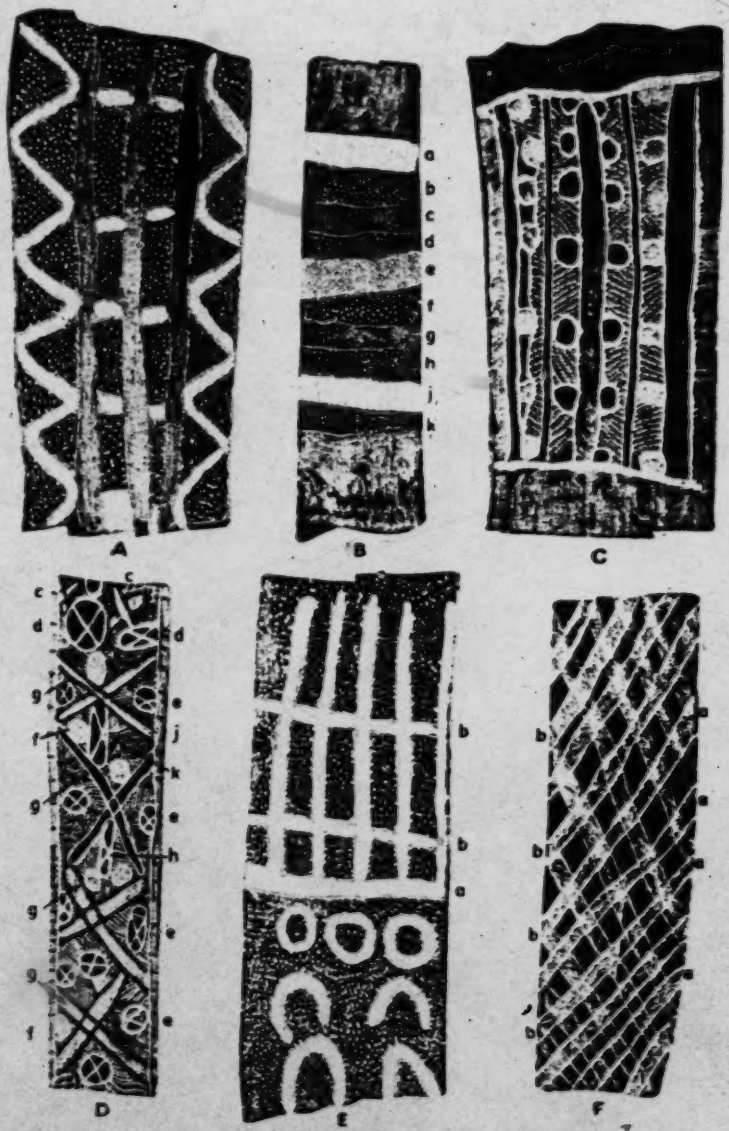

PLATE 54. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Maratji, Goose Creek; B, Sea-shore; C, Sea and Sea-coast; D, Marine Creatures; E, Topography, Snake Bay; F, Jungle.

[p. 160 F]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x
136●

A

B

[137]

C

D

E

PLATE 55. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Sea and Shore Creatures; C, Sea-going Turtles; D, Barramundi; E, Sea-snakes.

[p. 160 G]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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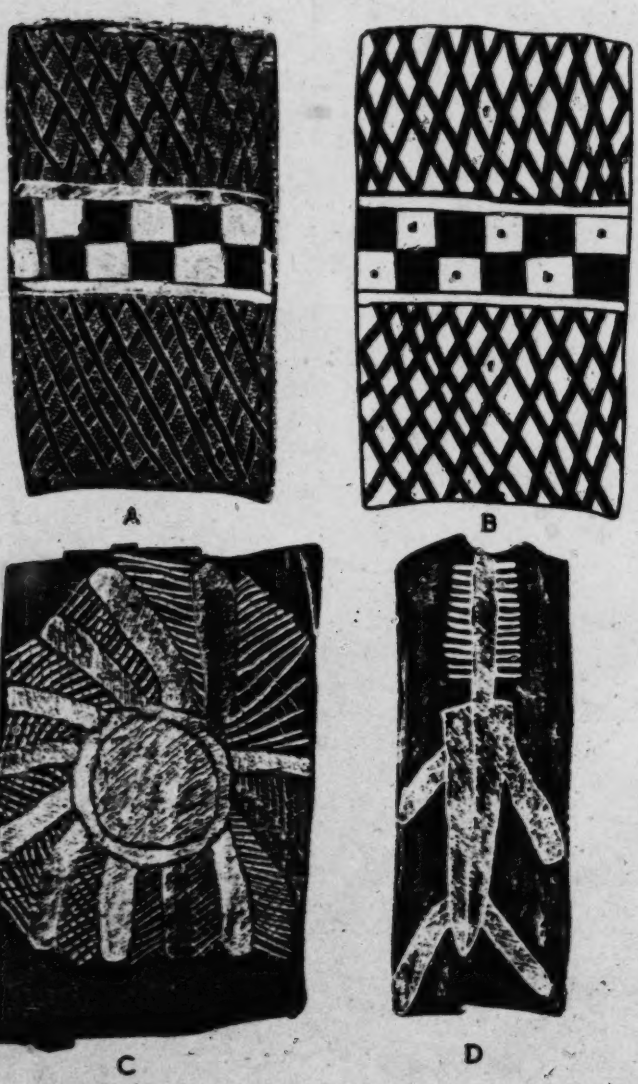

PLATE 56. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Creatures of the Sea; C, Jelly-fish; D, Saw-fish.

[p. 160 H]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 ×
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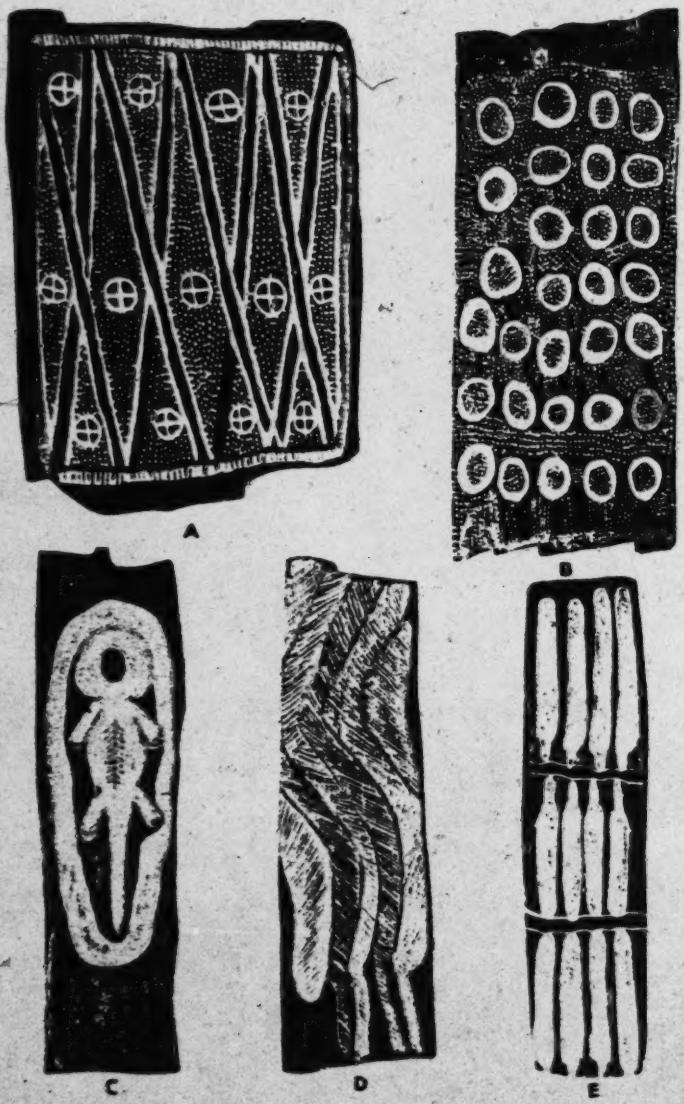

PLATE 57. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Edible Fruits; B, Poisonous Yams; C, Goanna; D, Sea-snakes; E, Sponges.

Cp. 160 I]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

X532 of wild honey in the hollow trees, and the dots, the red and black seeds of a
133 jungle vine.
137 On the lower panel, *s*, *s*, etc., indicate another forest of eucalyptus trees; the two rows of five circles at *p*, *p*, hives of wild bees, the cross-hatched panels between them spider webs, and the dots, the red and black seeds.

Biru Creek

Pl. 53E refers to a water-course, Biru, near the Goose Creek swamps, which is fresh in the southern and salt in the northern section, where it enters the sea.

The white panel *a*, is the saltwater end of Biru Creek, which is near the entrance of the Goose Creek swamps (Fig. 1), and the white band *c*, the freshwater end of the same creek. The black band *b*, is its banks. Panels *d*, *d*, etc., are white patches of sand and the dots, on the upper panel, patches of water-grass on the floor of the swamp. The bottom panel represents the open sea, the dots indicating patches of seaweed on the bottom.

Snake Bay

Pl. 53B, C, deals with the topography of Snake Bay.

Karslake Island (Wulrungku) is shown at *m*, on the lower edge; a sandbar (upper), the home of the spirit dogs, the *Wankuis* (p. 154) is at *f*; Iluwara inlet, in the Curtis Haven, is at *h* (middle right); a beach on the opposite shore of Iluwara inlet is at *j*, and Tjipripu Point at *w* (lower left). The long vertical line *s*, on the left, is Banjo beach, on which we camped; and *k* (lower right), a mangrove creek to the east.

Designs *e*, *e*, etc. (upper right), are mangrove trees growing on Karslake Island, and crosses, *o*, *o* (upper left), dead trees on the shore. Basket sponges, growing on rocks at the sea-bottom, are indicated at *c*, *c*, etc. (centre). Turtles are at *a*, *a*, etc.; dugongs at *b*, *b*, etc., and canoes at *d*, *d*, etc. Many casuarina trees, *g*, *g*, etc., grow along the shore lines.

[136]

Lagoons and Swamps

This simple bark painting, Pl. 52C, pictures the lagoons at the rear of the expedition camp.

The upper white semi-circle is the swamp, immediately behind our camp, in which there are many paper-bark trees (*Melaleuca* sp.); the white dots are water-lilies growing in the swamp. The central white oval indicates an open lagoon from which the water runs into the sea.

The lower design indicates a swamp further inland, which is fed by two

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

freshwater streams (projections on the lower edge). The dots around this design are also water-lilies. 532x 133 137

Western Bathurst Island

Pl. 52D illustrates a hill, Ipiṭjulimpi, on western Bathurst Island.

The central black oval is Ipiṭjulimpi Hill, and the white outline, the tall annual grass which grows at its base. The circle of small discs are groups of boulders on the sides of the hill. The eight long ovals on the upper and lower sections of the paintings, are cabbage palms; the white outer border symbolises red cliffs near by, and, the dots, the grass on the hillside.

2. THE SEA AND THE SWAMP-LANDS

The Sea and Sea-shore

Three bark paintings, Pl. 54C, Pl. 53F, and Pl. 52D, deal with the sea and the sea-shore.

Pl. 54C refers to the sea and the sea-coast. The outer plain vertical panels symbolise the white sand on the sea-shore, and the outer black panels, hatches of sea-weed. The light-coloured ovals are rocks under the water, covered with the sea-weed, and the black ovals are reefs of dark-coloured rocks on the bottom, which shelter the parrot fish and the rock cod. The cross-hatching indicates the white sand on the bottom of the ocean.

Pl. 53F depicts in a simple manner, the sea and the beach.

The intersecting lines on the upper panel represent an octopus, the dots, throughout the painting, small stones on the floor of the ocean; *a*, indicates the waves breaking on the beach; *b*, is a salt-water creek, and *c*, *c*, are its banks. [136]

Pl. 52D is a bark painting of the sea. The horizontal bars symbolise the waves breaking on the beach; the black rectangles, the dark-coloured stones, and the lighter-coloured rectangles, the red stones exposed at low water. The five vertical bands such as *a*, *a*, indicate the lines of debris, left by the receeding tide.

The Ocean Floor

Pl. 50A pictures the floor of the ocean. The light and dark coloured discs throughout the painting are boulders on the bottom, black projections on the dark-coloured discs, pearl-shell oysters, and those on the lighter discs, star-fish. The dots indicate the sea-sand. [136]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
QI20 Tiwi QI20

A Salt-water Creek

×532 133 Pl. 53D pictures a salt-water creek, Tunangabupi, which flows into the sea at north-eastern Melville Island.

The central panel is the Tunangabupi creek, the rectangles along it alternately representing sandbanks and outcrops of rocks in its bed. The lines forming the diamond patterns, indicate a series of freshwater streams which flow into the Tunangabupi Creek, and the white dots, the shrubs growing on their banks.

A Mangrove Swamp

Pl. 50B depicts a mangrove swamp at Cape Fourcroy.

Transverse band *a*, is a dry creek bed whose waters run into the swamp during the wet season, and *b*, a salt-water creek among the mangroves. The lines of diamond-like patterns at *c*, *c*, indicate a muddy salt-water creek, and the crossed designs *d*, *d*, muddy patches among the trees. At *e*, *e*, are fallen trees with mud on their roots, and *f*, is a large tree with its roots exposed. The intersecting lines in panels, *g*, *g*, indicate a forest of mangrove trees, and the dotted background, edible mangrove fruit lying on the ground.

The Sea-coast at Cape Van Diemen

Both sides of a large *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 52A and Pl. 52B, picture the sea-coast adjacent to Imilu, at Cape Van Diemen, north-western Melville Island.

The horizontal lines, *a*, on Pl. 52A, the obverse side of the basket, indicate the grass and fallen leaves on the sea-shore; the two bands, *b*, *b*, represent the sharp eroded rocks on the water's edge, and the lower band, *c*, weeds growing on the rocks under the water.

Throughout the design, the darker-coloured barred rectangles, with white ●[136] lines, are black trepang, and those with grey lines, white trepang. The plain rectangles indicate the sandy bed of the ocean.

On Pl. 52B, the reverse side of the same *pukamuni* basket, the series of transverse bands picture flat rocks on the edge of the sea, and the barred triangles, the water surging through them. The high cliffs at Imilu, Cape Van Dieman, are indicated by the many v-shaped designs.

The Sea and Mangrove Creeks

Pl. 54B is a particularly simple design which the artist once used to decorate a *pukamuni* pole.

The plain panels at the top and bottom of the paintings, represent the open sea; the transverse panels, *a*, *c*, *e*, *g*, *j*, refer to the salt-water creeks in the man-

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

grove swamps, and the dotted panels, *b*, *d*, *f*, *h*, and *k*, to the seaweed growing on the sea-bottom. 532X

3. THE FAUNA

The Sea-Creatures

Two bark paintings, 55A, B, and 56A, B, depict the creatures who live on the floor of the ocean. 532X

On Pl. 55A, B, design *a*, represents a shark; design *b*, and *f*, are large sea-snakes; *e*, is a smaller species, and *g*, another snake that lives in the mangrove swamps. At *c*, is a saw-fish; at *d*, a porpoise, and at *h*, a sea-slug or *bêche-de-mer*. Designs, *m*, *m*, etc., are shells; and *l*, boulders on the sea-bottom; *k*, is a creek in the mangrove swamp, and *j*, a sandbank in Snake Bay. 136●

Pl. 56A, B, also deals with the creatures of the sea. In the central section panels *a*, *a*, are star-fish; panel *b*, refers to an octopus; *c*, to pearl-shell oysters; *d*, to a crab, and *e*, to a turtle. The cross-hatching, throughout the design, is symbolical of the scale pattern on a crocodile skin, and the two transverse white bands are the creature's intestines.

The Snakes

Two bark paintings, Pl. 57D and Pl. 55E, depict the snakes of Melville and Bathurst Islands.

Pl. 57D pictures, in conventionalized form, a number of sea-snakes, some of which were poisonous and much feared.

Pl. 55E illustrates a number of snakes that live in the forest and jungle adjacent to the expedition.

Reading from the right, *a*, is the venomous bush snake, *jaruwini*; *b*, a copper-coloured non-venomous snake, *ilinga*; *c*, a venomous snake, *buliaringa*, that lives in the mangrove swamps, and *d*, a harmless water-snake, *patinga*. The short, more or less horizontal lines at *f*, *f*, are tall eucalypts in the forest and the dots, the grass at their base. [137]

A Goanna

Pl. 57C is a simple X-ray bark painting of a goanna, on which the backbone and ribs are indicated. This is the only example of that curious art form which I saw on Melville Island, although on the adjacent mainland, the X-ray art has reached its highest development.[88] [171]

The Sea-going Turtle

Pl. 55C pictures the sea-going turtles. The central design represents the

[88] Mountford, 1956, p. 256.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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x532
136

large logger-head turtle, *Ringa*, whose totemic place is at Jutapinta, north of Karslake Island (see Pl. 12c).

In the lower right is a young logger-head, and in the upper left, a hawk-bill turtle, *Garagalani*, which when a woman, assisted in the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*.

On the upper right of the painting is a green turtle and on the right-hand edge, a canoe which the aborigines had used to capture the turtles.

A Barramundi

This bark painting, Pl. 55D, pictures a barramundi, *alaminga*, a large fish which lives in either fresh or salt water.

The fish, *c*, is shown within the inner white oval. Its head is at *a*, its eyes being the two short lines within *a*; its tail is at *d*, and its fins at *e*, *e*, *e*, *e*. The dots represent the marks on its skin.

The outer oval is made up of red, white, yellow and black lines. Reading from the outside, the red oval indicates the land; the white, the sandy beach; the yellow, the breaking waves, and the black, the open sea.

A Jelly-fish

Pl. 56C illustrates an unidentified jelly-fish, *indringa*. The central disc is the body; the radiating lines, the tentacles, and the cross-hatched areas the ocean.

A Saw-fish, Jidati

Pl. 56D is a simple, representational bark painting of the saw-fish, *jidati*, in which the saw of the creature is given special prominence and the fins are shown as legs.

Sea Sponges

Pl. 57E pictures a number of sponges growing on the floor of the ocean. Although sea sponges do not appear to have any specific value to the aborigines, they are often pictured in the bark paintings.

4. THE FLORA

x532
137

Edible Jungle Fruits

Pl. 57A illustrates a number of edible fruits that grow in the jungle and the forest.

The crosses surrounded by a circle, represent the fruits of two different eugenias. They are about the size of an apple; one, a red fruit, is called *binamia*, and the other, a white fruit, *taurarujna*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

X 532 137

branches in full blossom. The dots at the base of the painting indicate eucalyptus blossoms lying on the ground.

A Forest, Curtis Haven

Pl. 53A illustrates the topography at Curtis Haven.

Transverse panel *a*, is a stringy-bark tree,[83] *b*, *c*, are two woolly-butts and *m*, is an ironwood. The short white panels at *f*, *f*, are cycad palms; the lines of circles at *g*, *g*, *g*, low hills, and the short white panels between them, cabbage palms. The cross-hatching indicates the grass on the hillsides.

5. MISCELLANEOUS AND UNIDENTIFIED

X 532 304

Body Scars

Pl. 58A refers to the chevron scars on the bodies of the older men and women; it has no other meaning.

The four white vertical lines indicate the scars on their legs; the many transverse lines, those across the abdomens, and the lines of dark and light-coloured chevron designs, the scars on the abdomens, backs, upper arms, and thighs.[84]

The Salmon-man

X 532 302

At the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, a salmon-man painted himself and his many wives with a series of large spots like those on the basket; when at the completion of the ceremony, those people became fish, they still retained the coloured spots on their bodies. The dots on Pl. 50C are symbolical of those on the body of the mythical salmon-man.

Design for a Pukamuni Pole

X 532 ● 136

Pl. 54D is a similar design to one which the artist once painted on a *pukamuni* pole he made for the dead man, *Kulatina*. The designs,[85] which are not linked with any myth or secular story, were, according to the artist, formed in his mind by the sound of the waves breaking on a nearby coast.

The four groups of crossed lines, *g*, *g*, etc., represent trepang, the lighter coloured being the white and the darker, the black species. The smaller

[83] These are species of eucalypts.

[84] The older generation of Melville and Bathurst Islanders were decorated with these scars. The custom has been discontinued in recent years. Spencer, 1928, Fig. 439, illustrates examples.

[85] Spencer, 1928, Fig. 475, illustrates poles decorated with a design similar to bark paintings, Pl. 54D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

groups of crossed lines at *c*, *c*, are two stingrays; *d*, *d*, etc., are two dolphins; the darker crossed discs, *e*, *e*, and similar patterns, stones on the beach, and the lighter, such as *f*, *f*, etc., freshwater cockles. There is an unidentified salt-water fish at *h* and a shark at *k*. 532 x 136

Unidentified

I do not know the meanings of the designs on the bark paintings, Pl. 58D, nor those on the three *pukamuni* baskets, Pl. 59A, B, Pl. 59C, D, and Pl. 60C. 532 x

Two of the baskets, Pl. 59A, B, and Pl. 59C, D, were brought by the Bathurst Island group when they attended the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

not only in physique but also in intelligence. I should be surprised to 153
find in any other Australian tribe a man with the intelligence and adaptability of my own head boy Mariano.

The flora and fauna of the two islands is very similar to that of the 133
rest of the Northern Territory. The country is mostly flat with a low range of rocky hills between Cape Gambier and Cape Keith on Melville Island, and a still lower range in the centre of Bathurst. The timber 137
consists of the usual Australian trees; gums, stringy-bark, woolly-butt, bloodwood and ironwood cover most of the two islands, broken here and there by patches of open grassland and in other places by dense patches of jungle where snakes and "devils" thrive and the natives seldom enter. Wallabies are extraordinarily plentiful, but there are no kangaroos. 136
Buffaloes are found on Melville in small numbers. These are the wild descendants of the domestic Indian buffaloes imported for agricultural purposes by the early settlers at Fort Dundas. At one time they had increased and multiplied to such effect that thousands were shot every year without any appreciable effect upon their numbers. At the present time, however, probably owing to many of the cows being killed, there are probably not more than a thousand on the island. The natives are seldom able to kill a buffalo though they realise the fact that it is good to eat.

Not only are wallabies plentiful, but there is also an abundant supply 262
of the other native articles of food, fish, crocodile, birds of all kinds, wild honey, yams and other native vegetables. As a result of this abundance 161
of foods, it would seem that the two islands had a greater density of population than is to be found in almost any other part of Australia.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The people inhabiting Melville and Bathurst Islands are subdivided 621
into a number of local groups. These local groups are the important sections of the population since they act as land-owning groups, war-making groups, have a solidarity of their own which is far stronger than any tribal solidarity that may exist and even to some extent regulate marriage.

Before considering these hordes in detail, however, something must 184
be said about the tribal name. All the hordes practise the same customs, 619
speak the same language and inter-marry. The boundaries of the people speaking this language are of course strictly defined by the sea. In other words, the people of Melville and Bathurst have a solidarity of their own,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 the mainland. In the first place no spears are manufactured for projecting by other method than simply by hand. No spear-throwers, so much in evidence [101] among all true Australian tribes, are in use on these islands. Yet light spears were observed which really marked the beginning of the development of the arrow. 411 524 These were seen to be used by youths at play and during their sham fights. Light green sticks, a little over a metre in length and slightly more than a lead pencil's thickness, are cut and scraped to a simple point at one end. The opposite end, that is, the back- or hand-end, is next put to the mouth and split with the teeth along its fibres into several strips some 10 centimetres long. The split pieces are then bent outwards like the feathers of an arrow and the toy weapon is ready for use. It can be hurled by hand with astounding precision. The opponents evade the missiles by dodging and crouching and contorting their bodies in much the same clever manner as I have described[1] of the Larrekiya and Wogait tribes.

411 Strictly speaking, one type of spear prevails. It is made of a single piece of solid wood, straightened to a greater or less degree over a fire. It is barbed at the front end and tapers to a simple point behind. The extreme variations in length and, consequently, in weight also, of this spear attract the attention at first sight. It is nothing unusual to find spears measuring 450 centimetres in length and weighing 2,700 grammes, but at the same time the smaller specimens measure only 250 centimetres in length and weigh 370 grammes. When we consider that a fair average length of the Northern Territory spear is 300 centimetres and a good average weight 260 grammes, the maxima of the islanders' spears quoted seem very remarkable indeed. The more do these appeal to us since the largest species [136] of the indigenous fauna is but a fair-sized wallaby. Crocodiles are comparatively scarce, and the buffalo, introduced from Timor by Captain Barlow, first commandant of Fort Dundas, in 1826, is practically unknown on Bathurst Island. On Melville Island, where similar spears are in use, the buffalo is very plentiful, but it is a singular fact that the natives do not hunt this beast to any considerable extent.

The head of the spear has many barbs carved on one side and, occasionally, on two diametrically opposite sides. There are usually from ten to thirty barbs, which are directed backwards (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 5 (Series)). Behind these there may or may not be from four to eight small serrations that stand out at right angles to the length of the shaft. In other cases, too, some six or more barbs are cut at the back part of the spear-head pointing the opposite way, that is, in the direction the spear is thrown. The spear heads have a long point resembling a cutting-blade or spike. The barbs are symmetrically carved with sharp edges and point. They are flattish lancet-shaped, with a central ridge on the outside, and project from the head to various degrees of prominence in different specimens. Many of the spears are longitudinally grooved with an adze, either for the whole of their length or along the head-end only. They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 33.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

leads to the situation—quite foreign to our way of thought and also apparently to that of Polynesian cultures—whereby a young bachelor can prowl around the bush all night without arousing the slightest interest but his daytime wanderings, ostensibly in search of game, are watched by his married seniors with the deepest suspicion.

[8] The buffalo, which are confined to Melville Island, are the wild descendants of domestic East Asian water buffalo which were imported during an early attempt at settlement.

[9] It is perhaps not without interest that one of Tip's jokes is imperishably preserved in the files of the Peabody Museum at Harvard. Tip was in Darwin in 1927 when W. Lloyd Warner was collecting at the Native Compound the anthropometric measurements which were afterwards analyzed by W. W. Howells (1937), and like all other natives in town from many tribes he and a number of Tiwi were measured by Warner. On the card for each subject Warner wished to record the personal name of the native. Led by Tip, all the Tiwi measured bestowed upon themselves the most obscene "native name" they could think of, and years later Tip would shout with laughter when telling how Warner faithfully recorded these obscenities, often repeating them several times to make sure of the correct pronunciation.

[10] This set of sentiments surrounding Tip's wife also gives a little more insight into the sex activities of Louis. His reluctance to move in on her, because of the way "the old men would feel," while showing no such reluctance to move in on Mrs. Bob, supports the view implied above that Louis, while sex dominated, was no fool in his amours. He had an intelligent and realistic appreciation of just how much he could get away with.

[11] I use this slang term deliberately, since it expresses somewhat the Tiwi attitude toward those young bachelors who go about seducing the wives of their elders and betters.

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9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca.1940)1943 O120 Tiwi O120

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. Harney and A. P. Elkin[1]

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and ●136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog (*wongine*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. 825 According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts 757 of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] [1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. Elkin.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

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Fig. 7. Agnes (left) and a friend admire a large mangrove crab

together with sharks, these waters contain the large and dangerous salt-water crocodile and all manner of poisonous jellyfish, one realizes that to swim around in a high sea in the pitch dark requires considerable courage. 123

Soon after we had crawled under the mosquito netting and between the blankets rain began to fall in a gentle and persistent way, but still not hard enough to prevent our falling asleep with little conversation.

It was hardly light the next morning when Agnes stood up and rewrapped her *naga*, a strip of calico, about her waist, then took up the billys and went to the well to draw water for the morning tea. Although the rain had been steady during the night, the well-built fire still had some life in it and after a few minutes of concentrated blowing, Albert had it rejuvenated. While the billy boiled, Big Jack shook as much of the wet sand as was possible from the blankets and rolled them into tight bundles. Then he set off to retrieve the canoe. By the time he reappeared, the tea was ready and it helped to wash down the leathery cold strips of damper sweetened with jam. [291] [372]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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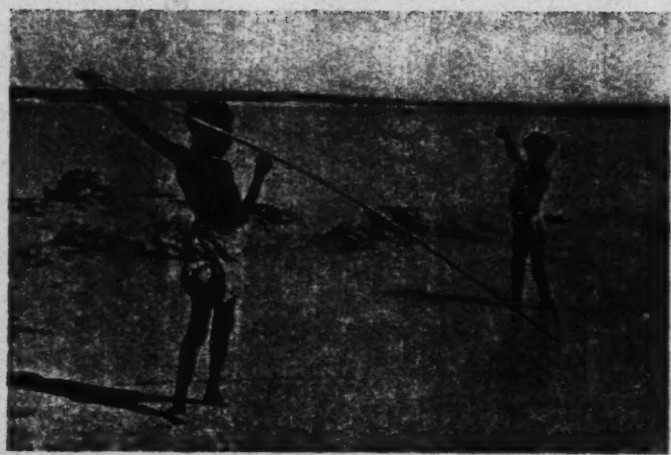

Fig. 9. Two young hunters practicing with fish-spears

123 the impenetrable jungle, which were attributed to the *Ningawi*, the
[776] weird and mysterious "little people" of the mangrove. Rounding a curve in the river, we surprised a flock of whistle ducks sitting on an exposed mudbank. Young Billy tried to shoot one for supper but missed, and soon they were well out of range. On a rare piece of solid ground we saw the long tail and massive hips of a startled
[136] wallaby as he hopped to safety. However, a successful throw of the fish-spear brought us a large barramundi, and the .22 rifle provided both a possum and a fruit bat, or flying fox, for supper.

All of a sudden the mangroves disappeared and our view was no longer restricted to the river bank; rather we gazed through
[137] thick, gnarled white paperbarks on the water's edge to wide expanses of marshy grasslands. A few flocks of black and white geese, which had returned to the swamps early in the evening, were startled by the sound of the motor and rose honking in fright.

About five, we reached Minianapi, a landing place about fifteen yards wide, where solid ground reached the river bank. We were

under the surface by the massive roots of the paperbarks. It was in 123
just this sort of pool that the largest of the five crocs landed that [225]
night, was harpooned. The huge 18-foot animal dived into the roots
and it took about twenty tense minutes to dislodge and dispatch him.
Aside from the crocodiles the only wild life seen that night was a
small and very frightened little mouse who suddenly appeared on
my lap and then just as suddenly disappeared over the boat's side.

We returned to Minianapi at daybreak and the hot tea and
roast goose seemed a perfect breakfast, or was it supper? It didn't
matter for we were soon sound asleep.

When we finally awoke in mid-afternoon we found the camp
almost deserted. "Everyone go walkabout; kill geese," Albert
informed us as he and Agnes gathered more wood to build up the
smouldering fire. It was very quiet in the small clearing and only
the little black spots of charcoal spaced in irregular intervals on the
ground were evidence that there were more than our mob in resi-
dence. The clearing itself was quite bare because it had been burned
by the first comers, with the double purpose of clearing out the
four-foot grass itself, and any of the various poisonous snakes [136]
which were quite likely to infest it. In back of the clearing was a
thick tangle of low bushes through which ran a little foot-path.
Agnes started down this path carrying a billy can and I offered to
go with her, but Albert said, "No, by um by we go, him long way,
him only get a little bit now." After one gets used to the pronoun [195]
"him" being used to refer to everything animal, vegetable, and
mineral, this phrase is perfectly understandable: the first "him"
referred to the water, the second to Agnes.

So instead of collecting water, I wandered down to the river
bank where Billy-Two, Brownie, and a few of the other men, were
busy skinning the crocodiles. This they did by cutting the skin first
around the head, then down either side of the rows of bumps
running along the spine to the tail. The skin was then carefully [281]
peeled and cut from the body. Once free it was rubbed with salt
which would act as a preservative until such time as the supply boat
would arrive to carry it to Darwin. There the skins would be sold [439]
to the dealer and the proceeds credited to the hunter's account or 452
sent in the form of hard cash to the settlement for distribution. Now
they were folded into bundles and loaded into the launch, and large [262]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 10. Skinning a large crocodile

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pieces of the white meat were carried into the camp to be roasted for dinner. What was not to be consumed that night was thrown into the water, for meat spoils quickly in this sticky climate.

Darkness came early, and with it came the return of the goose hunters and the departure of the launch with the Grimsters and their crocodile team. Once more they would spend the night hunting crocodiles, this time downstream on their way back to the settlement. Soon many little fires broke up the darkness of the clearing and the smell of fresh roasting meat wafted over to where Albert, Agnes, Jack, and I were opening cans of corned beef. "Tomorrow we go bush," Albert remarked and I heartily assented.

Young Brook, a lean young man, and his wife, Alice,

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 11. Even the youngest respect the teeth of the crocodile

approached our fire. "You savey goose?" he asked me. "Oh yes," I said, "we eat him along America." He handed me a large juicy leg which I gave to Albert to divide, then squatted down at the edge of the fire's glow. I handed my tin of tobacco to Alice and she filled her husband's pipe. Picking up a burning branch from the fire, she knocked a hot coal into the bowl of the pipe and began smoking. Soon she handed it to Young Brook. Suddenly our attention was directed to the opposite side of the clearing where Dennis, the four-year old daughter of Black Joe was crying hysterically. Tuki, a tall powerful man of fifty-five, was doing his best to calm her and disentangle himself from her clinging arms so that he could leave. Tuki and his wife, Fat Alice, were a childless couple and

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Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

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262 cooked, with that delicious charcoal-broiled flavor so much sought after in our more elite dining establishments or in our backyards.

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224 Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goanas, they brought over to show us an extremely large water [431] snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tre- [513] mendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minianapi in time to meet the geese.
123 All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless
231 baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's
484 hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was

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13:Barclay J-3 (ca.1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

OUD out from East Point, and from the nearest island of the Vernon group, were also clearly visible as we passed over them. Straight ahead, Melville and Bathurst Islands now showed up, the hills a darker blue, and every moment they became more and more distinctly visible.

133 We turned west again as we reached the shores of Melville Island. Below, and near at hand, in turn were sandy beaches,
137 cliffs that come straight down to the water's edge, or low mangrove-flats through which wind serpentine inlets of salt water. Inland, low green hills are covered with open tropical forest, denser on the lower slopes and thinning towards the arid, stony summits. Fan-palms grow among the tropical eucalypts, and the familiar pandanus palm borders open grassy flats just as it does on the mainland across the narrow seas. Buffalo, now
[136] so much reduced in numbers that nobody shoots them, feed on the flats, and in the forest-covered hills are many kangaroos and wallabies. Little bays, and now and then projecting lines of reef, make natural boat-harbours, and far away across the tree-tops a wide expanse of shining water seems to be a great lake surrounded by wooded hills—it is actually an arm of the sea on the eastern side of Cape Van Diemen.

The funnel-shaped entrance to Apsley Strait, the mile-wide, fifty-mile-long stretch of fast-flowing waterway that separates the two islands, soon appeared beneath us. Looking towards the north, on the eastern side of this narrow silvery passage, one sees the wooded hills, the dense patches of vivid green jungle, and the open swampy plains of Melville Island. To the west, on the Bathurst Island side of the entrance, dense plantations of coco-nut palms occupy the foreground. There are cleared fields with a wall of forest beside them, white roofs among the palms, and beyond again are thickly-timbered heights.

DENSE mangroves, of a deeper green than that of forest or jungle foliage, give contrast at the water's edge on either side of the narrow strait, which, a silver streak in the blue distance, leads on to the sea, faintly visible far beyond at the height at which we were flying. The tide runs through this strait like a mill-race; but at the moment it was dead-water, and, with sail set, a large dug-out canoe was making across from Melville to
177 Bathurst Island. As the 'plane banked round preparatory to landing, I saw, beyond the canoe and across the strait, the iron roof of the only European dwelling on Melville Island.

It was formerly the permanent camp of Joe Cooper, a famous buffalo-hunter; but, now, since Cooper's death, even this solitary outpost has long been deserted. It is more than a century since the old military settlement of Fort Dundas, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, was abandoned. Nothing of the fort now remains except a few heaps of stone, and, buried in thick scrub, the grass-grown brickwork that faced the surrounding deep trench. The area of Melville Island is 2,240 square miles.
131 Bathurst Island is only half as large. Although Melville
797 Island may, some day, come within the scope of North Australian settlement schemes, the major part of Bathurst Island is vested in perpetuity in the authorities of the Mission of the Sacred Heart, and the latter island will remain, fortunately almost entirely in its virgin state, a sanctuary alike for man and beast.

797 We taxied to a standstill on the well-kept landing-ground of the Sacred Heart Mission in the presence of many spectators. Notified of the time of our arrival by means of the wireless

[p. 14(A)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

Tiklauila" or "My wife is a Munupula woman"; a mourner would say, "He died when visiting the Munupula and therefore we will have to go to Munupi for the funeral"; an old man would reminisce about being brought up as a youth by his mother's brother, who was a Turupula, and the good times he had in Turupi; and another would recount details of big battles between the Munupula and the Malauila. All of these were band names or band territories. The nine bands thus acted, psychologically, as small tribelets or semisovereign groups, since it was with one of them that every Tiwi most closely identified in his day-to-day life on the islands. It is only when, as nowadays, he leaves the islands to go to work for the white man in Darwin that he has to think of himself as a Tiwi, since there he mingles with men of other tribes. Even then, work and residence in the white man's town does not entirely obliterate band identification. A Tiklauila in Darwin prefers to work with and to consort in the evenings with other Tiklauila, and Malauila with Malauila.[8]

Because of certain peculiar features of Tiwi domestic life, to be discussed below, it is difficult to sum up the Tiwi band in any simple formula. People, especially women, changed their band residence frequently in the course of their lives, and being born into a band did not at all require permanent residence with that band, either for males or for females. Thus the district (for example, Tiklaru or Malau) was a firm, fixed, known quantity, but the people who "owned" the district (for example, Tiklauila or Malauila) were a flexible and constantly shifting collection of individuals.

The territorial boundaries between bands were clear and well known to everybody, though they were not the sharp lines on a map such as we regard as essential for a frontier or a land boundary. All pieces of country—clumps of jungle, stretches of grassland, sections of thick woods—had names. One such piece of country, say a thickly wooded area, belonged to one band, while the more open country that began where the woods thinned out belonged to another; thus the boundary was not a sharp line but a transitional zone—perhaps of several miles—where the change from trees to open savannah became noticeable, with the band territories thus fusing into one another rather than being separated by sharp lines. The Tiwi, so to speak, thought of the landscape as a sort of spectrum where a man moved gradually out of one district into another as he passed from one type of horizon to the next. Since rivers, and even Apsley Strait, a very narrow arm of the sea separating Melville from Bathurst Island, usually have similar types of vegetation on *both* sides or banks, none of the island rivers nor Apsley Strait was a boundary or frontier between bands. The Mandiimbula, predominantly a Melville Island

[8] In the early 1930's the situation at the Government Hospital in Darwin offered a good illustration of this. The hospital authorities said they gave preference for houseboy jobs to "Melville Islanders because of their greater intelligence and reliability." In point of fact, some of the younger Tiklauila had established a monopoly on hospital jobs and no Tiwi other than a Tiklauila was ever hired there. The whites thought they were hiring Tiwi but the Tiklauila saw to it that they hired only Tiklauila and felt no vestige of obligation to other Tiwi to help them get these desirable jobs. The alleged greater intelligence of the islanders was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Tiklauila, having had a Catholic mission in their territory since 1911, were more used to white requirements.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Not only did many people come to such a funeral to express their kinship with, and pay their respects to, the deceased, but as mentioned above, many men with disputes to settle or fights to pick let such matters ride until the next big funeral was called and then took advantage of the large crowd to provide the necessary witnesses for the transaction of the outstanding legal business. Gatherings of many households for purely legal affairs, without funerals or *kolema* ceremonial as the main *raison d'etre* for the gathering, were comparatively rare and when they did occur they were usually called by one man, to settle one case only, and hence did not promote the attendance of very many households. Similarly, the funerals of most women and of younger and therefore less important men drew together at most ten or twelve households and a few other individuals, so that the crowd was usually not above one hundred people at the most. A single *ad hoc* legal duel, even when an episode in a long-drawn out and notorious dispute, seldom drew more than this number. Duels always attracted some spectators who came for the excitement, even though not personally involved, provided of course they were camped somewhere in the vicinity. 527 571 619 764 627

This second type of collective gathering, of which the smaller funerals and the single duels were the main occasions, might then require the attendance of a household head, accompanied by some or all of his household members, perhaps five or six times a year. These gatherings would each last less than forty-eight hours, and since the people the household head met at them would mostly be people of his own band or of closely adjoining bands, the excitement of seeing unfamiliar faces—people not seen for over a year perhaps—would be absent. We may reckon that attendance at these smaller, more localized gatherings, and the participation in group activity which they entailed, took up two more weeks, all told, out of the yearly round. When these two weeks are added to the six or seven already estimated for the time spent by a busy public man at the large gatherings, we find that even the busiest and most gregarious senior elders spent less than ten weeks out of the fifty-two in collective activity outside their immediate households.

To complete the list of occasions which called for joint activity by the members of several households, we must include the joint kangaroo hunt. This activity was very localized and very spasmodic, occurring only when and where conditions were right and somebody felt sufficiently energetic to organize it. Much of the Tiwi country is a mixture of dense scrub and relatively open savannah; kangaroo are relatively easy to hunt in the latter but very hard to get near in the denser types of vegetation. The native method of hunting was based on getting as close as possible to the animal before it saw or heard the hunter. If it detected the hunter, it fled, and no Tiwi in his senses ever threw a spear or a throwing stick at a moving kangaroo.[5] Only when the animal was standing still and the hunter was close enough to aim carefully at a vital part was the spear thrown. At certain seasons of the year, particularly after the end of the wet and early in the dry season, many sections of good kangaroo country gave very poor hunting returns because the grass had become 224 [137] 221 224

[5] The up-and-down movement of a hopping kangaroo in flight makes it an extraordinarily difficult target even for skilled white hunters armed with shotguns or rifles.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

INTRODUCTION

MELVILLE ISLAND (Fig. 1), the research field of the 1954 National Geographic expedition, is, with the exception of Tasmania, the largest of the Australian islands. Eighty miles from east to west, and seventy from north to south, it rises barely five hundred feet above the sea. Its level surface is covered with a monotonous grey-green forest of eucalypts and acacias, whose monotony is broken only by the steep cliffs and sandy beaches of the coastline, the salt-water creeks which cut deeply into the northern coasts, and the almost impenetrable mangrove swamps that line those waterways. 131 133 137

Between Melville Island and the mainland are the swiftly running tideways, the reefs and shoals of the Clarence and Dundas Straits, tideways so dangerous that, before the installation of a series of flashing light-buoys, no ocean-going ship would attempt to navigate their broken waters in the darkness.

Abel Tasman, in 1644, was the first European to sail along the east, north, and west coasts of Melville Island and the adjacent Bathurst Island,[1] naming Cape Van Diemen and Van Diemen Gulf after the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. As Tasman's account of that journey was lost, we do not know whether he actually landed on the islands, or only saw them in the distance. 175

Sir Philip King circumnavigated the two islands in 1818 and in 1824 the British Government, both to prevent the French from settling along the northern coasts of Australia and to protect British commerce from the rapidly expanding Dutch trade, established a military post at Fort Dundas, on the Apsley Straits. After five unhappy years the authorities moved the garrison to Port Essington, on the Coburg Peninsula, on the mainland, but not before both Sir Gordon Bremer (12th Nov. 1824) and Major Campbell (1834, pp. 135–60) had made some excellent observations on aboriginal graves, burial poles, bark paintings and canoes. [114]

In the early days of this century, a buffalo hunter, Joe C. Cooper, having gained the confidence of the warlike people of Melville Island, known as the Tiwi tribe, established a camp near Cockle Point (Fig. 1) on the south-western corner of Melville Island. There he earned a living shooting buffaloes for their hides, buffaloes whose forbears had escaped from the settlement at Fort Dundas.

[1] Melville and Bathurst Islands, separated by the narrow Apsley Strait, are both a geographic and cultural unit. [101]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

881
[516]
[137]

B

D

[142]
[302]

A

C

PLATE 44. *The Kulama Ceremony*

A, Chanting Kulama Songs; B, Placing Kulama Yams in Oven; C, Ritual before collecting Kulama Yam; D, The Kulama Yam.

[p. 128 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

881 led by the *Mikinatrinas*, carrying the baskets, followed by the *Mikiasaras*, the *Mikiasarimas*, and the *Mikiagulas*. No *kulama* woman accompanied this party.

As the *kulama* men entered the jungle they separated, each searching for vines which indicated the presence of the yam.[20] Before digging, however, the [824] *kulama* men, softly calling "Oom-oom", gently patted the ground to wake [753] up the yams, for, should any yam get a fright, its spirit, becoming annoyed, would make everyone ill with the *kulama* sickness. When digging the yams, the men were most careful not to break even one of the fine roots (Pl. 44D).

On filling in the holes, the men again made the thunder call, "Oom-oom", [821] which, they said, would cause more rain to fall before the day was over. One aboriginal accidentally broke a *kulama* yam while digging it. Instantly, he was on his feet, and, with the broken yam in his palm, dodged in and out among the trees, to escape the spirit of sickness released by the angry yam. After a few minutes, however, he returned, placed the broken yam carefully in the basket with the rest, and resumed his digging. His companions said that it was fortunate that he had only damaged the yam slightly, otherwise, its spirit would have made not only the careless aboriginal, but all of the *kulama* people ill.

When sufficient yams were collected, the party returned to camp in the same order as they went out, i.e., *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikiasaras*, *Mikiasarimas* and *Mikiagulas*. The *Mikinatrinas* carried the yams to the foot of a blood-wood tree, called the *wuringalua*, cleared the grass from around the base and, taking the yams from the basket, placed them on the ground. They were covered with leaves by the female initiates, the *Mikinatriningas*.

(4) *The Preparation of the Ceremonial Ground*

In the late afternoon, the *kulama* men and the male initiates, excluding the *Marukununi* and the *Wadjeniatis*, prepared the ceremonial ground, the *milimika*.

372 The men walked toward an open space in the forest, and with low cries, 881 beat the ground with sticks, while the leader, pulling up a tuft of grass, threw it into the air. At the place where it fell, the men dug a small circle, the *tumarapi* (navel), in which the yams were to be cooked. Then, sitting down, the men pushed the sand and grass outwards with their feet until the *milimika*, about fifteen feet in diameter, was cleared and surrounded by a low mound of earth and grass.

[20] The *kulama* yam (*Dioscorea sativa*, variety *rotunda*) (Pl. 44D), is about the size of a hen's egg and covered with hairs similar to a beard. It is held in the palm of the hand until [222] [137] it is placed carefully in the bark basket.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (e) "The salt water (sea), brings plenty of drift-wood up on the beach for
539 our fires."
881 (f) "The *mukwall* (shark) killed a stingray."
(g) "The boat sails fast and the waves are beating its sides."

At approximately 8.30 p.m. the chanting ceased and the aborigines retired to their camps.

(6) *The Lighting of the Ceremonial Fire*

About 6.30 the next morning, the *Mikinatrinings* women collected pieces
[137] of termite mound and put them on the top of the sticks for the fire which had been piled over the oven, the *tumarapi*. This fire could be lit by any man above the grade of *Mikinatrina*. Whilst the fire was burning down, the *Mikingulas* walked around it, and sang a few *kulama* songs, only one of which was recorded.

[177] (1) "When I see the shining iron of the new schoolhouse, I think how my children will go to school and wear boots."[81]

881 By 9.30 a.m. after everyone had had a meal, most of the aborigines, including several children, painted themselves in red and made their way to the swamp to take part in the ritual of bringing the *kulama* yams from the water, to the *milimika*.

On reaching the swamp, the leader took the yams from the pad of grass under the water, placed them carefully in the basket, with a bundle of rushes plucked from a nearby swamp on top, then, putting the basket on his shoulder, carried it to the *milimika* and stood it beside the fire "to warm up the yams".

881 The *Mikingulas*, walking anti-clockwise as before, chanted another series
533 of songs.
539 (a) "I went to Native Affairs (Darwin), drew out £10 (with which to
[177] gamble) and bought a pack of playing cards."[82]

Striding around the ring with two spears in one hand and a throwing stick in the other, the same man sang.

(b) "I have many spears. If the white people were not here, I would kill you all."

881 At the end of the song, the performer called out the name of his dead
765 father, striking himself on the head with his throwing stick to indicate his sorrow. The people on the outside of the ring cried in sympathy.

[185] [81] A parent's hope in a changing society that his children will live at a higher social level that the one which he himself occupies.

[82] A number of the younger Melville Islanders work for extended terms in Darwin, periodically returning to their homeland to take part in the ceremonies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER VI

The Secular Bark Paintings

×532 THE designs used by the Tiwi on many of their secular bark paintings are strongly influenced by those employed in decorating the poles and the large bark baskets of the *pukamuni* ceremony. For instance, all of the patterns on Pl. 49 would be similar to those used on a burial pole, while a number of the paintings of the totemic places, for example, those shown on Pl. 10, have the same fundamental designs as those on the *pukamuni* baskets.

As mentioned previously, one of the remarkable aspects of the art of the [171] Tiwi is that it is highly formalized, whereas, on the mainland, only fourteen miles away, across the dangerous waterway of Dundas Strait, the art is fully representational. This difference in the art forms of the Tiwi and that of the aborigines of the adjacent mainland is an excellent example of how a natural barrier can isolate one culture from the influence of another.

1. TOPOGRAPHY

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The obverse side of a large *pukamuni* basket (Pl. 49A, B), illustrates the trees and shrubs of Cape Van Diemen, arranged in a decorative pattern, and on the reverse side (Pl. 49C, D), the natural features at Imilu, in the same locality.

Cape Van Diemen

On Pl. 49A, B, the series of rectangles at *a*, on the top of the basket, represent a forest of stringybark trees, and the groups of vertical and sloping lines at *k*, *k* (bottom), many bloodwood trees. The vertical lines, *f*, *f*, etc., are also stringybarks and the horizontal lines, *c*, *c*, etc., bloodwood trees.

The many circles, *d*, *d*, etc., are *pukamuni* arm ornaments, *palmatjinas* (Pl. 31E, F); the cross-hatching in rectangles *e*, *e*, etc. (upper) are spider webs, and the dots at *b*, *b*, etc., black and red seeds of a jungle vine lying on the ground.

Imilu

On Pl. 49C, D, the circles *a*, *a*, etc., in the border, represent the many hives of wild bees in the trees at Imilu, and the intervening panels, *f*, *f*, etc., red

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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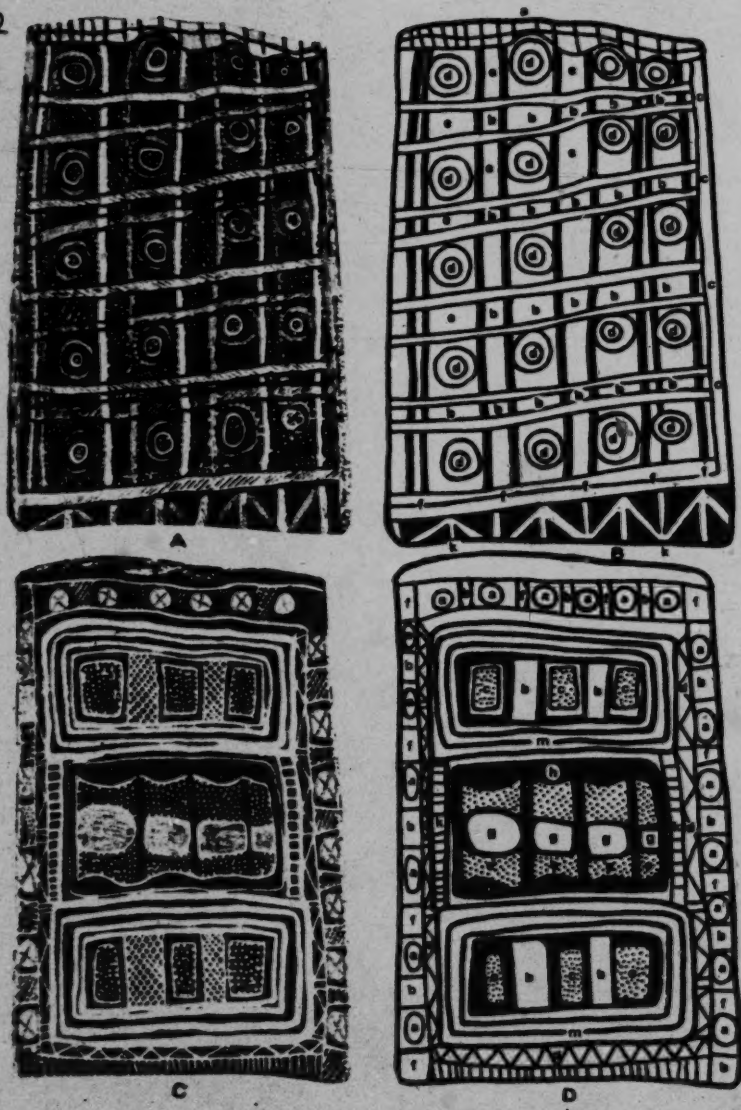

PLATE 49. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Topography, Cape Van Diemen; C, D, Topography, Imilu.

[p. 160 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

O120 Tiwi O120

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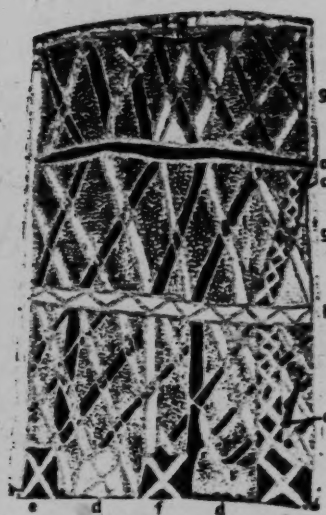
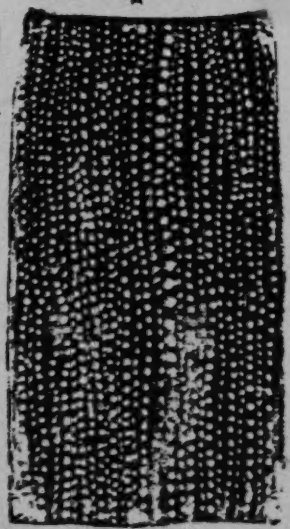
A

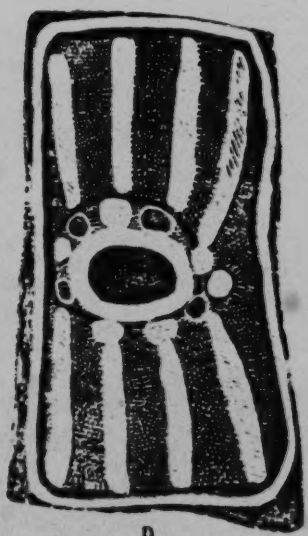


B

[136]
[302]



C



D

PLATE 50. *Secular Bark Paintings*

A, Sea-floor; B, Mangrove Swamp; C, Fish-man, Kumunga; D, Topography, Bathurst Island.

Cp. 160 B]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

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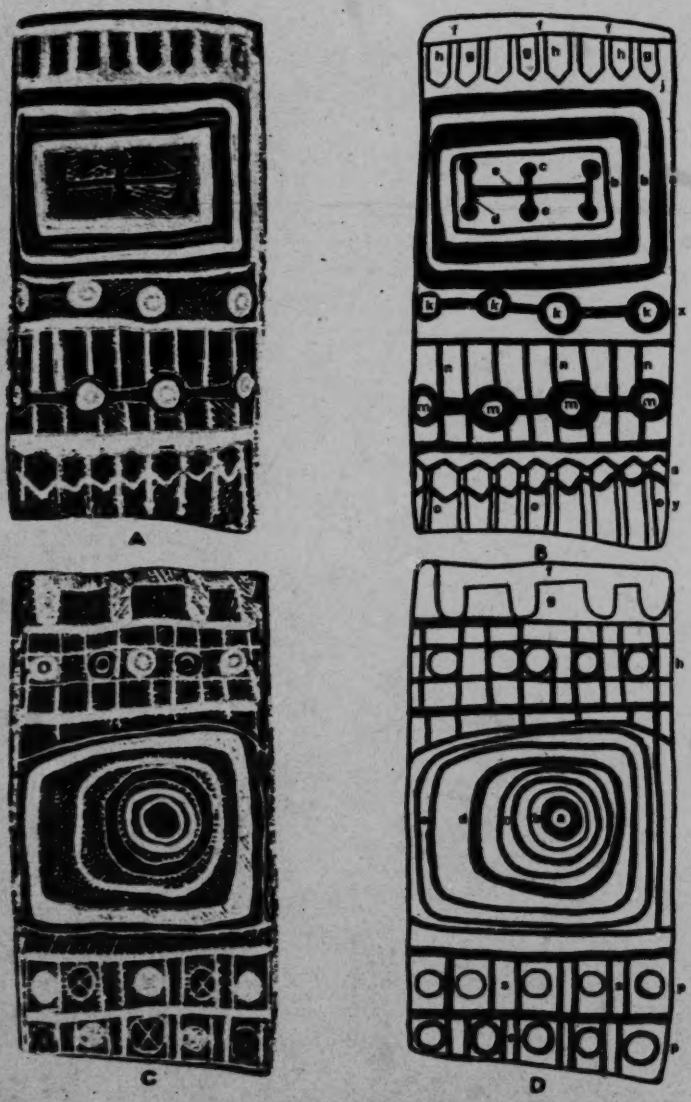

PLATE 51. *Sessler Bark Paintings*
A, B, Topography, Garden Point; C, D, Topography, Snake Bay.

[p. 160 C]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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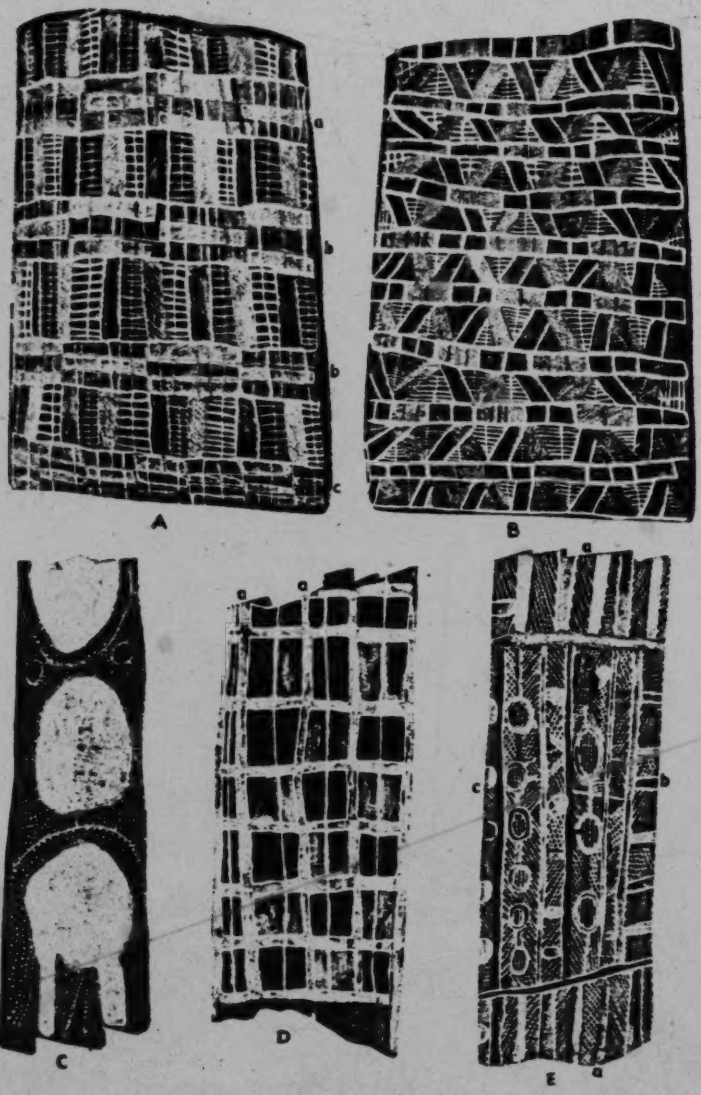

PLATE 52. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Sea-coast, Cape Van Diemen; C, Lagoons and Swamps; D, The Sea-shore; E, Jungle Scene.

[p. 160 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[136]

PLATE 53. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Forest, Curtis Haven; B, C, Topography, Snake Bay; D, Fresh and Salt-water Streams; E, Topography, Goose Creek; F, Sea-scape.

[f. 160 E]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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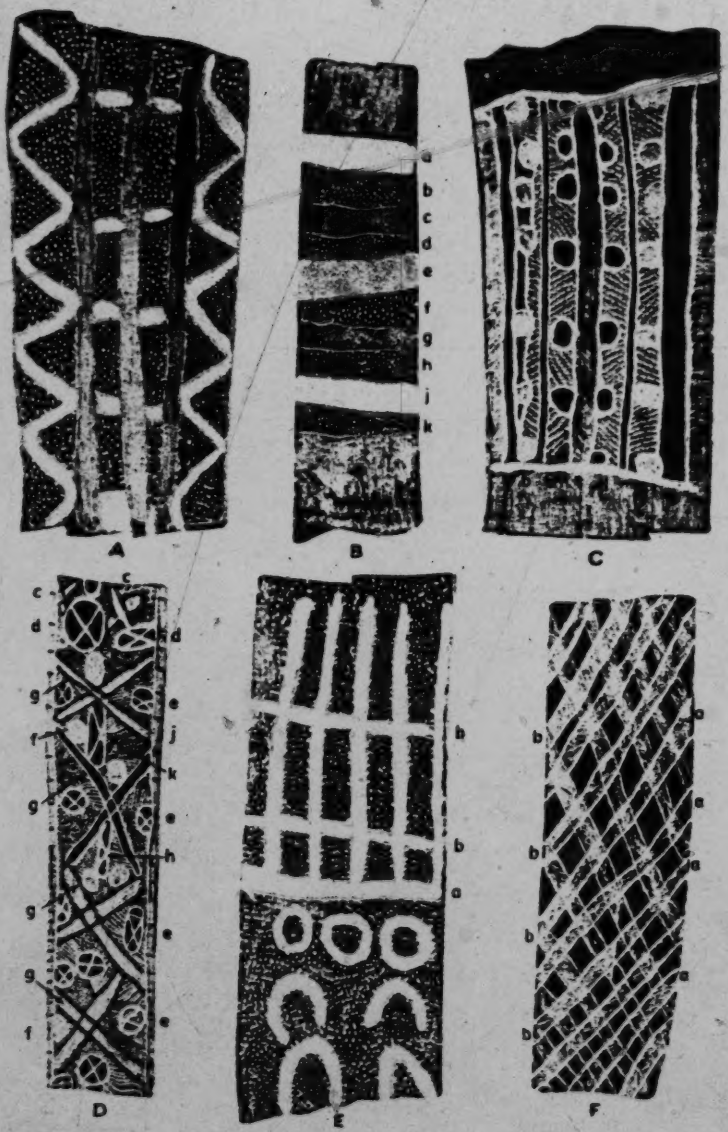

PLATE 54. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Maratji, Goose Creek; B, Sea-shore; C, Sea and Sea-coast; D, Marine Creatures; E, Topography, Snake Bay; F, Jungle.

[p. 160 F]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x
136

A

B

[137]

C

D

E

PLATE 55. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Sea and Shore Creatures; C, Sea-going Turtles; D, Barramundi; E, Sea-snakes.

[p. 160 G]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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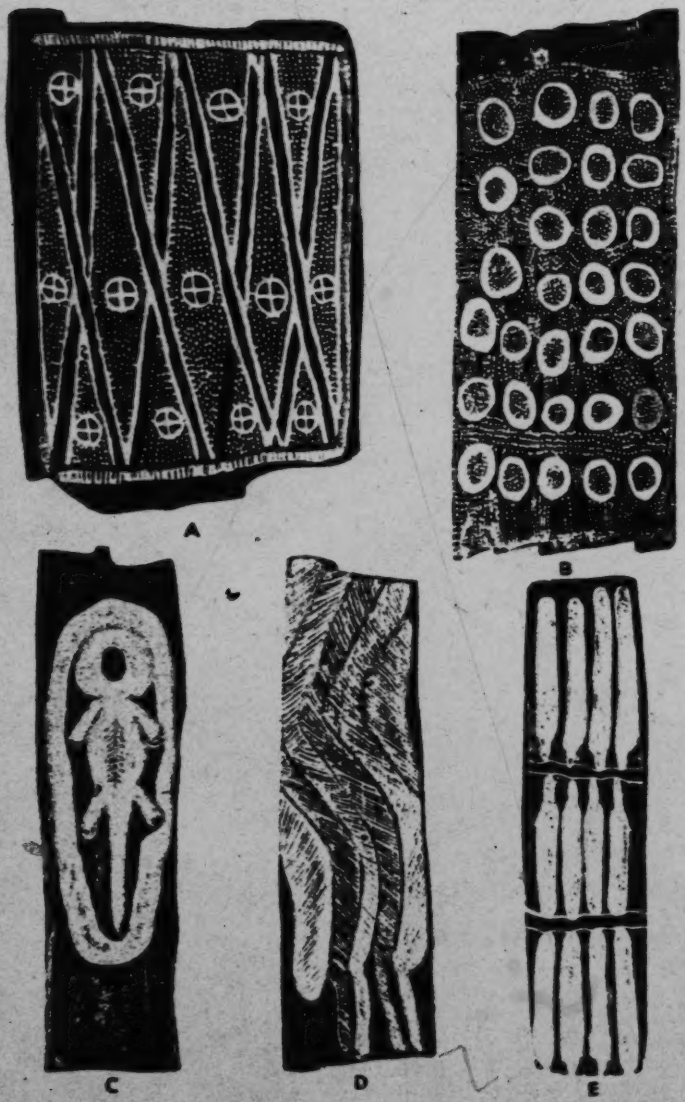

PLATE 57. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Edible Fruits; B, Poisonous Yams; C, Goanna; D, Sea-snakes; E, Sponges.

[p. 160 I]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

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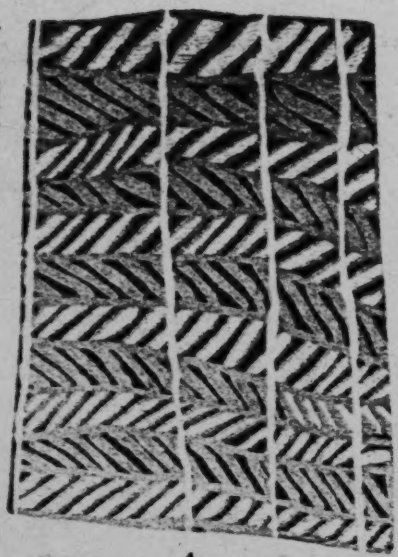
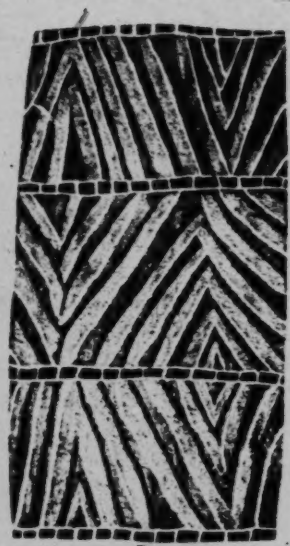
[821]



A



B

[137]

C

D

PLATE 58. *Secular Bark Paintings*

A, Chevron Body Scars; B, Wet-season Sky; C, Honey-bearing Trees; D, Unidentified.

[p. 160 J]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

and black seeds. The dotted rectangles, *c*, *c*, at the top and bottom of the paintings are lily-covered lagoons (dots represent the blossoms); the cross-hatched panels, *b*, *b*, etc., between them are spider webs in the trees and the meandering lines, *d*, *d*, etc., along the outer edge, a jungle vine hanging from the branches of the trees. The black design *h*, in the middle of the painting, is the beach at Imilu; the irregular circles, *g*, *g*, etc., are large rocks on the shore, and the dots, the eucalyptus trees that grow along the top of the cliff. The series of large rectangles, *m*, *m* (top and bottom) indicate the sandy shores of the lagoons, and the short vertical lines at *k* (bottom), a forest of eucalypts.

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A large *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 51A, B, C, D, pictures (*a*) Pl. 51A, B, the topography near the mission station at Garden Point, near Punata (Fig. 1), and (b) Pl. 51C, D, the surroundings near the expedition camp.

Punata (Garden Point)

The series of rectangles on the obverse side of the basket (Pl. 51A, B), represent a house at Garden Island mission. At *a*, are the foundations; *b*, *b*, the walls; *c*, *c*, the upright posts of the house; *d*, the beams of the roof, and at *e*, is the ridge pole.

[177]

At *f*, *f*, etc., on the upper edge, are the tall eucalyptus trees of the surrounding forest. At *j*, is the red ground on which the trees grow; at *g*, the dots are black and red seeds on the ground, and at *h*, the cross-hatching is the spider-webs in the trees.

At the bottom of the painting, *n*, *n*, etc., and *o*, *o*, etc., are more large eucalyptus trees. Symbols *k*, *k*, etc., and *m*, *m*, etc., represent hives of wild honey in the trees; the meandering lines at *s*, are jungle vines hanging from the branches; the cross-hatched areas are spider webs among the leaves, and the dots, as before, red and black seeds on the ground.

Snake Bay

The central black circle, *a*, on the reverse side of the basket, Pl. 51C, D, is a black rock in the sea, and the circle, *b*, immediately surrounding it, the broken water at its base, while circle *c*, indicates large rocks at the bottom of the cliffs, the white outer rectangle, *e*, being the sea-sand and the rectangle, *d*, the waves breaking on them. The white dots are the pebbles on the shore.

The upper and lower panels of the painting deal with the land. The white design *f*, on the upper edge, is a forest of large eucalyptus trees, and the cross-hatching, *g*, spider-webs on their branches. The five circles at *h*, are hives

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

X532
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137

of wild honey in the hollow trees, and the dots, the red and black seeds of a jungle vine.

On the lower panel, *s*, *s*, etc., indicate another forest of eucalyptus trees; the two rows of five circles at *p*, *p*, hives of wild bees, the cross-hatched panels between them spider webs, and the dots, the red and black seeds.

Biru Creek

Pl. 53E refers to a water-course, Biru, near the Goose Creek swamps, which is fresh in the southern and salt in the northern section, where it enters the sea.

The white panel *a*, is the saltwater end of Biru Creek, which is near the entrance of the Goose Creek swamps (Fig. 1), and the white band *c*, the freshwater end of the same creek. The black band *b*, is its banks. Panels *d*, *d*, etc., are white patches of sand and the dots, on the upper panel, patches of water-grass on the floor of the swamp. The bottom panel represents the open sea, the dots indicating patches of seaweed on the bottom.

Snake Bay

Pl. 53B, C, deals with the topography of Snake Bay.

Karslake Island (Wulrungku) is shown at *m*, on the lower edge; a sandbar (upper), the home of the spirit dogs, the *Wankuis* (p. 154) is at *f*; Iluwara inlet, in the Curtis Haven, is at *h* (middle right); a beach on the opposite shore of Iluwara inlet is at *j*, and Tjipripu Point at *w* (lower left). The long vertical line *s*, on the left, is Banjo beach, on which we camped; and *k* (lower right), a mangrove creek to the east.

Designs *e*, *e*, etc. (upper right), are mangrove trees growing on Karslake Island, and crosses, *o*, *o* (upper left), dead trees on the shore. Basket sponges, growing on rocks at the sea-bottom, are indicated at *c*, *c*, etc. (centre). Turtles are at *a*, *a*, etc.; dugongs at *b*, *b*, etc., and canoes at *d*, *d*, etc. Many casuarina trees, *g*, *g*, etc., grow along the shore lines.

[136]

Lagoons and Swamps

This simple bark painting, Pl. 52C, pictures the lagoons at the rear of the expedition camp.

The upper white semi-circle is the swamp, immediately behind our camp, in which there are many paper-bark trees (*Melaleuca* sp.); the white dots are water-lilies growing in the swamp. The central white oval indicates an open lagoon from which the water runs into the sea.

The lower design indicates a swamp further inland, which is fed by two

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

freshwater streams (projections on the lower edge). The dots around the design are also water-lilies. 532x 133 137

Western Bathurst Island

Pl. 50D illustrates a hill, Ipitjulimpi, on western Bathurst Island.

The central black oval is Ipitjulimpi Hill, and the white outline, the tall annual grass which grows at its base. The circle of small discs are groups of boulders on the sides of the hill. The eight long ovals on the upper and lower sections of the paintings, are cabbage palms; the white outer border symbolizes red cliffs near by, and, the dots, the grass on the hillside.

3. THE SEA AND THE SWAMP-LANDS

The Sea and Sea-shore

Three bark paintings, Pl. 54C, Pl. 53F, and Pl. 52D, deal with the sea and the sea-shore.

Pl. 54C refers to the sea and the sea-coast. The outer plain vertical panels symbolize the white sand on the sea-shore, and the outer black panels, batches of sea-weed. The light-coloured ovals are rocks under the water, covered with the sea-weed, and the black ovals are reefs of dark-coloured rocks on the bottom, which shelter the parrot fish and the rock cod. The cross-hatching indicates the white sand on the bottom of the ocean.

Pl. 53F depicts in a simple manner, the sea and the beach.

The intersecting lines on the upper panel represent an octopus, the dots, throughout the painting, small stones on the floor of the ocean; *a*, indicates the waves breaking on the beach; *b*, is a salt-water creek, and *c*, *c*, are its banks. [136]

Pl. 52D is a bark painting of the sea. The horizontal bars symbolize the waves breaking on the beach; the black rectangles, the dark-coloured stones, and the lighter-coloured rectangles, the red stones exposed at low water. The five vertical bands such as *a*, *a*, indicate the lines of debris, left by the retreating tide.

The Ocean Floor

Pl. 50A pictures the floor of the ocean. The light and dark coloured discs throughout the painting are boulders on the bottom, black projections on the dark-coloured discs, pearl-shell oysters, and those on the lighter discs, star-fish. The dots indicate the sea-sand. [136]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

grove swamps, and the dotted panels, *b*, *d*, *f*, *h*, and *k*, to the seaweed growing on the sea-bottom. 532X

3. THE FAUNA

The Sea-Creatures

Two bark paintings, 55A, B, and 56A, B, depict the creatures who live on the floor of the ocean. 532X

On Pl. 55A, B, design *a*, represents a shark; design *b*, and *f*, are large sea-snakes; *e*, is a smaller species, and *g*, another snake that lives in the mangrove swamps. At *c*, is a saw-fish; at *d*, a porpoise, and at *h*, a sea-slug or *beche-de-mer*. Designs, *m*, *m*, etc., are shells; and *l*, boulders on the sea-bottom; *k*, is a creek in the mangrove swamp, and *j*, a sandbank in Snake Bay. 136

Pl. 56A, B, also deals with the creatures of the sea. In the central section panels *a*, *a*, are star-fish; panel *b*, refers to an octopus; *c*, to pearl-shell oysters; *d*, to a crab, and *e*, to a turtle. The cross-hatching, throughout the design, is symbolical of the scale pattern on a crocodile skin, and the two transverse white bands are the creature's intestines.

The Snakes

Two bark paintings, Pl. 57D and Pl. 55E, depict the snakes of Melville and Bathurst Islands.

Pl. 57D pictures, in conventionalized form, a number of sea-snakes, some of which were poisonous and much feared.

Pl. 55E illustrates a number of snakes that live in the forest and jungle adjacent to the expedition.

Reading from the right, *a*, is the venomous bush snake, *jaruwini*; *b*, a copper-coloured non-venomous snake, *ilinga*; *c*, a venomous snake, *buliaringa*, that lives in the mangrove swamps, and *d*, a harmless water-snake, *patinga*. The short, more or less horizontal lines at *f*, *f*, are tall eucalypts in the forest and the dots, the grass at their base. [137]

A Goanna

Pl. 57C is a simple X-ray bark painting of a goanna, on which the backbone and ribs are indicated. This is the only example of that curious art form which I saw on Melville Island, although on the adjacent mainland, the X-ray art has reached its highest development.[88] [171]

The Sea-going Turtle

Pl. 55C pictures the sea-going turtles. The central design represents the

[88] Mountford, 1956, p. 256.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

X532
136

large logger-head turtle, *Ringa*, whose totemic place is at Jutapinta, north of Karslake Island (see Pl. 12c).

In the lower right is a young logger-head, and in the upper left, a hawk-bill turtle, *Garagalani*, which when a woman, assisted in the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*.

On the upper right of the painting is a green turtle and on the right-hand edge, a canoe which the aborigines had used to capture the turtles.

A Barramundi

This bark painting, Pl. 55D, pictures a barramundi, *alaminga*, a large fish which lives in either fresh or salt water.

The fish, *c*, is shown within the inner white oval. Its head is at *a*, its eyes being the two short lines within *a*; its tail is at *d*, and its fins at *e*, *s*, *e*, *s*. The dots represent the marks on its skin.

The outer oval is made up of red, white, yellow and black lines. Reading from the outside, the red oval indicates the land; the white, the sandy beach; the yellow, the breaking waves, and the black, the open sea.

A Jelly-fish

Pl. 56C illustrates an unidentified jelly-fish, *indringa*. The central disc is the body; the radiating lines, the tentacles, and the cross-hatched areas the ocean.

A Saw-fish, Jidati

Pl. 56D is a simple, representational bark painting of the saw-fish, *jidati*, in which the saw of the creature is given special prominence and the fins are shown as legs.

Sea Sponges

Pl. 57E pictures a number of sponges growing on the floor of the ocean. Although sea sponges do not appear to have any specific value to the aborigines, they are often pictured in the bark paintings.

4. THE FLORA

X532
137

Edible Jungle Fruits

Pl. 57A illustrates a number of edible fruits that grow in the jungle and the forest.

The crosses surrounded by a circle, represent the fruits of two different eugenias. They are about the size of an apple; one, a red fruit, is called *binamia*, and the other, a white fruit, *tauraruina*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The intersecting diagonal lines symbolize the trunks of those fruit-bearing trees, and the dots on the ground, a small edible berry. 532 × 137

The Poisonous Yams

Pl. 57B illustrates two of the poisonous yams, the *kulawa* and the *kwani*. These yams have to be sliced and soaked in water for about three days to remove the poison. They are then edible. The dots on the background indicate grass and shrubs.

The Jungle Trees

This simple painting, Pl. 54F, represents two species of trees that grow in the jungle. The diagonal lines such as *a*, *a*, etc., leading from lower left to upper right of the painting, symbolize a large white-barked jungle tree, and those crossing at right-angles, i.e., *b*, *b*, etc., the milkwood tree. The unpainted diamonds indicate the bare ground and the small plants on the floor of the forest.

A Eucalyptus Forest

The central horizontal panel, *a*, of Pl. 54E represents a track that leads through the forest adjacent to our camp. The five vertical white lines are large eucalyptus trees in a nearby forest which have been hollowed out by the termites, the hollows being indicated by the two upper horizontal lines, *b*, *b*, in the top panel. The dots indicate grass and low shrubs.

On the lower panel, the four crescents are the new moons; the dots, the stars in the sky, and the circles, rocky outcrops. I did not find out whether these rocky outcrops were celestial or terrestrial features. [821]

A Jungle Scene, Imiln

Pl. 52E pictures the trees in a jungle at Imilu, Cape Van Diemen.

The short vertical lines, *a*, *a*, in the top and bottom panels and the short horizontal lines at *b*, on the right-hand edge are trees in the jungle, and the spaces between them, the sandy ground. The five semi-circles at *c*, on the left-hand edge and the ovals in the panels, are the trunks and branches of other jungle trees, and the cross-hatching is a carpet of fallen leaves.

Honey-bearing Trees

The painting, Pl. 58C, deals only with the honey-bearing blossoms of the trees. The long horizontal rectangle is a fallen tree in the forest and the six upright symbols, the trunks of living eucalyptus trees with their upper

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

X 532
137

branches in full blossom. The dots at the base of the painting indicate eucalyptus blossoms lying on the ground.

A Forest, Curtis Haven

Pl. 53A illustrates the topography at Curtis Haven.

Transverse panel *a*, is a stringy-bark tree,[53] *b*, *c*, are two woolly-butts and *m*, is an ironwood. The short white panels at *f*, *f*, are cycad palms; the lines of circles at *g*, *g*, *g*, low hills, and the short white panels between them, cabbage palms. The cross-hatching indicates the grass on the hillsides.

5. MISCELLANEOUS AND UNIDENTIFIED

X 532
304

Body Scars

Pl. 58A refers to the chevron scars on the bodies of the older men and women; it has no other meaning.

The four white vertical lines indicate the scars on their legs; the many transverse lines, those across the abdomens, and the lines of dark and light-coloured chevron designs, the scars on the abdomens, backs, upper arms, and thighs.[54]

The Salmon-man

X 532
302

At the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, a salmon-man painted himself and his many wives with a series of large spots like those on the basket; when at the completion of the ceremony, those people became fish, they still retained the coloured spots on their bodies. The dots on Pl. 50C are symbolical of those on the body of the mythical salmon-man.

Design for a Pukamuni Pole

X 532
136

Pl. 54D is a similar design to one which the artist once painted on a *pukamuni* pole he made for the dead man, *Kulatina*. The designs,[55] which are not linked with any myth or secular story, were, according to the artist, formed in his mind by the sound of the waves breaking on a nearby coast.

The four groups of crossed lines, *g*, *g*, etc., represent trepang, the lighter coloured being the white and the darker, the black species. The smaller

[53] These are species of eucalypts.

[54] The older generation of Melville and Bathurst Islanders were decorated with these scars. The custom has been discontinued in recent years. Spencer, 1928, Fig. 439, illustrates examples.

[55] Spencer, 1928, Fig. 475, illustrates poles decorated with a design similar to bark paintings, Pl. 54D.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

not only in physique but also in intelligence. I should be surprised to find in any other Australian tribe a man with the intelligence and adaptability of my own head boy Mariano.

The flora and fauna of the two islands is very similar to that of the rest of the Northern Territory. The country is mostly flat with a low range of rocky hills between Cape Gambier and Cape Keith on Melville Island, and a still lower range in the centre of Bathurst. The timber consists of the usual Australian trees; gums, stringy-bark, woolly-butt, bloodwood and ironwood cover most of the two islands, broken here and there by patches of open grassland and in other places by dense patches of jungle where snakes and "devils" thrive and the natives seldom enter. Wallabies are extraordinarily plentiful, but there are no kangaroos. Buffaloes are found on Melville in small numbers. These are the wild descendants of the domestic Indian buffaloes imported for agricultural purposes by the early settlers at Fort Dundas. At one time they had increased and multiplied to such effect that thousands were shot every year without any appreciable effect upon their numbers. At the present time, however, probably owing to many of the cows being killed, there are probably not more than a thousand on the island. The natives are seldom able to kill a buffalo though they realise the fact that it is good to eat.

Not only are wallabies plentiful, but there is also an abundant supply of the other native articles of food, fish, crocodile, birds of all kinds, wild honey, yams and other native vegetables. As a result of this abundance of foods, it would seem that the two islands had a greater density of population than is to be found in almost any other part of Australia.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The people inhabiting Melville and Bathurst Islands are subdivided into a number of local groups. These local groups are the important sections of the population since they act as land-owning groups, war-making groups, have a solidarity of their own which is far stronger than any tribal solidarity that may exist and even to some extent regulate marriage.

Before considering these hordes in detail, however, something must be said about the tribal name. All the hordes practise the same customs, speak the same language and inter-marry. The boundaries of the people speaking this language are of course strictly defined by the sea. In other words, the people of Melville and Bathurst have a solidarity of their own,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

By Herbert Basedow, M.D., M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., etc.

With Plates VII-XX.

Local Correspondent of the Royal Anthropological Institute, London, and Honorary Fellow of the Anthropological Society, Göttingen; late Chief Medical Inspector and Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Introduction.

In August of last year (1911), I visited Bathurst Island to inspect the natives on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. Accompanied by one of my inspectors (Mr. J. H. Kelly) and a crew consisting of a Chinaman, a Manilaman, and three natives of the Larrekiya Tribe,[1] I left Port Darwin at eleven o'clock in the evening and entered Apsley Strait early the next morning. We spent nine days in the examination of the island, entering the numerous salt-water arms and rivers, effecting a landing wherever possible and traversing the island on foot. Landing was, in most places, difficult on account of the thick growth of mangroves that fringes the island on the east. It had been my intention to circumnavigate the island, but a heavy monsoonal gale prevented us from even making the attempt in the small motor-craft at our disposal. I therefore decided to return *viâ* Apsley Strait and inspect part of Melville Island.

The plates included in this paper are all reproductions of my original photographs and coloured drawings.

Condition of Natives.

I estimate the population of the island to be about 500. Their isolation and, no doubt in a measure also, their reputation as being cannibalistic and treacherous in their habits, have guarded their primitive condition to the present day.[2] Before

[1] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. of S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 1.

[2] Compare the statement:—

"Melville Island, about 30 miles north of Port Darwin, is inhabited by a tribe of which very little is known. They do not circumcise, and speak a different language from those on the mainland. They are represented as a very strong and powerful race.

"Before the arrival of the Hon. B. T. Finniss at Escape Cliffs in 1864, the Melville Island natives occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras, in which they invariably succeeded; but they have not done so since. This tribe is of a very hostile nature, and on several occasions have attacked Europeans visiting the island. Their canoes and weapons are similar to those on the mainland." P. Foelsche: "Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia," *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 17.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Balers made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

314 396 137 Fig. 1. Forest scene on Bathurst Island. From the stringy-barked eucalyptus on the left side of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe. Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
501 Fig. 2. Various types of paddles in use on Bathurst Island. About $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.

PLATE XIII.

764 Figs. 1 and 2. Distant and near view of a native grave, surrounded by five carved and painted posts, Bathurst Island. Note the cleared space and the position of grave, viz.: at the junction between open woodland and thicket. A tall Bathurst Islander in seen in Fig. 2.

PLATE XIV.

415 Fig. 1. A melon-shell (*Melo diadema*) used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Fig. 2. A *Fusus priesi* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 764 Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e. Painted and carved posts of native grave shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XV.

415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cyrena assingtonensis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
317 386 Fig. 2. Lumps of yellow ochre (on the left), white pipe-clay (in the centre), and red ochre (on the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus australis*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
301 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (?). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 532 764 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XII.

501

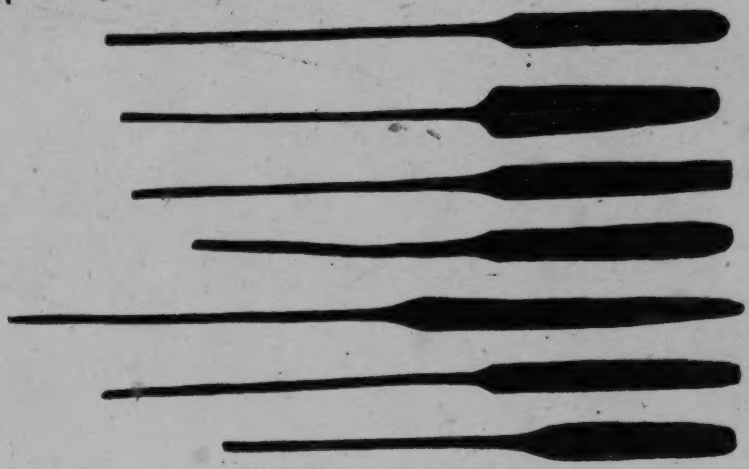

FIG. 2.

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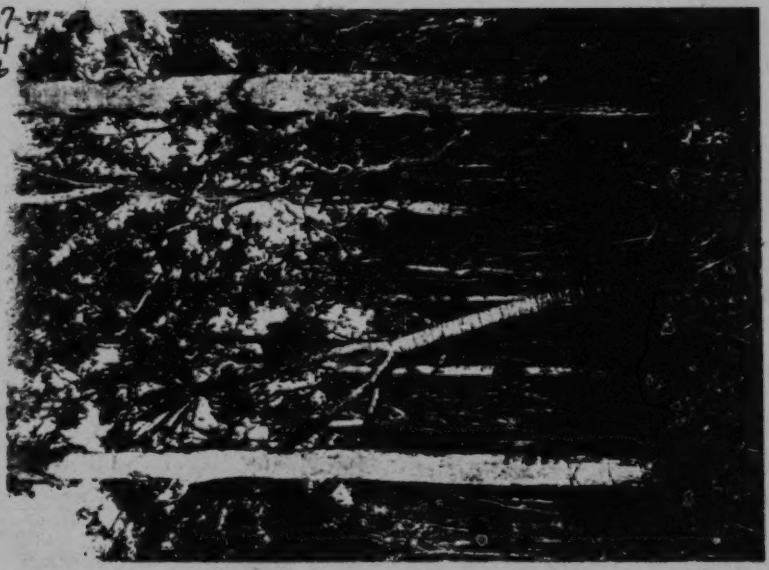

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 6]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 322 - ANALYST]

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 O120 Tiwi O120

nature of the cause they diverged sharply. The same single-minded concentration which Mariano devoted to the cultivation of white men, Louis devoted to his sexual activities. Whether two men devoting most of their time one to preaching acculturation, the other to seduction, can be said to have a common basic personality, is a question best left to the personality experts; but at least to the superficial observer there was something vaguely similar in the grim and humorless way in which Louis pursued other men's wives and the way in which Mariano carried on his acculturation campaign.

Sexual irregularities are difficult data upon which to obtain accurate information in any culture. When, therefore, Louis is described as an habitual and constant seducer, no claim is made that he was actually as successful in this line of endeavor as tribal opinion maintained. All that we can be sure of is that Louis had an exalted reputation of this sort and he had it in a tribe where a number of circumstances combine to make seduction almost as easy and almost as common as eating or drinking. The seduction situation is largely the result of the marriage customs of the Tiwi which have the effect of forcing most men to remain bachelors until well into their thirties while concentrating all wives, old and young, in the hands of the older men. This means that the older a man gets the more wives he accumulates, and it would appear that the more he accumulates the more suspicious he becomes that some of them (probably the younger and more physically attractive ones) are being unfaithful to him. These suspicions are accentuated by (a) the way in which the day-to-day food gathering activities of the women are necessarily carried out—the women are widely dispersed through the bush, often working singly, well out of sight and hearing of each other; (b) the fact that young unmarried men are frequently hunting (or pretending to hunt) alone in the same general area of country as that in which an old man's numerous wives are gathering wild foods; and (c) the character of the vegetation in large sections of the Tiwi country, great stretches of it being just open enough to make it easy for native eyes to see somebody slipping through the trees, but just thick enough to make it difficult for them to be sure of identities at any distance.[6]

In such an atmosphere it is rare for any bachelor to live for more than a few months at most without having to face an accusation by some old man that he has been taking liberties with one of the latter's wives, and it is even rarer for an old man with a number of young wives not to have reason to suspect most or all of them of having been unfaithful to him several times at least in the course of a year. But in this setting of daily[7] seduction Louis' reputation was outstanding. In the period with which we are dealing here he had been suspected and publicly accused of adultery with almost every possible woman for miles around. His demeanor when accused by the outraged husbands was characteristic. Whereas other seducers denied the charge and asserted their essential purity, or tried to laugh it off as silly rumor ("Why, I don't even know the woman"), or alibied themselves and accused other men ("I wasn't even hunting in that direction that day, it must have been so-and-so, he was following a kangaroo down that way at the time in question"), or sometimes even

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca.1940)1943 O120 Tiwi O120

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. Harney and A. P. Elkin[1]

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and 136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog (*wongins*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. 825 According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts 757 of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] [1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. Elkin.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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342
361

Fig. 1. Snake Bay Settlement

114 Islanders on a hunt. The trip took us to a small clearing on the right bank of the Paluwiunga River, ten miles upstream from where it empties into the Arafura Sea.

131 A brief glance at the map will help to further pinpoint this location. Ten degrees south of the equator and at a distance of twenty to fifty miles due north from the Australian Northern Territory capital of Darwin, lies the relatively large Melville Island (1,000 square miles), named for Viscount Henry Dundas Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, who authorized the coastal survey of 1818 during which the island was circumnavigated. To the west, separated by a narrow strait, lies the smaller Bathurst
101 Island. The group of people with whom I found myself camped by the river bank were members of the Tiwi, a tribe of Australian
[161 Aboriginals whose country includes both these islands. Today about
361] seven hundred members of the tribe live near to the southeast corner
797 of Bathurst Island where they are in various ways administered to by the Sacred Heart Mission. On the northern coast of Melville
161 Island, on a hill overlooking Snake Bay, near the mouth of the
361
648

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

Fig. 4. A casuarina grove

123 clutched Tchuwiunga more tightly
501 and I hugged my KLM bag while the two men worked to head the canoe into the largest waves while trying at the same time to head in
[137] towards the shore. This meant taking a good many not so large waves broadside and we got very wet. Facing sternwards, I could not see the waves, so if a particularly
[823] large one (Agnes called them "female waves!") approached, I would be given a few seconds warning and would duck the breaking spray which would cover the boat and its occupants. The only miserable one was the puppy who presented a very puzzled and hurt expression as he peered out from under the folds of Agnes's *naga*. For the rest of us the cold spray was a welcome relief from the burning sun.

Once in close to the shore, our skilful paddlers brought the canoe safely onto the beach, riding in on one of the breakers. We unloaded everything, although we intended to stop only for lunch, for the canoe would soon be swamped by the sea if left alone. After unloading, Albert swam the canoe out beyond the breakers where he anchored it with a large rock.

123 Then we climbed the low dunes close to the shore and came to a grove of casuarinas. These provided much appreciated shade but a very uncomfortable carpet of spiny seed pods. Taking up our two billy cans, Agnes led me to the back of the grove where she
[312] showed me a small well. There were many footprints around the sandy hole which were identified as belonging to Black Joe's mob, the natives who had preceded us. They had, however, not depleted the well for in the bottom was a small puddle, and since this was at the very end of the six months dry season, it was considered fortunate that there was any water at all. Agnes carefully tasted

123 Although the wind had died and the clouds given way to a clear, light blue sky, the sea still had heavy rollers. However, instead of breaking over the canoe, they gently lifted it high in the air, then let it slide down the incline. We set out as the first rays of the sun appeared over the horizon and soon began to feel revived as our clothes began to dry. We stayed fairly close to the shore, close enough so that landmarks could be easily seen. For a while we coasted by the thin white strip of sand along which we
123 had hunted for turtle eggs the afternoon before. The land in back
133 of the beach was low swampland and all that could be seen was a thin line of green foliage. But soon we approached Tubinu Point. Here the beach gave way to a jutting headland and the steep sea-
[134] ward cliff was a rainbow of colors where bands of ocherous clays of yellow and red were separated by clear white and topped by a
[137] heavy line of dark humus. Tall eucalyptus trees stood right up to the edge of the 75-foot cliff. We stayed well clear of the base, for a short but ragged, rocky reef extended out under the water.

Rounding the point, we came to a small inlet edged with the
123 ever-present tangle of mangrove trees, beyond which was another clean white stretch of sandy beach. About this time the puppy grew restless and started roaming the canoe from stern to bow. Once he had reached the bow he climbed up to the very point and stuck his nose into the wind. As the canoe rose and dipped he would lose his balance and I would grab him and hand him to Agnes. But he would not stay put and soon would again be a live figurehead pointing the way. Finally, Albert said, "Let him go." As was to be expected, the next roller knocked little Tchuwiunga off his perch and into the sea he went. As the canoe passed, Albert leaned over and fished the frightened, struggling puppy out of the water and handed him to Agnes, who began rubbing him down. "Him gotta learn," remarked Albert. "Sea bin teach him more better." Soon Tchuwiunga revived his courage and again ventured forward, but this time instead of standing on the bow, he curled up on the bag of flour and slept soundly until we reached our destination. He had indeed learned his lesson well.

The rolling motion, sun, and inactivity had made both Agnes and me drowsy and we were all but asleep when Big Jack woke
[201] us with, "Black Joe mob. Him camp Anderaningo." I looked in

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 9. Two young hunters practicing with fish-spears

123 the impenetrable jungle, which were attributed to the *Ningawi*, the
[176] weird and mysterious "little people" of the mangrove. Rounding a curve in the river, we surprised a flock of whistle ducks sitting on an exposed mudbank. Young Billy tried to shoot one for supper but missed, and soon they were well out of range. On a rare piece of solid ground we saw the long tail and massive hips of a startled
[136] wallaby as he hopped to safety. However, a successful throw of the fish-spear brought us a large barramundi, and the .22 rifle provided both a possum and a fruit bat, or flying fox, for supper.

All of a sudden the mangroves disappeared and our view was no longer restricted to the river bank; rather we gazed through
[137] thick, gnarled white paperbarks on the water's edge to wide expanses of marshy grasslands. A few flocks of black and white geese, which had returned to the swamps early in the evening, were startled by the sound of the motor and rose honking in fright.

About five, we reached Minianapi, a landing place about fifteen yards wide, where solid ground reached the river bank. We were

settlement work. It seemed the chief advantage was that they 123
received 'money-in-the-finger' from the skins they caught. They 465
didn't understand why they didn't also get paid for the settlement 521
work. I kept silent, but soon they turned to me and said, "You get job; how much you pay?" I told them, and then went on to say that out of that salary I had to pay someone for the food I ate, the clothes I wore, the house I lived in and so on, whereas they did not have to pay for the flour, tea, sugar, meat, blankets, or clothes the welfare people gave them. There was a long silence during which, I believe, each man was figuring how much all these benefits were worth in hard money. Finally Ginger said slowly, "Maybe, this way more better."

Soon the visitors rose and returned to their fires. Someone 123
started a song, a low nasal chant. Another, a woman, began a high- 533
pitched love song, and to this discordant lullaby I soon fell asleep.

As usual, it was barely light when the camp came to life again. 123
After the customary tea breakfast, the various families discussed 512
among themselves the day's plans. Black Joe and Long Peter, their wives and children, were taking the canoe up-river to hunt. Young Brook and his brothers, Danny Brown and Charlie Cook, their wives and children, soon left to hunt in the area back of Minianapi, Charlie Quiet and Roger also left. "Now we go?" I turned in question to Albert. "No, we stay behind. Build house. No good you go bush. Too much grass, plenty big mob cheeky snake. By and by that mob burn grass; then we go bush." It seemed like a logical explanation, but I was disappointed.

The day was already sticky and muggy, and tired of inactivity 123
I started off toward the creek, saying I was going for a swim. Both natives jumped up and said, "No. No. Too much crocodile, more better go along billabong." So with Agnes ahead we started down the path leading away from the creek. Soon we were out of the thick tangle of bushes separating the clearing from the true bush. Now the path led over the rocky, dusty ground, which had but recently been burned. The trunks of the large bloodwood and [137] ●
stringy-bark trees were blackened for about four feet up from their base. The spiraled trunks of the screwpalm, as well as their lower dried leaves, also had a charred appearance. Except for an occa-

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Figs. 18 and 19. With a tomahawk between his teeth, Albert goes after honey.

OUD out from East Point, and from the nearest island of the Vernon group, were also clearly visible as we passed over them. Straight ahead, Melville and Bathurst Islands now showed up, the hills a darker blue, and every moment they became more and more distinctly visible.

133 We turned west again as we reached the shores of Melville Island. Below, and near at hand, in turn were sandy beaches,
137 cliffs that come straight down to the water's edge, or low mangrove-flats through which wind serpentine inlets of salt water. Inland, low green hills are covered with open tropical forest, denser on the lower slopes and thinning towards the arid, stony summits. Fan-palms grow among the tropical eucalypts, and the familiar pandanus palm borders open grassy flats just as it does on the mainland across the narrow seas. Buffalo, now
[136] so much reduced in numbers that nobody shoots them, feed on the flats, and in the forest-covered hills are many kangaroos and wallabies. Little bays, and now and then projecting lines of reef, make natural boat-harbours, and far away across the tree-tops a wide expanse of shining water seems to be a great lake surrounded by wooded hills—it is actually an arm of the sea on the eastern side of Cape Van Diemen.

The funnel-shaped entrance to Apsley Strait, the mile-wide, fifty-mile-long stretch of fast-flowing waterway that separates the two islands, soon appeared beneath us. Looking towards the north, on the eastern side of this narrow silvery passage, one sees the wooded hills, the dense patches of vivid green jungle, and the open swampy plains of Melville Island. To the west, on the Bathurst Island side of the entrance, dense plantations of coco-nut palms occupy the foreground. There are cleared fields with a wall of forest beside them, white roofs among the palms, and beyond again are thickly-timbered heights.

DENSE mangroves, of a deeper green than that of forest or jungle foliage, give contrast at the water's edge on either side of the narrow strait, which, a silver streak in the blue distance, leads on to the sea, faintly visible far beyond at the height at which we were flying. The tide runs through this strait like a mill-race; but at the moment it was dead-water, and, with sail set, a large dug-out canoe was making across from Melville to
177 Bathurst Island. As the 'plane banked round preparatory to landing, I saw, beyond the canoe and across the strait, the iron roof of the only European dwelling on Melville Island.

It was formerly the permanent camp of Joe Cooper, a famous buffalo-hunter; but, now, since Cooper's death, even this solitary outpost has long been deserted. It is more than a century since the old military settlement of Fort Dundas, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, was abandoned. Nothing of the fort now remains except a few heaps of stone, and, buried in thick scrub, the grass-grown brickwork that faced the surrounding deep trench. The area of Melville Island is 2,240 square miles.
131 Bathurst Island is only half as large. Although Melville
797 Island may, some day, come within the scope of North Australian settlement schemes, the major part of Bathurst Island is vested in perpetuity in the authorities of the Mission of the Sacred Heart, and the latter island will remain, fortunately almost entirely in its virgin state, a sanctuary alike for man and beast.

797 We taxied to a standstill on the well-kept landing-ground of the Sacred Heart Mission in the presence of many spectators. Notified of the time of our arrival by means of the wireless

[p. 14(A)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 CX20 Tiwi CX20

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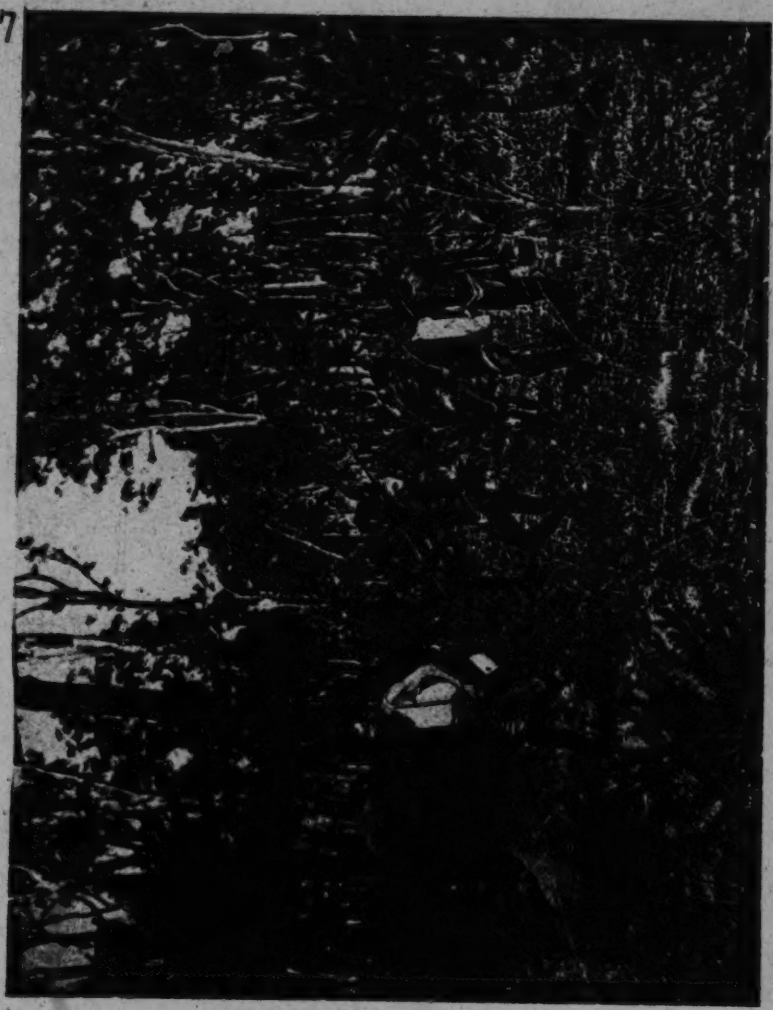

WALKABOUT'S CAMERAMAN GOES ON A "WALKABOUT" THROUGH TYPICAL BATHURST ISLAND COUNTRY.

[p. 19(c)]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[FACING p. 3]
[FRONTISPIECE]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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PLATE I. *Artists of the Tiwi*
A, Pulanimbuwi; B, Inbidjarmeri; C, Tjamalampua; D, Malumerinita.

[p. 20 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120
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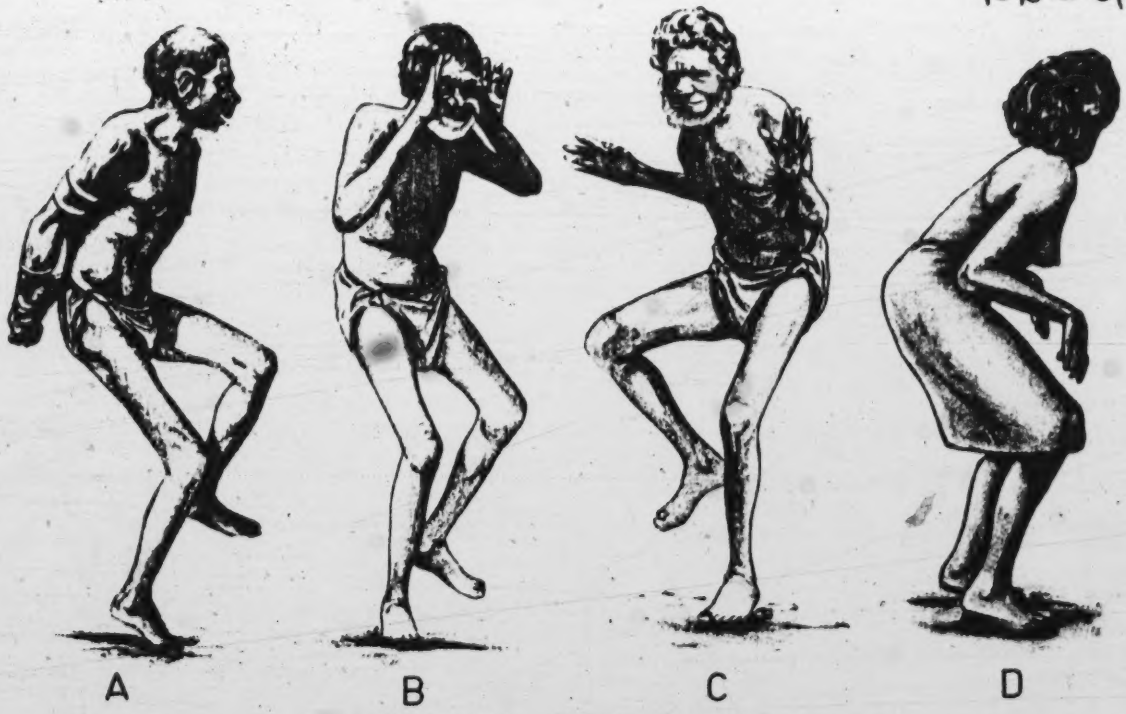

PLATE 29. *Totemic Dances*
A, Jabiru, Tjalati; B, Owl, Pintoma; C, Lizard, Kilpuruni; D, Frog, Kwouk-kwouk.

[p. 88 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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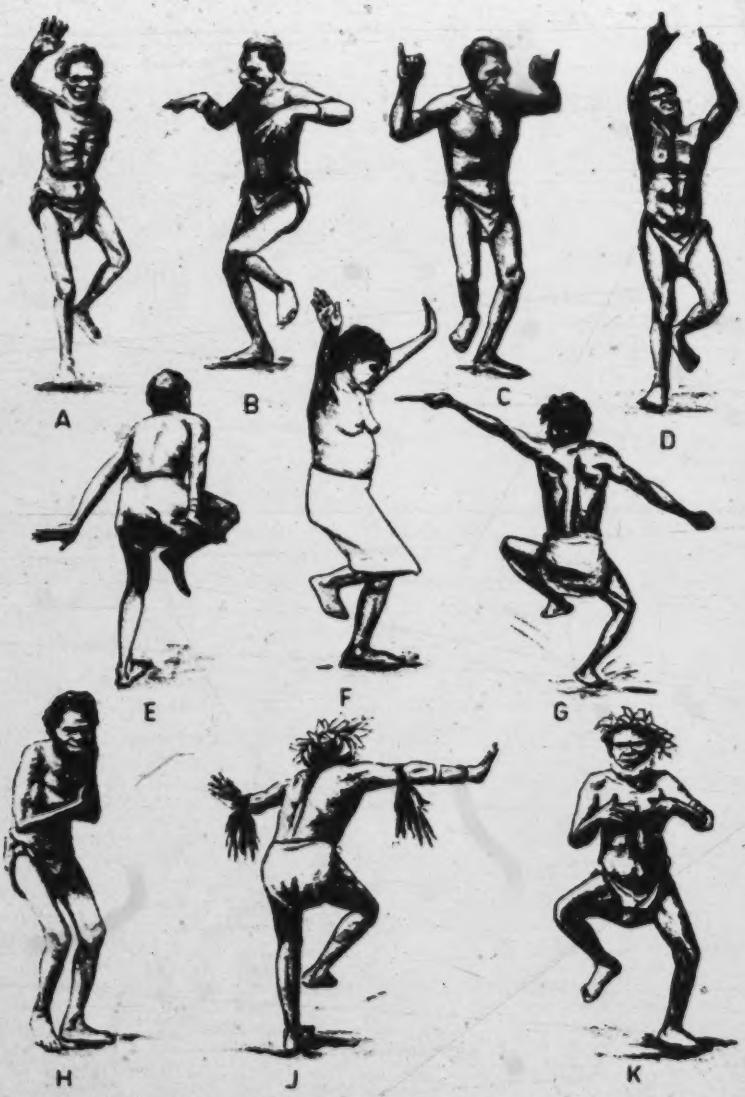

PLATE 30. *Totemic Dances*
A, Moon; B, Rain; C, Flying Fox; D, Wild Honey; E, Crocodile; F, Amburu; G, Shark; H, Skinny Fish; J, Sea-eagle; K, Ningaui.

[p. 88 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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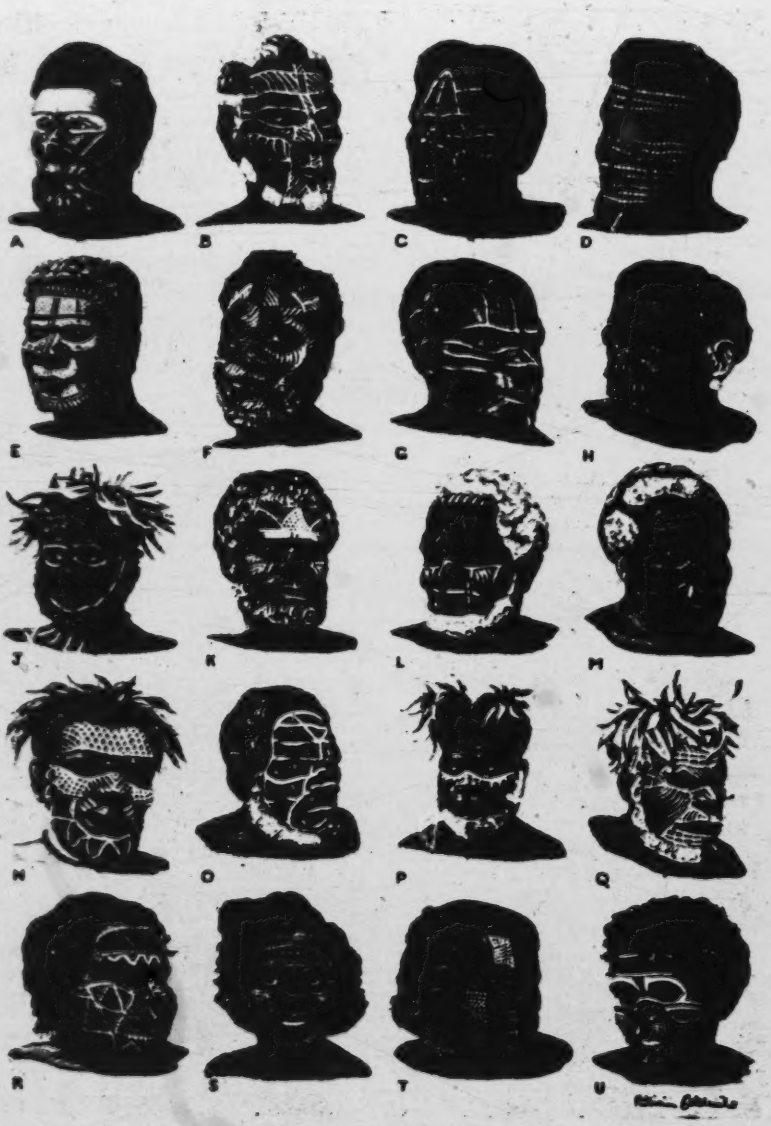

PLATE 28. *Ceremonial Facial Decorations*

A, Wadjeniati Initiate; B, Water-snake, Tuluma; C, Shark, Tuduwala; D, Fish, Mungumini; E, Thunder-man, Pakadringa; F, Salmon, Kumuminu; G, March-fly, Kudjatumpi; H, Boobook-owl, Purutjikini; J, Barn-owl, Pintoma; O, Ningani. K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, U, Unidentified.

[Analyst's note: the plate in the original text is in full color]

[FACING p. 92]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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PLATE 38. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*
A, B, C, Carved and Painted Pole on Old Grave; D, Poles on Old Grave.

[p. 120 F]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[516]
[137]

[142]
[302]

PLATE 44. *The Kulama Ceremony*
A, Chanting Kulama Songs; B, Placing Kulama Yams in Oven; C, Ritual before collecting Kulama Yam; D, The Kulama Yam.

[p. 128 B]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

BEFORE the advent of the buffalo-hunters, few white men had visited the islands since the 648
early days of the naval settlement at Fort Dundas, established by Sir Gordon [175]
Bremer in 1824, but abandoned four years later. Malays and Japanese pearlers
have been in the habit of taking in water from either of the islands and have
frequently come into disastrous conflict with the natives. It is perhaps also on 164
account of their isolation from civilization that I found the blacks comparatively
free from any serious disease. Apart from the various minor ailments such as
traumatic lesions and their after-effects, cataracts and keratitis, a few congenital
deformities and such like, only a few cases of tertiary syphilis came under my
notice.

A young gin was suffering from a disease of the hip, apparently chronic, but
she was too timid to permit me to make an examination. They are on the whole 142
a healthy, sturdy people of moderate stature, with a good muscular development
and a square, big thorax. The characteristics are Australoid and yet they present [144]
certain insular peculiarities.

The Head.

The forehead is low, with a marked supraorbital development; the face
somewhat depressed and the lower jaw strong. The eyes are sunken and the nose
is small. The wavy black hair of some of the males was worked up into numerous [302]
small, cylindrical, pendant masses with clay and ochre.[1] This, so far as I could [765]
ascertain, designated mourning. Others had besmeared their hair with ochre. The
hairs on the upper lip are pulled out. The growth of the beard of the men varies,
but is, on an average, good.

The natives of either island do not practise the knocking out of one or two 304
incisors as they do on the mainland. Major Campbell,[2] however, reports having 171
observed the custom on Melville Island.

The face is painted symmetrically with differently coloured ochres, charcoal, 302
and pipeclay, in various degrees of complexity (Fig. 1). A few of the simpler designs
might be described briefly:—*Case* (1): The whole surface of the face blackened
with charcoal. *Case* (2): The nose red and the rest of the face charcoal-black.
Case (3): Face (including the shaven upper lip and upper part of chin) charcoal-

[1] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* London, 1852, vol. ii, p. 13: "The characteristic mode of dressing the hair among the Torres Strait Islanders is to have it twisted up into long pipe-like ringlets, and wigs in imitation of this are also worn"; and again, "at Cape York I have at times for a week together seen all the men and lads with the hair twisted into little strands well daubed over with red ochre and turtle fat."

Also P. P. King, *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114: "The [184]
men were more muscular and better formed than any we have before seen, they were daubed over with a yellow pigment which was the colour of the neighbouring cliff (Luxmore Head on Melville Island); their hair was long and curly and appeared to be clotted with a whitish paint."

[2] *Journ. Geogr. Society*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 153. *Cf.* also H. Klaatsch: *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 591.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca.1940)1943 O120 Tiwi O120

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. HARNEY and A. P. ELKIN[1]

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and 136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog 825 (*wongine*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

●142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may 757 often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] [1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. ELKIN.

11: Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[colors appearing in original:
Hair - left: white, center stripe: red, right: yellow.
Face - left: unpainted, center stripe and dots: yellow, right: red. -- Analyst.]

[Cover]

Il: Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 O120 Tiwi OL20

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ARTICLES

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ADULTHOOD — *Jane C. Goodale* 10
BEAUTY AND SCIENCE — *Meredith L. Jones* 18
ECOLOGY OF THE HEIGHTS — *Lawrence W. Swan* 22
BENEFICENT CANNIBALISM — *Edwin Way Teale* 30
THE SUN
FAMILIAR SHORE BIRDS IN JAPAN — *Dean Amadon* 48
ROOT GROWTH CLAIMS SOIL FROM SEA — *Virgil N. Argo* 52

DEPARTMENTS

REVIEWS — *William R. Farrand* 3
SKY REPORTER — *Simone Daro Gessner* 56
TRAVEL: FAR AND NEAR — *Tim Spierings* 60
ABOUT THE AUTHORS 64
NATURE AND THE CAMERA — *David Linton* 65

COVER: A man in the group of Tiwi natives living on Melville Island, in the Timor Sea, paints his face while participating in the Tiwi's annual, three-day *Kulama* ceremony, which is named after a toxic yam. The Tiwi who still adhere to tradition believe that great powers for good or evil dwell in *Kulama* yams, and that one must participate in their ritual preparation if one is to benefit from those powers. For those young Tiwi men and women who undergo the six years of instruction in the ritual, it represents a formal initiation into adulthood. Dr. Jane C. Goodale discusses this ceremony in the article that begins on page 10.

142
302
884

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[Title Page]

142
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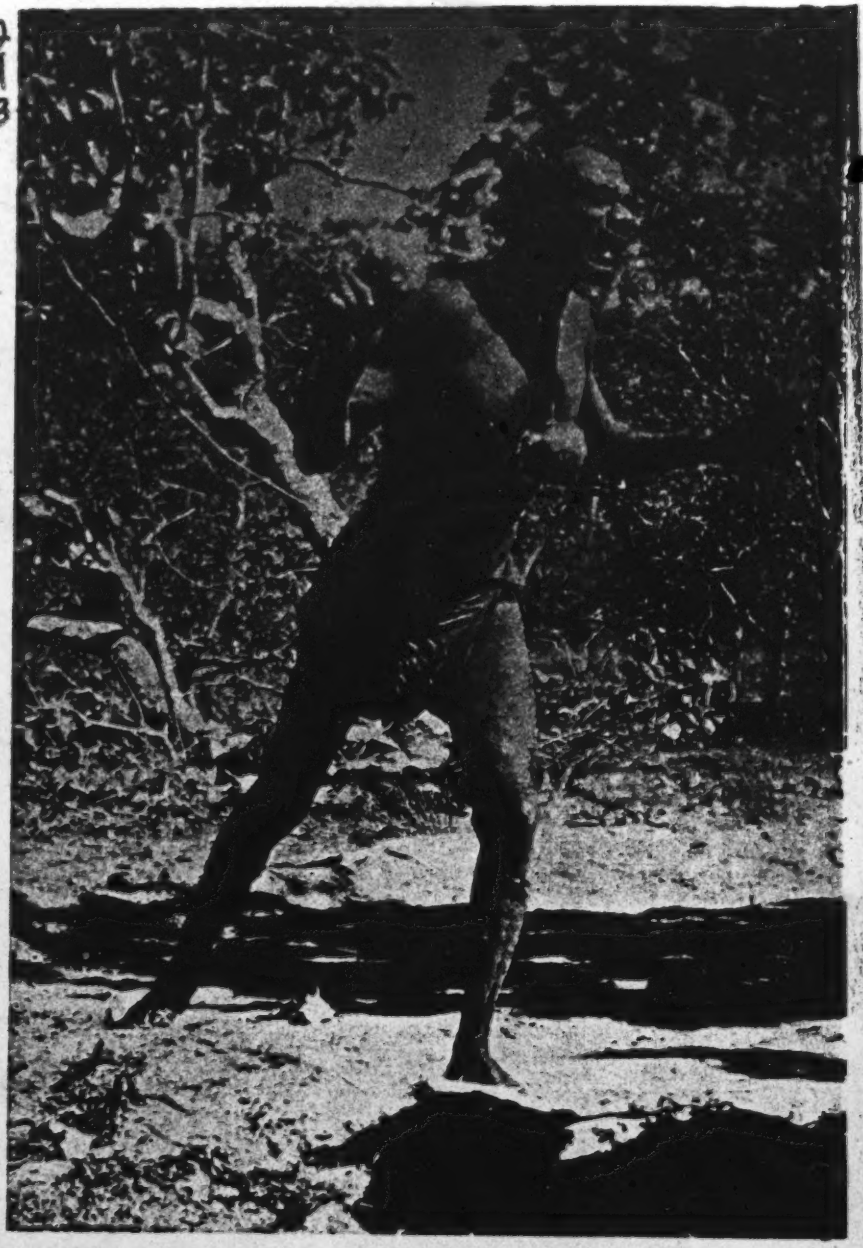

Tiwi native on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day Kulama ceremony.

[P.10]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954,1962) 1963 CX20 Tiwi CX20

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Running paint into the hair is supposed to prevent illness, and daubing it on the arms and legs wards off broken bones.

[P. 13, (A)]

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FATHER PAINTS GIRL to show how it would be done if she were to be initiated. Although no children of group were considered ready, ceremony was held to maintain benefits thought to accrue to the Tiwi who had undergone initiation.

[p. 151 (8)]

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Near end of Kulama ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.

[colors appearing in original:

Body - light purple with white.

Hair and beard - left: yellow, center stripe: red, right: white.

Red across nose and upper cheek. -- Analyst.]

[P. 17]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[P.2]
[P.1 not processed]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 2. Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend, Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 7. Agnes (left) and a friend admire a large mangrove crab

together with sharks, these waters contain the large and dangerous salt-water crocodile and all manner of poisonous jellyfish, one realizes that to swim around in a high sea in the pitch dark requires considerable courage. 123

Soon after we had crawled under the mosquito netting and between the blankets rain began to fall in a gentle and persistent way, but still not hard enough to prevent our falling asleep with little conversation.

It was hardly light the next morning when Agnes stood up and rewrapped her *naga*, a strip of calico, about her waist, then took up the billys and went to the well to draw water for the morning tea. Although the rain had been steady during the night, the well-built fire still had some life in it and after a few minutes of concentrated blowing, Albert had it rejuvenated. While the billy boiled, Big Jack shook as much of the wet sand as was possible from the blankets and rolled them into tight bundles. Then he set off to retrieve the canoe. By the time he reappeared, the tea was ready and it helped to wash down the leathery cold strips of damper sweetened with jam. [291] [372]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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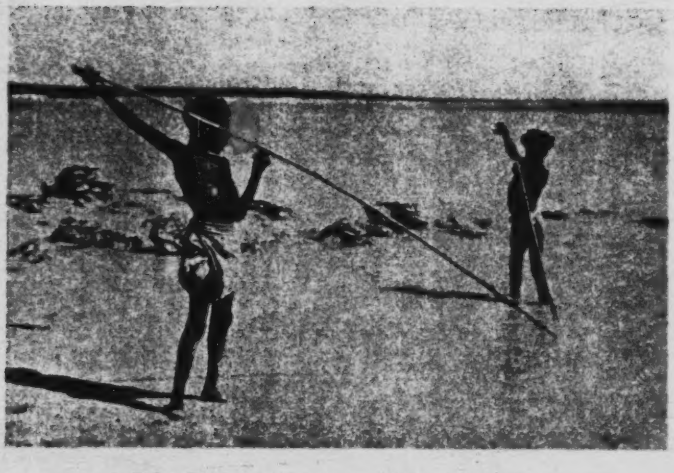

Fig. 9. Two young hunters practicing with fish-spears

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About five, we reached Minianapi, a landing place about fifteen yards wide, where solid ground reached the river bank. We were

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

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Fig. 10. Skinning a large crocodile

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pieces of the white meat were carried into the camp to be roasted for dinner. What was not to be consumed that night was thrown into the water, for meat spoils quickly in this sticky climate.

Darkness came early, and with it came the return of the goose hunters and the departure of the launch with the Grimsters and their crocodile team. Once more they would spend the night hunting crocodiles, this time downstream on their way back to the settlement. Soon many little fires broke up the darkness of the clearing and the smell of fresh roasting meat wafted over to where Albert, Agnes, Jack, and I were opening cans of corned beef. "Tomorrow we go bush," Albert remarked and I heartily assented.

Young Brook, a lean young man, and his wife, Alice,

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 12. A Tiwi family camped for the night

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Black Joe, Fat Alice's brother, had given them his eldest daughter in adoption. However, Dennis spent as much time with her proper parents as with her foster parents and it was quite evident that her affection was at least equally divided. Albert went over and managed to bring the screaming, kicking child back to our camp and asked me to give her some of the hard candy which I had brought with me. It was some time, however, before her attention was sufficiently distracted to allow Tuki and the other men to slip away into the canoe to hunt crocodiles for another night. Agnes commented to me, "Let him cry? That white man rule no good. By and by they go silly."

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We strolled back to Black Joe's camp with Dennis, and listened to a discussion concerning the superiority of crocodile hunting over

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 13. Gathering water-lilies in a fresh-water swamp

cut and after he had collected about thirty he selected a nice, smooth ledge of rock in the shade to work further on the sticks. First he stripped the bark, then measuring them against his arm he cut them so that each stick was as long as the distance from his fingertips to his elbow. All this he did with his knife, holding it by the tip of its long blade so that the handle would add its weight to each blow. He carefully smoothed off the two ends so there were no loose splinters. We each took a bundle of these sticks, tied them with strips of pandanus, and returned to the camp. Here they were laid in the water close to the bank and weighted down with a rock. This would make them good and heavy, it was explained.

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During the afternoon, the two men worked on the permanent house which Bill Grimster had ordered. Big Jack had spent the morning cutting posts and had brought in about half a dozen. By late afternoon, when the others returned, they had been set upright in holes dug to individual measure so that they stood firm without bracing.

Once everyone had returned, a fire was built. The men collected their individual bundles of *milingani* and placed the ends of the dripping sticks in the flames. They squatted over the sticks and individually started a chant during which they cupped their hands in the smoke and carrying it to their bodies, slapped their necks, then their arms. "Knar. Knar Gerra doo (slap), Gerra doo (slap)." The chant was nothing more than the imitation of the cries of the geese and the whir of the sticks. They explained that to bring the goose down they had to hit it directly on the neck or wings. "Why

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 14. "Cooking milingaai"

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do you cook the sticks?" I asked. "To make them dry so they won't slip in our hands," they replied.

Once the sticks were all well charred on the ends the men took them down to the canoe. For once, I used my status of ethnographer and overruled my role of a woman, and accompanied the men on what was properly men's business. The presence of women or children might bring bad luck. Whether the explanation was simply that women and children are considered to be lacking in the amount of silence or immobility required, or whether the reason was more subtle, I never found out. "This properly men's business," was the only explanation.

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We took the canoe a quarter of a mile up stream, where we

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 15. Weather-worn poles mark the grave of someone long dead but not forgotten

223 bush. He bin die long time ago." This had been his country while
789 alive and it was still his country, for his spirit remains near the
grave and still hunts the wild animals and birds, while the spirits
775 of his wives collect the wild yams, and his little spirit children play
in the bush. Bangri will share this food with others who come, and
their *mobuditiies*, should they die and be buried in the country, for
as long as his name is remembered, and until his grave-posts rot
with the passing of time.

123 But Bangri was not cooperative. The next day the hunters
found little game in the bush and the women turned to the laborious
[222 job of digging six-foot holes with a stick to obtain the small yams
224] that are to be found at this season. Again the grass was too thick,
the snakes too cheeky, and Albert advised against our going bush.
[152 I decided the more logical explanation was that Albert considered
777] we ourselves had ample food, and besides he was sincerely worried
about his long run of bad luck. But he left with the others that
[223]

evening to kill geese. When they returned with only three geese, a long conference was held. I offered all the food I could spare and it was decided that, in return for a few yams and some of the goose, I should make dampers and put jam on them for the children, all of whom were under five and very hungry, and give small pieces of tobacco to the men and women. This was Albert's, Agnes's, and Big Jack's tobacco, and so everyone traded something and all pronounced it a fair deal. I cooked the damper, smothered it with jam and, with Agnes prompting, called; "Kakritjui Kali." "Little ones, come." The five who could walk, ran, then stood shyly by while I handed each a piece; then they ran back to their mothers. Soon they were back and, nudged by their mothers, all murmured "Thank you very much." This was a phrase I never heard, either in the native language or in English, when they were receiving from another native. Giving and receiving were so much a part of their life that among themselves "thank you's" seemed unnecessary.

123 [223] [437] [431 576]

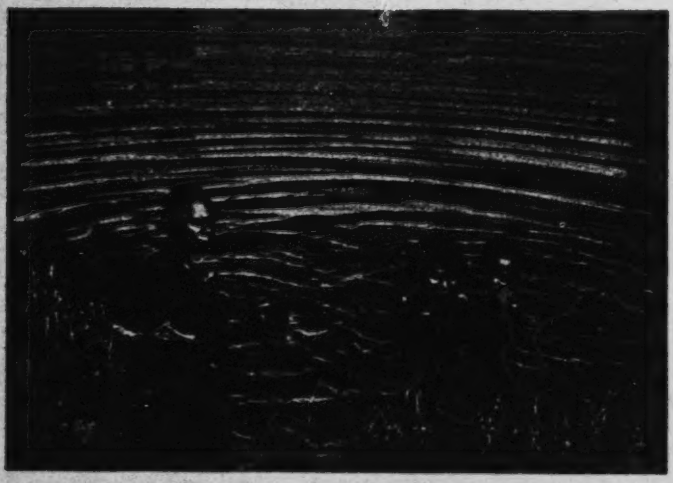

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Fig. 16. Agnes, Filley, and Crissy-boy cooling off in the river

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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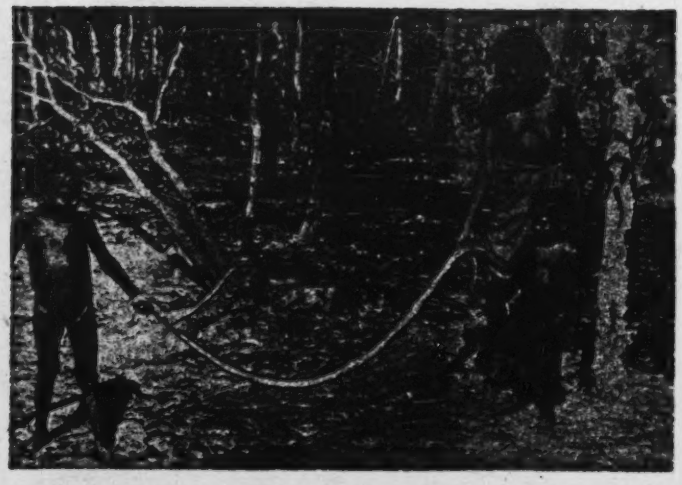

Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

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262 cooked, with that delicious charcoal-broiled flavor so much sought after in our more elite dining establishments or in our backyards.

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224 Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goanas, they brought over to show us an extremely large water [431] snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tre- [513] mendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minianapi in time to meet the geese. 123 All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's 231 hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we 484 reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was

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13:Barclay J-3 (ca.1939)1939 0120 Tiwi 0120

[p. 13(c)]

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BATHURST ISLAND ABORIGINAL MOTHER AND CHILD.

600 crocodile, nothing that breathes so utterly immobile; but there are few beasts that can spring more quickly into deadly activity when the occasion warrants a display of strength and agility.

The Vernons do not appear to be the sort of emergency landing-ground that one would choose if it could possibly be avoided. Apart from the crocodiles, the terrain does not promise too safe a landing.

Sea and sky alike were palest blue, and, in the farthest distance, the vast and faintly-wrinkled expanse of ocean mingled softly with the sky in a pearly sea-haze. One could not say where the one began and the other ended, and, partly obscured in the haze, far-distant luggers, with all sail set, headed for Darwin. Beneath the 'plane, rounded boiling swirls, long straight lines of white foam, and darker turbulent streaks in the pale-blue surface of the sea clearly defined the spring-tide currents. Down beneath us, too, shoals and deeps showed emerald or blue, and the long, pale-brown lines of reef that run

717 The couples marry young without any thought for the future.
582 They just marry as, and when, they feel inclined, and the mission
342 fathers provide the new home. Under the palms beside the Strait are many of the queer little iron humpies provided, just a roof, as it were, sloping on each side from the ridge-pole to the ground. The whole can be picked up and moved to a fresh position when fleas become too numerous and the surroundings otherwise unpleasant. These humpies scarcely seem attractive to white folk, but the islanders like them, and they are at least a great improvement on the dog-kennels of old iron that the blacks persist in erecting for themselves on the beach at Darwin.

797 Proper houses are provided in the Kahlin compound there, but the blacks despise them; and, although the miserable humpies on
342 the beach are demolished from time to time by the authorities, they are all up again by next evening. The good fathers know what the islanders prefer, and they have given the married couples the kind of accommodation in which they feel most happy. The humpies may be hot and stuffy, but they are dry inside when it rains.

142 The island blacks, in many respects, differ considerably from the tribes of the mainland. They are excessively hirsute, and,
144 on attaining maturity, the men grow long beards, many being of truly patriarchal proportions. The upper lip is kept bare, which practice seems to emphasize the magnificence of the beard. Shocks of hair, sometimes standing six inches high, add to a wildly impressive appearance. They are tall and muscular, and, as they stride along, they seem the very acme of physical development, a living advertisement for the natural, open-air existence.
302 The hairs, by the way, are plucked from the upper lip one by one, and this painful proceeding is undertaken in the calmest manner, certainly with less fuss and facial distortion than the average white man makes during his morning shave.

171 The use of the woomera for throwing spears, and of the
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[p. 15 (A)]

726 One man will then take a step or two forward, hold up a hand, and stamp vigorously, and all the warriors of his side will copy his actions. "Let 'em all come!" is the attitude adopted. If the enemy does not start hostilities at once, they throw their spears down and jump about like wallabies to show their contempt for the sluggard's markmanship. They are, however, careful not to get too far away from their own weapons, on which they pounce immediately the first spear is hurled by their opponents. The air is soon thick with flying spears and war-clubs, and the exchange goes on until some unlucky warrior is really hurt, when the engagement ceases.

727 BOTH sides gather round, howling their dismay, until repairs to the injured have been effected. A red-dyed ball of goose-
[781] down, which is hung from the neck by a string woven of human hair, is held before the mouth as a charm to divert the missiles, but the warriors owe their immunity from death or serious injury to their own remarkable eyesight and to the dexterity with which they evade, or turn to one side, the hurtling weapons of the enemy. The war-clubs used by the islanders are far more
411 difficult to dodge than the spears, which come straight at you.

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A BATHURST ISLANDER BRANDISHES HIS CLUB.

The war-club is merely a short, bent stick with a knob at one end; but, spinning in the air like a boomerang, it can be thrown for amazing distances by the islanders, considerably over a hundred yards, and not far off two hundred. This weapon is not thrown straight at an opponent, but at a stone, or a tuft of

[P. 17(A)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

726 received any serious damage, and it seemed to have been a most enjoyable occasion. An islander, who had seen the world from the decks of many luggers, made a remark that was truer than he knew, "When white feller go to war, he takem rifle, he takem

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HUNTING TURTLE, FROM A DUG-OUT CANOE NEAR BATHURST ISLAND.

bomb. Some feller *must* be killed. White feller silly b——!" It cannot be said that the mission fathers have a dull time at Bathurst Island.

797 There are two sisters of the order at the Mission Station. In addition to teaching the girls, they attend to all household mat-

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

648 has no other white inhabitants, while Melville is held under lease by the meat firm known as Vesteys Ltd., but has no permanent white inhabitants, though occasionally campers, beachcombers, and hunters from Darwin stay there for a few months.

177 All the earlier accounts lay stress on the ferocity and hostility of the
648 natives of these islands, but long albeit intermittent contact with the whites has tamed them. At the present time it is no exaggeration to say that except for the Larakia, who are almost extinct, no tribe in the Northern Territory has so assimilated white ideas or is so familiar with white men. A proof of this is afforded by the fact that members of this tribe are more in demand in Darwin as houseboys than members of any other tribe, simply because, as it is generally expressed, they have more "savvy," that is they are more intelligent and more adaptable to white conditions.

But while their proximity to Darwin and their long experience of white men have taught them much of our ideas and customs, the absence of a permanent white settlement in their country with its consequent massacres and epidemics has on the other hand prevented their numbers being depleted and their social organization being broken down. It is therefore still possible to obtain fairly full and satisfactory information about the life and culture of these islands as they were before white influence began.

181 The ferocity of these people, I am convinced, has been much exag-
648 gerated even by the earliest settlers. As a matter of fact their outstanding characteristic is not their fierceness but their sense of humour, as noted by Spencer. They are constantly laughing, even at the most solemn moments, and this applies to practically every man, woman and child on the island. I am inclined to think that their superior physique, which is very apparent, their huge spears—which incidentally they seldom use, except ceremonially—their striking method of painting their faces and their years of conflict with the Malays, which had accustomed them to stand and fight rather than to run at sight of a stranger, gained them in large part their evil reputation.

● 144 In physical appearance they are certainly Australoid, but the men are on the whole taller, sturdier and better proportioned than any of the mainland tribes. This is obvious even in Darwin, where it is an easy matter to pick out almost at a glance a member of the Tiwi. I agree
153 also with Sir Baldwin Spencer that they are superior to the mainlanders,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

BEFORE the advent of the buffalo-hunters, few white men had visited the islands since the 648
early days of the naval settlement at Fort Dundas, established by Sir Gordon [175]
Bremer in 1824, but abandoned four years later. Malays and Japanese pearlers
have been in the habit of taking in water from either of the islands and have
frequently come into disastrous conflict with the natives. It is perhaps also on 164
account of their isolation from civilization that I found the blacks comparatively
free from any serious disease. Apart from the various minor ailments such as
traumatic lesions and their after-effects, cataracts and keratitis, a few congenital
deformities and such like, only a few cases of tertiary syphilis came under my
notice.

A young gin was suffering from a disease of the hip, apparently chronic, but
she was too timid to permit me to make an examination. They are on the whole 142
a healthy, sturdy people of moderate stature, with a good muscular development
and a square, big thorax. The characteristics are Australoid and yet they present [144]
certain insular peculiarities.

The Head.

The forehead is low, with a marked supraorbital development; the face
somewhat depressed and the lower jaw strong. The eyes are sunken and the nose
is small. The wavy black hair of some of the males was worked up into numerous [302]
small, cylindrical, pendant masses with clay and ochre.[1] This, so far as I could [765]
ascertain, designated mourning. Others had besmeared their hair with ochre. The
hairs on the upper lip are pulled out. The growth of the beard of the men varies,
but is, on an average, good.

The natives of either island do not practise the knocking out of one or two 304
incisors as they do on the mainland. Major Campbell,[2] however, reports having 171
observed the custom on Melville Island.

The face is painted symmetrically with differently coloured ochres, charcoal, 302
and pipeclay, in various degrees of complexity (Fig. 1). A few of the simpler designs
might be described briefly:—*Case* (1): The whole surface of the face blackened
with charcoal. *Case* (2): The nose red and the rest of the face charcoal-black.
Case (3): Face (including the shaven upper lip and upper part of chin) charcoal-

[1] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* London, 1852, vol. ii, p. 13: "The characteristic mode of dressing the hair among the Torres Strait Islanders is to have it twisted up into long pipe-like ringlets, and wigs in imitation of this are also worn"; and again, "at Cape York I have at times for a week together seen all the men and lads with the hair twisted into little strands well daubed over with red ochre and turtle fat."

Also P. P. King, *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114: "The men were more muscular and better formed than any we have before seen, they were daubed over with a yellow pigment which was the colour of the neighbouring cliff (Luxmore Head on Melville Island); their hair was long and curly and appeared to be clotted with a whitish paint." [184]

[2] *Journ. Geogr. Society*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 153. *Cf.* also H. Klaatsch: *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 591.

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171 The use of the woomera for throwing spears, and of the
411

[p. 15 (A)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 The matter of men traveling to distant camps for ceremonials illumi-
595 nates again, and from a new angle, the great value of elderly widows in the
587 household. Tu'untalumi, during his visit to Malau in August, was able to split his household efficiently by taking a couple of old wives with him to supervise his young wives on the journey and leaving other old wives at home in Tangio to begin storing up food for the grass-burning project which he intended to stage on his return. It will be noticed in the account of his movements that he began issuing invitations to the grass burning on his way home from Malau, [224 showing his confidence that the elderly wives he had left at home would 251] have the preparations well in hand during his absence. A big man with a big household really needed three or four elderly widows because these enabled him to split his work force in various ways as his various political and social obligations required and to be sure of trustworthy supervision of each of the segments. A man without widows in his household, or with only one, could not do this; in fact, it was hard for a man without widows to attend ceremonials at all, or even to receive a large party of visitors to his household. And, as we have already pointed out, since such a man would probably go hungry very often because he would not dare to send his unsupervised young wives into the bush to gather food, there were practically no such men nor such households. Widows were indispensable to a senior Tiwi, both in his public and in his private life.

Making Things

592 Throughout this chapter we have been stressing the contrast between
887 the dull routine of life in an isolated Tiwi household during the greater part of the year and the sort of life typical on those relatively rare occasions when something special—a festival, a funeral, a fight, a grass burning, a naming ceremony, some collective phase of men's initiation—required the assembling together of several households for joint activity. Before leaving the daily life of the isolated camp, we should mention one other area of activity—namely, the manufacturing activities of the tribe. The Tiwi did not manufacture much, [32] but spears, throwing sticks, canoes, digging sticks, baskets, bodily ornaments, graveposts, and all the miscellaneous paraphernalia used in ceremonials had to be made in whatever leisure time people could find during the long weeks and months when each of the households lived more or less in isolation from the others. Crude and simple as these artifacts were, their construction required time, and only the older men had the time and the skill based on experience to make the more important of them.

[147] Largely because of their failing eyesight, the older men hunted very little and hence tended to remain in camp all day while the young men were hunting and the women were gathering. There were, of course, some old men who took advantage of this time to do little except doze in the shade, but
182 most of the household heads spent a fairly active day in camp engaged in
511 making things. Here we find another aspect of Tiwi culture that results from
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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

628 of nondelivery of bestowed daughters, or other types of broken promises. Some of these cases had been going on for years, and settlement of them at the level of the individual duel had failed. The aggrieved individuals in the two Bathurst Island bands therefore pooled their grievances, persuaded many of their relatives and friends who were not aggrieved to join them, and a large party of men of all ages set off for the Mandiimbula territory.

This party, comprising about thirty fighting men all heavily armed and [302] all wearing the white paint indicative of anger and hostile intent, was a "war" party, and its coming to their territory was recognized as such by the Mandiimbula. On arrival at the place where the latter, duly warned of its approach, had gathered, the war party announced its presence. Both sides then exchanged a few insults and agreed to meet formally the next day in an open space where there was plenty of room. After a night mostly spent by both sides in individual visiting and renewing old acquaintances, the two armies met next morning in battle array, with the thirty Tiklauila-Rangwila warriors drawn up at one end of the clearing, and about sixty local warriors at the other end. Immediately the familiar patterns of the duel imposed themselves. 537 A senior individual on one side began a harangue directed at an individual 628 on the other. When he ran out of breath, another individual began his complaint. Since each accused Mandiimbula replied individually to the charges made against him, the whole proceeding remained at the level of mutual charges and replies between pairs of individuals. Angry old men on both sides often seemed to be trying to find a basis that would justify or provoke a general attack by one group upon the other, but always failed to find it because of the particularity of the charges. The rules of Tiwi procedure compelled the [619] accuser to specify the sources of his charges and his anger, and these always turned out to be directed not at the Mandiimbula band, but at one, or at most two or three, individual members of that band. And when another old man took the center of attention, his anger would be directed at quite different 628 individuals. Hence when spears began to be thrown, they were thrown by individuals at individuals for reasons based on individual disputes. Unlike the seduction duels, however, these duels occurred mostly between two senior men, and the danger of a direct hit was much reduced because of the poor marksmanship of both parties. On the other hand, the danger of somebody getting hurt was increased because a fight between two old men was likely to spread as other old men were drawn into it to support one or the other side—in which case, a wild melee occurred with badly thrown spears flying in all directions. This was probably a good thing, because soon somebody was bound to be hit, thus ending the fight. Not infrequently the person hit was some innocent [147] noncombatant or one of the screaming old women who weaved through the fighting men, yelling obscenities at everybody, and whose reflexes for dodging spears were not as fast as those of the men.

As soon as somebody was wounded, even a seemingly irrelevant crone, fighting stopped immediately until the implications of this new incident could be assessed by both sides. For the crone was never really irrelevant; she was somebody's mother and somebody else's wife and somebody else's sister and

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

corrobboree of the Melville Islanders, but it appears that he regarded the [114] demonstration as hostile. He writes that "the dance consisted chiefly of the per- 527 formers leaping two or three times successively out of the sea, and then violently 535 moving their legs so as to agitate the water into a foam for some distance around them, all the time shouting loudly and laughing immoderately; then they would run through the water for eight or ten yards and perform again; and this was repeated over and over as long as the dance lasted."

During none of these ceremonies, or indeed anywhere on the island, did I see [771] anything of totemism in the scientific sense of the word. This fact is in accordance [114] with my observations in Central and North Australia, and my negative evidence is amply borne out by the researches of Drs. W. E. Roth and H. Klaatsch and others.

Pastimes.

The sham-fights of youths with small arrow-shaped spears have already been 524 mentioned. Children were observed upon the beach competing in running and long jump. A favourite amusement of the younger folk on a breezy day is to collect the light globular seed-heads of the "spring rolling grass" (*Spinifex hirsutis*), that grow on every sand-hill near the coast, and take them to the beach and there release them on the hardened sand. Driven along by the wind, these seeds travel over the surface at no mean pace. Allowing them to gain a fair start, the children bolt after them and endeavour to overtake them and pick them up from the ground while dashing past them at full speed in "cow-boy" fashion.

Another game is that of hand-ball. The seeds of the zamia (*Cycas media*) take the place of a small ball. Two lads stand facing one another and hit the seed to and fro with the palms of their hands, after the style of a modern game of tennis.

Despite their keenness of sight and quickness of hand, they are, nevertheless, [147] very backward in catching with their hands an object which is thrown at them.

Burial Method.

The aborigines of Bathurst and Melville Islands have a unique and elaborate 764 method of burial; graves have been found on both islands. It appears that the favourite places for burying the dead are there, where a jungle or mangrove-thicket breaks to the ordinary eucalypt-woodland, usually near to the sea-coast or to a native water.

Historically we have to note several observations in this connection.

Sir Gordon Bremer[1] mentions having discovered a grave on Bathurst Island in 1824. "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it

[1] *Imperial Parliamentary Paper*, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, London, March 27th, 1843; also in *The Genesis of Queensland*, by H. S. Russell, Sydney, 1888, p. 34.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 15. Weather-worn poles mark the grave of someone long dead but not forgotten

223 bush. He bin die long time ago." This had been his country while
789 alive and it was still his country, for his spirit remains near the
grave and still hunts the wild animals and birds, while the spirits
775 of his wives collect the wild yams, and his little spirit children play
in the bush. Bangri will share this food with others who come, and
their *mobudities*, should they die and be buried in the country, for
as long as his name is remembered, and until his grave-posts rot
with the passing of time.

123 But Bangri was not cooperative. The next day the hunters
found little game in the bush and the women turned to the laborious
[222 job of digging six-foot holes with a stick to obtain the small yams
224] that are to be found at this season. Again the grass was too thick,
the snakes too cheeky, and Albert advised against our going bush.
[152 I decided the more logical explanation was that Albert considered
777] we ourselves had ample food, and besides he was sincerely worried
[223] about his long run of bad luck. But he left with the others that

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 17. "Hunting a possum"

It was soon overtaken by Albert who killed it quickly with a blow from a stick. As he brought it back he said, "Him big mother. See him pickaninni." And he held up a hairless baby barely three inches long, its eyes still closed, but very much alive. "Oh, kill it quick, Albert," I begged. He shook his head, "I can't kill him, I too sorry alonga him." Here we were at an impass, two people too sorry alonga him; one too sorry to kill it, and one too sorry to let it live. Who was right?

Meanwhile, Agnes took the mother possum and pulled the fur from a small area on the belly and then slitting the skin with the sharp end of a broken stick, she withdrew the gall bladder and intestines. "Him make him bad," she explained. We did not stop to cook the animal, but continued our search. This area had all been burned by the previous parties and already little delicate shoots of grass were poking up through the black ground.

During the next hour we wandered slowly through the bush and, although we saw many trees which had been inhabited by possums, they were now empty. One that looked most likely was hollow and Albert hopefully built a fire in the rotten base, then sat back and waited for the smoke to drive the animal out. After half an hour, it was quite obvious that no one was at home.

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Then our luck turned. This time, when Albert gave the "come here" call, it was because he had located a wild honey nest, or "sugar-bag," high in a large stringy-bark eucalyptus. There was little point in cutting this large tree down so Albert prepared to climb. First he cut a small sapling and laid it at a 45-degree angle against a crotch where the massive trunk split in two. Then, grip-

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

648 has no other white inhabitants, while Melville is held under lease by the meat firm known as Vesteys Ltd., but has no permanent white inhabitants, though occasionally campers, beachcombers, and hunters from Darwin stay there for a few months.

177 All the earlier accounts lay stress on the ferocity and hostility of the
648 natives of these islands, but long albeit intermittent contact with the whites has tamed them. At the present time it is no exaggeration to say that except for the Larakia, who are almost extinct, no tribe in the Northern Territory has so assimilated white ideas or is so familiar with white men. A proof of this is afforded by the fact that members of this tribe are more in demand in Darwin as houseboys than members of any other tribe, simply because, as it is generally expressed, they have more "savvy," that is they are more intelligent and more adaptable to white conditions.

But while their proximity to Darwin and their long experience of white men have taught them much of our ideas and customs, the absence of a permanent white settlement in their country with its consequent massacres and epidemics has on the other hand prevented their numbers being depleted and their social organization being broken down. It is therefore still possible to obtain fairly full and satisfactory information about the life and culture of these islands as they were before white influence began.

181 The ferocity of these people, I am convinced, has been much exag-
648 gerated even by the earliest settlers. As a matter of fact their outstanding characteristic is not their fierceness but their sense of humour, as noted by Spencer. They are constantly laughing, even at the most solemn moments, and this applies to practically every man, woman and child on the island. I am inclined to think that their superior physique, which is very apparent, their huge spears—which incidentally they seldom use, except ceremonially—their striking method of painting their faces and their years of conflict with the Malays, which had accustomed them to stand and fight rather than to run at sight of a stranger, gained them in large part their evil reputation.

144 In physical appearance they are certainly Australoid, but the men are on the whole taller, sturdier and better proportioned than any of the mainland tribes. This is obvious even in Darwin, where it is an easy matter to pick out almost at a glance a member of the Tiwi. I agree
● 153 also with Sir Baldwin Spencer that they are superior to the mainlanders,

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

not only in physique but also in intelligence. I should be surprised to 153
find in any other Australian tribe a man with the intelligence and adaptability of my own head boy Mariano.

The flora and fauna of the two islands is very similar to that of the 133
rest of the Northern Territory. The country is mostly flat with a low range of rocky hills between Cape Gambier and Cape Keith on Melville Island, and a still lower range in the centre of Bathurst. The timber 137
consists of the usual Australian trees; gums, stringy-bark, woolly-butt, bloodwood and ironwood cover most of the two islands, broken here and there by patches of open grassland and in other places by dense patches of jungle where snakes and "devils" thrive and the natives seldom enter. Wallabies are extraordinarily plentiful, but there are no kangaroos. 136
Buffaloes are found on Melville in small numbers. These are the wild descendants of the domestic Indian buffaloes imported for agricultural purposes by the early settlers at Fort Dundas. At one time they had increased and multiplied to such effect that thousands were shot every year without any appreciable effect upon their numbers. At the present time, however, probably owing to many of the cows being killed, there are probably not more than a thousand on the island. The natives are seldom able to kill a buffalo though they realise the fact that it is good to eat.

Not only are wallabies plentiful, but there is also an abundant supply 262
of the other native articles of food, fish, crocodile, birds of all kinds, wild honey, yams and other native vegetables. As a result of this abundance 161
of foods, it would seem that the two islands had a greater density of population than is to be found in almost any other part of Australia.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The people inhabiting Melville and Bathurst Islands are subdivided 621
into a number of local groups. These local groups are the important sections of the population since they act as land-owning groups, war-making groups, have a solidarity of their own which is far stronger than any tribal solidarity that may exist and even to some extent regulate marriage.

Before considering these hordes in detail, however, something must 184
be said about the tribal name. All the hordes practise the same customs, 619
speak the same language and inter-marry. The boundaries of the people speaking this language are of course strictly defined by the sea. In other words, the people of Melville and Bathurst have a solidarity of their own,

884 are allowed to dig the yam. A special dance area, or cere-
[462] monial ring, is cleared on the ground and a special cook-
[535] ing fire is built in its center. On each of the three ceremonial
[302] days the participants paint themselves in specified ways
with ocher. During the evening of each day, while the yams
are soaking or cooking, the male participants, singly or
884 together, walk slowly counterclockwise around the cere-
533 monial fire, beating sticks together as an accompaniment
[534] to specially composed songs. At times the wives, who re-
main outside the ring, sing with the men, or they may join
[535] their husbands in traditional dances that imitate various
aspects of the natural world around them.

The songs are a vital part of the ritual. They must be newly composed for the occasion and may relate to any event or abstract idea the composer chooses. The songs
[154] often deal with injustices the singer has experienced in the past year, about which he wishes to register an "official" complaint:

[539]

> "There was a funeral,
> You went first, I came after.
> Old people came in first.
> I was late because I had a *Kulama*.
> Why didn't you wait for me?"
>
> or
>
> "When Dory have baby girl
> The old man said, 'That's for you.'
> Dory, my mother-in-law, she burns me.
> Dory doesn't know the old people way.
> I would like to kill her."

Others may be in the nature of news reports, in which the listeners are informed of anything interesting that may have happened to the singer during the preceding year.
CEO For instance, the composer of the following song had just

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P.14, (A)--Qualyst]

[P.13, (B)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

outdance and out-sing and out-party most of the men fifty years younger than himself.[6] 159 888

Since Tu'untalumi was a senior Tiwi household head who spent more of his time attending festivals, funerals, fights, and other collective occasions than did most of his contemporaries, it is instructive to examine his movements over a full year. If he had kept an engagement book during 1928-29, it would have looked something like this: 159 887

Early April (end of wet season): Leaves his home base in Tangio where he has spent most of the wet season and visits the Mission station to attend a few small funerals (children who have died at the Mission in the preceding months). During these funerals a series of fights and duels also takes place. Total people present: perhaps fifty or sixty. Time thus spent in helping to wind up public business: five days. Returns home to Tangio and remains there for rest of April. [797]

End of April: Goes to Rangu with a big party of other Tiklauila for a funeral (junior elder). Fairly big funeral, lots of people, lots of disputes. Time away, including leisurely journey to and from Rangu, about two weeks. Gets back home about middle of May. [764 166]

Middle of May—end of June: Lives quietly at home with his household in Tangio.

About July 1st: Goes to Mission for a few days, "visits" with whoever is there. Tries out a new composition of his own (song and dance) on group camped at Mission. Returns home for rest of July. [533 535]

Last week of July: Taking his younger wives and their children with two senior wives in charge of them, sets out for Malau for a big funeral with lots of people and fights. There he performs his new dance; is much consulted on ceremonial matters by the Malauila; gets into a few fights himself but handles them with dignity and honor; remains in Malau two weeks; stops off to visit and attend a small funeral with the Munupula on his way back; has a fight with a Munupula while there; returns to the Mission; stays there a day or two dispensing all the news from Malau and Munupi to those camped there; issues invitations for a grass burning in some sections of Tangio which were not burned in April or May. Goes on home to Tangio where some of his older wives have remained during his absence. Total time away: about three weeks. [166]

End of August: Is joined in Tangio by several other Tiklauila and Rangwila households whom he has invited. Grass burning and joint kangaroo hunting goes on for four or five days. Dancing and partying at night. After five days most of visiting group leave and he and his household remain alone in Tangio until well into October. [224]

[6] There is no suggestion that Tu'untalumi was in any way an official ritual leader. All old men, by virtue of their years, were to some extent ritual leaders; he had merely worked harder and longer at it than most of them. His tirelessly joyful personality had a good deal to do with his success in the self-established role. In a culture that might be thought likely to make all its men gloomy, anxiety-ridden introverts, he was a warm, happy, dignified old extrovert and he was widely admired. [156]

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[142
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Fig. 2. Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend, Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

lores and customs, and if the white people were disappointed by his performance in settlement work, the old men of the tribe were just as pleased by his attitude to his native heritage.

Agnes, a slim tall girl of twenty, was even shyer than Albert and to cover up this shyness she always smiled or giggled. She was a cheerful soul to have around. Feeling that the responsibility of the care and feeding of the *murandanga* (female white person) was a little more than their young shoulders could bear, Albert asked Big Jack, his older brother, a "big man" in the tribe to come along. At the last minute a fifth member was added, Tchuwiunga, a tiny black-and-white puppy of about eight weeks old.

Number one canoe was the largest canoe and was considered the safest. The Malay fishermen, a century or more ago, had taught the Melville Islanders how to hew a rough canoe from a single log, but the art had never been perfected. This canoe measured about fifteen feet in length by about three feet in width at the center. There were small platforms in the bow and stern which

Fig. 1. Setting off in Number one canoe

pressed laughter on the other side of the fire as he recalled to himself the amusing incidents of the day. Even when alone with his thoughts he was still laughing. This suggests that Tip's gaiety was "natural" rather than contrived for effect, and there is support for the suggestion in the fact that Tip was regarded as a poor hunter, because, as one critic put it, "He doesn't concentrate on killing the kangaroo but plays jokes on the kangaroo and makes a game out of hunting." Another indication that when alone he behaved in the same irresponsible manner that he exhibited in public. 159

The second ground that suggests that fun-loving and gaiety are not incompatible with increasing age and tribal status is the fact that there were many old and venerable Tiwi who loved fun and laughter just as Tipperary did. One such was Tu'untalumi, one of the most elderly of the Tiklauila, a man of weight, dignity and poise. He was a highly respected person, an expert in ceremonial performances and a rigid traditionalist in all things. But despite his age and dignity this man was as given to fun and laughter as Tip was. The main difference was that Tip's laughter was loud, boisterous and prankish; Tu'untalumi's jokes and quips were delivered in low, gentle tones and his laughter was dignified and restrained. But within the limitations imposed by his status he got as much fun and extracted as much humor out of life as Tip, illustrating the point that age and seniority in Tiwi do not at all necessarily mean sourness and lack of humor. Although the two were not related Tipperary played up to the old man and courted and valued his approval while Tu'untalumi clearly liked having Tip around him. They were kindred souls but separated by more than forty years of age. 157 522 561 159 522 572

As is probably the case in most cultures, so among the Tiwi—the genuinely gay person is popular. Tipperary though the next to youngest of Turimpi's sons was the one with most friends. Perhaps significantly, his friends were among both his seniors and juniors, but not among his brothers. Antonio was the only brother who sought Tip's company and this can be accounted for either by the fact that Antonio, when not harassed by his status, was an easy-going, friendly and none too intelligent man who laughed readily even when none too sure of what the joke was, or that he found Tip's company a relaxation from the cares of state. Of the other brothers, the self-righteous and puritanical Mariano considered Tip frivolous and deplored (or was jealous of) the tendency of white men to become fond of him. Louis actively disliked Tip perhaps because his love affairs were an obvious target for some of Tip's better quips. "Perhaps he is going into the bush to take a nap" was one of his comments when he saw Louis disappearing among the trees. With his full brother Bob, Tip had few close ties, perhaps because Bob spent much of his time in Darwin, but even more likely, one suspects, because Bob, an indefinite and colorless youngster, shrank from attracting public notice, whereas Tip was always drawing attention to himself, with the result that Bob to save himself embarrassment avoided his company. 159 593

Outside his siblings, Tipperary's gaiety earned him the liking and companionship of the younger men and made him a favorite younger man of some 159 522 572

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 177 183 561 684 to give an imitation of an angry and indignant elder telling off an impertinent "young punk,"[11] but even to the Tiwi, the spectacle of the subservient and retiring Bob trying to overawe and browbeat the formidable and completely self-reliant Louis was such a perversion of the traditional pattern that it bordered on the farcical. As soon as it was over and the conventions were satisfied, Bob, pale and shaken by the unwonted initiative and aggressiveness he had been forced to display, hurried back to the oblivion of Darwin where no such demands were made on a good boy, and, presumably to ensure that he would not be forced to go through such an ordeal again, took the rather unusual step of taking his wife along with him this time.

157 The above brief sketches convey perhaps some idea of the variation in personalities of the five brothers. Obviously no definite conclusions can be drawn from material of this sort. It is merely suggestive of possibilities for theory. What it seems to suggest is, however, at variance with the idea that personality is substantially uniform in the simpler societies. No attempt has been made in this paper to explore the full gamut of personal differences among the Tiwi. By adding half a dozen other individuals (including such as Tu'untalumi and Dooley, already briefly mentioned) to the five siblings we have discussed above, it would be easy to widen the number of "personality types" illustrated. By confining our attention to the sons of Turimpi we have avoided an arbitrary selection of contrasting individuals; the five men selected were chosen *not because* they were different *but because* they were brothers. How different they are in that vaguely defined thing called personality is largely a matter of opinion depending almost entirely upon what is regarded as a "personality" difference. All that we would here claim for them in the way of difference is that on any continuum for a single trait the five sons of Turimpi range themselves about as differentially as any five average men are likely to do in our culture. In aggressiveness, for example, Mariano is well toward one end of the range, Bob well toward the other; Tipperary, Louis and Antonio at different points in between. In decisiveness or decision-making, Mariano, Louis and Tipperary belong to the heavily positive side, Antonio and Bob on the heavily negative side. But if we couple with decisiveness the ability to win friends and influence people, Tipperary, the decisive and popular, must be sharply separated from Louis and Mariano, decisive but unpopular. The three aggressive dominating types differ markedly among themselves in what might be called interest in life or chief motivating force, Mariano expressing his need for dominance through political channels, Louis through sex, Tipperary through laughter and kidding. On an introvert-extrovert continuum, Louis the silent withdrawn lone-wolf has to be placed well toward the introvert pole, with Mariano not very far away from him, but with Tipperary the out-giving friendly "Rotarian" kidder at the other extreme, and Antonio well down toward Tipperary's end. These are of course just a few of the possible ranges along which the sons of Turimpi have to be located.

Whatever facet of behavior we seize on for comparison, we find these five

men markedly different from one another. Nor does that obvious fact seem due in any way to the circumstance that the observations upon them were made in a post-white situation. The presence of the Mission, the arguments about polygyny, the lure of movies and white jobs in Port Darwin, the coming of the Japanese pearlers—such factors as these obviously influenced a great deal the *cultural* situation, but it is difficult to see how they can be held to account for Mariano's vehemence or Antonio's indecision or Tip's gaiety or Louis' amorousness. Such things as the Mission, the Japanese, Port Darwin, were vehicles for or occasions for Mariano's vehemence and Antonio's indecision and Tip's gaiety, but they certainly did not cause them. These men would, one presumes, have displayed those same temperamental traits through other and more "native" cultural vehicles if the whites and the Japanese had not been there. To argue otherwise, that is that such differences appear in the post-white situation but are absent under pre-white conditions, would seem to be a most blatant form of ethnocentricism.

It is equally ethnocentric, though in a different way, to argue that our culture, because of its alleged greater complexity, is able in some mysterious way to produce greater variations in personality traits than other and simpler cultures. What complexity of culture does is increase the number of cultural alternatives or socially acceptable behavior patterns; it cannot increase the number of attitudes which an individual will manifest while choosing a cultural alternative or following a socially acceptable pattern. An individual in any culture will follow a "cultural course" but he will follow it cheerfully or sourly, silently or garrulously, in a relaxed manner or a tense manner, like a leader or like a follower, with his eye on the gallery or regardless of the world's opinion. These alternatives would appear to be human alternatives, since they are ways in which all men respond to cultural stimuli. Since they are human variations they will be present where there are many cultural alternatives and where there are none. They will be present in closed social systems as much as in open social systems. When a man in any culture in the world is practising a cultural pattern, he will still differ from his neighbors—or his brothers—in the way he practises it. "It ain't the horrible things you do, but the horrible way you do 'em," are the words of an old joke which draws attention to the vital difference between the things which a culture requires its people to do and the attitudes with which different people proceed to do them. The five sons of Turimpi all followed Tiwi cultural patterns reasonably closely but as this paper has tried to demonstrate they were far indeed from being "stereotyped personalities." They differed not in what they did but in how they did it.

It follows therefore that since simplicity or complexity of culture is irrelevant to the whole matter, we should expect to find, in any culture in the world, a pretty similar range of variation in what must roughly be called "types of people." If the personality and culture literature is leading young anthropologists into the field expecting to find "stereotyped personalities" in the simpler cultures, they are doomed to disappointment. Years ago, Franz Boas (in a passage that is never quoted nowadays) told them what they *will* find. "Some

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

so high and rank that the hunters were unable to get near the kangaroo. In this event, a senior man of the district might decide to convene a grass-burning posse. To it he invited more or less whom he pleased, so long as he included other household heads of the same band and other senior men from outside it whose ancestry gave them some claim to be invited. At the appointed time the hunters assembled, perhaps ten or fifteen adult men, with younger ones doing the actual hunting and the older ones supervising. The women and children acted as beaters; the grass was set on fire over a big area, and the kangaroos rounded up and killed while dazed by the smoke and the noise. The bag of animals killed in such a concerted hunt sometimes ran higher than one kangaroo per participant, so that every man, woman, and child present was able to gorge himself on kangaroo meat for a day or two. This sudden glut of meat was not, however, the main object of the burning, but a dividend. Even though few kangaroos were caught in the smoke and confusion, the burned-over area would provide good visibility for kangaroo hunting during the rest of the dry season, since the new tender shoots that sprang from the burned-over grass were a favorite food of the kangaroo and served to lure them out of the denser scrub areas and the mangrove swamps where hunting them was always difficult.

These occasional joint hunts, like the occasional small fights and the funerals of unimportant people, usually brought together only the members of households who lived relatively close to one another, so that while they are included in the list of events which interrupted household isolation, they did not, as a rule, involve any interaction between members of any wider group than the neighboring households. Perhaps the whole matter of activity beyond the household and the band can be illustrated best by an actual case. We have already mentioned the venerable Tu'untalumi, an old man resident among the Tiklauila, who as late as 1929, and despite the fact that by then the Tiklauila were the band most subject to mission influence, nonetheless had a list of twenty-one wives. In other ways besides his record of polygamy, Tu'untalumi was a pillar of the old culture. Though past seventy and much too old to hunt, he was a most enthusiastic and indefatigable song and dance composer, and in his zest for ceremonial he made a point of attending every big festival and as many smaller ones as he could get to. The whole tribe respected Tu'untalumi as a big man, liked him as a person, admired him for his steadfast support of Tiwi traditions, and most of all accepted him as a sort of leading authority on ritual matters. When dubious or disputed points of ceremonial were submitted to him, his decision, given clearly and firmly and with much citation of precedent and the distant past, was accepted without demur. His presence at a gathering located outside his own district was always a source of gratification to the household which had convened the gathering. The fact that Tu'untalumi had seen fit to attend not only made that household feel important but also provided its members with a technical guide and arbiter for unofficial help in running the rituals. The old man loved going to parties—and he was always a welcome guest—and years of such activity had given him such a sturdy, wiry constitution that despite his near-seventy-five years he could

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

outdance and out-sing and out-party most of the men fifty years younger than himself.[6] 159 888

Since Tu'untalumi was a senior Tiwi household head who spent more of his time attending festivals, funerals, fights, and other collective occasions than did most of his contemporaries, it is instructive to examine his movements over a full year. If he had kept an engagement book during 1928-29, it would have looked something like this: 159 887

Early April (end of wet season): Leaves his home base in Tangio where he has spent most of the wet season and visits the Mission station to attend a few small funerals (children who have died at the Mission in the preceding months). During these funerals a series of fights and duels also takes place. Total people present: perhaps fifty or sixty. Time thus spent in helping to wind up public business: five days. Returns home to Tangio and remains there for rest of April. [797]

End of April: Goes to Rangu with a big party of other Tiklauila for a funeral (junior elder). Fairly big funeral, lots of people, lots of disputes. Time away, including leisurely journey to and from Rangu, about two weeks. Gets back home about middle of May. [764 166]

Middle of May—end of June: Lives quietly at home with his household in Tangio.

About July 1st: Goes to Mission for a few days, "visits" with whoever is there. Tries out a new composition of his own (song and dance) on group camped at Mission. Returns home for rest of July. [533 535]

Last week of July: Taking his younger wives and their children with two senior wives in charge of them, sets out for Malau for a big funeral with lots of people and fights. There he performs his new dance; is much consulted on ceremonial matters by the Malauila; gets into a few fights himself but handles them with dignity and honor; remains in Malau two weeks; stops off to visit and attend a small funeral with the Munupula on his way back; has a fight with a Munupula while there; returns to the Mission; stays there a day or two dispensing all the news from Malau and Munupi to those camped there; issues invitations for a grass burning in some sections of Tangio which were not burned in April or May. Goes on home to Tangio where some of his older wives have remained during his absence. Total time away: about three weeks. [166]

End of August: Is joined in Tangio by several other Tiklauila and Rangwila households whom he has invited. Grass burning and joint kangaroo hunting goes on for four or five days. Dancing and partying at night. After five days most of visiting group leave and he and his household remain alone in Tangio until well into October. [224]

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Middle of October: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[7] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing.

End of October: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

End of January: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

End of February: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

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[7] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeimpi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The mobility of people other than household heads was much less. 562
Women and children could move only with the permission, and usually in the 571
company, of their lord and master. Occasionally old and trusted wives might
be sent, unsupervised, on a journey by their husbands or their brothers, [203]
usually to carry messages and bring back gossip, but young wives were never trusted to be out of sight either of the husband or of elderly female supervisors. Young men were less subject to their fathers' orders and hence were fairly free to come and go as they pleased, but the universal suspicion which all husbands bore toward wandering young men put severe restrictions on their mobility and prevented them attaching themselves to any household or camp in which they did not have some close relative.

The fact, then, that a man like Tu'untalumi was (in Tiwi terms) very 159
mobile did not necessarily mean that members of his household shared his 222
degree of mobility. When he took most of his large household with him on his 462
journeys away from home, as he often did, it was always because he was going 527
a considerable distance and was traveling slowly, living off the country as he
went. In such cases he liked to have a large retinue to feed him on the way
and also to permit him to entertain in fitting style when he arrived. For
while it was true that at a funeral or at an initiation the relatives of the de-
ceased or of the novices were supposed to take care of the feeding of all the [574]
visitors, nonetheless, wealthy and generous men like Tu'untalumi believed in taking along with them a bevy of young wives, with a couple of efficient elderly widow-wives in charge of them, to contribute to the food-getting and food-preparing activities. Of course the supervision of the young wives' morals [837
in the strange environment was often difficult, especially in the hectic at- 593]
mosphere of a big ceremonial, but this worry was compensated for by the fact that the visitor who came so attended was contributing a number of extra food providers to the labor force of the harassed hosts and thus making a generous gesture, and also by the fact that such a visitor was not dependent upon the hospitality provided by the hosts. Having his own food-producing unit with him, he could live better and stay longer than if he had come alone or only as one of a party of men. In this respect, as in so many others, a Tiwi household head's decision had to be reached by balancing against one another the two competing motives of, on the one hand, the desire to eat well and, on the other, the desire to keep his young wives safe from prowling bachelors. Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest man of the Malauila band, usually decided not only to leave his wives at home but also not even to go himself. But Ki-in-kumi was a gloomy, pessimistic old man. Tu'untalumi usually decided to do the thing in style, travel with a large retinue, have all the comforts of home while in strange districts, and take his chances on the strange bachelors. He clearly believed that a good booming ceremony with lots to eat and himself in the center directing the dancing was well worth the risk of a few of his young wives being seduced off-stage. Men like Ki-in-kumi thought Tu'untalumi an [184]
old fool for not leaving his young wives at home, and Tu'untalumi probably thought that old Ki-in-kumi might as well be dead, especially since his death would be the occasion for a really magnificent funeral.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

162 [621] The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

561 [858 882] [591] Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

561 589 884 [582] [177] The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

561 884 557 [582] The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

159 554 [589] In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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was still a bachelor and why Banana had acted so impulsively and thereby 159
gotten himself in the bad graces of the elders. The two men were the eldest 554
of four brothers without any full sisters and as such they were necessarily
handicapped in their career struggle. Elders seeking satellites or contempo- [557]
raries seeking allies looked askance at men without sisters, for such men could
have no sisters' daughters to use in the marriage-arrangements struggle.
The mother of Tiberun and Banana was dead, but even were she still alive, [582
few men would have been interested in marrying a widow whose only living 581]
children were sons. Widows without daughters and bachelors without sisters
rated very low in the scale of desirable assets sought either by elders or by
contemporaries.

Tiberun was thus the only bachelor in the 30-42 age group. Of the 159
remainder we select Teapot as an example of another man who failed to get 554
started. Teapot was at least 35, and about seven years previously he had "stolen" 626
a wife from an elder. This wife was no ancient and shop-worn widow like
the wife Banana had "stolen," but a young girl who had been betrothed in
due form to an elder by her father. How Teapot had managed to get away with
her is too complicated an incident to unravel here, and in any case it hadn't
done Teapot much good. After presenting Teapot with a baby boy the young
woman died, and Teapot, with a now six-year-old son, was more or less an
outcast among the Malauila. No elder wanted him as a satellite and none of
his contemporaries wanted him as an ally. His mother was dead and his only
sister was married to a Munupula elder. This sister in Munupi was his only
asset and one which a different man might have used as a means to better
himself. But Teapot, instead of using this small asset to get started on a
career, had chosen to defy the rules and "steal" an elder's bestowed wife.
"Stealing" an old widow was reprehensible conduct in the eyes of the elders;
stealing a young bestowed wife was unforgivable. Hence Teapot, since his
crime, had received no bestowal, had been able to marry no widow, and was
wanted by no one as an ally.

A complete contrast to these two unsuccessful men in their thirties was 159
provided by the case of Gitjara, who was about the same age as Tiberun. 557
Gitjara, it is true, had sisters, and that was always a help. Using his sisters 562
(already married and bearing children to an elder) as bait, Gitjara when he 584
was about 28 proposed an alliance to L. F. B., a rather feeble man about five
years older than himself, who was not doing very well in the influence race.
The gist of the proposal was that, since both their mothers were still alive and
each married to an old man who could not last much longer, Gitjara should
marry the ancient mother of L. F. B. when she became a widow, and L. F. B.
should marry Gitjara's mother when that old lady became a widow. Perhaps
the idea originated with the two old women rather than with either of the
young men. Since such arrangements were essentially plots or schemes, it is
impossible to determine who conceived them in the first place—old women
ambitious to aid their sons or young men ready to use their mothers as long-
term gambits to ultimately provide themselves with young wives. Mother-
exchange operations were probably first conceived at high-level strategy con-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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159 557 584 [562]

ferences in which smart mothers and dull mothers, smart sons and dull sons were all present, and the final plan emerged from consensus.

In this case the former husbands of the two old women both died conveniently soon and within about three years of each other and, according to plan, there came into existence a household of two men in their thirties each married to the elderly mother of the other. Gitjara and L. F. B. thus set up jointly the foundations of their households and began their careers as a joint enterprise.

Gitjara had two sisters, both married to White Man, an elder, and already the mothers of daughters to him. By marrying Gitjara's mother, L. F. B. automatically became the nominal father of these women, and in the event of White Man's death would have, as such, some say in where they remarried. But the right of the step-father to redispose widowed step-daughters was always disputed by the brothers (or even sons) of the step-daughters, provided those brothers (or sons) were old enough or influential enough for their wishes to be taken seriously. Thus we may say that in putting L. F. B. into position as his own step-father, Gitjara's main object had been to get a satellite or henchman of his own into the position of step-father of his sisters (the wives of White Man) so that when they became widows there would be no conflict between the wishes of their brother and the wishes of their step-father as to whom they should remarry. L. F. B. as step-father was, so to speak, a stooge for Gitjara the brother.

Conversely, L. F. B. had two sisters both married to Ki-in-kumi, the most powerful elder in Malau. By marrying the mother of L. F. B., Gitjara [606] became the step-father of two of Ki-in-kumi's wives, thus immediately (despite his youth) becoming technically the father-in-law of that powerful old man, and a man with some say in where those two wives of Ki-in-kumi would remarry on Ki-in-kumi's death. As step-father of such widows, Gitjara would have to make his wishes prevail as against the wishes of their brothers, but the only brother was L. F. B. and his vote was obviously in Gitjara's pocket.

By engineering this double shuffle of two elderly widows, each with daughters, Gitjara had launched his career as a marriage manipulator. Almost before it was concluded he became involved in another widow operation. We will omit the intricate details, but can say that he emerged from this with a second wife for himself, this one (naturally) also a widow but quite a young widow. This woman had already borne four sons and one daughter to her previous husband but was still young enough when Gitjara took her over in 1926 to bear him a son (her last) in 1927. In Tiwi terms the acquisition of this widow by Gitjara was a real achievement for the young man, not because of her comparative youth nor because of the son she bore him but because among the children by her previous marriage was a daughter aged about nine [554] at the time she remarried Gitjara. To become the step-father of such a young girl was a real asset for the young operator. Her dead father had bestowed this child on Summit, another of the same Malauila age group of 30-year-olds and hence one of Gitjara's rivals and competitors in the influence struggle.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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This created an intriguing situation since Summit, having had this child bestowed on him at her birth some nine years previously, had thus acquired a bestowed wife at about age 27; Gitjara now 33 or so still had not received a bestowal. By remarrying the mother of Summit's young bestowed wife, Gitjara had turned the tables on one of his chief competitors among his age group. He could not, of course, alter the bestowal; in five or six years' time the girl would take up residence with Summit. But as the step-father who renamed the girl and the head of the household in which she would live for the next five years, Gitjara was in an excellent position to make Summit enter into a deal or two with him. He could drag his feet as to the time of the delivery of the girl to Summit; he could drop hints that there was something irregular about the bestowal to Summit in the first place, and so on; but whatever form of pressure he chose to exert on Summit, the latter well knew that all Gitjara wanted was to be cut in on some of Summit's deals and to be included in the network of Summit's alliances. The next move was now clearly up to Summit. 159 557 584

If Summit wished the nine-year-old girl now in Gitjara's household to be transferred promptly and without argument, he would be well advised to give some consideration to Gitjara, perhaps even the promise of one of his still-to-be-born daughters either as a wife or as a ward. Although not necessary, it would be a politically wise gesture. If he did so, both men would be gambling in futures. Since Summit's young wife was now nine years old, it would be at least six or seven years before she could produce a daughter (if at all) and another fourteen or fifteen years before any such daughter (if she lived) would be old enough to join Gitjara's household either as a wife or ward. Hence, under any such arrangement between the two young men, Summit would be giving something to Gitjara but in such a way that the latter could not collect for at least twenty years and might never collect.

Anthropologists will note that such arrangements still conformed to the patterns of cross-cousin marriage. Gitjara as *de jure* father delivers his "daughter" to Summit and thus becomes technically Summit's mother's brother or wife's father. Twenty years later (if all goes well) Summit delivers his daughter (by Gitjara's daughter) to Gitjara, thus becoming technically the mother's brother or wife's father of Gitjara. Gitjara himself might marry this daughter of Summit by his own step-daughter or treat her as a ward given to him by Summit and bestow her on some other man selected by himself; in the latter case he would be acting as father to his step-daughter's daughter. There were no clan barriers to such an arrangement, since fathers had to belong to clans different from those of their wives and of their daughters, step-daughters and daughters' daughters. 159 602 [582] [584] [614]

There were, of course, alternative actions or "deals" open to Summit and also to Gitjara, depending upon their plans in other directions. The pattern described above, however, was extremely common in Tiwi marriage arrangements, and often it was the reason why some very old man would receive some female infant as a wife: an agreement of this type had been made twenty or thirty years before, when the now senile old man was in his 159 557 584

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 thirties and when the mother of the baby he was now receiving was married to some man long since dead. The circumstances were certainly right for such an arrangement in the Gitjara-Summit case of 1928.

159 557 582 If we now pause and look at the marriage career of Gitjara at the point it had reached by the time he was 33, we can separate out three distinct types of operation in which this admirable young man had engaged. His first marriage, with L. F. B.'s elderly mother, had brought into existence a joint household of young men and elderly widows which not only was a very satisfactory housekeeping arrangement but also put Gitjara and his ally, L. F. B., in a position to exert some influence on all the subsequent remarriages of their respective sisters.

Gitjara's marriage a few years later to a second widow put him in a position to enter into marriage arrangements even more directly, since the second widow had a daughter promised to Summit but still too young to take up residence with him. By dragging his feet on the fulfilment of this promise, Gitjara could put pressure on Summit and extract from the latter some sort [584] of consideration to facilitate the delivery of the girl. Gitjara was thus well in the marriage-broker business before he had any children of his own and indeed before he had received any bestowal. This was the second type of operation for an up-and-coming young man, and it was one wherein a shrewd and aggressive operator would use the daughters of other men (that is, of a widow's previous husbands) in such a way as to attach all sorts of codicils and contingent interests and second mortgages to the original bestowal of those daughters, many of these collectable in full only in the far distant future, after all prior interests had been satisfied or had lapsed.

The third type of operation engaged in by Gitjara was, of course, to try and attract bestowed wives of his own. His vigorous operations, by age 33, in the widow remarriage field, were not only ends in themselves but also were the type of operation that attracted the approval of older men with daughters to bestow. Hence it is not surprising to find that by 1929 Gitjara, married to the two widows already mentioned, had received two bestowals. The older of these was a girl of ten rebestowed on Gitjara in 1927 when the man died upon whom she had been bestowed at birth. The second was a baby born in 1927 whose father was Tomitari of the Rangwila. (The choice of Gitjara as a son-in-law by Tomitari was so interesting that we shall discuss it later in this chapter.) Both these bestowals were made *after* Gitjara had engineered his remarriage of the two widows and as far as kinship was concerned had no connection whatever with these widows or their close relatives. We conclude, therefore, that widow remarriage could be used by alert and aggressive men in their early thirties for three purposes: (1) to establish households and obtain elderly housekeepers; (2) to establish low-priority rights in the daughters of the widows' previous husbands; and (3) to attract attention to themselves as smart operators and gain the attention and approval of older men. As an outgrowth of the third purpose, they were likely to attract bestowals. Hence we may say that among the Tiwi the best road to obtaining a [587] young wife or several young wives was for a young man to be first successful

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the manipulation of the remarriages of elderly widows, who were always in large supply. If a man showed skill and know-how in his early thirties among the widows, then in his late thirties and early forties young wives would be bestowed upon him in abundance. Such a lesson could not have a better exemplar than Gitjara. By age 33 he had done so well among the widows that his first *young* wife would be joining his household by the time he was thirty-eight or thirty-nine, and another was already a year old. Clearly he was a young man of promise and one to be watched—and cultivated. 159 557 582 587

Summit, a man slightly older than Gitjara, must be dealt with very briefly, since the reasons for his success would take us too far afield. In 1929 he had a list of six wives, the only resident one being an elderly widow. The other five were bestowals and the eldest of these was the girl of ten whom we have already mentioned as being in the household of her step-father, Gitjara. Two more, younger than the ten-year-old, were in the household of Padimo (see below) and the remaining two were in the household of one of the elders of the Rangwila band. Summit, in Tiwi reckoning, was a Rangwila himself and had only moved to Malau a few years before. Some four years previously he had been a young Rangwila with no less than five bestowed child-wives. Three of these had been given him by an elder in Malau, two by an elder of his own band. The Malauila girls were older than the two Rangwila girls and his Malauila father-in-law was older than his Rangwila father-in-law. Summit therefore moved north to supervise personally his interests in Malau. He had, however, been out-maneuvered when the Malauila father-in-law died, since Gitjara had then been able to remarry the mother of Summit's eldest child-wife and Padimo had been able to remarry the mother of the other two little girls. Having thus moved to Malau to be near to and a satellite of his elderly Malauila father-in-law, Summit now found himself the technical son-in-law of two young men of his own age group who were among his keen competitors in the influence struggle. To ensure that his three promised Malauila child-wives joined his household when old enough, he now needed to make some arrangements with Gitjara and Padimo. Summit had gotten his bestowals rather early and rather easily but he still had the problem of nailing them down. 159 584 [557 587]

While thus engaged in acquiring five bestowed young wives and trying to promote their safe delivery when ready, Summit had married a widow not much more than forty years old but childless by her two previous husbands.[8] Such a widow at least provided him with a food-getter and housekeeper and enabled him to establish a household into which his five bestowed wives would enter as they successively reached the proper age. Thus Summit's household in 1929 consisted only of himself and his *palimaringa* wife. Within the next fifteen years it would be increased by the addition of at least five young wives, 159 587 592 592 159

[8] Such women who had reached middle age without surviving children were called by a special term, *palimaringa*, in Tiwi and the term referred to childlessness rather than barrenness. Summit's widow, for example, had borne two children, both of whom had died in infancy, and she was classified as a *palimaringa*. When a *palimaringa* became very, very old indeed, the word changed to *timaringa*. [842]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 plus any new bestowals, plus any further widows Summit might find it to his interest (and power) to remarry.

159 584 557 Padimo, who thus enters our story as one of Summit's rivals and one of his nominal fathers-in-law, was also a Rangwila who had moved to Malau at the call of an elderly father-in-law. He presents another pattern of Tiwi upward mobility and one that was statistically more frequent than the rather tortuous road followed by men like Gitjara. Padimo had been chosen as a nephew worth supporting by old Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest of the Malauila. The earliest proof of Ki-in-kumi's patronage of Padimo had come in 1925-26 when an old man died, leaving eight widows of very diverse ages. Three of these "widows," aged respectively 17, 13, and 9 at the time of the death of their first husband, were daughters of Ki-in-kumi. Being so young and their brothers being equally young, their father's right to arrange their remarriage was unchallenged and Ki-in-kumi reassigned[4] them as wives to young Padimo, then aged about thirty-three. The eldest of the three girls had already borne two female children to the dead man, these being the two girl babies mentioned above as having been promised to Summit.

As well as the three young widows, Padimo had also obtained at the same redistribution the oldest and most haggish of the dead man's eight wives. It was at the same redistribution that Gitjara had obtained his second widow (the mother of the girl promised to Summit). Thus through Ki-in-kumi's influence, Padimo had obtained four "widows" of the eight left by the man who died in 1925-26; Gitjara, working without a powerful patron, had been lucky to obtain one.

159 595 [604] Ki-in-kumi had subsequently followed up this initial selection of Padimo as a favored sister's son by giving further daughters to him as they were born. Consequently, by 1929 Padimo's wife list consisted of the following:

A. One extremely ancient widow.

B. One wife aged about 20, daughter of Ki-in-kumi, mother already of two daughters by a previous husband who, before his death, bestowed these daughters on Summit.

C. One wife aged about 17, daughter of Ki-in-kumi; had just had her first child (who lived only a week); had previously been bestowed on the dead husband of wife B, but was too young to join his household before he died.

D. Three more girls, daughters of Ki-in-kumi, the eldest about 12 and hence old enough to have been bestowed on the same previous husband as wives B and C; the other two aged 2 and 1 and hence born since his death. All three of these were still resident in their father's household.

[584 587] [4] It is difficult to decide whether such reassignments of female children by their father, on the death of the man to whom he had first betrothed them, should be called "rebestowals" or "remarriages." We prefer the first word since such "child-widows" were usually reassigned by their fathers (if still alive) without any challenge to his rights to do so. They therefore do not differ from original bestowals at birth except for the awkward semantic fact that the man to whom such a "child-wife" was reassigned was technically her second husband.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

With a lineup such as this by the time he was thirty-six, Padimo was clearly in 159
process of going places in Tiwi society. The only weakness one could see in 557
his position was that it all derived from the favor of one patron, and no old 595
man with daughters, other than Ki-in-kumi, had seen fit to bestow a girl
upon him. It should be noted that in 1929, though Padimo had two young
wives resident in his household, he still had no children of his own. His first 159
child, born that year, lived only a few days. The only children in residence were 557
the two girls promised to Summit by the previous husband of their mother. 592
Their bestowal on Summit was a matter beyond Padimo's control though he 584
could use them to force some concessions from Summit just as Gitjara could
with the girl in his household. But as Padimo's young wives began to bear
daughters of his own, his bestowal of them would be less encumbered by the
commitments of any predecessor. While Ki-in-kumi lived, Padimo would have
to consider his obligations to that old man and at least consult with Ki-in-kumi
as to how he should bestow his female children, since any such children would
be the daughters' daughters of the old man. Nor would the death of Ki-in-kumi
leave Padimo entirely free to bestow his own daughters anywhere he wished.
Many of the girls already given to him as wives by Ki-in-kumi had mothers
who possibly, and brothers who certainly, would outlive Ki-in-kumi. On the [587]
old man's death, all of his numerous wives would remarry—some of the older
ones probably to ambitious younger men—and these new husbands of the
widows of Ki-in-kumi would begin interfering with and trying to alter the
arrangements made for his daughters by the old man during his lifetime. Thus [606]
Padimo would find himself stuck with a group of new and antagonistic fathers-
in-law in place of the old, indulgent father-in-law who had been responsible
for his success so far. Padimo's problem was basically how to hold, after
Ki-in-kumi's death, the favored position he had gained during the old man's
lifetime through the old man's favor.

In the meantime, with Ki-in-kumi still alive and powerful, Padimo had 159
the biggest and fastest expanding household among the Malauila men in their 592
thirties. The only remaining man in this age group was Boya who was the 557
oldest of them all, being at least 42 years old in 1928. As might be expected,
his career illustrates some new facets of the Tiwi influence struggle.

Structurally the position of Boya was simple but politically it was com- 159
plex. His father had been a henchman and satellite of Ki-in-kumi in the early
career of that old operator and roughly had had somewhat the same relation-
ship to the young Ki-in-kumi as L. F. B. had to Gitjara. Boya's father, the
satellite, left only two widows (an indication of his mediocrity) and these
two widows had been remarried by Ki-in-kumi, the patron. One of these
widows was Boya's mother, and Boya was too young at the time to have any
say in where his mother remarried. Ki-in-kumi's interest in marrying Boya's
mother was not of course because he thus acquired Boya as a step-son, but
because he acquired Boya's sisters as step-daughters. Step-sons were liabilities [562]
which new husbands had to take over in order to get rights in the real assets
—the step-daughters.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 593 [587] Some years later, when Boya had reached a reasonable age like 30, Ki-in-kumi had arranged for him to marry a very ancient and childless widow (*palimarluga*) more than twenty years older than himself. This was all that Ki-in-kumi considered he needed to do for his step-son, and in Tiwi terms it was almost a gesture of contempt and an open indication that Ki-in-kumi, by providing him with an old woman who was childless but could cook, was not interested in helping Boya toward a career. Since the joining up of Boya to [768] the crone took place shortly after the death of Boya's mother, who had lived with her sons in Ki-in-kumi's household, Ki-in-kumi by producing the old widow for Boya was telling him in effect to get out and start his own household now that his mother was dead.

159 584 593 [592] In 1928 we found Boya aged about 42 married to the crone of 65. But he, she, and Boya's younger brother of 24 were still living in Ki-in-kumi's household. Ki-in-kumi's detestation of him was notorious and yet Boya had by now no less than four young bestowed child-wives growing up elsewhere. No one of these bestowals had come from Malau but were bestowals from different fathers of baby girls in other bands. At first sight this presented a curious situation. Within his own band Boya appeared a complete failure, suffering [554] so severely from Ki-in-kumi's hostility that he had received no bestowals and at age 42 did not even have a separate household of his own. But how could this judgment be squared with the four bestowals from elders of other bands? Clearly none of the causes of success so far analyzed fitted the case of Boya.

159 591 592 Further research into who lived with whom as distinct from who was married to whom revealed that not only was "the household" of Boya, his elderly wife, and his younger brother an integral part of the Ki-in-kumi "establishment," but also that Padimo with his "household" was part of that establishment. Padimo, like Boya, had one elderly wife but he also had five bestowed wives, all daughters of Ki-in-kumi. We said above that the two eldest of these five girls being now aged 20 and 17 respectively were in residence with their husband, while the three youngest, not having reached puberty, were still "with their father." Actual observation showed that this was an academic distinction, since the households of Padimo, the son-in-law, and Ki-in-kumi, the father-in-law, were parts of the same establishment. When one of Ki-in-kumi's daughters bestowed on Padimo became old enough to "leave her father and join her husband," she did not have to move her residence or even change her daily work routines. She merely sat at night around the campfire of her older sisters (Padimo's wives) instead of around the campfire of her younger sisters (Ki-in-kumi's daughters). She remained part of the same establishment.

Padimo, it will be remembered, was the young man whom Ki-in-kumi had attracted from Rangu to Malau by liberally bestowing him with child-wives. Padimo had thus moved into the northern band and by 1928 had moved right into Ki-in-kumi's camp, where he functioned as a sort of executive officer and heir apparent to the old man. In the same camp, though in a very different capacity, was Boya, the 42-year-old despised step-son. Many roads thus 512 led to Ki-in-kumi's household, but before discussing the large establishment

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

of that wealthy elder, we will first summarize, in Table I, the marital conditions of the eight young men we have been discussing. 592

TABLE I
THE MALAUILA YOUNG MEN IN 1928-29

Name	Age	Resident Old Wives (Ex-widows)	Resident Young Wives (Bestowals)	Promised Wives (Under 14)	Own Children
Tiberun	33	0	0	0	0
Banana	28	1	0	0	0
Teapot	35	0[a]	0	0	1
Gitjara	33	2	0	2	1
L. F. B.	38	1	0	1	0
Summit	36	1	0	5	0
Padimo	36	1	2	3	0[b]
Boya	42	1	0	4	0

[a] Teapot's "stolen" wife was dead.
[b] Padimo's first child, born in 1929, lived only a few days.

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This table presents a summary of many of our earlier attempts at generalization. The only Malauila under the age of 43 who had a bestowed young wife old enough to live with him was Padimo, who was thus exceptionally lucky. Leaving out young Banana, five of the seven men between the ages of 30 and 42 had young females promised to them, but these were mostly babies or children who would not come into residence for several years. Six of the seven had married widows, mostly elderly widows, well in advance of the arrival of young wives and before any father had bestowed a daughter on them. Finally, and a point not made before, men of this age group rarely had any children of their own. The only entries in the last column of Table I are the irregularly born son of Teapot; Padimo's first daughter who died virtually at birth; and the 1-year-old son of Gitjara who was the last child born to his second ex-widow. Tiwi men rarely had young wives until they were around forty; they even more rarely had any children of their own before that age. Padimo's dead baby and Gitjara's 1-year-old son were exceptional; the zeros in the last column against the names of Boya (42), L. F. B. (38), and Summit (36) represent the normal situation for Tiwi men of such ages. 561 582

In terms of success (as measured by bestowals) Padimo and Summit (largely through the patronage of elders) and Boya and Gitjara (largely through their own operations) were the coming young men among the Malauila. Of the others, L. F. B. was approaching forty with few assets and no influence, and the other three, Tiberun, Banana, and Teapot, had not even got started in the influence race. 554 584

A Very Successful Elder: Ki-in-kumi

The most influential man in Malau and the head of the biggest household was Ki-in-kumi. Since he had been born around 1863-64 and had been 159 557

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 a "young operator" somewhat before 1900, the deals by which he got his
557 career launched were difficult to reconstruct. The results of them, plus the fact that he lived long enough to draw full dividends from them, gave him by
159 1928-29 a wife-list of twenty-one. These had been accumulated as follows:
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When around 30 years old he remarried two elderly widows and a year or two later received his first bestowal. Thus by age 33 he had three wives. On that foundation he went ahead thus:

		Total
At age 33		
Had two widows and one bestowed wife		3
Between age 33 and age 43		
Remarried two more widows and had three more bestowed wives join him	+5	8
Between age 43 and age 53		
Three more bestowed wives came into residence	+3	11
(During these twenty years at least five bestowed wives died in infancy or childhood)	+5	16
Between age 53 and age 65		
Two more bestowed wives joined him and he married 2 more widows (one the mother of Boya)	+4	20
Now at age 66 there is still one more bestowed wife, aged about 9, in her father's household	+1	21

Thus his list of twenty-one wives was made up of six elderly widows and fifteen bestowed or rebestowed young wives.

By 1928-29 five of his bestowed wives had died before puberty and one was still with her father. Three of his six widows were dead. Subtracting these nine women, we find that his current household contained twelve resident and active wives: the oldest about sixty, two in their fifties, four in their forties or thirties, three in their twenties, and the two youngest around seventeen or eighteen years of age. Almost all of them had borne children since joining his household, but the death rate had been high among Ki-in-kumi's children and from all of his wives he had only eight living children of whom six were girls. Five of these six daughters he had bestowed or rebestowed on Padimo (see above) and the sixth on a middle-aged Rangwila. His oldest living daughter was the girl of 20 married to Padimo. His oldest living son was a boy of 18, despite the fact that Ki-in-kumi had been "a married man" for over thirty-five years. This was a situation which many Tiwi elders found themselves
159 in at the close of long and successful lives. With numerous wives, numerous
592 step-sons, large households to be managed, and large estates to be liquidated after their deaths, their oldest real sons (as distinct from step-sons) were still boys or youths and as such quite unsuitable as executive assistants while the old man lived or as heirs or executors after the old man died. Quite apart
[882 from kinship considerations, the Tiwi emphasis on age and seniority made it
888 impossible for Ki-in-kumi to utilize in any capacity his 18-year-old son. A youth of that age was a nonentity, whoever his father.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

TABLE II
KI-IN-KUMI'S ESTABLISHMENT

(Ages in brackets)

		Males	Females
Head (Ki-in-kumi	66)	1	0
Oldest step-son (Boya	42)	1	0
Sister's son (Padimo	36)	1	0
Old wives (of all three adult men)		0	5
Young wives (including Padimo's 2)		0	11
Young males (sons and step-sons)		8	0
Young females (daughters and step-daughters)		0	5
Totals		11	21

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Confronted by this situation, Ki-in-kumi in his advancing years had summoned Padimo, a sister's son in his early thirties, to come from Rangu and become his chief lieutenant. The youth of his own son had been a factor in his selection of Padimo. The presence in his camp of an older step-son, Boya, had been another factor. Boya, the step-son, was more than twenty years older than the son, and at least six years older than Padimo, the chosen instrument. Padimo, as we have seen, moved right in, fused his own small household with Ki-in-kumi's large one, and became Ki-in-kumi's Man Friday. Boya, the step-son, though married to a widow, refused to move out. Thus, among other things, we have to distinguish between Ki-in-kumi's household of twelve resident wives enumerated above, and Ki-in-kumi's establishment which contained Padimo, Boya, and the various people attached by marriage or kinship to them. Padimo had an old wife and two young wives (daughters of Ki-in-kumi). Boya had an old wife and a younger brother. There were a number of younger step-children of both sexes also resident with Ki-in-kumi. The full size and make-up of his establishment is given in Table II.

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The Establishments of Malau

There were, besides Ki-in-kumi, six other elders of the Malauila band. Two of these, the brothers Enquirio and Merapanui, were well over sixty and deserve, both by age and by success, to be labeled senior elders. The remaining four ranged in age from about 45 to nearly 60 and since none of them were particularly successful we call them the junior elders. In Table III we have listed the seven "establishments" in which lived all the members of the band. We mean by an establishment a food-production and food-consumption unit. Ki-in-kumi's establishment contained three married men—himself, Boya, and Padimo—and therefore contained three households. Economically it was one establishment, since the sixteen wives it contained worked

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

free daughters on the older men but upon each other while waiting for the power alignment in Malau to change with Ki-in-kumi's death. Perhaps the clearest case of the pull between the obligations of the past and the planning for the future in the bestowal of free daughters was provided by Merapanui. He was a man who owed or thought he owed very little to his elders. None of them had ever bestowed a girl on him, and he reached fifty with nothing but an ancient widow. The fortunate death of an elder brother had suddenly provided him with bestowable daughters rather later in life than the average. By 1929 he had been able to bestow no less than four, and every one of them went to men much younger than himself and in other bands. Merapanui, being relatively free of old debts, was investing his daughters in young men with a future, but unlike Ki-in-kumi who had invested most of his daughters in one younger man, Padimo, old Merapanui believed in diversifying his investments. 557 584

Thus the politics of bestowal marriage were just as complicated as the politics of widow remarriage but, since a man was ten or more years older when he became involved in the former than when he became involved in the latter, a rather different set of motivations prevailed. At thirty-five as a mobile operator in the widow field, a man was trying to launch a career, and if he had no obvious assets—no living sisters or mother or important mother's brothers—he was often trying to launch it on a shoestring. By forty-five the same man was well along in his career and was a junior elder—the head of a household with at least one young wife in residence and a man beginning to have bestowable daughters of his very own. He now saw tribal politics and reputation building in different perspective from the way they had looked to him ten years earlier. Then he had put his services and his wits and his diplomatic skills at the disposal of older men in order to gain favorable notice from the elders. But now that he was an elder himself, albeit still low in the pecking order of elders, he was no longer their satellite but rather one of them and therefore in competition with them. Now he no longer wanted to build up his client's business; he wanted to build up his own household and his own influence. With the arrival of his first free daughters he was no longer content to work for and accept the leadership of older clients; he was in business as an elder for himself. His free daughters were therefore bestowed not as acknowledgments of his obligations to older men but as inducements to younger men to accept him as their patron. With his first free daughters a man was in position to become emancipated from the dominance of the elders because with the arrival of those daughters he could start bidding against them for the allegiance of men younger than himself.

One of the neatest examples of the switch in life career was provided in 1928 by the case of Tomitari. All Tiwi life careers and marriage arrangements were so tangled that one was delighted to find a relatively open and shut case. Some of the principals involved were relatives of Padimo, who was originally a Rangwila before Ki-in-kumi, his patron, lured him to Malau. Padimo and three sisters were the children of a Rangwila man and woman whom for simplicity's sake we will call Padimo's real father and real mother. The father bestowed the three girls on another Rangwila named Inglis who was 159 557 584

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 about the same age as himself. (*If* we tried to answer *why* he did, the case would no longer be simple.) Padimo's father died while the four children were still young, and their mother remarried a relatively young man named Tomitari. This occurred in about 1914 and the situation then was as follows:

GENEALOGY I
THE INGLIS-TOMITARI RELATIONSHIP 1914
(Males are in italics; ages are in brackets)

Padimo's Father (just dead) 1. = Padimo's Mother (40) = 2. *Tomitari* (30)

Inglis (44) = Sister I (21) | *Padimo* (20) | Sister II (13) | Sister III (10)

Fifteen years or so later, all parties were still alive; the two youngest sisters had joined Inglis as wives and all three sisters had borne children to him, including girls. Thus the situation in 1928-29 was:

GENEALOGY II
(1928-29)

Padimo's Mother (55) = *Tomitari* (45)

Padimo

Sister I wife of *Inglis* (59)
Sister II wife of *Inglis*
Sister III wife of *Inglis*
↓
Daughter A (11)
Daughter B (8)
Daughter C (5)
Daughter D (2)
Daughter E (1)

The three sisters of Padimo had borne five daughters to Inglis and as they were successively born Inglis had bestowed the first three on Tomitari. He did not bestow the fourth or fifth nor any of his daughters by other wives.

The master clue to the whole matter was the marriage in 1914 of Padimo's widowed mother to Tomitari, then little more than thirty. His function had been to act as trustee or stand-in for Inglis' interest, not in the widow but in her daughters who had been bestowed on Inglis by their dead father. The young Tomitari as step-father of the girls had to ensure their safe delivery to Inglis' household. (One was there already but the other two were not.) Tomitari accomplished his mission, acquiring the widow, of course, as a wife in the process; the girls arrived safely in Inglis' household and Inglis paid off handsomely by bestowing their daughters on his honest agent who had held off the competitors.

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But by 1923 or thereabouts Inglis had stopped paying off. Tomitari by then had received three bestowals from Inglis. (Actually he had received about six, but three died in infancy). Moreover, he was no longer a young man but

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was entering the junior elder class and, having received wives from other sources than Inglis, was getting to the point where he would soon have free daughters of his own. He had no intention of performing any more services for Inglis who was now nearly sixty. Hence Inglis had not bestowed any daughters on Tomitari since 1923; those of his daughters who had been born since that year were bestowed on men other than Tomitari and men who were younger and less successful than he. 159 584 557

As we see it, the deals involving widows, particularly the pay-offs to young agents for acting to promote the interests of older men, had distorted what might be called the pure theory of Tiwi bestowal. According to the pure theory, mothers' brothers bestowed their daughters on selected sisters' sons, and the older man who gave a young man a wife and became his wife's father, was performing a kindness toward a favorite nephew for which the nephew should be grateful. But the Inglis-Tomitari operation shows how the theory had become distorted in practice. In order that Inglis might have some young daughters whom he would be free to bestow on his favored young nephew, Tomitari, in 1914 he had had to arrange the young man's marriage with an elderly widow to ensure safe delivery to him (Inglis) of some young wives who would bear him those daughters. Everything went smoothly and no slip-up occurred, yet by the time Inglis was in a position to give a wife to his favored young nephew, he found that the latter was no longer a dependent young man but a successful junior elder competing with him in his own field of identifying and using talent among the younger men. Tomitari's first daughter, born in 1927—not to any daughter of Inglis but to an older wife—was bestowed by its father on the distant but very promising Gitjara, a man of thirty-two. Gitjara was thus selected by Tomitari as a promising satellite at about the same age as Tomitari in 1914 had been selected by Inglis. Moreover, Tomitari by this time, far from being the grateful nephew of old Inglis (as the theory stipulated), was looking forward with anticipation to the old man's death, since when that occurred, among the widows of Inglis would be the three sisters of Padimo of whom he was still the nominal father. It was by acting as their step-father when they were children that he had got his own career started. They were indeed the foundation stone of his own career and, having profited so much from them as children, he was keenly interested in their redisposition whenever Inglis' death should put them on the market again. Thus he was simultaneously the husband of some of Inglis' daughters and nominal father of some of Inglis' wives. In the first status, he was expected by the theory to be a grateful son-in-law of Inglis; in the second status, the facts of Tiwi life required him to see Inglis' death as providing him with an opportunity to derive some new benefits for himself from his position as nominal father of the three wives of Inglis whose delivery to Inglis' household he had himself engineered. 183 581 604 159 183 584 604 [557 593]

Thus the politics of bestowal cannot be separated from the politics of widow remarriage. Every case of one had endless repercussions in the other. Sisters' sons who were promised young wives by their mothers' brothers were always too old to be grateful by the time the bestowal occurred or by the even later time when the bestowed child was old enough to come into residence. 182 557 584 604

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 Mothers' brothers, in turn, were unable to endow their nephews any earlier
557 because they as younger men had been caught in the same trap. The only way
584 out was by deals in which older men and younger men collaborated. Ideally
604 such collaborative efforts should always have been between mothers' brothers and sisters' sons, but amid such fierce competition and endless log rolling this was not possible, and in many cases the mother's-brother—sister's-son relationship was a *result* of collaboration between older man and younger man rather than a cause. The bond arose from the deal rather than from their original kinship, particularly when the two men involved were very close in age.

The collaborative deals between older men and younger men were essentially designed to compensate for the older man's inability to bestow a young wife upon the younger man at a reasonable age. As was stated before, not until he was about forty-five would the older man have a free or unencumbered daughter. By then his younger collaborator and satellite had attracted the attention of older and wealthier men with many unencumbered daughters. After
159 performing all his services to Inglis, young Tomitari had not had to depend
557 on him for his first bestowal. A wealthier man than Inglis had reached over
571 Inglis' head, so to speak, and bought Tomitari's allegiance by the bestowal of
584 a young wife who provided Tomitari with a free daughter several years earlier than any child the daughters of Inglis could provide. With this first unencumbered daughter, Tomitari promptly bid for the allegiance of Gitjara. Put in terms of allegiances, Tomitari had from 1914 until about 1923 been the henchman of Inglis. During those years he passed from about age thirty to age forty, and his main patron was Inglis, who passed from about forty-four and on the fringes of the elder group to about fifty-four and accepted among the elder group. Then—and this was typical of the shift of allegiance that occurred in most life careers—a senior elder more wealthy in wives and daughters than Inglis bid for Tomitari's allegiance, and Tomitari became his henchman. Five years later, in 1928, Tomitari was a coming junior elder in Rangu and a man of influence in his own right. His oldest bestowed wife had already borne him a daughter whom he used to make Gitjara *his* henchman. The three wives (daughters A, B, and C) of Inglis were nearing the stage when they would join his household and he had other bestowals from other quarters. His relation to Inglis was no longer that of henchman but of rival, since they were now both successful elders in the same band and competitors in the struggle to make younger men dependent on them. Far from bestowing any more daughters on Tomitari, Inglis was bestowing his daughters (now plentiful) on men of Gitjara's generation (though not on Gitjara). Having more free daughters than Tomitari, he had more men of that generation to patronize, but since Inglis was sixty and Tomitari only forty-five, time was obviously on the side of the latter.

Thus the crux of the Tiwi system of influence-satelliteship-marriage ar-
557 rangement-wealth centered around what happened to a man in his thirties. This
571 is what we meant when we said earlier that old men with many daughters
584 bestowed them on young men who looked to them like "comers." Old men

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

months after the attack on Darwin. Many of the older Tiwi who were in Darwin during the bombing did not survive the war; the psychological strain and lack of sufficient food was too much for them. Genealogies show that an unusual number of deaths occurred among Tiwi between 1942 and 1946. 648 [165]

When Western food supplies again became available, the old Tiwi bush living seems to have departed. The Tiwi suddenly realized their full dependence upon the products which only the whites could provide. As the war came to an end and one after another of the temporary military bases were abandoned, the missionaries and the Tiwi salvaged what they could, transporting large amounts of corrugated iron to Bathurst Island Mission for native huts. The Tiwi were drawn together around the Mission in larger numbers than ever before, their camps ranging in a line along the Mission beach. The majority of the Tiwi, about 600, considered Bathurst Island Mission their home, although some of the young adult males spent most of the year in Darwin. About 50 islanders lived adjacent to the half-caste Melville Island Mission at Garden Point. Another 150 were permanently located at the government settlement at Snake Bay. The remaining Tiwi, about 150, were year-round residents of Darwin; over one hundred lived at Bagot Native Compound and at an unsupervised native camp at Point Gunn directly opposite the southernmost tip of Melville Island; the rest were inmates at the leper colony. The resulting total population of about 950, in 1954, is only about a hundred less than the figure of 1062 which Hart obtained in his census of 1928-29. 177 361 797 162 [161]

Marriage Arrangements

We have discussed how, under the traditional Tiwi pattern of life, the greatest energies of mature males were expended in bargaining with each other for new wives. The old social system was one which had as normal features prenatal and early childhood engagements for females, remarriage for all widows, considerable age difference between marriage partners, and polygamy. The new Catholic system introduced by Father Gsell outlawed, or at least discouraged, polygamous marriages, nuptial unions between persons of greatly differing ages, and all prenatal or childhood betrothals. As indicated, Father Gsell initiated his new policies by purchasing young females and then allowing them to choose their own partners from among their single agemates. 177 797 58

It is of interest to inspect the actual circumstances surrounding one of the earliest unions which took place under Father Gsell's supervision. About 1914, Polly, an attractive young female who had already had a rather checkered career, having been stolen by a Yuwatja male from her rightful mate, was "stolen back" by another Tiwi, Timalarua of the Rangwila. Polly, however, decided that she did not want an old husband like Timalarua, so she ran away to the sisters and Father Gsell. In time, old Timalarua allowed Father Gsell to buy this wife who did not want to live with him. Shortly afterward, Father Gsell asked Polly whom she wanted to marry. Polly named Cabbagee as the 159 177 584 797

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 177 584 797 male of her choice and the couple soon set up housekeeping with Father Gsell's blessing. This was, at least, how the missionary saw it.

But what were the real circumstances surrounding this "free choice" by Polly? Her real father—that is, the husband to whom her mother Rita was married when Polly was born—had promised Polly to Kardu. Timalarua had "stolen" Polly from Kardu, her rightful husband. Nor is this the whole story. Rita had been "stolen" by Puti from Polly's father Turimpi. After several fights between Puti and the aging Turimpi and after Rita's complete refusal to return to Turimpi, Turimpi allowed Puti to keep Rita as his wife. Polly, however, was ultimately to go to the man to whom she had been promised, Kardu. But Puti, as the potential next father of Polly, had promised Cabbagee that as soon as Kardu died Polly was to be Cabbagee's wife. That is, when Polly chose Cabbagee as her mate she was only bypassing Kardu and taking as her husband the next normal alternative open to her.

When one considers what parts of Father Gsell's reform were significant in this case, one finds that only late consummation of marriage, monogamy, and marriage between agemates were important. A female did not actually have a "free choice" of her mate as Father Gsell had hoped and, in fact, had specified. She selected a youth to whom one of her relatives had at least tentatively promised her. Or (to put it in Hart's terms) she married—under Mission auspices—a young man who had at least a second or third mortgage on her.

159 177 595 797 Let us follow the case of Cabbagee's marriage further. He married Polly when he was about 23; he was too young to be married in the old pattern and was, therefore, happy to get a wife and be on his way up the social ladder. But when the next female promised to him (before her birth) came of age and he collected her, Polly made a terrific row. She did not want any younger female around her household as a second wife and told the priest at the Mission so. He in turn deprived Cabbagee of all gifts of tobacco and food and sent him and his family to the bush to think over the matter. After a few months, Cabbagee decided that he wanted tobacco and that after all the only place he could get it was at the Mission. He and his family returned and he gave up his second wife to Father Gsell, for a payment of food.

Younger men who were getting wives from among Father Gsell's convent girls thus found that they were unwise to accept a second wife from any other source. But such a young man, married under Catholic auspices, soon 584 found that he could enhance his prestige without invoking criticism from the Mission if he gathered around him his own female relatives, the younger of 557 whom he could give away later, one at a time, to men of his choice. A married man like Cabbagee, who gave another man his sister or sister's daughter, was in a position to ask all sorts of favors from the recipient, especially gifts of food, tobacco, and trade goods, and support in politics.

177 583 By the end of World War II, even these newer concepts of marriage agreement had begun to alter. There were many young Christian females desiring to have husbands whose fathers and brothers were not asking further wives as repayment. The fathers began to ask for new types of concessions

177 592 them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that
● 159 177 592 his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few uncomfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose [736 968] deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased [584 589] younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Carmel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally [607] her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1] [602] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

177 162 571 We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a listing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent. [768] Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a benchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had 604 584 177 daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The southern section of Bathurst

[31 [797] Island (Hart 1930) is inhabited by a subtribe called the Tiklauila. In 1911 a Roman Catholic Mission station was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island, virtually in Tiklauila territory, and at the time of the present writer's field work this was the only white settlement. In the generation before the missionaries arrived the "big man" among the Tiklauila was Turimpi. 159 Because of their complicated marriage and inheritance regulations the average Tiwi old man in the course of his lifetime accumulates an impressive number of wives and Turimpi was no exception to this rule. At the time of his death, which occurred toward the end of the 1890's at an age which was probably something approaching 70, Turimpi counted as his wives then living or pre-deceasing him no less than 25 females. Of these the only one we need to pay any attention to is the woman named Bongdadu. She, while Turimpi's wife, had borne numerous children, of whom three males grew to manhood—Antonio, born in approximately 1883, Mariano born three or four years later, and Louis born around 1893. Sometime between 1895 and 1900 she was widowed by the death of Turimpi, whereupon she married another elderly man, Murikambunga, to whom she bore two more sons—Tipperary, born around 1900, and Bob born about a year later. Bongdadu of course had numerous other children who did not survive childhood.[4] It is her five adult sons who concern us here.

Turimpi, as the number of wives suggests, was an important tribal figure [554] during his lifetime. Importance, prestige, tendency to be spoken of as a "big man" are in Tiwi functions of a number of factors in which age, number of wives, fighting ability, wisdom in council, and "family" in the sense of having relatives who are also "big men," are all compounded. On all these counts Turimpi was important, and his prestige tended to carry on after his death. 554 Since the horde or subtribe is a comparatively small group, ranging in size 62 from 214 for the Tiklauila (the biggest) to 57 for the Mingwila (the smallest), there will seldom be more than two or three "big men" in a subtribe at the same time, and at certain periods there may be none at all since the few old men who have the age qualification may not have the other qualifications. Turimpi's death left the Tiklauila to some extent in this state. There were few other men with comparable seniority and none of them had the qualifications for informal leadership and local prestige that he had possessed. His death left a gap, and [768] a gap that could hardly be filled by his eldest son Antonio, who at the time of his father's death was a youth of about 16 years of age. About thirty years [114] later, in 1928 to 1930, the field work upon which the present paper is based was carried out.

ANTONIO

159 It so happened that the present writer had been with the Tiwi for nearly three months before he met Antonio, although during those three months he had been closely associated with two of his brothers, Mariano and Tipperary. These two gave Antonio a great build-up as one of the most important men around, as a "big man" in every possible Tiwi sense. But when encountered in person he proved most disappointing. The only words that fitted Antonio

were words like "insecure" and "uneasy." He was not particularly aggressive nor particularly submissive, but he fluctuated between the two attitudes. One got the impression after associating with him that he was never sure of what was expected of him and acted therefore in contradictory ways according to what *he thought* was expected of him. Or to put the same impression another way, there seemed a constant discrepancy between what people expected of Antonio and what he wanted to do if left alone. In tribal fights, for instance, he acted fiercely and aggressively and with the air of swaggering braggadocio that that all important men are expected to show in fighting, yet at the earliest possible moment he melted into the crowd with visible relief at being able to quit the center of the stage and without a trace of rancor or ill will toward any of the people whom he had been abusing or had been abused by a few minutes before. In council meetings of senior men he was always listened to with respect yet always had to be prodded into speaking at all. He never initiated a policy or offered his opinion until pressure was put upon him to state what he thought, and while his opinion when given was listened to with attention it was always a paraphrase of some opinion already given, usually the majority opinion of the group. He expressed what he thought the group wanted him to say, never an "opinion of his own." In this respect Antonio had many of the characteristics of a "yes-man" and like his counterparts in more civilized societies he seldom took the unpopular side and seldom stood up to opposition.

Two burning political issues agitating the Tiwi in 1928–30 were the issues of (1) plural marriage and (2) the visits of the Japanese pearling luggers. The Catholic missionaries had taken a strong stand on plural marriages and were bringing all the economic and moral pressure they could exert on the younger Tiwi to induce them to restrict themselves to one wife. Failure to bow to Mission pressure resulted in the recalcitrant's being cut off from the European food, tobacco, clothes, etc. which could only be obtained through the Mission. But beginning in the middle 1920's Japanese pearling boats in ever increasing numbers had carried on the practice of anchoring on the further side of Melville Island during the period of high tide (when diving for pearl shell was impossible) and inviting the natives to provide their women as prostitutes for the use of the crews during their stay on the beaches. The Japanese captains paid lavishly in European goods for any women thus provided and the subtribes on the southeast side of Melville, in particular the subtribe called the Yeimpi, proved very susceptible to the Japanese temptations.

These two issues of plural marriage and prostitution for the Japanese rather neatly complemented each other at two points. Not only did the Japanese rival the Mission station as a source of supply for European goods; the possession of a large number of wives was a condition that made a man very unpopular with the missionaries, but, if he were disposed to rent out some of them, made the same man very popular with the Japanese. The plural marriage issue, if alone, would clearly have divided the tribe into the conservatives, staunchly upholding plural marriage as the Tiwi way, and the radicals abandoning it in return for Mission favor. But such an alignment was cut right across

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

by the Japanese issue, since it tempted the conservative with several wives to violate all the old tribal sanctions by renting out his wives, and it provided the Mission adherent radicals with a grand opportunity to pose as the real defenders of the old culture and to charge the old polygamists with being the real renegades from the ancient ways.

It can be easily guessed how high feelings ran on these issues and how hotly they were debated when a number of Tiwi gathered together. But on neither of these issues or on any aspect of them did Antonio show any signs of leadership. He accumulated wives but always apologized in a rather deprecating and apple-polishing way when he met the missionaries, and spent part of his time hanging around the Mission despite the contemptuous attitude which the missionaries adopted toward him. He thus contrasted very unfavorably with some of his contemporaries, notably one Dooley who, having been for years a one-wife man and a Mission favorite, inherited a second wife at around the age of forty. Dooley's decision was clear-cut and highly spectacular. He accepted the second wife, shook the dust of the Mission station from his feet and never set foot near it again, taking up again the traditional life of a Tiwi elder, deep in the bush, with his two wives and later additions, ignoring all white innovations, even tobacco.[4] Dooley's uncompromising behavior was greatly admired by the tribe but few had the strength of character to emulate him, certainly not Antonio.

On the Japanese issue Antonio was just as vacillating. Prodded by others to make a statement he would in ringing tones denounce as disgraceful and scandalous the behavior of the Yelmpi wife-renters, but on his visits to the Yelmpi country ostensibly "to see for himself what was going on" he shared eagerly in the proceeds of vice which his friends there offered him and was even heard on a few occasions to wonder aloud why the Japanese always went to the Yelmpi country when there were plenty of secluded beaches in Tiklaulla country. Instantly challenged, "Would you want the Japanese to come here?" "Would you rent your wives to them if they did?" poor Antonio quickly turned it into a feeble joke, saying deprecatingly, "Oh no, no, no. I just wondered why they always go to those ugly Yelmpi women?"

In summary we might say that Antonio's personal behavior appeared to be that of a man pushed into a position rather too big for him to fill. He was not by nature particularly aggressive or domineering, but as the eldest son of Turimpi he was constantly being pushed by public opinion onto the center of the stage, whereas he would have been much happier if public opinion had left him alone to be an ordinary, average member of the crowd. The role he was called on by his status position to play seemed to give him little or no pleasure, little or no personal satisfaction. Such a view of his "personality" is supported by the fact that when alone in the bush with his own family and away from the society of his peers Antonio was relaxed and at ease. As Durkheim pointed out, the basic factor in Australian social psychology is that men spend a great part of their lives hunting and collecting in the bush, completely out of physical contact with all people except members of their own households,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

usually wives and children only, but this life lived in an isolated household is broken in upon at intervals by short interludes of the "collective life," when members of numbers of households gather together for ceremonies, legal proceedings, fights and initiations. If we may call these two types of living the public life and the private life of the adult male Australian, then we may say that Antonio was very happy in private life and uncomfortable in public life. The two activities which made him happiest were playing with his children and hunting with his dogs. When left alone by society to do these two things Antonio was a kindly, patient, gentle, good-natured and relaxed man, but in all social relations with other adult men he was nervous and uncertain of himself. One might hazard the opinion that it was because children and dogs made no great demands upon him that he was happy and at ease with them, but people he found very trying since they were always expecting him to "take a stand" or to make a decision and this was something he had no talent for, something which did not "come naturally" to him, and something which gave him no satisfaction. Turimpi's mantle had fallen on a man who just wanted the world to let him alone, who preferred his home, his family and his dogs to any rewards which public life could give him.

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MARIANO

Mariano was first encountered in Port Darwin before the writer had got to the Tiwi. Finding me waiting for transportation to the islands, Mariano offered to come with me and act as my chief interpreter and informant. As he appeared a very intelligent and mature member of the tribe, I promptly hired him. Or so I thought at the time. Events were to prove that what had happened was that Mariano had appropriated me. For Mariano was (in his own opinion, at least) the only possible person fit to escort and advise a white man visiting the Tiwi. He had created something of a monopoly in the job of white man's escort and adviser. The beginning of this not unusual native profession went back, in his case, to the foundation of the Mission station. When the missionaries arrived in 1911 and began to build their mission houses Mariano became almost immediately the principal go-between of Mission and natives. As far as the situation of 1911 can now be reconstructed the factors operating to select Mariano for this position were merely suitability of social status, availability and willingness to undertake it. As already mentioned, the Mission was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island. This was Tiklauila territory and at that time the dominant family among the Tiklauila was that of Turimpi. Of Turimpi's sons, Antonio, the eldest, was about 28 or 29, Mariano was about 25 and Louis, the third son, was a youth not yet 20. Antonio's role as eldest son was already fixed, Mariano's, as second son, was still flexible. Antonio was personally unaggressive except when forced into taking a strong stand, Mariano (we may speculate) was already more forceful and more prone to draw attention to himself by aggressive behavior.[6] Mariano was just ready in 1911 to emerge from the age group of young men who should, according to Tiwi ideas, be seen and not heard into the age group of "junior adult men" who

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 [561] have some slight voice in tribal affairs. Antonio had already emerged into this latter group and therefore was already committed to the old way of things to an extent that Mariano was not. This line of reasoning will explain at least why Mariano was chosen rather than Antonio. Louis, on the other hand, was still a boy indistinguishable among the group of 18 year olds.

159 554 797 Students of social organization in small societies are aware that in such societies the status requirements for certain positions are frequently such that often only a very few individuals, sometimes only one individual, are actually available to fill the positions. A similar narrow range of potential holders also pertains, it would seem, to statuses not known to the native culture but thrown up, as it were, by the demands of the culture-contact situation, as in the present case by the arrival of the Mission. What the missionaries needed among the natives was a spokesman for them (a) who had some influence, and influence in Tiwi is a combination of age, family prestige and personal forcefulness; (b) who was a local man in the district in which the Mission was built; (c) who was young enough to be flexible in his actions and thinking and therefore capable of being influenced by them; (d) who was not yet so committed to tribal mores (plural wives, strict observance of taboos, etc.) that once trusted by the Mission and identified in the native mind as a Mission-supporter he would be likely to embarrass the Mission by backsliding; and (e) who was willing to take on the job. They found their man in Mariano. A careful review of all the other possible candidates as they existed in 1911 fails to reveal any other man who had so many of the above desiderata. Dooley had many, but was a person of no family, certainly not a son of Turimpi.

In the early days of the Mission Mariano thus became its main spokesman among the tribe and the most trusted interpreter for and adviser of the priests. By 1928 he to some extent still occupied this position. But by then the Mission had had seventeen years in which to build up wider contacts and find other spokesmen, and its needs were no longer the same needs as in its pioneer days. Moreover, not only had the Mission matured in those seventeen years but so had Mariano. At the age of 42 or so, he was now a man of influence and prestige in the tribe but, like many better-known leaders of men in other societies, he was inclined toward an aggressive, bumptious self-importance and an exaggerated belief in his own indispensability. He had therefore become rather a trial to the missionaries (and to all the other white men to whom he had attached himself). The result was a continued series of quarrels between him and the Mission, which usually ended with Mariano, in a rage, storming off either to the bush or Port Darwin. In Port Darwin he characteristically worked for only the more important whites, senior government officials or at the hospital, until his anger had cooled sufficiently for him to return, self-contained, dignified, completely humorless and rather pompous, to ascertain whether the missionaries realized how foolish they had been to quarrel with him. If they had not, then he simply quit the Mission and waited for the arrival of some white visitor who needed a native sponsor. He thus acquired a greater knowledge of white ways than most of the Tiwi and as a result no doubt of his op-

159

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

portunities for cultural comparison he at the same time acquired an acute insight into his own culture and into the psychology of his fellow tribesmen. For the anthropologist he was a magnificent informant and a continuous pain in the neck. As increasing years gave him increasing tribal seniority, Mariano became increasingly domineering and touchy about his own importance and increasingly recognized by the younger men as the man who voiced the "pro-mission" and hence "pro-white" point of view in tribal arguments. However, it would be a mistake to think of him as the "detribalized" native of the literature (as another Benelong, e.g., in the magnificent study of culture contact given by the Australian novelist Eleanor Dark, 1941). On the contrary the tough old unacculturated natives who lived deep in the bush and who tried to act much of the time as if white men didn't exist not only accepted Mariano but respected him and paid deep attention to his arguments. The reasons why they did this are, I think, all considerations of "personality," that is, they respected Mariano despite his collaboration with the Mission largely because Mariano was the kind of man he was. He was forceful and determined; he was sincere, he was consistent both in word and in deed, he was intelligent and knew both the psychology of his audience and how to marshal his arguments so as to obtain maximum impact from his material. And he had supreme confidence in his own righteousness. Time and again one was struck by the contrast between him and his elder brother Antonio. When Antonio spoke (always after being prompted or coerced into giving his opinion), people listened hoping to hear wisdom and force and cogency; instead they heard only hackneyed phrases and inconsistent arguments which left them dissatisfied and unconvinced. When Mariano spoke (always without invitation and frequently ahead of many of his seniors), he laid down, in vehement tones, a definite policy, and even though his policy was unacceptable to his hearers as it frequently was, they listened with close attention and voiced their approval at the end, not so much of the policy he outlined as the directness and clearness of the delivery and the logic of his position.

The difference between the two men is well illustrated by their attitudes toward the Japanese wife-renting on the Yeimpi beaches. On this, the burning issue of the day, Antonio never took a stand but shilly-shallied on all sides of it, despite the fact—frequently drawn to his attention—that his small daughter was betrothed to an old Yeimpi who was a notorious wife-renter and he, therefore, in a very short time would be faced with the decision of whether to hand the girl over to her promised husband or not. Mariano on the contrary seized upon the Japanese issue from its first appearance as proof of the essential soundness of the Mission campaign against plural marriages. His speeches were clear-cut and definite. "It all goes to show that the priests are right when they say that having a lot of wives is a bad thing. These old Yeimpi have too many wives. If they had only one each, like white men (and inferentially like Mariano himself), they would not be doing this disgusting thing of renting out their wives to Japanese, they would want to keep their one wife to themselves like decent Tiwi." Most of his hearers (a) considered themselves decent Tiwi, but

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 548 595 668 797 (b) had each a number of wives at home, (c) had not rented any to the Japanese as yet (mainly because of lack of opportunity), but (d) were all suspecting each other of contemplating an early trip to the Yeimpi country and therefore were in chronic indecision on the whole matter. Hence Mariano's arguments were greeted with the applause that any group of people caught among a complicated set of moral alternatives will give to one of their number who has solved for himself the conflicts that beset them and has solved them moreover in a way perfectly consistent with all his previous attitudes. It was the applause and approval that is expressed in our culture by some such phrase as "I may not agree with him but at least he is sincere and you always know where he stands."

159 593 But like similar people elsewhere Mariano inspired no close intimate loyalty. Nobody felt warmly toward him. The missionaries used him but didn't like him, the anthropologist found him invaluable as an informant but intensely irritating in his self-importance and his belief in his own indispensability; among the natives he had no intimates and no close friends. His relations with his wife were much more formal and distant than was usual among monogamous couples and she frequently criticized him both in public and in private for what she called his "failure to talk to her"—undoubtedly the Tiwi equivalent of the American wife's complaint against her husband's absorption in business or politics. He was fond of his children but played with them little and then in a silent, brooding sort of way, confining his caresses to tickling and squeezing them, unlike Antonio whose play with his children was always carried on in an endless flow of chatter and two-way conversations. Child-talk, one surmises, was beneath Mariano's dignity.

177 159 All in all, Mariano was a forceful, domineering, self-important, introverted man, pursuing his dedicated way as the leader of a cause—collaboration with and imitation of the whites—but having personality traits which prevented him from inspiring any of the affection or warm devotion that other types of leaders inspire. There were many Tiwi, especially among the younger men, who were ready and willing to adopt at least the easier aspects of white culture such as clothes, work in Darwin, disrespect for tribal laws, violation of taboos, but in no sense can they be described as Mariano's followers, still less his admirers. Everyone respected Mariano, everybody consulted him, everybody made use of him and listened to him, but nobody warmed to him. He was as sound, as domineering, as aggressive, as humorless, as dedicated, as admirable as one of the Old Testament prophets—and just as difficult to like.

LOUIS

159 Of the five sons of Turimpi, it may be that the two who were most similar in whatever it is that is called personality were the second and third sons, Mariano and Louis. Both were "lonely ones," both had about them a kind of gloomy, inward-focused aura which inhibited warm friendly relations with [522] others. Among a people to whom laughter and gaiety come easily, both were completely devoid of humor. Both were men dedicated to a cause, but in the

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

nature of the cause they diverged sharply. The same single-minded concentration which Mariano devoted to the cultivation of white men, Louis devoted to his sexual activities. Whether two men devoting most of their time one to preaching acculturation, the other to seduction, can be said to have a common basic personality, is a question best left to the personality experts; but at least to the superficial observer there was something vaguely similar in the grim and humorless way in which Louis pursued other men's wives and the way in which Mariano carried on his acculturation campaign. 159

Sexual irregularities are difficult data upon which to obtain accurate information in any culture. When, therefore, Louis is described as an habitual and constant seducer, no claim is made that he was actually as successful in this line of endeavor as tribal opinion maintained. All that we can be sure of is that Louis had an exalted reputation of this sort and he had it in a tribe where a number of circumstances combine to make seduction almost as easy and almost as common as eating or drinking. The seduction situation is largely the result of the marriage customs of the Tiwi which have the effect of forcing most men to remain bachelors until well into their thirties while concentrating all wives, old and young, in the hands of the older men. This means that the older a man gets the more wives he accumulates, and it would appear that the more he accumulates the more suspicious he becomes that some of them (probably the younger and more physically attractive ones) are being unfaithful to him. These suspicions are accentuated by (a) the way in which the day-to-day food gathering activities of the women are necessarily carried out—the women are widely dispersed through the bush, often working singly, well out of sight and hearing of each other; (b) the fact that young unmarried men are frequently hunting (or pretending to hunt) alone in the same general area of country as that in which an old man's numerous wives are gathering wild foods; and (c) the character of the vegetation in large sections of the Tiwi country, great stretches of it being just open enough to make it easy for native eyes to see somebody slipping through the trees, but just thick enough to make it difficult for them to be sure of identities at any distance.[6] 182 837 [222] [224] [137]

In such an atmosphere it is rare for any bachelor to live for more than a few months at most without having to face an accusation by some old man that he has been taking liberties with one of the latter's wives, and it is even rarer for an old man with a number of young wives not to have reason to suspect most or all of them of having been unfaithful to him several times at least in the course of a year. But in this setting of daily[7] seduction Louis' reputation was outstanding. In the period with which we are dealing here he had been suspected and publicly accused of adultery with almost every possible woman for miles around. His demeanor when accused by the outraged husbands was characteristic. Whereas other seducers denied the charge and asserted their essential purity, or tried to laugh it off as silly rumor ("Why, I don't even know the woman"), or alibied themselves and accused other men ("I wasn't even hunting in that direction that day, it must have been so-and-so, he was following a kangaroo down that way at the time in question"), or sometimes even 159 [837]

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 admitted the charge along the age-old line of "the woman tempted me," Louis always faced his accusers silently, sullenly, almost disinterestedly. He never excused himself, never alibied. On the other hand he never gloried in or boasted of his sexual exploits, he merely gave the impression that he was completely disinterested in the whole procedure of argument and punishment and wanted to get it over with as quickly as possible. It was very evident that, despite his sexual reputation, he was not invested with any glamour nor did he excite any hero-worship on the part of the younger men. The role of Don Juan [555] in some cultures can presumably be a role that leads to a successful seducer's [837] being envied and even to some extent hero-worshipped by the young bloods, but this seems quite absent as a cultural possibility in Tiwi values. Successful young seducers never act publicly as if they were proud of themselves nor in any way show off or assume a "look how clever I am" manner. Absence of such behavior was very noticeable in others besides Louis, and certainly he never acted in such a way, despite his obvious suitability for such a role were it culturally available.

In camp and during the periods of the collective life he was silent, gloomy and dour, frequently irritable, unfriendly and hostile to everybody. He was [582] too young, in Tiwi terms, to rate a wife, but the policy of the Mission to dis- [797] courage plural marriages had as its positive correlate the promotion of marriages for the wifeless young men and Louis was one of those who had obtained a wife through Mission manipulations. She died after a beating which Louis in one of his frequent fits of anger had administered to her, and while the natives never said so openly, they clearly agreed with the Mission's charges that Louis had murdered his wife. Thus accused to his face by the Mission, Louis shrugged his shoulders in his normal, indifferent way. In council he seldom spoke and what he said carried no weight. This, of course, may well have [561] been due to his age as in Tiwi terms Louis at 31 or 32 was still a young man who should keep silent in the presence of his seniors. But it was very noticeable that even in the quick informal conferences between members of a party on the march involving such petty decisions as whether to camp at this waterhole or try and make the next one before nightfall, or in similar minor decision-making, Louis took no part. He listened silently to the debate, was very quick to foresee correctly what the decision was going to be as was evidenced by his starting off again by himself before the main party had realized where the consensus lay, but he apparently felt no urge to express aloud his own views on the issue. His actions showed that in his private analysis of the situation he was way ahead of most of the debaters but apparently his personal satisfactions came from correct anticipation of majority decision rather than from any desire to participate himself in decision-making. The same ability to listen, analyze what he heard, to act upon his own analysis but never to intervene actively was very noticeable in Louis' reaction to the accusations against him by the outraged husbands. An outraged husband usually begins his charges late at night when the camps are quiet. At such a time he begins to yell his accusations through the darkness at the top of his voice, naming the seducer,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159

the wife concerned, the time and place where the event occurred, how sure he is of the truth of his accusations, what he intends to do about it, all this interspersed with insults and abuse of the young man involved. The effectiveness of this type of midnight harangue depends largely upon the offender's being within earshot, since there is not much point in abusing an absentee. The accused almost invariably reacts by shouting back denials. But this was not Louis' way. He remained silent until the ranting old man was forced to pause and ask rather feebly of the darkness, "What's the matter with him? Why doesn't he answer? Is he asleep?" Whereupon from Louis' campfire would come a quiet, "No, I hear you," and very little else. The husbands found this most frustrating, a situation somewhat analogous to the schoolboy situation of our culture expressed in some such phrase as "You can't ever get him to bite."

In addition to this great self-control and his undoubtedly keen intelligence, Louis was a formidable fighting man, the toughest, strongest and most dangerous in battle of all Turimpi's sons. But when he fought, he fought alone. He led no factions and commanded the loyalty of no clique. He was in all things a lone wolf, apparently wanting no friends and seeking to influence no man. These personality traits probably stood him in good stead in his amorous career, though whether that career was the result of possession of such traits, or whether the traits were developed by the requirements of the career is an open question. Certainly, under Tiwi conditions, a person like Louis was peculiarly suited for an amorous reputation, since noisiness and chattersomeness during amours increase the chance of discovery, and close intimate friends are always liable to gossip. Solitary, reserved, intelligent and determined, master of his own fate and accepting the responsibility for his own actions, but saying practically nothing, Louis, one suspects, was the type of man who would have a successful career in whatever line of activity he concentrated upon, and in any culture in the world a man like Louis if he concentrates on sex will be a constant source of uneasiness and suspicion to husbands. He will always get what he goes after.

TIPPERARY

The three oldest sons—Antonio, Mariano and Louis—were over 30 at the time of observation. The two youngest, Tipperary and Bob, were just approaching thirty. Bob, as we shall see later, was definitely lacking in color and definiteness. Louis, as we have pointed out, was a silent, antisocial type of man. It might be inferred from these two facts, especially by those familiar with the increasing importance and prestige that age, *per se*, brings in Australian social life, that all the younger men were rather restrained and unemphasized in personality characteristics just because they were young. Such a view is, I think, contradicted by the fact that Louis, while silent and noninitiatory, was nevertheless far from colorless. Even though he seldom spoke to draw attention to himself people, both men and women, were always well aware of him when he was around. It is also contradicted by the personality of Tipperary.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 Tip, and every white man who came in contact with him immediately shortened his name to the obvious diminutive form, was a person whose whole life was devoted to laughter. No English word fits him so well as the word "gay." This gaiety was not clownishness or buffoonery nor did it contain any element of malice or desire to hurt others; it was simply an enormous sense of fun. The other four brothers were in their different ways rather taut and tense personalities, or at least three were and Antonio was when away from home. Tip alone of the five brothers was always completely relaxed and unselfconscious. He was always looking on the bright side, always trying to banish tension and worry with a quip or a wisecrack, always making a joke. His favorite sentence opening was "perhaps." On one occasion a camp I was in 159 was badly scared by a ghost appearing in the middle of the night in the midst 522 of the camp fires. Everybody, anthropologist included, huddled around their [775] fires, not daring to look and yet unable to abstain from furtive peeps. Finally the apparition seemed to have gone and there were low whispers from various firesides of, "Has it gone?—I think it's gone—it doesn't seem to be there now." "Perhaps it's gone to Port Darwin to see a movie," said Tip, loudly, and immediately the tension was broken and the whole camp shouted with laughter. On another occasion a group of natives who were escorting an elderly and venerable French priest through the bush, were chased by a herd of wild buffalo[8] and forced to take refuge in the nearby trees. The buffalo pawed and snorted under the trees and a discussion took place as to how to frighten them away. Shouting, swearing and throwing sticks failed to frighten them off. "Perhaps, Father," said Tip, convulsed with laughter at the whole proceeding and addressing the priest, "perhaps they would go away if you cursed at them in the Church language [i.e., Latin]."

159 There are several important things to notice about Tip's humor. One is 522 that much of the time he used it as a means of initiating action, as in the ghost 561 incident where he took the lead over several senior men in dissolving the tension, or in the Warner incident,[9] where the initiating suggestion to play a very old and hackneyed joke came from him. In a culture that looked with disfavor on young men speaking out of turn, Tip was always speaking out of turn, but because such speaking was always in a joking form, few if any natives recognized it as being out of turn. From certain points of view we might say that Tip had found, through his gaiety, a tool which he used to make his presence felt without exciting social disapproval because of his lack of age. But that statement makes the whole matter sound far too conscious and de- 159 liberate. Again we face a constantly recurring problem—how much of "personality" is status-dictated and how much "natural"? Will increasing years and dignity cause Tip to cease laughing at life and its problems? There seem at least two grounds for strongly doubting it. One is the admittedly subjective but strongly held view that Tip didn't laugh and joke and come out with his incongruous "perhaps" to achieve effect or as a means to the end of social recognition, but because he genuinely and naturally enjoyed his own humor. Too many nights have I dozed off to sleep listening to Tip gurgling with sup-

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

pressed laughter on the other side of the fire as he recalled to himself the amusing incidents of the day. Even when alone with his thoughts he was still laughing. This suggests that Tip's gaiety was "natural" rather than contrived for effect, and there is support for the suggestion in the fact that Tip was regarded as a poor hunter, because, as one critic put it, "He doesn't concentrate on killing the kangaroo but plays jokes on the kangaroo and makes a game out of hunting." Another indication that when alone he behaved in the same irresponsible manner that he exhibited in public. 159

The second ground that suggests that fun-loving and gaiety are not incompatible with increasing age and tribal status is the fact that there were many old and venerable Tiwi who loved fun and laughter just as Tipperary did. One such was Tu'untalumi, one of the most elderly of the Tiklauila, a man of weight, dignity and poise. He was a highly respected person, an expert in ceremonial performances and a rigid traditionalist in all things. But despite his age and dignity this man was as given to fun and laughter as Tip was. The main difference was that Tip's laughter was loud, boisterous and prankish; Tu'untalumi's jokes and quips were delivered in low, gentle tones and his laughter was dignified and restrained. But within the limitations imposed by his status he got as much fun and extracted as much humor out of life as Tip, illustrating the point that age and seniority in Tiwi do not at all necessarily mean sourness and lack of humor. Although the two were not related Tipperary played up to the old man and courted and valued his approval while Tu'untalumi clearly liked having Tip around him. They were kindred souls but separated by more than forty years of age. 157 522 561 159 522 572

As is probably the case in most cultures, so among the Tiwi—the genuinely gay person is popular. Tipperary though the next to youngest of Turimpi's sons was the one with most friends. Perhaps significantly, his friends were among both his seniors and juniors, but not among his brothers. Antonio was the only brother who sought Tip's company and this can be accounted for either by the fact that Antonio, when not harassed by his status, was an easy-going, friendly and none too intelligent man who laughed readily even when none too sure of what the joke was, or that he found Tip's company a relaxation from the cares of state. Of the other brothers, the self-righteous and puritanical Mariano considered Tip frivolous and deplored (or was jealous of) the tendency of white men to become fond of him. Louis actively disliked Tip perhaps because his love affairs were an obvious target for some of Tip's better quips. "Perhaps he is going into the bush to take a nap" was one of his comments when he saw Louis disappearing among the trees. With his full brother Bob, Tip had few close ties, perhaps because Bob spent much of his time in Darwin, but even more likely, one suspects, because Bob, an indefinite and colorless youngster, shrank from attracting public notice, whereas Tip was always drawing attention to himself, with the result that Bob to save himself embarrassment avoided his company. 159 593

Outside his siblings, Tipperary's gaiety earned him the liking and companionship of the younger men and made him a favorite younger man of some 159 522 572

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

of the oldest and most respected seniors, particularly of Tu'untalumi and those swayed by his opinion. It follows from this that Tip though given to jokes and pranks cannot be written off as merely a privileged buffoon. On the contrary his wit and gaiety earned him friends and his friends gave him influence out of proportion to his youth. Some insight into this is supplied by the shadow of the ubiquitous Louis. Tipperary, through the missionaries' efforts on behalf of monogamy, had obtained a wife at a much earlier age than would have been possible under pre-white conditions, and according to the women, who have their own sources of information about such things, Louis was strongly attracted by Tipperary's wife. Since Louis was not noted for restraint or self-discipline in these matters the obvious question was why he did not press his attention on her as he had done on numerous other women, including the wife of Tip's younger brother Bob. "Oh no, he doesn't dare chase after Tipperary's wife. The old men would be very angry if he did anything to her," was the reply of the old hags who were the local gossip columnists. This belief that the "old men" would undoubtedly protect Tip's wife while they had noticeably failed to protect Bob's wife from a similar threat (see below) is a pretty clear indication that the two young men had very different places in tribal estimation—a fact that in turn can be correlated with no status differential between them and leaves only the "personality" difference between the two men to account for it. Tip was popular with the control groups, Bob was not, therefore the control groups would support Tip because they liked him. They were indifferent toward Bob.[10]

To summarize Tipperary is relatively easy. He was a cheery, relaxed, fun-loving young man who enjoyed his own humor but enjoyed it all the more if it were shared by an appreciative audience. He was therefore gregarious, friendly, outgoing and extroverted. He would have been a good Rotarian or a better disk-jockey. Because of these traits he was noticed a great deal more by his elders than his age justified and the notice he received was usually favorable. He was popular in a way none of his brothers were, and because of this popularity was able to express opinions and exert influence to an extent unusual for one of his years. In a society where men under 30 are expected to be seen and not heard, Tip was constantly being heard. This was only possible because his natural gaiety and warmth prejudiced almost everybody in his favor. He was the sort of man about whom it is often said in our culture "he always makes a party go," or, "he is the sort of person who just naturally makes friends."

BOB

The youngest brother, Bob, needs only two words to describe him—complete nonentity. About 27 or 28 when I knew him and, because of the Mission's efforts, married a good deal younger than he would have been under pre-white conditions, Bob, whatever the occasion or circumstances, was always part of the background. Like many of the younger Tiwi he was inclined to spend part of each year in Darwin working for the white men, and by them he was regarded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

garded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker. The tribe thought of him in much the same way, the missionaries and anthropologist agreed with the estimate. Bob was essentially a "good boy." He never did anything wrong, never answered back, never spoke out of turn, never stepped out of line, never deviated from the behavior expected of him. He was, of course, too young in Tiwi categories to have any influence or importance. But it is hard to see how age could turn him into anything more positive than he was at 28, at which age he invited the comment that he had very little personality. About all that could be said is that he was a born follower and always tried to do the right thing, the right thing consisting in conforming to the expectations of whatever group he happened to be with at the moment. When with the tribe Bob did what the elders told him to do. If they disagreed among themselves, Bob waited until the majority decision was clear and then added his voice to the chorus of agreement. The same faithfulness which caused his white employers to label Bob "a good boy" caused the tribal elders to regard him as among the sounder of the young men, though they deplored his tendency to spend so much time in Darwin. But even on his trips to Darwin Bob did not depart too much from the norms for men of his age who had been children when the Mission came and who therefore constituted a post-white generation. He did not stay more than three or four months at a time in Darwin, he returned for all the steps of his initiation ceremonies, he observed his food and other taboos even when in Darwin, and during his sojourns there he never caused scandal back-home by getting into the slightest "trouble." He went to Darwin when the tribe could raise no valid objection to his going, he returned whenever his absence led to criticism. Bob was a barometer of which line offered the least resistance at any given time. His chief motivation seemed to be to escape public attention, to always be where he would attract the least notice. 159

The only occasion I ever saw Bob forced to emerge from the background and take the center of the stage was on one occasion when he returned from Darwin and was told by the local gossips that his wife had been unfaithful to him during his absence. The man involved was—not surprisingly—his brother Louis. This really put Bob on the spot. In pre-white days a youngster like Bob would not have had a wife, and therefore the situation of a man of Bob's tender years calling an older man to account for seducing his wife could not have arisen. The traditional pattern in seduction cases is for the husband, necessarily an older man, to accuse the alleged seducer, necessarily a young man and therefore a bachelor and a person of no importance, and demand vengeance on him. The accuser is, therefore, traditionally a man of weight and prestige and dignity, and carries on his case against the seducer with style and authority. The accused on the other hand, being young and a person of no importance, stands abashed, cowed and silent, looking guilty while the outranged husband showers him with tirades of abuse, followed finally by spears or throwing-sticks. In the case of Bob versus Louis the casting of these traditional roles was all wrong. Bob, overcome with embarrassment, did his best

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 177 183 561 684 to give an imitation of an angry and indignant elder telling off an impertinent "young punk,"[11] but even to the Tiwi, the spectacle of the subservient and retiring Bob trying to overawe and browbeat the formidable and completely self-reliant Louis was such a perversion of the traditional pattern that it bordered on the farcical. As soon as it was over and the conventions were satisfied, Bob, pale and shaken by the unwonted initiative and aggressiveness he had been forced to display, hurried back to the oblivion of Darwin where no such demands were made on a good boy, and, presumably to ensure that he would not be forced to go through such an ordeal again, took the rather unusual step of taking his wife along with him this time.

157 The above brief sketches convey perhaps some idea of the variation in personalities of the five brothers. Obviously no definite conclusions can be drawn from material of this sort. It is merely suggestive of possibilities for theory. What it seems to suggest is, however, at variance with the idea that personality is substantially uniform in the simpler societies. No attempt has been made in this paper to explore the full gamut of personal differences among the Tiwi. By adding half a dozen other individuals (including such as Tu'untalumi and Dooley, already briefly mentioned) to the five siblings we have discussed above, it would be easy to widen the number of "personality types" illustrated. By confining our attention to the sons of Turimpi we have avoided an arbitrary selection of contrasting individuals; the five men selected were chosen *not because* they were different *but because* they were brothers. How different they are in that vaguely defined thing called personality is largely a matter of opinion depending almost entirely upon what is regarded as a "personality" difference. All that we would here claim for them in the way of difference is that on any continuum for a single trait the five sons of Turimpi range themselves about as differentially as any five average men are likely to do in our culture. In aggressiveness, for example, Mariano is well toward one end of the range, Bob well toward the other; Tipperary, Louis and Antonio at different points in between. In decisiveness or decision-making, Mariano, Louis and Tipperary belong to the heavily positive side, Antonio and Bob on the heavily negative side. But if we couple with decisiveness the ability to win friends and influence people, Tipperary, the decisive and popular, must be sharply separated from Louis and Mariano, decisive but unpopular. The three aggressive dominating types differ markedly among themselves in what might be called interest in life or chief motivating force, Mariano expressing his need for dominance through political channels, Louis through sex, Tipperary through laughter and kidding. On an introvert-extrovert continuum, Louis the silent withdrawn lone-wolf has to be placed well toward the introvert pole, with Mariano not very far away from him, but with Tipperary the out-giving friendly "Rotarian" kidder at the other extreme, and Antonio well down toward Tipperary's end. These are of course just a few of the possible ranges along which the sons of Turimpi have to be located.

Whatever facet of behavior we seize on for comparison, we find these five

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

121 theorists," says Boas, "assume a mental equipment of primitive man distinct from that of civilized man. I have never seen a person in primitive life to whom this theory would apply. There are slavish believers in the teachings of the past and there are scoffers and unbelievers; there are clear thinkers and muddle-headed bunglers; there are strong characters and there are weaklings" (1951). It is notewofthy that this (for Boas) unusually flat and definite statement was made in an attempt to demolish the views of Levy-Bruhl that between civilized man and the primitive there is an impassable psychological gap. Perhaps—as Tipperary would say, if he understood the matter—perhaps, the personality and culture movement is merely Levy-Bruhl in modern dress, perhaps the latent content of the movement is to deny to the people of the simpler cultures the ordinary elementary human qualities of individual difference and human variation, thereby enabling "personality" and "individuality" to be treated as unique creations of the white races to be found only among the followers of the American way of life. If this indeed be the latent content of much "personality and culture" literature, it seems to warrant a flat and unqualified rejection, in terms as emphatic as those of Boas, by all those anthropologists who, like Boas, may not know projective tests but do know something about the simpler native societies.

NOTES

121 [1] In view of the wide discrepancies in the use of the word "personality" it must be made clear again that all that is meant by the word here is the level of description one is apt to get if in ordinary social conversation one asks the question, "What sort of person is he?"

115 [2] The native names of these men are all polysyllable and difficult for the reader to remember. I use therefore the names bestowed upon them by white men, to aid in keeping them distinctly in mind. The Spanish names, Antonio, etc., were bestowed by certain Filipino carpenters who built the building for the Roman Catholic missionaries when they first arrived. Tipperary is, of course, a white corruption of a native name.

● 159 [3] It will be noticed by close students of the above information that Turimpi must have been born in the 1830's, Bongladu born somewhere around 1865. She had her first child when she was about 16 or 17, at which time her husband Turimpi was at least 50. This is a perfectly normal Tiwi marital situation, the commonest marriage arrangement being one in which a newly-born female child is betrothed by her father to a man in his thirties.

159 177 797 [4] Even from the anthropologist Dooley would not accept tobacco until he had convinced himself that in return he would not be required to sacrifice any of his principles. Nor would he take his son, to whom he was passionately attached, to the Mission station for medical treatment—perhaps the most striking proof of the uncompromising attitude that Dooley had adopted toward the Mission.

159 [5] Such a speculation about Mariano's personality at the age of 25, seventeen years before the author knew him, is based upon the general belief of social scientists that personality does not change much between 25 and 42, and the particular evidence of the older missionaries that Mariano was "already inclined to throw his weight around" when they first arrived.

13 182 837 [6] Goodenough (1949) is apparently one of the few anthropologists to discuss the relation between extra-marital sexual activity and the opportunities provided by the nature of the physical environment. The point here is slightly different; whether the Tiwi physical environment encourages adultery is uncertain since a social system such as theirs would promote adultery whatever the physical environment, but it certainly helps to increase the suspiciousness of husbands.

837 [7] That seduction has to be a daytime activity is implied in what has already been said. After sundown the women are concentrated in their husband's camp and have no opportunity. Which

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

leads to the situation—quite foreign to our way of thought and also apparently to that of Polynesian cultures—whereby a young bachelor can prowl around the bush all night without arousing the slightest interest but his daytime wanderings, ostensibly in search of game, are watched by his married seniors with the deepest suspicion. 837

[8] The buffalo, which are confined to Melville Island, are the wild descendants of domestic East Asian water buffalo which were imported during an early attempt at settlement. 136

[9] It is perhaps not without interest that one of Tip's jokes is imperishably preserved in the files of the Peabody Museum at Harvard. Tip was in Darwin in 1927 when W. Lloyd Warner was collecting at the Native Compound the anthropometric measurements which were afterwards analyzed by W. W. Howells (1937), and like all other natives in town from many tribes he and a number of Tiwi were measured by Warner. On the card for each subject Warner wished to record the personal name of the native. Led by Tip, all the Tiwi measured bestowed upon themselves the most obscene "native name" they could think of, and years later Tip would shout with laughter when telling how Warner faithfully recorded these obscenities, often repeating them several times to make sure of the correct pronunciation. 159 522 114

[10] This set of sentiments surrounding Tip's wife also gives a little more insight into the sex activities of Louis. His reluctance to move in on her, because of the way "the old men would feel," while showing no such reluctance to move in on Mrs. Bob, supports the view implied above that Louis, while sex dominated, was no fool in his amours. He had an intelligent and realistic appreciation of just how much he could get away with. 159 626

[11] I use this slang term deliberately, since it expresses somewhat the Tiwi attitude toward those young bachelors who go about seducing the wives of their elders and betters.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

alistically estimated at about one person to six and a half square miles, and for the best watered sections as about three persons to every ten square miles.[5] Some detailed corroboration for this last figure is supplied by the Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands who are dealt with at length in this monograph. The Tiwi are one of the few tribes occupying a well-watered and favorable environment for hunting and gathering who have been left in continuous occupation of their native habitat down to the present day. A careful and exhaustive census of them (by Hart) in 1928-29 showed that the approximately 2900 square miles comprising the two islands were occupied and used by 1062 people.

Thus between the time of their first arrival and approximately 1770 when the white men first got to know them, the original group of primitive castaways had multiplied to a population of between 250,000 and 275,000. This relatively small number (for the size of the continent) was thinly spread over most of the land, but was more numerous in the areas where the water supply was good and where the natives had available adequate sources of meat—marsupial, reptile, and bird—and fish, as well as a considerable quantity of wild plant foods.

Basically, all Australian tribes had cultures of the same general type, although local variation had developed as the original emigrants spread out into different geographical environments and their descendants lost contact with each other. The question of how many tribes there were at the beginning of white settlement is almost impossible to answer since "tribe" in Australia meant little more than a group of bands with a distinct language. There were at least five hundred distinct languages (all belonging to the same linguistic family, but most of them mutually unintelligible) which in the total population of a quarter of a million gives an average of about five hundred speakers for each distinct linguistic group. This seems a low figure for a so-called tribe and is probably brought about by the large number of very small linguistic units ("tribes") which early writers report in some areas such as coastal New South Wales and parts of Victoria. Certainly the linguistic units ("tribes") which survived down to modern times and could therefore be studied by twentieth-century anthropologists, such as the Arunta, Murngin, and Tiwi tribes, were considerably larger than five hundred people, but probably even the biggest "tribes" did not exceed two thousand in population.

Scattered in small local groups (bands) over enormous areas of country and armed only with boomerangs, crude stone-pointed spears, and spear throwers, the Australian natives were in no position to resist the white settlers. They were simply brushed aside by the early British colonists[6] who began arriving in 1788, and in the course of the next century and a half, the natives

[5] Radcliffe-Brown 1930.

[6] There is an interesting link between American history and the first white settlement in Australia. Prior to the Revolutionary War, Great Britain deported her worst criminals to convict settlements in the colony of Georgia. After American independence, she had to find a new dumping ground to relieve the overcrowding in the British jails and established her new convict settlement at Botany Bay near the present city of Sydney on the east coast of Australia.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

months after the attack on Darwin. Many of the older Tiwi who were in Darwin during the bombing did not survive the war; the psychological strain and lack of sufficient food was too much for them. Genealogies show that an unusual number of deaths occurred among Tiwi between 1942 and 1946.

When Western food supplies again became available, the old Tiwi bush living seems to have departed. The Tiwi suddenly realized their full dependence upon the products which only the whites could provide. As the war came to an end and one after another of the temporary military bases were abandoned, the missionaries and the Tiwi salvaged what they could, transporting large amounts of corrugated iron to Bathurst Island Mission for native huts. The Tiwi were drawn together around the Mission in larger numbers than ever before, their camps ranging in a line along the Mission beach. The majority of the Tiwi, about 600, considered Bathurst Island Mission their home, although some of the young adult males spent most of the year in Darwin. About 30 islanders lived adjacent to the half-caste Melville Island Mission at Garden Point. Another 150 were permanently located at the government settlement at Snake Bay. The remaining Tiwi, about 150, were year-round residents of Darwin; over one hundred lived at Bagot Native Compound and at an unsupervised native camp at Point Gunn directly opposite the southernmost tip of Melville Island; the rest were inmates at the leper colony. The resulting total population of about 950, in 1954, is only about a hundred less than the figure of 1062 which Hart obtained in his census of 1928-29.

Marriage Arrangements

We have discussed how, under the traditional Tiwi pattern of life, the greatest energies of mature males were expended in bargaining with each other for new wives. The old social system was one which had as normal features prenatal and early childhood engagements for females, remarriage for all widows, considerable age difference between marriage partners, and polygamy. The new Catholic system introduced by Father Gsell outlawed, or at least discouraged, polygamous marriages, nuptial unions between persons of greatly differing ages, and all prenatal or childhood betrothals. As indicated, Father Gsell initiated his new policies by purchasing young females and then allowing them to choose their own partners from among their single agemates.

It is of interest to inspect the actual circumstances surrounding one of the earliest unions which took place under Father Gsell's supervision. About 1914, Polly, an attractive young female who had already had a rather checkered career, having been stolen by a Yuwatja male from her rightful mate, was "stolen back" by another Tiwi, Timalarua of the Rangwila. Polly, however, decided that she did not want an old husband like Timalarua, so she ran away to the sisters and Father Gsell. In time, old Timalarua allowed Father Gsell to buy this wife who did not want to live with him. Shortly afterward, Father Gsell asked Polly whom she wanted to marry. Polly named Cabbagee as the

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

not only in physique but also in intelligence. I should be surprised to find in any other Australian tribe a man with the intelligence and adaptability of my own head boy Mariano.

The flora and fauna of the two islands is very similar to that of the rest of the Northern Territory. The country is mostly flat with a low range of rocky hills between Cape Gambier and Cape Keith on Melville Island, and a still lower range in the centre of Bathurst. The timber consists of the usual Australian trees; gums, stringy-bark, woolly-butt, bloodwood and ironwood cover most of the two islands, broken here and there by patches of open grassland and in other places by dense patches of jungle where snakes and "devils" thrive and the natives seldom enter. Wallabies are extraordinarily plentiful, but there are no kangaroos. Buffaloes are found on Melville in small numbers. These are the wild descendants of the domestic Indian buffaloes imported for agricultural purposes by the early settlers at Fort Dundas. At one time they had increased and multiplied to such effect that thousands were shot every year without any appreciable effect upon their numbers. At the present time, however, probably owing to many of the cows being killed, there are probably not more than a thousand on the island. The natives are seldom able to kill a buffalo though they realise the fact that it is good to eat.

Not only are wallabies plentiful, but there is also an abundant supply of the other native articles of food, fish, crocodile, birds of all kinds, wild honey, yams and other native vegetables. As a result of this abundance of foods, it would seem that the two islands had a greater density of population than is to be found in almost any other part of Australia.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The people inhabiting Melville and Bathurst Islands are subdivided into a number of local groups. These local groups are the important sections of the population since they act as land-owning groups, war-making groups, have a solidarity of their own which is far stronger than any tribal solidarity that may exist and even to some extent regulate marriage.

Before considering these hordes in detail, however, something must be said about the tribal name. All the hordes practise the same customs, speak the same language and inter-marry. The boundaries of the people speaking this language are of course strictly defined by the sea. In other words, the people of Melville and Bathurst have a solidarity of their own,

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

relatives of the mother, such as the mother's mother's brother. The Tiwi have matrilineal totemic clans. 553 602

Names are seldom bestowed upon an individual by women; the only female relative having that power is the actual mother's mother. A mother is never in any circumstances allowed to name her own child. The reason for this is fairly obvious. The naming of children is a ritual affair, and as such is more or less forbidden to the women, for although their exclusion is not nearly so strict as in some other parts of Australia, they do not, among the Tiwi, take very much part in ritual affairs. The mother's mother, however, stands in a rather privileged position to her daughter's child. She is of the same totem and is normally a very old woman, and to a certain extent appears to become a symbol of the clan for her daughter's son. A boy, for example, will strongly resent and often endeavour to revenge any insult to his mother's mother, even if it means taking up arms against his own father. For example, during my stay a boy of twelve abused his father and quitted his father's camp for over a month because in a fight between hordes his father had injured the boy's mother's mother's brother. There was no particular respect or regard for the latter individual on the part of the boy, but the injury was a grave insult to his mother's mother. [603] [562] 603

It must also be understood that it is impossible for any two people to have the same name. Should a father inadvertently bestow upon his child a name already in use he is guilty of a gross breach of etiquette, and to prevent such a possibility a man will refrain for a long time from coining a name until he is fairly certain that the one he decides upon is neither already in use nor was held by any person recently dead. Although the Tiwi number nearly eleven hundred people at the present time, and each one of these has on an average three names, a careful study of these three thousand three hundred names fails to reveal any two as being identical. 551 [161]

By the time that a child reaches puberty he is the possessor of several names since by then some at least of the people entitled to bestow names upon him will have exercised that privilege. In exceptional cases he may have six or seven names though sometimes only one. All of these will have been known at some time or other to the tribe at large, though it is usually possible to get a full list of a person's names only from that individual himself or his father or mother.

It is not at all unusual in primitive societies for the death of a man to

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

By Herbert Basedow, M.D., M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., etc.

With Plates VII-XX.

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Introduction.

In August of last year (1911), I visited Bathurst Island to inspect the natives on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. Accompanied by one of my inspectors (Mr. J. H. Kelly) and a crew consisting of a Chinaman, a Manilaman, and three natives of the Larrekiya Tribe,[1] I left Port Darwin at eleven o'clock in the evening and entered Apsley Strait early the next morning. We spent nine days in the examination of the island, entering the numerous salt-water arms and rivers, effecting a landing wherever possible and traversing the island on foot. Landing was, in most places, difficult on account of the thick growth of mangroves that fringes the island on the east. It had been my intention to circumnavigate the island, but a heavy monsoonal gale prevented us from even making the attempt in the small motor-craft at our disposal. I therefore decided to return *viâ* Apsley Strait and inspect part of Melville Island.

The plates included in this paper are all reproductions of my original photographs and coloured drawings.

Condition of Natives.

I estimate the population of the island to be about 500. Their isolation and, no doubt in a measure also, their reputation as being cannibalistic and treacherous in their habits, have guarded their primitive condition to the present day.[2] Before

[1] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. of S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 1.

[2] Compare the statement :—

"Melville Island, about 30 miles north of Port Darwin, is inhabited by a tribe of which very little is known. They do not circumcise, and speak a different language from those on the mainland. They are represented as a very strong and powerful race.

"Before the arrival of the Hon. B. T. Finniss at Escape Cliffs in 1864, the Melville Island natives occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras, in which they invariably succeeded; but they have not done so since. This tribe is of a very hostile nature, and on several occasions have attacked Europeans visiting the island. Their canoes and weapons are similar to those on the mainland." P. Foelsche: "Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia," *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 17.

11;Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By JANE C. GOODALE

884 [114] [824] [114] [178] [177] 161 131 178 [224] 825 462 868

IN 1912 SIR BALDWIN SPENCER, a professor of biology at the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony, however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe that such participation cannot prepare them adequately for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Melville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Economically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied, and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

000 TIWI NATIVE on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day Kulama ceremony.

[P. 11, (B)]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

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Fig. 1. Snake Bay Settlement

114 Islanders on a hunt. The trip took us to a small clearing on the right bank of the Paluwiunga River, ten miles upstream from where it empties into the Arafura Sea.

131 A brief glance at the map will help to further pinpoint this location. Ten degrees south of the equator and at a distance of twenty to fifty miles due north from the Australian Northern Territory capital of Darwin, lies the relatively large Melville Island (1,000 square miles), named for Viscount Henry Dundas Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, who authorized the coastal survey of 1818 during which the island was circumnavigated. To the west, separated by a narrow strait, lies the smaller Bathurst
101 Island. The group of people with whom I found myself camped by the river bank were members of the Tiwi, a tribe of Australian
[161 Aboriginals whose country includes both these islands. Today about
361 seven hundred members of the tribe live near to the southeast corner
797] of Bathurst Island where they are in various ways administered to by the Sacred Heart Mission. On the northern coast of Melville
161 Island, on a hill overlooking Snake Bay, near the mouth of the
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Tjipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families.

It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace.

By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives,

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

000 alistically estimated at about one person to six and a half square miles, and for the best watered sections as about three persons to every ten square miles.[5] Some detailed corroboration for this last figure is supplied by the Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands who are dealt with at length in this monograph. The Tiwi are one of the few tribes occupying a well-watered and favorable environment for hunting and gathering who have been left in continuous occupation of their native habitat down to the present day. A careful [161] and exhaustive census of them (by Hart) in 1928-29 showed that the approxi- [162] mately 2900 square miles comprising the two islands were occupied and used by 1062 people.

Thus between the time of their first arrival and approximately 1770 when the white men first got to know them, the original group of primitive castaways had multiplied to a population of between 250,000 and 275,000. This relatively small number (for the size of the continent) was thinly spread over most of the land, but was more numerous in the areas where the water supply was good and where the natives had available adequate sources of meat—marsupial, reptile, and bird—and fish, as well as a considerable quantity of wild plant foods.

Basically, all Australian tribes had cultures of the same general type, although local variation had developed as the original emigrants spread out into different geographical environments and their descendants lost contact with each other. The question of how many tribes there were at the beginning of white settlement is almost impossible to answer since "tribe" in Australia meant little more than a group of bands with a distinct language. There were at least five hundred distinct languages (all belonging to the same linguistic family, but most of them mutually unintelligible) which in the total population of a quarter of a million gives an average of about five hundred speakers for each distinct linguistic group. This seems a low figure for a so-called tribe and is probably brought about by the large number of very small linguistic units ("tribes") which early writers report in some areas such as coastal New South Wales and parts of Victoria. Certainly the linguistic units ("tribes") which survived down to modern times and could therefore be studied by twentieth-century anthropologists, such as the Arunta, Murngin, and Tiwi tribes, were considerably larger than five hundred people, but probably even the biggest "tribes" did not exceed two thousand in population.

Scattered in small local groups (bands) over enormous areas of country and armed only with boomerangs, crude stone-pointed spears, and spear throwers, the Australian natives were in no position to resist the white settlers. They were simply brushed aside by the early British colonists[6] who began arriving in 1788, and in the course of the next century and a half, the natives

[5] Radcliffe-Brown 1930.

[6] There is an interesting link between American history and the first white settlement in Australia. Prior to the Revolutionary War, Great Britain deported her worst criminals to convict settlements in the colony of Georgia. After American independence, she had to find a new dumping ground to relieve the overcrowding in the British jails and established her new convict settlement at Botany Bay near the present city of Sydney on the east coast of Australia.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to the husband of the pregnant woman. We carefully say "the husband of the pregnant woman" rather than "the father of the child" because the right resided in the male head of the household at the time of the birth. Although he was ordinarily both the father of the child and the husband of its mother, there were naturally occasions when a child was born after the death of its father, in which case the right of betrothal unquestionably belonged to the mother's new husband. The clearest statement of this rule is to say that the right of betrothal of all newly born females resided in the husband of the mother at the time of the girl's birth. "He who named the child bestowed it."

In most human societies the proportion of males and females in the population is approximately equal, except in the older age-groups where women predominate owing to their tendency to live longer than men. The Tiwi conformed to this norm biologically, but their cultural insistence that all females of every age be married resulted in further unusual features of the domestic situation. No such compulsory marriage was required or expected of males. Hence, the total female population, but only part of the male population, was married. Mathematically this permitted, indeed required, a high degree of plural marriage. The men who held the right to betroth—namely, the fathers of the female babies—could, within certain limits imposed by the kinship system, bestow their about-to-be-born or newly born daughters where they wished, and they certainly did not bestow them on about-to-be-born or newly born males. On the contrary, they bestowed them, generally speaking, where some tangible return was to be anticipated. Put bluntly, in Tiwi culture daughters were an asset to their father, and he invested these assets in his own welfare. He therefore bestowed his newly born daughter on a friend or an ally, or on somebody he wanted as a friend or an ally. Such a person was apt to be a man near his own age or at least an adult man, and hence perhaps forty years or so older than the newly born baby bestowed upon him as a wife. Or, the father might bestow an infant daughter on a man—or some close relative of such a man—who had already bestowed an infant daughter upon him, thus in effect swapping infant daughters. Obviously, the fathers who did the swapping, even if they were not quite the same age themselves, were bound to be many years older than the infant wives they thus received from each other. Or, thirdly, a father looking for a suitable male upon whom to bestow his infant daughter's hand might decide to use her as old-age insurance—in which case he selected as her future husband not one of the older adult men who would be old when he himself was old, but a likely looking youngster "with promise"; that is, a youth in his late twenties or thirties who showed signs of being a good hunter and a good fighting man, and who was clearly on his way up in tribal power and influence. Such a youth, in his late twenties at the time of betrothal, would, with luck, be in his prime as "a big man" in about twenty years—a time when the father of the infant daughter would be getting old and decrepit and much in need of an influential son-in-law who was obligated to him.

There were other bases upon which infant daughters were betrothed,

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

162 [621] The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

561 [858 882] [591] Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

561 589 884 The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married [582] to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was [177] in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

561 884 557 [582] The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

159 554 [589] In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

TABLE II
KI-IN-KUMI'S ESTABLISHMENT

(Ages in brackets)

		Males	Females
Head (Ki-in-kumi	66)	1	0
Oldest step-son (Boya	42)	1	0
Sister's son (Padimo	36)	1	0
Old wives (of all three adult men)		0	5
Young wives (including Padimo's 2)		0	11
Young males (sons and step-sons)		8	0
Young females (daughters and step-daughters)		0	5
Totals		11	21

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Confronted by this situation, Ki-in-kumi in his advancing years had summoned Padimo, a sister's son in his early thirties, to come from Rangu and become his chief lieutenant. The youth of his own son had been a factor in his selection of Padimo. The presence in his camp of an older step-son, Boya, had been another factor. Boya, the step-son, was more than twenty years older than the son, and at least six years older than Padimo, the chosen instrument. Padimo, as we have seen, moved right in, fused his own small household with Ki-in-kumi's large one, and became Ki-in-kumi's Man Friday. Boya, the step-son, though married to a widow, refused to move out. Thus, among other things, we have to distinguish between Ki-in-kumi's household of twelve resident wives enumerated above, and Ki-in-kumi's establishment which contained Padimo, Boya, and the various people attached by marriage or kinship to them. Padimo had an old wife and two young wives (daughters of Ki-in-kumi). Boya had an old wife and a younger brother. There were a number of younger step-children of both sexes also resident with Ki-in-kumi. The full size and make-up of his establishment is given in Table II.

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The Establishments of Malau

There were, besides Ki-in-kumi, six other elders of the Malauila band. Two of these, the brothers Enquirio and Merapanui, were well over sixty and deserve, both by age and by success, to be labeled senior elders. The remaining four ranged in age from about 45 to nearly 60 and since none of them were particularly successful we call them the junior elders. In Table III we have listed the seven "establishments" in which lived all the members of the band. We mean by an establishment a food-production and food-consumption unit. Ki-in-kumi's establishment contained three married men—himself, Boya, and Padimo—and therefore contained three households. Economically it was one establishment, since the sixteen wives it contained worked

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

162 592 621 as a team and the food they produced was consumed by the thirty-two total members of the establishment. For comparative purposes in Table III we list Ki-in-kumi's establishment as Unit I and give the personnel breakdown of the other six establishments that made up the total population of Malau. Unit II is the joint enterprise maintained by the other two senior elders, the brothers Enquirio and Merapanui. To this we have added the pathetic and ostracized Teapot and his motherless son, since when they ate at all they ate as hangers-on of the Enquirio-Merapanui menage. Unit III is the establishment jointly maintained by the brothers White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua. Since the oldest wife of Ku-nai-u-ua was Summit's mother, that young man, together with the elderly ex-widow who was so far his only resident wife, lived in this establishment. Units IV and V present no difficulty; they are the small households of the other two junior elders Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai respectively. Unit VI is the joint enterprise of Gitjara and L. F. B., containing largely old ladies and young men. Unit VII is the remarkable menage that had gathered round the elderly widow whom young Banana had illegally "married." To this couple

TABLE III
THE FOOD PRODUCTION UNITS OF MALAU

Unit	Married Males	Unmarried Males[a]	Old Wives[b]	Young Wives	Girls Under 14	Total Persons
I	3	8	5	11	5	32
II	3	9	1	7	11	31
III	3	2	2	3	5	15
IV	1	5	0	1	1	8
V	1	2	0	1	2	6
VI	2	5	3	0	1	11
VII	1[?]	4	1	0	0	6
Total	14	35	12	23	25	109

[a] Unmarried males include all males from male infants to men around 30, or more.
[b] The division between old wives and young wives is arbitrary. Several of the young wives were 40, others only 14 or 15.
[?] The question mark in Unit VII refers to the difficulty of deciding whether Banana should be classified as married.

had attached themselves Tiberun (Banana's unmarried older brother), two younger brothers, and another male orphan who had apparently moved in [736] for want of some better place to eat. The Banana menage thus had somewhat the appearance of a case of economic polyandry and somewhat the look of a fraternity house with an elderly housemother in residence. We include it as Unit VII since by so doing we are able to include in Table III all the hundred and nine people who made up the Malauila band in 1928-29 and allocate all of them to the economic units in which they functioned as food producers and food consumers.

The data in Table III merit close study. These seven establishments illustrate in capsule form several of the more significant emphases in Tiwi career patterns; indeed each might be said to illustrate some time point in the life careers of adult men and/or some degree of success or lack of success in becoming an influential man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Politics of Widow Remarriage

Ki-in-kumi's large establishment was the sort of set-up that every Tiwi sought to achieve but few accomplished. An establishment such as his meant wealth, power, prestige, and influence for its head, and, in Malau, Ki-in-kumi was the only man with such a household. With eleven males, many of them food producing; sixteen women, all of them food producing; and several of the girls under fourteen able to assist the older women, the amount of food this unit could collect in a day provided an ample food surplus for the establishment. A man whose household was a surplus food producer was a successful man. Moreover, since the large work force that produced the food surplus contained numerous young wives who (usually) could be relied upon also to produce numerous female babies, he was doubly blessed with both the requisites—surplus food and surplus daughters—necessary to increase his influence and make more people beholden to him or dependent on him. Of the thirty-five married women in Malau, sixteen, or over 45 percent, were in this one establishment.

By comparison, the other old men of Malau were less successful.[8] Through pooling their work forces, Enquirio and Merapanui had achieved an establishment (Unit II) almost as big as that of Ki-in-kumi, and probably its members ate almost as well as the members of his, but their effort was a shared effort and their influence and prestige had to be divided between them. They had been lucky with daughters but, divided between the two fathers, the eleven daughters in their establishment were less impressive than Ki-in-kumi's eight, and the total of seven young wives between them was quite overshadowed by Ki-in-kumi's nine. The two old brothers were successful men and headed a successful operation, but their prestige and success must be rated at least one whole degree below that of Ki-in-kumi.

Another pair of elderly brothers, White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua, had also joined forces (Unit III), but the results can be judged as only fair. They were at least the best off of their age group, the 45- to 55-year-olds, but the competition in that age group was weak, as can be seen by comparison of their establishment with Units IV and V, the households of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai. Perhaps the best indication of the respective success in life of the seven oldest men is that given in the column of Table III headed "young wives." Of the twenty-three such women in the band, eighteen were in the establishments[9] of the three oldest men (Units I and II); the next five men in age shared the remaining five (Units III, IV, and V).

It might be thought that the small establishments of the unsuccessful junior elders like White Man, Ku-nai-u-ua, Pingirimini, and Tipiperna-gerai could be expected to increase sharply in size and these men to grow in relative prestige and influence when death removed the three old men at the heads

[8] It will be noticed that as we move into the older group of men we have to use their native names, since most of them had no "whiteman" names.

[9] Two of these eighteen were of course actually married to Padimo, but still part of the establishment of their father, Ki-in-kumi, since Padimo's wives all lived with Ki-in-kumi's wives.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

months after the attack on Darwin. Many of the older Tiwi who were in Darwin during the bombing did not survive the war; the psychological strain and lack of sufficient food was too much for them. Genealogies show that an unusual number of deaths occurred among Tiwi between 1942 and 1946.

When Western food supplies again became available, the old Tiwi bush living seems to have departed. The Tiwi suddenly realized their full dependence upon the products which only the whites could provide. As the war came to an end and one after another of the temporary military bases were abandoned, the missionaries and the Tiwi salvaged what they could, transporting large amounts of corrugated iron to Bathurst Island Mission for native huts. The Tiwi were drawn together around the Mission in larger numbers than ever before, their camps ranging in a line along the Mission beach. The majority of the Tiwi, about 600, considered Bathurst Island Mission their home, although some of the young adult males spent most of the year in Darwin. About 30 islanders lived adjacent to the half-caste Melville Island Mission at Garden Point. Another 150 were permanently located at the government settlement at Snake Bay. The remaining Tiwi, about 150, were year-round residents of Darwin; over one hundred lived at Bagot Native Compound and at an unsupervised native camp at Point Gunn directly opposite the southernmost tip of Melville Island; the rest were inmates at the leper colony. The resulting total population of about 930, in 1954, is only about a hundred less than the figure of 1062 which Hart obtained in his census of 1928-29.

Marriage Arrangements

We have discussed how, under the traditional Tiwi pattern of life, the greatest energies of mature males were expended in bargaining with each other for new wives. The old social system was one which had as normal features prenatal and early childhood engagements for females, remarriage for all widows, considerable age difference between marriage partners, and polygamy. The new Catholic system introduced by Father Gsell outlawed, or at least discouraged, polygamous marriages, nuptial unions between persons of greatly differing ages, and all prenatal or childhood betrothals. As indicated, Father Gsell initiated his new policies by purchasing young females and then allowing them to choose their own partners from among their single agemates.

It is of interest to inspect the actual circumstances surrounding one of the earliest unions which took place under Father Gsell's supervision. About 1914, Polly, an attractive young female who had already had a rather checkered career, having been stolen by a Yuwatja male from her rightful mate, was "stolen back" by another Tiwi, Timalarua of the Rangwila. Polly, however, decided that she did not want an old husband like Timalarua, so she ran away to the sisters and Father Gsell. In time, old Timalarua allowed Father Gsell to buy this wife who did not want to live with him. Shortly afterward, Father Gsell asked Polly whom she wanted to marry. Polly named Cabbagee as the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now
592 only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that
159 his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few un-
177 comfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped
592 with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose
[736 deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother
968] had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased
[584 younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Car-
589] mel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were
[607] two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1]
[602] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

177 We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led
162 by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a listing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration
571 in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent.
[768 Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had
604 daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the
584 "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-
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[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 vicinity of this rock, so the legend runs, and they are often called the *Wurukwompila*.

The *Timiririyui* are said to have come originally from a small island off the coast of *Wrayyu* where the *timiririya* (woolly-butt tree) is especially prolific due to the fact that it was here that *Prondupu*, the original mythological woolly-butt, settled after the battle at *Tayio* between the animal-men.

So the story goes on throughout the list of totems. It is not a myth properly so called since mythological figures are in it only incidentally. As told by the Tiwi it is a rationalized explanation on a basis of local geography and the desires of old men generations ago.

● 162 614 The clans vary greatly in size. The largest clan, *Mierdui*, numbers 132 persons whereas the *Paroliuyibila* has only six and the *Taparui* only two. The distribution of the population amongst the clans and the hordes will be dealt with in a later paper in which the results of a census of the Tiwi population will be given.

C. W. M. HART

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

handled, or who happened to be at the brokering age when no big households were being liquidated, found themselves in the position that Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai occupied in 1928-29. We know they had not been successful dealers in their thirties because we found them around the age of fifty with only one resident wife each and relatively few bestowals in prospect. Their earlier dealings in widows had not laid the right foundations for successful careers as elders. Even before he was forty, Padimo had five or six bestowed wives either in residence or in prospect, and Boya, not much over forty, had several already promised. The death of Ki-in-kumi in the near future would bring both of them more reputation and ultimately more bestowals in return for their skill (if they showed it) in the disposition of the estate. The inferiority of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai to these younger men in the marriage and influence struggle was already apparent and would be even more accentuated by Ki-in-kumi's death.

The Politics of Bestowal

The above discussion of how younger men were indirectly benefited by the deaths or impending deaths of wealthy older men does not pretend to give an exhaustive list of all the considerations that went into the reallocation of a dead man's widows. We built our analysis around those factors which were paramount in the case of Ki-in-kumi's household. Other cases were different to the extent that there were real adult sons involved in them rather than a nominal "son" like Boya, or because in them the old man had not chosen a clear-cut executor as Ki-in-kumi had chosen Padimo, or because an old man had surviving brothers close to him in age and alliance who would emphasize the levirate principle and seek to have it followed in the relocation of their dead brother's widows. The few points we are seeking to emphasize among the many that might be emphasized in any exhaustive treatment of Tiwi widow remarriage are: 1) that widow remarriage was a very flexible area in which the ultimate disposition of the widows was decided by the manipulations and wishes of a wide range of individuals including both relatives and nonrelatives. The dead man himself; the fathers of the wives, if still alive; the brothers of the widows, if adults; the widows themselves, if strong minded; the executors of the dead man, if clearly nominated; and the numerous dealers and brokers on behalf of remote clients or even on their own account—all tried to make their own wishes prevail. The result was that no two cases were ever alike, but on balance 2) it was younger men rather than older men who were most likely to enhance their reputations and increase their assets in the long run as the results of these widow redeals, even though in the short run it was the older men who remarried most of the widows, especially the younger widows.

We have briefly discussed what we have labeled the politics of widow remarriage before discussing the politics of infant bestowal, although logically it might appear that infant bestowal should be taken up first. We have ful-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

584 lowed this order because, in Tiwi life, infant bestowal was reserved for fathers,
163 and a Tiwi was at least a middle-aged man before he became a father at all. Before he could have a daughter to bestow, he had to be the father of one; and before he could become a father, he had to have a baby girl bestowed upon him and wait for her to grow up to child-bearing age. The much-married Ki-in-kumi did not have his first actual daughter (as distinct from wives' daughters begotten by previous husbands) until he was forty-five, and Enquirio was closer to fifty than to forty when his first real daughter was born. We are inclined to call such daughters free or unencumbered daughters since the step-daughters brought into a man's household by widows, even young widows, were already bestowed by act of the widows' previous husbands and the new husband's control over their marriage was therefore encumbered by the dispositions made by his predecessors.

Thus most men did not have and could not expect to have any free or
584 unencumbered daughters to bestow until they were well into their forties. By that time a man was a prisoner of his past. When at last he had free daughters he was no longer a free man but a junior elder with a mass of obligations both to older men and to younger men, which he had contracted in the previous twenty or thirty years. Even his initiation, which had started when he
[881] was only about fifteen, left him under obligation to the older men who had initiated him. Any bestowals he had received had almost necessarily come to him from older men. In his thirties, it is true, he had operated in the widow remarriage area and put some older men under obligation to him by acting as their agent. But in his agency activities he had also contracted debts, usually in fee-splitting or log-rolling agreements with other agents of about his own age. Thus all his past activities, from his initiation at fifteen until the arrival of his first free daughter at (let us say) age forty-five, were on balance a story of obligations contracted and debts of gratitude assumed in his career of upward mobility. The more successful he had been up to now, the stronger the pressure on him to begin paying off those who had helped him, since it was assumed that his very success was a clear indication of how much obligation he must have to other men, especially older men and contemporaries.

584 If this line of reasoning had been the only relevant one, a Tiwi of age
557 forty-five just presented with his first free daughter would have had problem enough deciding which of his many obligations to liquidate first by his bestowal decision for that daughter. Unfortunately he was at the age when he had to consider the future as well as the past. Some of his old obligations were to men who were very old and unlikely to live much longer. Others were to men of his own age with whom he had been partners ten years before, but by now it was clear that some of these would never amount to much and paying them
[554] off would reap no dividends for the future. Failure to meet the obligation might incur their enmity, but in view of their lack of success, perhaps their hostility was a lesser evil. In 1929, Gitjara, who had needed L. F. B. to get his own career launched, was ready to drop him as a partner now that Gitjara had attracted favorable notice in the form of two bestowals. The junior elders, though obligated to older men like Ki-in-kumi, were not bestowing their scanty

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation. Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life—for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws) scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago. Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature, though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; graveposts were *pukimani*

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

648 lished between the northern Tiwi and the Japanese. A government ration depot was founded at Garden Point about 1939 and many of the local Tiwi females were taken by the government to Darwin in order to stop their use by Japanese pearlers. However, by that time many Japanese half-castes had been born to the women.

797 In 1940, a new Catholic mission was established at Garden Point to care for these half-castes. This Melville Island Mission brought together not only the island part-aborigines, but also other Catholic half-castes from all over the Northern Territory. By late 1940, it became clear that the existence 648 of a government depot for aborigines at Garden Point was incompatible with a policy aimed toward educating the adjacent half-caste children for life as members of the white Australian community. The government ration center was removed to Snake Bay. Also, by 1940, the government had begun to [164] remove lepers from both Bathurst and Melville islands to a leprosarium on Channel Island in Darwin harbor. Here, over the following years, developed a community of Tiwi which often numbered as many as forty persons. At Channel Island they found themselves forcefully confined amongst natives from many mainland tribes. Tiwi who returned from Channel Island after [177] years of residence there were more sophisticated in European ways than their fellow-tribesmen and found themselves agents of white Australian culture.

The winter (our summer) of 1941 was the last in which the Japanese came to Garden Point. The Catholic brothers who were there at the time viewed at least one extraordinary event in those months before Pearl Harbor. On this occasion, a man in the uniform of a Japanese naval officer was seen aboard the mother ship of the Japanese pearling fleet which called in at Garden Point; under Australian law neither ship nor officer were allowed within the three-mile limit. Pearl Harbor occurred a few months later.

The year 1942 brought modern warfare to the Tiwi. An American plane running out of the Philippines lacked enough fuel to get to Darwin; it landed on the small airstrip at Bathurst Island Mission. Then on February 19, 1942, Darwin was bombed. Japanese planes flew over Bathurst Island Mission on their way to commit what became "Australia's Pearl Harbor." Father McGrath, the local priest, recognized the raiders as Japanese and radioed his warning into Darwin twenty minutes before the horror commenced. The message went unheeded and the loss of life and property was great. Bathurst Island Mission was itself strafed, possibly for the attempt to warn Darwin. The bombing of Darwin left the Northern Territory in chaos. The white residents evacuated southward by any means at hand; in one case, two men drove a road grader seventy miles "down the track" before they felt safe enough to stop.

The disruption of the Tiwi community was as great as that of the white settlement at Darwin, although no Tiwi were killed in the bombing and strafing by the Japanese. The Catholic authorities realized that they could not [797] guarantee a food supply to the natives, and the Tiwi families at the Mission were sent to the bush to support themselves. Tipperary, a Tiwi who was by 1942 an old hand in Darwin, told Pilling (1954) of the privation he had [177] endured when he had taken to the bush and had not had a smoke for four months after the attack on Darwin.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat and so prevent the theft. 776 821 648

The Maratjis at Maundu

Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained by the faeces of the *Maratjis*. 776 778

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandubuka* totem are the only people safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from his own armpits, rubs it over his companion. 751 776 [827]

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then, walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi* which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialuni*, whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of Maundu. [437] [753] [164]

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon, they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an aboriginal, called *Alumgun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this taboo. [841] [784]

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu. 532 x

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained) water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the 778 776

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

BEFORE the advent of the buffalo-hunters, few white men had visited the islands since the 648
early days of the naval settlement at Fort Dundas, established by Sir Gordon [175]
Bremer in 1824, but abandoned four years later. Malays and Japanese pearlers
have been in the habit of taking in water from either of the islands and have
frequently come into disastrous conflict with the natives. It is perhaps also on 164
account of their isolation from civilization that I found the blacks comparatively
free from any serious disease. Apart from the various minor ailments such as
traumatic lesions and their after-effects, cataracts and keratitis, a few congenital
deformities and such like, only a few cases of tertiary syphilis came under my
notice.

A young gin was suffering from a disease of the hip, apparently chronic, but
she was too timid to permit me to make an examination. They are on the whole 142
a healthy, sturdy people of moderate stature, with a good muscular development
and a square, big thorax. The characteristics are Australoid and yet they present [144]
certain insular peculiarities.

The Head.

The forehead is low, with a marked supraorbital development; the face
somewhat depressed and the lower jaw strong. The eyes are sunken and the nose
is small. The wavy black hair of some of the males was worked up into numerous [302]
small, cylindrical, pendant masses with clay and ochre.[1] This, so far as I could [765]
ascertain, designated mourning. Others had besmeared their hair with ochre. The
hairs on the upper lip are pulled out. The growth of the beard of the men varies,
but is, on an average, good.

The natives of either island do not practise the knocking out of one or two 304
incisors as they do on the mainland. Major Campbell,[2] however, reports having 171
observed the custom on Melville Island.

The face is painted symmetrically with differently coloured ochres, charcoal, 302
and pipeclay, in various degrees of complexity (Fig. 1). A few of the simpler designs
might be described briefly:—*Case* (1): The whole surface of the face blackened
with charcoal. *Case* (2): The nose red and the rest of the face charcoal-black.
Case (3): Face (including the shaven upper lip and upper part of chin) charcoal-

[1] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* London, 1852, vol. ii, p. 13: "The characteristic mode of dressing the hair among the Torres Strait Islanders is to have it twisted up into long pipe-like ringlets, and wigs in imitation of this are also worn"; and again, "at Cape York I have at times for a week together seen all the men and lads with the hair twisted into little strands well daubed over with red ochre and turtle fat."

Also P. P. King, *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114: "The men were more muscular and better formed than any we have before seen, they were daubed over with a yellow pigment which was the colour of the neighbouring cliff (Luxmore Head on Melville Island); their hair was long and curly and appeared to be clotted with a whitish paint." [184]

[2] *Journ. Geogr. Society*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 153. *Cf.* also H. Klaatsch: *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 591.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 jointly, or any one of them singly, were able to translate that claim into marriage depended on the other claims. Brotherhood in itself gave no exclusive right to widows, but of course a brother, being necessarily of the same clan and frequently of the same band as the deceased husband, was well in line to assert a claim to the widow if he could make the claim good. Cursory inspection of the genealogies reveals, however, a surprisingly small number of cases of men taking over the widows of their deceased brothers. At best it was a very minor factor in Tiwi marriage customs.

The parallel custom of the sororate—that is, of sisters being married to the same husband—was more common. It occurred both in connection with infant bestowal, by a father promising *all* his daughters by a particular wife [595] to the same husband, or in connection with widow remarriage, whereby two or [584] more full sisters, previously married to the same husband, passed together on his death to the same new husband. The sororate occurred more frequently in the first form than in the second, largely because, as already mentioned, widows had more say in their own marriages than baby girls had, but there was nothing obligatory nor required about it, as is shown by the frequent cases in which a father bestowed all his daughters by one wife on the same man but on the early death of that man rebestowed them *seriatim* on several different husbands. One got the impression, though no Tiwi ever made the point explicit, that within the Tiwi bestowal system the prevailing high rate 165 of infantile and child mortality was an important factor in sustaining the soro- 182 rate principle to the extent that it did exist. A father who bestowed upon a 587 man the first daughter borne by a certain wife was almost obliged to bestow upon the same man the second daughter of the same wife if the first one died in infancy. Moreover, since most fathers bestowed their daughters with an eye to their own advantage, it was clearly desirable if he wanted to cement the goodwill of a prospective son-in-law, to promise him *all* the daughters produced by a certain wife, so that even though most of them died in infancy, at least one or two would be delivered in good condition at the age of puberty. [557] The aim of bestowal was to win friends and influence people, and a bestowal of a child who died before she reached the son-in-law did a father little good. A shrewd father could avoid this risk by following the sororate principle; a stupid or feckless father who scattered his daughters widely could well end up with as many disappointed sons-in-law as friendly ones, as the infantile and child mortality took its heavy toll of his young daughters. In the genealogies, sororate marriages in some form occur much more frequently than levirate marriages, but nonetheless their incidence is such as to indicate that they were a relatively minor feature in Tiwi marriages and that their occurrence was most frequently due to careful fathers trying to insure sons-in-law against disappointment, and themselves against charges of nondelivery.

171 No account of marriage in any Australian tribe can go very far without 582 raising the difficult matter of the kinship system, since all the accounts we have of mainland Australian tribes tell us that all marriages there took place within a rigid kinship framework which required everybody to marry somebody who was automatically his or her cross-cousin (for example, a man and a daughter

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

months after the attack on Darwin. Many of the older Tiwi who were in Darwin during the bombing did not survive the war; the psychological strain and lack of sufficient food was too much for them. Genealogies show that an unusual number of deaths occurred among Tiwi between 1942 and 1946.

When Western food supplies again became available, the old Tiwi bush living seems to have departed. The Tiwi suddenly realized their full dependence upon the products which only the whites could provide. As the war came to an end and one after another of the temporary military bases were abandoned, the missionaries and the Tiwi salvaged what they could, transporting large amounts of corrugated iron to Bathurst Island Mission for native huts. The Tiwi were drawn together around the Mission in larger numbers than ever before, their camps ranging in a line along the Mission beach. The majority of the Tiwi, about 600, considered Bathurst Island Mission their home, although some of the young adult males spent most of the year in Darwin. About 50 islanders lived adjacent to the half-caste Melville Island Mission at Garden Point. Another 150 were permanently located at the government settlement at Snake Bay. The remaining Tiwi, about 150, were year-round residents of Darwin; over one hundred lived at Bagot Native Compound and at an unsupervised native camp at Point Gunn directly opposite the southernmost tip of Melville Island; the rest were inmates at the leper colony. The resulting total population of about 950, in 1954, is only about a hundred less than the figure of 1062 which Hart obtained in his census of 1928-29.

Marriage Arrangements

We have discussed how, under the traditional Tiwi pattern of life, the greatest energies of mature males were expended in bargaining with each other for new wives. The old social system was one which had as normal features prenatal and early childhood engagements for females, remarriage for all widows, considerable age difference between marriage partners, and polygamy. The new Catholic system introduced by Father Gsell outlawed, or at least discouraged, polygamous marriages, nuptial unions between persons of greatly differing ages, and all prenatal or childhood betrothals. As indicated, Father Gsell initiated his new policies by purchasing young females and then allowing them to choose their own partners from among their single agemates.

It is of interest to inspect the actual circumstances surrounding one of the earliest unions which took place under Father Gsell's supervision. About 1914, Polly, an attractive young female who had already had a rather checkered career, having been stolen by a Yuwatja male from her rightful mate, was "stolen back" by another Tiwi, Timalarua of the Rangwila. Polly, however, decided that she did not want an old husband like Timalarua, so she ran away to the sisters and Father Gsell. In time, old Timalarua allowed Father Gsell to buy this wife who did not want to live with him. Shortly afterward, Father Gsell asked Polly whom she wanted to marry. Polly named Cabbagee as the

124 802 were *yadi*, *irrara*, *irradroma*, *arkwawi* and *inalti*, respectively one, two, three, few and many. Some natives had a vague idea of five and ten. A nominal roll of the dead [551] was impossible, as the names of the dead are *ardjidit*, "unlawful," "taboo." A method was arranged whereby flat sticks were used and notched. Separate sticks were taken for males and for females. A group would sit about and the dead identified by relationship with the living. A big notch in the sticks would be made for each adult, a smaller notch for a child, and a tiny notch for a baby. Records obtained in this way 165 showed that at least 56 men, 87 women, 17 boys, 25 girls and one male and one female infant had died. The population of the islands, before the epidemic, was estimated as a result of general enquiries to be about 650, so the known death roll of 187 indicates a high mortality rate.

The original rumour suggested that the natives were dying of measles, as someone had diagnosed some illnesses at the Mission about Christmas time as measles. The extremely low number of infant deaths was entirely against measles being the cause of the holocaust, and supports the native diagnosis of magic.

H. K. Fry,
D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.

[p. 80-B]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

outdance and out-sing and out-party most of the men fifty years younger than himself.[8] 159 888

Since Tu'untalunii was a senior Tiwi household head who spent more of his time attending festivals, funerals, fights, and other collective occasions than did most of his contemporaries, it is instructive to examine his movements over a full year. If he had kept an engagement book during 1928-29, it would have looked something like this: 159 887

Early April (end of wet season): Leaves his home base in Tangio where he has spent most of the wet season and visits the Mission station to attend a few small funerals (children who have died at the Mission in the preceding months). During these funerals a series of fights and duels also takes place. Total people present: perhaps fifty or sixty. Time thus spent in helping to wind up public business: five days. Returns home to Tangio and remains there for rest of April. [797]

End of April: Goes to Rangu with a big party of other Tiklauila for a funeral (junior elder). Fairly big funeral, lots of people, lots of disputes. Time away, including leisurely journey to and from Rangu, about two weeks. Gets back home about middle of May. [764 166]

Middle of May—end of June: Lives quietly at home with his household in Tangio.

About July 1st: Goes to Mission for a few days, "visits" with whoever is there. Tries out a new composition of his own (song and dance) on group camped at Mission. Returns home for rest of July. [533 535]

Last week of July: Taking his younger wives and their children with two senior wives in charge of them, sets out for Malau for a big funeral with lots of people and fights. There he performs his new dance; is much consulted on ceremonial matters by the Malauila; gets into a few fights himself but handles them with dignity and honor; remains in Malau two weeks; stops off to visit and attend a small funeral with the Munupula on his way back; has a fight with a Munupula while there; returns to the Mission; stays there a day or two dispensing all the news from Malau and Munupi to those camped there; issues invitations for a grass burning in some sections of Tangio which were not burned in April or May. Goes on home to Tangio where some of his older wives have remained during his absence. Total time away: about three weeks. [166]

End of August: Is joined in Tangio by several other Tiklauila and Rangwila households whom he has invited. Grass burning and joint kangaroo hunting goes on for four or five days. Dancing and partying at night. After five days most of visiting group leave and he and his household remain alone in Tangio until well into October. [224]

[8] There is no suggestion that Tu'untalunii was in any way an official ritual leader. All old men, by virtue of their years, were to some extent ritual leaders; he had merely worked harder and longer at it than most of them. His tirelessly joyful personality had a good deal to do with his success in the self-established role. In a culture that might be thought likely to make all its men gloomy, anxiety-ridden introverts, he was a warm, happy, dignified old extrovert and he was widely admired. [156]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Middle of October: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[7] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing.

End of October: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

End of January: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

End of February: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

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[7] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeimpi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

To avoid constant use of the awkward phrase "mourning ceremony," we refer to it as the funeral though it took place some considerable time after the burial of the body. How long a time elapsed between the burial and the funeral depended upon the importance of the dead person. The more important the deceased, the longer it took after his or her burial to prepare for the funeral, both ceremonially and practically. Babies frequently had no funeral ceremonies at all, especially if they died very young and unnamed. Children were given small funerals, held within a month or so after the death, and the people present were merely the members of the local households. Young adult men and all adult women had funerals of medium size, and old men had the biggest funerals of all. Big funerals were rarely held in the wet season because of the height of the grass and bush and the consequent difficulty of travel. The season after the end of the rains (April-May-June) was a favorite time for funerals since by then people were moving again and there was then an accumulated backlog of funerals to be held for people who had died late in the previous dry season or during the wet. The mourning ceremonies of two or more people were sometimes held together; this obviously required that they be buried close together, although they need not have died at the same time. Seeking as usual to increase his importance in the public eye, a man might hold the medium-sized funeral of one of his children at the same time and place as the big funeral of an important elder—provided their graves were close together—even though two or three months had separated the two deaths.

The actual burial of the body immediately after death was usually a small affair attended only by whatever people happened to be in the vicinity. But some Tiwi ancients were on their last legs for months before they finally expired, and it was typical of Tiwi psychology that people should maneuver to be present when a death occurred. Until the anthropologist understood that even death had its political aspects, he could not understand why the Tiwi were always so anxious to hang around the camp of an old man who was taking an awfully long time to die. Since so very little happened at the actual time of death, this desire to be on the spot seemed merely morbid curiosity.[5] But it was not. A death immediately divided the whole tribe into two groups: a small group of relatives who automatically became mourners and therefore in a state of strict taboo, and the rest who were not sufficiently close to the deceased to have to assume a state of *pukimani*. The mourners, being *pukimani*, could do scarcely anything except weep and wail and gash their heads with stone axes. They could not touch the body or wrap it in bark; nor could they dig the grave, nor put the body in, nor fill in the hole. They had to ask non-mourners to carry out these tasks and thus became obligated to those non-

[5] How else was one to interpret the reluctance of Hart's party to move on, after spending three weeks waiting for old Tamboo to die, and the old man still lingered on? "Let's wait another day; maybe he'll die tomorrow" was the invariable response to suggestions that we move. "And if he does die, what will happen?" "Nothing; we'll move on then." But this was early in the fieldwork period, before Hart realized the all-pervasive character of Tiwi opportunism.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 609 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human [101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate [173] to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distribu- ●171 tional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how [411] isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their [531] wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus- [764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the [511] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

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[1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the [197 524] result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tralian tribe that was able to develop within the general Australian type of culture a number of distinct features, some of them unique, while at the same time lacking entirely other features which were widespread on the mainland. Tiwi isolation from the mainland explains the differences and the lacks; their favorable environment explains why they were able to develop certain traits along their own unique lines. 171

The Tribe and the Bands

Because they were isolated and few outsiders came near them, they did very little as a united tribe. Everybody on the two islands was a Tiwi, and the Tiwi world stopped at the water's edge. Fuzziness on the edges of tribal territory—a chronic headache to anthropologists working with mainland tribes—did not exist, nor did the problem of marriage outside the tribe. All Tiwi, of course, spoke the same language and practiced the same customs and regarded themselves as *the* people; these were almost the only respects in which they could be said to do anything as a tribal unit. There was no tribal government, there were no tribal officials, and no occasions which required the whole tribe to assemble together as a collective entity. For daily and yearly living, the important group was the band or horde,[2] of which there were nine. The total area of the two islands is about 3000 square miles, but some of this is swampy, some of it waterless, some of it mosquito-infested mangrove jungle, and the suitability of the rest for native living varies a good deal. Hence, the actively used and lived-in areas for each band probably averaged about two hundred square miles each and, in any case, there was not a very close relationship between band size and area occupied. Details of band size at various times are given in a later chapter, but, typically, Tiwi bands probably varied in size between a hundred and three hundred people. 619 [131] 619

The band was the territorial group with which a man most closely identified himself. Though the band lived from day to day spread out over a wide area and a man might not see many of his fellow band-members for weeks at a time, the average Tiwi thought of the two or three hundred square miles of band territory as his "own country" and of his fellow members as his own people. This is why the tribal name—Tiwi—so seldom needed to be used at home on the islands. It did not identify one group as distinct from another, since all locals were Tiwi. Just as in a New York suburb one does not say that there are some Americans in the house next door, but may say that there are some Texans or some Californians or some people from Michigan next door, so a Tiwi, seeing a group of visitors arriving in his band territory, would immediately identify them as Malauila or Rangwila or by whatever band they belonged to. A father would say casually, "I have betrothed my daughter to a 621 [423]

[2] Radcliffe-Brown, the great authority on Australian tribal society, tried to introduce the word "horde" for the Australian local group, but probably because of its suggestion to the popular mind of a dense concentration of people, it has never become established and in these pages we have used the more neutral word "band."

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

542 hold rather than the family. There was no ambiguity about its "living together" aspect; there were many ambiguities about its kinship aspects. To some of these unusual domestic usages we now turn.

Marriage by Betrothal

589 In many nonliterate societies, including most, if not all of the mainland Australian tribes, there is a tendency to believe that the main purpose in life for a female is to get married. The Tiwi subscribed to this idea, but firmly carried it to its logical conclusion; namely, that all females must get married, regardless of age, condition, or inclination. They (and they almost alone among human societies) took the very slight step from saying "All females *should* be married" to saying "All females *must* be married." As a result, in aboriginal times there was no concept of an unmarried female in Tiwi ideology, no word for such a condition in their language, and in fact, no female in the population without at least a nominal husband. Their own explanation of this unique situation was connected with their beliefs about conception and where 581 babies come from. Anthropologists have long been aware that the Australian 842 aborigines generally (and indeed some of the Melanesians, such as the famous case of the Trobriand Islands) ignored the role of the male in human conception and firmly believed that a woman becomes pregnant because a spirit has entered into her body. The Tiwi were no exception, but went a step further than the mainlanders in dealing with the dangerous situation created by the unpredictability of the spirits. Since any female was liable to be impregnated by a spirit at any time, the sensible step was to insist that every female have a husband *all the time* so that if she did become pregnant, the child would always have a father. As a result of this logical thinking, all [584] Tiwi babies were betrothed before or as soon as they were born; females were thus the "wives" of their betrothed husbands from the moment of birth onward. For similar reasons, widows were required to remarry at the gravesides [587] of their late husbands, and this rule applied even to ancient hags who had already buried half a dozen previous husbands in the course of a long life. It can readily be seen that these rules—prenatal betrothal of female infants and immediate remarriage of all widows—effectively eliminated all possibility of an unmarried female from Tiwi society. They also eliminated any possibility of an unmarried mother or a fatherless child. No matter where the unpredictable spirit chose to create a baby, whether it was in the body of a pretty young woman, a toothless old hag, or a little girl of six or seven, the pregnant [711 female would have a husband, and the children when born would have a 848 father. The Tiwi were thus probably the only society in the world with an illegitimacy rate of zero.

584 The practical application of these two unusual rules had certain unusual 851 consequences. The rule of prenatal betrothal obviously gave a great deal of 593 power to the person with the right to betroth, and in Tiwi this right belonged

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 jointly, or any one of them singly, were able to translate that claim into marriage depended on the other claims. Brotherhood in itself gave no exclusive right to widows, but of course a brother, being necessarily of the same clan and frequently of the same band as the deceased husband, was well in line to assert a claim to the widow if he could make the claim good. Cursory inspection of the genealogies reveals, however, a surprisingly small number of cases of men taking over the widows of their deceased brothers. At best it was a very minor factor in Tiwi marriage customs.

The parallel custom of the sororate—that is, of sisters being married to the same husband—was more common. It occurred both in connection with infant bestowal, by a father promising *all* his daughters by a particular wife [595] to the same husband, or in connection with widow remarriage, whereby two or [584] more full sisters, previously married to the same husband, passed together on his death to the same new husband. The sororate occurred more frequently in the first form than in the second, largely because, as already mentioned, widows had more say in their own marriages than baby girls had, but there was nothing obligatory nor required about it, as is shown by the frequent cases in which a father bestowed all his daughters by one wife on the same man but on the early death of that man rebestowed them *seriatim* on several different husbands. One got the impression, though no Tiwi ever made the point explicit, that within the Tiwi bestowal system the prevailing high rate 165 of infantile and child mortality was an important factor in sustaining the soro- 182 rate principle to the extent that it did exist. A father who bestowed upon a 587 man the first daughter borne by a certain wife was almost obliged to bestow upon the same man the second daughter of the same wife if the first one died in infancy. Moreover, since most fathers bestowed their daughters with an eye to their own advantage, it was clearly desirable if he wanted to cement the goodwill of a prospective son-in-law, to promise him *all* the daughters produced by a certain wife, so that even though most of them died in infancy, at least one or two would be delivered in good condition at the age of puberty. [557] The aim of bestowal was to win friends and influence people, and a bestowal of a child who died before she reached the son-in-law did a father little good. A shrewd father could avoid this risk by following the sororate principle; a stupid or feckless father who scattered his daughters widely could well end up with as many disappointed sons-in-law as friendly ones, as the infantile and child mortality took its heavy toll of his young daughters. In the genealogies, sororate marriages in some form occur much more frequently than levirate marriages, but nonetheless their incidence is such as to indicate that they were a relatively minor feature in Tiwi marriages and that their occurrence was most frequently due to careful fathers trying to insure sons-in-law against disappointment, and themselves against charges of nondelivery.

171/ No account of marriage in any Australian tribe can go very far without raising the difficult matter of the kinship system, since all the accounts we have 582 of mainland Australian tribes tell us that all marriages there took place within a rigid kinship framework which required everybody to marry somebody who was automatically his or her cross-cousin (for example, a man and a daughter

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of his mother's brother).[10] Enough has been said already to indicate that in Tiwi marriage nothing was automatic. Females were given in marriage by their fathers, or (to a lesser extent) by their brothers, or (to a still lesser extent) by their sons. But fathers died and were succeeded by the men their widows remarried, and these men renamed all the widow's children, and by renaming them established some rights to make marriage decisions for the females. Therefore, cross-cousin marriage in Tiwi was merely part of the total system of marriage and had to adjust itself to the rest of the system. In theory, fathers could only bestow their infant daughters on men who stood to them in the relation of sisters' sons. Conversely, every man who received a bestowed wife received her from a man who was technically his mother's brother and of course the girl's father. To this extent the Tiwi were a tribe who practiced cross-cousin marriage and their kinship system belonged to one of the commonest Australian types, that which Radcliffe-Brown called Type I, having investigated it among the mainland tribe called the Kariera.[11] But a kinship system of the Kariera type could not accommodate all the complexities that had been introduced into Tiwi life by the emphasis on infant bestowal and widow remarriage. In particular, the generations kept getting badly mixed up, as for instance in the very common case of old men bestowing their infant daughters on other old men of their own age group, and in return receiving as infant wives (or wards) daughters of those old men. With this happening constantly, it was difficult to maintain the kinship principle that recipients of wives were always sons of the donor's sister and donors were always brothers of the recipient's mother. Which was mother's brother and which was sister's son in the case of two old men busily swapping daughters was a problem that put a severe strain on a Kariera-type kinship system. And widow remarriage introduced further complexities. We have already mentioned the case of two young men, Antonio and Dominico, who through a judicious use of widow-remarriage had ended up married to each other's elderly mothers. This was no isolated case; many pairs of men of like age were married to each other's mothers. Who called whom "father" and who called whom "son" became an insoluble riddle in such cases.

To avoid further involvement in the labyrinthine complexities of Australian kinship organization, all that we need say here is that the Tiwi had unscrambled the potential confusion introduced into their kinship categories by inventing a few new terms which, superimposed upon their Kariera-type system, kept everything straight. In Kariera, and generally among all the mainland tribes, no kinship distinction was made between potential wife and actual wife or between potential "in-laws" and actual "in-laws." A Kariera male called all the girls who were eligible for marriage to him by the same term (*Nuba*, usually translated mother's brother's daughter); all the fathers of such girls

[10] The definitive work on Australian kinship systems is Radcliffe-Brown 1930-31, and there is a large technical literature on the subject. See also Elkin 1951; Berndt 1955 and 1957; Murdock 1949.

[11] See Radcliffe-Brown 1913.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

starvation level than was the case with many of the mainland tribes.[8] Even to talk about the Tiwi in near-starvation terms seems quite incongruous, for there was an abundance of native food available the whole year around and their only problem was to collect or catch it. We regard the development of their large multiple-wife household as essentially their own evolutionary solution to the problem of finding the most efficient unit of food production. Abundant food was there in the bush in its raw state; the most efficient way to extract it was by a work unit represented by such households as those of Ki-in-kumi, or Tu'untalumi, with the old remarried widows directing the young women and the hunting and fish spearing being done by the younger males. 262 182 121 592

Even the smallest households nearly always contained at least one old female veteran of the food quest who knew the bush like the palm of her hand and could wrestle some food out of the most inhospitable district. The only households that ever went hungry—and they only overnight or at worst for twenty-four hours or so—were the small households of only one or two wives, especially if both wives were young and inexperienced or young and flighty or both. Such households were uneconomic and were rare. On the other hand, the apparently absurd households such as those in which two young men shared their respective elderly mothers as wives, made good economic sense. Any attempt by two such young men to substitute two young wives or even four young wives for the two old ladies would have drastically reduced the standard of living of the household. When young wives arrived in Tiwi households they were not regarded as replacements for the old crones but joined as reinforcements and apprentices to the skilled workers—the veterans. The sexual aspects of marriage were necessarily subordinated to the housekeeping or food-production aspects, which is why in the previous section we spoke of every young man laying the foundation of his household by marrying an elderly widow usually long before there was any young wife in sight. 592

Since the bigger the household the more food it produced for its own consumption, there was a tendency for the smaller and therefore hungrier households to hang around the fringes of the bigger ones. Though every household was autonomous and could camp and collect food anywhere in the band territory in which it roamed, it was rare to find all the households in a band distributed evenly over the available territory. In Malau, Enquirio's household and that of Merapanni were usually to be found camped together, since the two men were full brothers and not in competition with each other. Also camped with or near them on any given occasion would be a few other small households. Such a combined group as this would, all told, amount to between forty and fifty people camping at the same spot and remaining together for weeks at a time. Under mainland conditions in most areas, a gathering of forty people for ten days at a time in the same locality was unheard of, except on 361 592 [171]

[8] As was pointed out earlier, the best-watered and most fertile areas of the mainland were the areas attractive to white settlement, and the tribes who inhabited such areas (for example, Victoria or coastal Queensland) were wiped out quickly. Most of the mainland tribes who survived long enough to be studied by modern anthropologists were tribes whose habitats were unfavorable both for native and for white occupation.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply. The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece of meat or a dish of *kwoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

on whom, but they also brooded long and suspiciously upon who had supported whom and why, either verbally or with spear in hand. In addition, all the incidents of the battle, in minute detail, were relayed to the rest of the tribe who had not been present, and many of these absentees would discover, among the proceedings, things they did not like or suspicious-looking actions on the part of some of their competitors or putative friends. These they would weave into their own strategies and store up for future use. An elder frequently found some basis for a new grievance against somebody in the events of a battle at which he had not even been present. 628 578

Finally, through all these disputes and hostile actions between senior men ran their united suspicion of bachelors. The only "battle" in two years between large groups drawn from distinct bands that had a clear-cut and definite final act was one fought in Rangu in late 1928. On that occasion, after disputing and fighting among themselves from early morning until mid-afternoon, all the old men present from both war parties gradually channeled all their anger toward one unfortunate young Mandiimbula bachelor whom they finally accused of going around from band to band creating misunderstandings between various elders. Several elders on both sides testified publicly that their mistrust of each other had started shortly after the bachelor in question had begun hanging around their households; whereupon the senior warriors of the two opposing armies had no difficulty in deciding that most of their suspicions of each other "were all his fault," and with great unanimity ganged up on the bachelor and quickly clubbed him into unconsciousness for being a troublemaker and a suspicion spreader. In the midst of battle the gerontocracy had reasserted its solidarity by finding a bachelor scapegoat upon whom to unload all their mutual suspicions and aggressions. 54 578 628

Religious Activities

If by religious activities we mean those beliefs and practices which pertain to unseen or supernatural forces, including rituals whose performance somehow affects those forces, then Tiwi religion readily crystallized around three focal points. These were: 1) their elaborate system of day-to-day taboos; 2) the elaborate set of beliefs and rituals pertaining to death; and 3) their complicated initiation ceremonies for young men. Add to these their myths and folklore about creation and their tribal past, and the whole of Tiwi religion has been covered. Space permits only brief mention of these three focal points. 771

TABOO In earlier chapters we have pointed out several aspects of life in which Tiwi culture diverged sharply from what anthropologists have come to regard as Australian mainland norms and we have suggested that these differences from the mainland are most reasonably to be attributed to either Tiwi isolation or favorable food supply, or some combination of both factors. In their religious life this same line of explanation continues to have validity. To those familiar with the cultures of Australian tribes, perhaps 171 789

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 789 [754] nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation. 13 Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because [182] they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life— [789] for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals [164 (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws) 731] scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago. [761 Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle 764] that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their 101 cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next 131 door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature, 182 though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic 754 making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

784 The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; graveposts were *pukimani*

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

771 784 sister's son being initiated, the attitude of a Tiwi toward the whole *pukimani* state was essentially a passive attitude. *Pukimani* behavior was something one accepted and conformed to when required; it was in no way an active attempt to change nature, people, food, gods, spirits, or anything else in the universe. [181] It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that since their *pukimani* system offered them no handle by which to seek actively to alter the universe in which they lived, the Tiwi found that universe to their liking as it was. Unlike the tribes of central Australia who lavished a lot of thought upon magical methods of improving the food supply or the rainfall, the Tiwi believed and acted on the belief that as long as they observed their *pukimani* taboos, the food would continue to be as abundant and the rains as regular as they had always been. [171] The central Australians, by seeking to coerce nature through magic, suggest that they found nature unsatisfactory; the Tiwi, by relying upon passive taboo-observance alone, suggest rather that their relationship to nature was an acceptable equilibrium that they wanted to preserve, not change. And if everybody observed his *pukimani* taboos when required, that equilibrium would remain undisturbed. Hence the antisocial man in Tiwi was not the maker of individual magic (he was unknown, anyway) but the nonobserver of taboo. By his nonobservance he threatened to upset the normally satisfactory equilibrium between man and nature. [626] For a senior Tiwi male to be charged publicly with breaking *pukimani* rules was a disgrace and a blow to his prestige and his position in public opinion. His behavior was possibly a sin against the spirits but it was certainly a shame in the eyes of his fellows. *Pukimani* observance was thus a matter of respectability to a much greater degree than it was a matter of pleasing the spirits.

765 DEATH As was mentioned above, death is the natural phenomenon around which the Tiwi had woven their most elaborate web of ritual. The most frequent and most important Tiwi ceremonies were the mourning ceremonies, [554 56 562] and they came in three sizes—small, medium, and large—depending on the age, sex, and importance of the dead person. The mourning ceremonies which drew the crowds were not held until some time after the death and burial. 764 All bodies of dead persons were buried within twenty-four hours of their death by digging a hole near the camp where the death had occurred and placing the body, wrapped in bark, in it. Near most well-used camping spots there was already a graveyard marked by old graveposts, and the latest corpse was buried there or near there. Seldom was the body carried any distance for burial. If a person died even less than a mile from an old burial ground, there was little inclination to carry the body that far. He would be buried, instead, within perhaps a hundred yards of where he died. This had certain awkward repercussions for social organization, since occasionally a person died while away from his home district and, being buried where he died, his ceremonies were held and his posts erected in a district in which his immediate family [591] did not live. Young men often used this to validate a change of residence, giving as their reason for living in a band territory in which they had not grown up, the location there of their father's graveposts.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he still had six years to go after that, not finishing the final grade of *Mikingula* until somewhere past the age of 24 or 25.

In contrast with the mainland initiation ceremonies, we think the most interesting point about Tiwi initiation resides not in the formal ceremonies but in the removal from the food-production units, for long periods of the year, of all the young males between the ages of 14 and 25. It is true that they did not spend *all* their time in seclusion and that after the age of twenty they remained mostly in their household camps, where they contributed to the household food production. Nonetheless, it remains clear that only a very well-off tribe could afford to allow so much time off from food production to all its young hunters. Tiwi fathers, it would seem, in arranging for the initiation of their sons to begin just when they were becoming productive hunters, were willing to sacrifice that productivity for less tangible advantages. The youths, secluded and guarded in the bush while getting an education, were not only out of the work force but were also out of the predatory-bachelor force. A Tiwi elder made sacrifices to "send his sons to college" but he breathed easier to know that the sons of the other elders were all there too.

All males without exception had to go through the full initiation cycle, and from the time of their first forcible seizure at the age of 14-15 to their final graduation at 24-26, they were in a state of *pukimani* and their personal names were strictly taboo to everybody in the tribe. Each youth was referred to only by his grade name, *Marukumarni* for the first year, *Mikingula* for the last four years, and so on. And here we return finally to a point which was mentioned much earlier—namely, the complete unimportance in tribal eyes of all males below the age of twenty-five. Until they had completed the final stage of initiation, Tiwi males were still boys; they did not even have names. Occasionally, when collecting genealogies and coming upon a reference to a young man, the innocent anthropologist would ask, "Is he married?" In tones of the deepest contempt the informant would reply, "That kid, how could he be married? He's still *Mikingula*." Though *Mikingula* was the stage typically reached by a man at about 20-21 and lasted for the next four years, to the Tiwi it was still a stage in the life of a boy. Not until he had finished as *Mikingula* could he step out into the world and life of men. How he spent the years immediately after finishing initiation decided how soon some senior man would think sufficiently highly of him to aid him in acquiring his first ancient widow.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER I

The Art of the Tiwi

1. THE ART FORMS

ALTHOUGH Melville Island is separated from the mainland of Australia by the Dundas Strait, only fourteen miles in width, the art forms on either side of this swift-running tideway bear little resemblance to each other. That of the mainland, of which the bark and cave paintings of Oenpelli are typical (Mountford, 1956, pp. 112–264; Spencer, 1928, pp. 802–24), is representational, and among the most decorative art forms employed by the Australian aborigines, while that of Melville Island is highly formalized, and cannot be interpreted without the aid of the artist. In this respect (although they employ different motifs) the art of the Melville Islanders resembles that of the aborigines of Central Australia (Mountford, 1937, pp. 84–95).

2. MEDIUMS OF EXPRESSION

The aborigines of Melville Island,[5] like those on the mainland (Spencer, 1928, p. 793) painted designs on the inside of the sheets of bark that made up their wet-weather shelters. Basedow (1913, p. 320, Pls. 19–20) figured bark paintings he collected from bark shelters on Melville Island, and Campbell (1834, p. 151), referring to shelters he saw near Fort Dundas (Punata), in Apsley Straits, writes, "Some of them were ornamented with figures drawn in white pipeclay; one, in particular, was neatly and regularly done all over, representing the cross-bars of a cell."[6]

Under normal tribal conditions, however, it is in the carving and painting of the elaborate burial poles and the ceremonial spears, coupled with the decorating of the large bark baskets, that the aborigines of Melville Island find an outlet for their artistic efforts.

The effect of the *pukamuni* burial ceremony was evident in many of the bark paintings collected on the expedition. For example, Pl. 3D, Pl. 54F, and Pl. 54A, are essentially the same designs as a Melville Island artist would use to

[5] For the sake of simplicity I will, in future, use the term, Melville Island, or the tribal name, Tiwi, to indicate the Melville and Bathurst Island culture, both of which are part of the same tribal unit.

[6] This would have been a design similar to that on bark painting (Pl. 52D).

[p. 18 blank]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

531 decorate a burial pole; and others, Pl. 2D, Pl. 10C, and Pl. 11A, similar to those he would paint on the ceremonial baskets.

I did not see or hear of figures being made in bark (Mountford, 1956, p. 443, fig. 65C, D); moulded in wax (Elkin and the Berndts, 1950, Pl. 21, Mountford, 1956, Pl. 143) or in the sands of the sea-shore (Mountford, 1956, p. 404, Pl. 91C, D), as is done in north-eastern Arnhem Land. Nevertheless, [532] the men did carve large burial poles in the form of human beings and smaller full-length figures, associated with the *pukamani* ceremonies. These figures bore some small resemblance to those recorded from north-eastern Arnhem Land (Berndt, 1948, Figs. A, B, Pls. 1, 2; Mountford, 1956, Pls. 130–40).

3. TECHNIQUES

386 (*a*) COLOURS. The pigments used for the decoration of the burial poles and the production of the bark paintings, were red, yellow and white ochres. As there was no suitable black pigment on the islands, the artists used crushed charcoal in its place.

[317] The source of the best ochres is a pit at Imilu on Cape Van Diemen (Fig. 1). This ochre, called *imilu*, is a bright yellow when collected,[7] but, when heated in the fire, it changes to a clear red. A soft white stone is common along the beaches. The ochres are not ground on a stone, as on the mainland (Mountford, 1956, p. 11), but, being friable, are crushed and mixed in a large cockle shell with water and fixative.

The aborigines often spoke of a superior ochre at Numanira, northern Melville Island (Fig. 1), which could be gathered only at low tide. I did not see any of this ochre in use.

(*b*) FIXATIVES. Three different types of fixative are used to ensure that the painted designs, both on the poles and the baskets, were as permanent as [314] possible. They were: the sticky gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids (*Dendrobium* sp.); the wax and honey of the wild bee, well mixed together; [237] and the yolks of the eggs of the sea-going turtle. The fixative was either mixed with the pigments or rubbed on the painting surface.

412 (*c*) BRUSHES. Simple brushes, made of strips of bark of varying widths, square across the bottom, chewed at one end, and held as in Fig. 2A and 2C, were used for the bulk of the work.[8] For making the dots, however, the artists used a

[423] [7] There did not appear to be any restriction on the gathering of this ochre; any aboriginal could go to Imilu and take as much as he wished.

[171] [8] The long flexible brush of the aborigines of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 12, fig. 3), was not used at Melville Island, although the bark brush (Fig. 2B) was often held in a similar manner.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER II

The Creation Period

WHATEVER differences may exist between the Melville Island cultures and those of the mainland, and, in some aspects, those differences are considerable, the creation stories indicate that the two cultures sprang from the same source.[9]

At the close of the creation period, both on Melville Island and the mainland, the original creators, men and women, were transformed, or transformed themselves, into various creatures, plants, natural forces or heavenly bodies.

Although I would not claim that the list of totems is complete, I feel certain that the aboriginal artists pictured, on the bark paintings, most of the areas created by their mythical forbears. More detailed research may reveal additional totemic places.

The list of the thirty-four totemic ancestors illustrated on the bark paintings is curiously unbalanced in its distribution. More than a third of these are trees, almost all eucalypts. The remaining four groups are: the natural forces, creatures of the air, the sea, and one inanimate totem, i.e. red ochre. Neither land animals nor reptiles are referred to in the bark paintings of the totemic places, although they appear in the myths.

These facts contrast strongly with the Central Australian beliefs regarding their totemic creatures (Mountford, 1948, p. 23; Spencer and Gillen, 1899, p. 387), where almost every living thing, particularly the creatures, took some part in the creation of the topography; plant totems are uncommon in Central Australia.

The same Central Australian characteristics are also evident in the myths of Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 21), although in the adjacent Arnhem Land, the great creators, i.e., the *Wawalik* Sisters (Warner, 1937, p. 250), and the *Djunkgao* Sisters (Berndt, 1952; Mountford, 1956, p. 267; Warner, 1937, p. 336), made the bulk of the topography, plants and creatures.

Although the Groote Eylandt pantheon, like that of Melville Island, originated as men and women, they were, almost without exception, changed to non-human totems, whereas the great creators of Arnhem Land, the *Wawalik* and the *Djunkgao* Sisters, have always remained human.

[9] Little research has been carried out on the creation stories of the Australian aborigines; Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 387) giving the most detailed account.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 As the sharpened sticks pierced his feet, *Mudasi* fell to the ground calling
825 *girik-girik* (his call today), then changing himself into the fork-tailed kite (*Milvus migrans*), rose into the air and flew away.[17]

Quickly *Jurumu* sought out the woman, *Parabruma*, and proposed marriage, but she, knowing of his treachery, angrily refused him. Incensed and disappointed, *Jurumu* struck *Parabruma* on either side of the head with his throwing stick, cutting her head so badly that long pieces of bleeding skin hung down on each side.

Screaming with pain (her present-day call), *Parabruma* changed herself into the masked plover (*Lobibyx miles*). One can still see those red flaps of skin hanging on either side of her face. Intent on revenge, *Mudasi's* brother, *Pilibilinnga*, crept up behind *Jurumu* and speared him in the back. Shouting "*gutli-gutli*" (his call), *Jurumu* changed himself into the wedge-tailed eagle (*Oroaetus audax*). When *Pilibilinnga* saw this he became a small brown hawk (unidentified).

Jurumu appears in another early creation myth when he, his wife *Narina*,
773 and her brother, *Kilpuruni*, lived in the same camp. One day, when the woman was out in the forest collecting food for her husband, *Kilpuruni* came up and asked for some. *Narina* offered him an opossum, but he said he was not fond of that meat. After refusing wild honey and several other foods, *Kilpuruni* admitted that he really wanted *Narina* to go in the bush with him. *Narina* refused, saying they could not do so, because they were brother and sister. However, *Kilpuruni*, by persistence and cajolery, finally had his way.

On returning to camp, *Narina* confessed her misdeeds to *Jurumu*, who, although he was angry and punished his wife, did not mention the matter to his brother-in-law. Biding his time, he invited *Kilpuruni* to go with him to look for hives of wild bees.

They had both climbed a high eucalyptus tree, when *Jurumu* showed his brother-in-law a hive at the end of a long projecting branch. Waiting until *Kilpuruni* had climbed out to investigate the hive, *Jurumu* cut the limb, which crashed to the ground on the top of the unfortunate victim.

Kilpuruni, all flattened out, changed himself into the present-day blanket
[825] lizard (*Chamydosaurus kingii*); *Narina*, who, in spite of his misdeeds, was fond of *Kilpuruni*, became the black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksi*) and still mourns for her unfortunate brother, while *Jurumu*, now the wedge-tailed eagle, is always on the look-out to kill and eat his wife's seducer.

[171] [17] A myth, with many points of resemblance, except that the main actors were crows and a wedge-tailed eagle, was collected by the author from the Adnjamatana tribe of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia. (Mountford, 1937, field notes.)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

3. THE DEATH OF PURUKUPALI

While many of the people of the early creation period were spreading over the island, the original family, *Wuriupranala*, *Murupiangkala* and *Purukupali*, and their descendants, had established themselves on south-eastern Melville Island; *Murupiangkala*, with her daughter *Tukumbuna* and her grandchildren, *Tukimbini*, *Wilinduela* and *Numanirakala*, at Murupianga; *Wuriupranala* with her son *Wuriuprinili*, at Wuriupi; and *Purukupali*, his wife *Bima* and their infant son, *Djinini*, at Impanali (Fig. 1). 773

Purukupali was strongly attached to *Djinini*. Every morning, when *Bima* went out food-gathering, she would take *Djinini* with her, bringing him back to *Purukupali* at the end of the day, together with the food she had collected.

In the same camp lived an unmarried man, *Tjapara*, who used to persuade *Bima* to leave her child asleep under the shade of a tree and sneak into the forest with him. This intrigue had been going on for some time when, on one very hot day, *Bima* stayed away from her child too long, for, when she returned, the shade had moved and *Djinini* was lying dead in the hot sun. Distraught with grief, *Bima* chanted her song of remorse—

Bili wangia tingatia
(Evil woman am I to have caused the death of my son.)

When *Purukupali* heard of the death of *Djinini*, his anger knew no bounds.[18] Striking his wife on her head with a throwing stick, and hunting her into the forest, he decreed that death should come to the whole world. As his son had died, said *Purukupali*, so the whole of creation would die, and once dead, never again would come to life. There was no death before that time.

Tjapara remonstrated with *Purukupali*, and pleaded for the dead body of *Djinini*, promising to restore him to life in three days.[19] But *Purukupali* was so adamant that the two men quarrelled about this matter until *Purukupali*, losing his temper, threw a *muruguna* (Pl. 32D) at *Tjapara* who replied with the forked throwing stick, *miluanta* (Pl. 32C) known today as *Tjapara's muruguna*. Soon the two men were locked in a deadly struggle, each wounding the other severely in the face and body.

[18] My informant stated that it was not the intrigues of *Tjapara* and *Bima* that enraged *Purukupali*, but that, by their selfishness, they had caused the death of his son.

[19] This is a reversal of ideas. In the mainland myths it is the moon that brings death to mankind (Mountford, 1956, p. 503), but among the Tiwi, it is the moon who endeavours to prevent death coming to the world. This is one of the many factors that suggest that the Tiwi must have been separated from the effects of the mainland cultures for a considerable period. [171] [174]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 the ceremonial baskets. But he did not fulfil his obligations. This breach of faith so infuriated the other fish-men that they chased him through the trees to spear him. Thinking to escape punishment, *Pipinjawari* jumped into the sea, and transformed himself into the queen fish. But the other men, also [825] transforming themselves into fish, continued the chase. Even now, on calm days, the aborigines often see *Pipinjawari*, with his broken back-bone now a dorsal fin, jumping out of the water to escape his pursuers.[24]

×532
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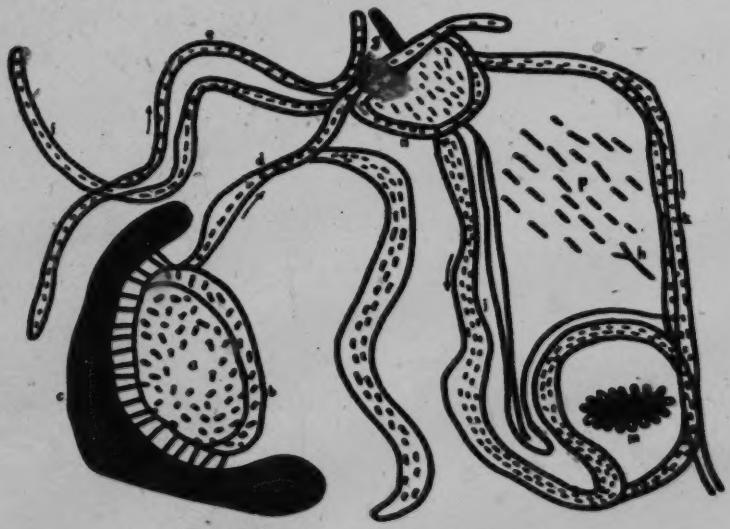


FIG. 3. *Spear-throwing Contest of Pipinjawari*

Fig. 3 is a crayon drawing of *Purukupali's pukamani* and the spear-throwing contest of the fish-people.

On the lower left is Timbaranapi, where all the mythical people assembled to perform the last *ilamia* before carrying out the final burial rituals.

At Timbaranapi, the men danced in the *milimilu*, *a*, and the women on the outskirts at *b*. The radiating lines on the edge of the *milimilu* are many baskets filled with food for the "workers" (Pl. 252), and crescent *c*, the ground cleared by the "workers". The men travelled by path, *e*, and the

[171] [24] This is the same fish as the *Tiwirdu* of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford 1956, p. 349).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The vertical lines at the bottom of the painting symbolize the rays of the sun-woman as she rises in the east, and the groups of dots throughout the design, the stars, *aspalinga*, in the night sky. 532x 773

On Pl. 5C, D, the two concentric circles, *d*, indicate the surface, while *a*, is the *imunka*,[81] or life centre of the sun.

The painting shows a number of different clouds; a thin misty cloud at *b*, heavy rain clouds which temporarily obscure the sun at *h*, *h*, *h*, etc., a mackerel sky at *c* (indicated by the short radiating lines), and cumulus clouds at *j*, *j*.

The colours of sunrise and sunset are indicated by the horizontal bands, *g*, *g*; while the lines of light, which sometimes radiate from the sunset, are at *e*, *e*, etc., and those from the sunrise at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 6A, B, is a bark painting of Wuriupi, the totem place of *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman. Her body, now a patch of jungle, is at *a*; her head at *n*, and her abdomen at *k*. Her arms are at *b*, *b*; her legs at *c*, *c*; her breasts at *j*, *j*; her ears at *m*, *m*; the chevron scars on her arms and back at *e*, *e*, etc. 532x 778

The windbreak of her camp, *d*, is a sandy beach at Wuriupi, and the shelter, under which she rested, is a large yam, whose leaves, vine and blossoms, are indicated by symbols, *h*, *h*; *l*, *l*; *v*, *v*, etc. Tracks made by the sun-woman are shown at *x*, *x*; *x*, *x*; red rocks on the beach at *g*, *g*; and black rocks at *f*, *f*.

Pl. 7B, a painting on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, also refers to the sun-woman. 532x 821

The sun is represented by the black circle in the lower section of the design, while the disc in the centre of the circle is the torch of blazing bark which the sun-woman carries across the sky to provide the world with light and heat. The white, upper disc represents the large thunderclouds which, at the beginning of the wet season, often obscure the sun.[82] The surrounding concentric circles and the parallel lines across the middle of the design symbolize the colours on the edge of the clouds at sunrise or sunset.

The lighter coloured diagonal lines refer to groups of cirrus clouds, and the darker, to monsoon clouds of the rainy season. The dots are the stars of the night sky.

The vertical black line in the middle of Pl. 7D, is the track across the sky of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*. The black disc across the bottom is the sun in the morning; the one immediately above, the sun at midday; the next,

[81] The *imunka* is a universal life essence which permeates all living things, the plants, the creatures and man. It is situated in the solar-plexus of man. This is the same life essence as that of the Pitjendadjara tribe of the western deserts of Central Australia (Mountford, 1948, p. 111). [774] [171]

[82] When a thundercloud obscures the sun, the aborigines believe that *Andjahi* (fresh water) has taken his wife, *Wuriupranala*, to his camp.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

776 ance, with a long black body, short, thick legs and arms, and a pendant abdomen, caused by continuous over-eating.

Pakadringa, with his sister, *Bumerali*, the lightning-woman, her husband, *Kilipatu*, and their many children travel together in the thunderclouds.

776 821 *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, has flaked stone axes, called *rikas*,[84] mounted on long crooked handles, which she carries in either hand. With these, while travelling in the clouds with *Pakadringa*, she strikes the ground beneath, destroying the trees and sometimes the aborigines.[85] *Bumerali* becomes angry when her children jump from cloud to cloud. The sharp crack of the thunder which immediately follows the lightning flash is the voice of *Bumerali*[86] reprimanding her children for their disobedience.

Tomituka, *Pakadringa's* other sister, is the woman of the monsoon rain. At the start of the wet season, the trees and plants become happy when they hear the distant rumblings of *Pakadringa* for they know that *Tomituka* comes with him, bringing rain for their thirsty roots.

× 532 Pl. 10D illustrates the mythical *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms.

776 821 The black central oval and the semi-circles at the top and bottom of the painting are the dark-coloured thunderclouds of *Pakadringa*. At *b*, *b*, etc., are white thunderclouds, and *c*, *c*, etc., red-coloured clouds which appear in the sky after a storm has passed. The designs *a*, *a*, etc., indicate the rainbow-women, *Maratji* (p. 154), and the dots on the background, the falling rain.

Pl. 22A, B, deals with the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. Her eyes are indicated at *a*, *a*; her breasts at *d*, *d*; her feet at *f*, *f*; her camps at *k*, *k*; and her nose is at *b*.

The crooked handles of her stone axes are at *c*, *c*, and the "road" of the lightning (the flash) is at *e*.

The upper crescent, *g*, is the thundercloud in which *Bumerali* and her family travel; *h*, a yellow cloud which forms after the storm has passed, *s*, *s*, *s*, are stringy-bark trees, and *n*, *n*, other trees killed by *Bumerali's* axe;

[84] Some of my informants said that the axes of *Bumerali* were made of a white stone which she had picked up at Moonga Hill, north of Turiturina, western Bathurst Island, where, I was told, there is an outcrop of quartz. Others said she made the axes from a white stone found in the upper world, Tuniruna, p. 171.

[85] There is a widespread belief throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and some of the Indonesian Islands, that the prehistoric stone axes, found by the peasant people, were thunderbolts (Mountford, 1955, p. 1). At Oenpelli (Mountford, 1956, p. 208) a lightning man, *Mamaragan*, carries stone axes on his hands and knees. With these axes he strikes the ground. It is of some interest to find the myth of such a widespread belief among the Australian aborigines.

[86] The aborigines distinguish between the sharp crack of thunder (the voice of *Bumerali*) and the rumble of distant thunder, that of *Pakadringa*.

[171]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

I. BELIEFS IN THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

The fear of the spirits of the dead and the desire of the living to propitiate them are the bases for the complicated burial rituals, not only of the Tiwi, but of all Australian tribes. 769 765

The Tiwi spirits of the dead, the *mopaditis*, live in self-contained communities at the various totemic places on Melville and Bathurst Islands. The *mopaditis* have the same appearance as the aboriginal folk, except that their bodies no longer have substance, being but nebulous images of their former selves. 775 [778]

No living person has seen these *mopaditis*, for they are invisible by day, white in the moonlight and black in the darkness. Although, normally, the *mopaditis* travel on the surface of the ground in the same manner as the aborigines, they are able, when crossing a river, or an arm of the sea, to walk on the surface of the water.

In the spirit land, the *mopaditis*, who are eternal, retain their totems (*pukwi*), marry spirit women of the correct tribal relationships, and have children who grow to maturity.[47] They eat the same food as the aborigines, going hungry if the hunting is poor,[48] and use the same implements and weapons.[49]

At the death of an aboriginal, the *mopaditi* rises out of the chest of the corpse. If the corpse is that of an infant, or a very small child, its *mopaditi* stays in the immediate neighbourhood, sleeping with the bereaved mother every night, but leaving in the morning before she wakes up. This continues until the woman has recovered from her grief.

After some months, the spirit child, now called a *buda-buda*, re-enters the body of its previous mother through her vulva and starts life again as a human being. [842]

On the other hand, if the person has lived for some time, its *mopaditi* stays around the grave, mourning because it has to leave its old companions. But after three days have elapsed, the *mopaditi* calls out "*Nimbungi*" (good-bye), and sets off, unaccompanied,[50] to the locality where it was born, which, before

[47] The aborigines are not certain whether the children, like their parents, have eternal life.

[48] This is unusual; in most of the aboriginal heavens I have heard of, for example, north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 323), there is ample, easily-gathered food. [171]

[49] These days, the *mopaditis* have even the modern wooden canoes, although, up to fifty years ago, their canoes, like those of the living people, were made from a folded sheet of bark. [177]

[50] Some aborigines believe that the father, or some close relative, comes to the grave and guides the spirit to its birthplace.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Unidentified

The designs on Pl. 28T are the same as those painted on the face of the chief mourner, *Katapi*, at *Waniamperi's* final *pukamuni*. I did not ask about their meanings. 302 778

Although I did not learn the meanings of the facial designs on the remaining faces on Pl. 28, it is reasonable to suppose they all referred to some mythological story, probably associated with the totem of the aboriginal who wore them.

7. THE PUKAMUNI DANCES

A number of the dances we saw at the *ilanias* and final *pukamuni* rituals belonged exclusively to certain Tiwi totemic groups. They were so constant in form that, in no time, we could recognize the dance and the totem to which it belonged. [794] 765 535

Many of these dances are more strenuous than any belonging to the mainland; some of them, indeed, so strenuous, i.e., the crocodile (Pl. 30E), the shark (Pl. 30G), or the sea-eagle (Pl. 30J), that they seldom lasted more than a minute. [171]

Although I recorded only fourteen of these totemic dances (illustrated on Pls. 29 and 30), I feel sure that these represent but a small proportion of those performed by the Tiwi. For instance, none of the totemic dances belonging to the dead person would have been performed at the burial rituals we witnessed.

Pl. 29A is the dance of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, which was performed with such skill and abandon by *Nilituma* at the Bathurst Island *ilania* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* ceremony.

Pl. 29B is the dance of the boobook owl, *Purujikini*, who with his wife, the barn-owl, *Pintoma*, organized the second *kulama* ceremony on Turiturina Island, western Bathurst Island. The dancer is indicating the large eyes of the boobook owl.

Pl. 29C is the dance of the blanket-lizard, *Kilpuruni*, who was punished by *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, because the former seduced *Jurumu's* wife. The dancer walked around the ceremonial ground with an awkward gait, in imitation of the blanket-lizard's curious method of locomotion.

Pl. 29D pictures the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, who is the mother of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, the woman of the monsoon rain, *Tomituka*, and the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. The frog dance was performed many times at the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi*, the frog being the totem of his father.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

8. THE CEREMONIAL OBJECTS OF THE TIWI

The ceremonial objects of the *pukamuni* ceremony, like the carved and painted burial poles and elaborate facial and body decorations already described, are totally unlike those used by the mainland aborigines. 301 778 765

A series of objects obtained on the 1954 expedition is illustrated on Pls. 31, 32.[96] [171]

On Pl. 31, A, D, and G, are chest ornaments called *pukabinda*, which are suspended around the neck with a loop of human hair string. Fig. A is an oval ball of the soft wax of the native bee, into which has been pressed a large number of the red and black seeds of a jungle vine. Fig. D, made of several ovals of lawyer vine, is bound together with strips of the same material. The pendant is made of human hair and white cockatoo feathers. The oval opening is too small to pass over the head, therefore this ornament, and similar examples which I saw, were suspended around the neck with string. Fig. G is a flat disc like Fig. D, with lengths of lawyer vine bound together. This disc was coated with wax, and further decorated with red and black jungle seeds. [237]

Pl. 31E and F are ornaments, *palmatjinas*, decorated with red and black seeds, which are pushed up the arm over the elbow.[96] Both have been made in the same manner as Fig. D, G.

Pl. 31B is a goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, worn around the neck or tied around the upper arm. *Wurarbuti* (frontispiece) is wearing a *tokwianga*.

These ornaments are made by embedding ends of the downy feathers of the pied goose in a ball of wax. So much work was entailed in making a *tokwianga* that the aborigines were loth to part with them. The *tokwianga* is worn on all ceremonial occasions. [237]

Pl. 31C is a false beard, *baludi*, which was worn at the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni* (see frontispiece), and the *kulama* rituals. The *baludi* may be pure decoration, or it may replace the beard, which up until comparatively recently was plucked out at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals. [302]

Fig. H illustrates three cane arm rings, *jairinis*, made from plaited lawyer vine. These were worn on the upper and lower arms of the *pukamuni* men and women, and occasionally by other performers, as decoration. At the end of the burial ceremony the performers take these rings from their arms and leave them on the grave as a present for the spirit of the dead.

[96] Spencer, 1928, Pl. XII, Figs. 450–4, illustrates a number of *pukamuni* ornaments he collected in 1911.

[96] Several of the men illustrated on Pl. 26B, are wearing these arm ornaments.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

elaborately shaped nor decorated, often being covered with no more than a series of dots.[1] 211 765

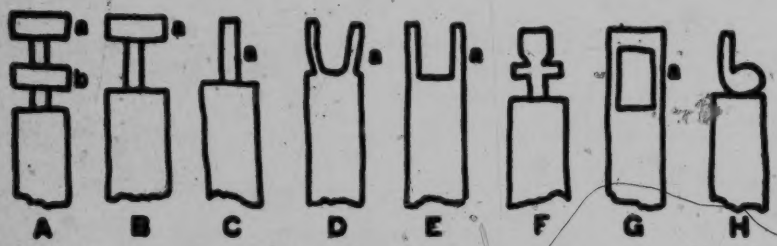


FIG. 8. *The Burial Poles*

Origin of the Pukamuni Poles

At present we have no evidence to show whether the custom of erecting burial poles around the grave in such numbers, not as a memorial, but as a gift to the dead, is confined entirely to the Tiwi tribe, or whether it is used in any other part of the world, and has reached the Tiwi by diffusion. There certainly are no similar burial poles on the Australian continent. 171 765 211 [769]

In north-eastern Arnhem Land, some of the decorated log coffins are as high as seven feet.[2] But the function of those coffins bears no relationship to that of the burial poles of Melville Island, the former being no more than coffins to hold the bones, and the latter, gifts to please the spirit of the dead.

It is possible that, during the long period of isolation from the mainland cultures, the Melville Islanders may have changed coffins of north-eastern Arnhem Land into the burial poles of the Tiwi.

The only examples of burial posts outside of Australia known to me, that are in any way comparable in function to those on Melville Island, are the *malanggan* burial ornaments of New Ireland described by Kramer.[3]

Methods of Manufacture

Although, at the conclusion of the *pukamuni* rituals, the grave is totally neglected and the poles allowed to decay, the "workers", using steel axes[4] 765

[1] Although *Tjamalampua* is not fully correct (see Bremer's and Campbell's statements in the early nineteenth century, pp. 107, 108), it indicates that both the poles and their painted decorations have, with the passing of the years, and the acquisition of steel tools, become more complex.

[2] Mountford, 1956, p. 317. [3] Kramer, 1925.

[4] The evidence of Bremer, Spencer and the aborigines, suggests that before the advent of metal the only cutting tools owned by the aborigines would have been crude stone axes, and the shells of cockles. It is likely that, under these conditions, the poles would 412 174 322

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532 765 [114] Dr. Kenneth Fry, when visiting the islands during 1913, made sketches of the pole shapes of eight *tudnis* and found out the meanings of five of them. These are reproduced on Fig. 8.

Fig. 8A represents a man carrying a roll of blankets on his back, *a*, being his hat, and *b*, his blankets. Fig. 8B also represents a man, *a*, as before, indicating his hat. On Fig. 8C, *a*, is the mast of a boat; on Fig. 8D, *a*, is the crutch in the boom of a pearling lugger (usually called branches of trees in the 1954 series); and on Fig. 8G, *a* is a window.

Dr. Fry did not find out the meanings of Fig. 8E, F, and H.

The present-day meaning of design, Fig. 8F, which could have applied to [177] [797] Dr. Fry's example, is somewhat interesting. The aborigines at the Bathurst Island mission are warned of the terrors of their future life if they are not buried "under the cross", i.e., in the mission cemetery.

When I asked the aborigines at Melville Island what was the significance of the cross they had carved on the top of several of their *pukamuni* poles, they explained that it was there purely as a "safety measure", just in case there was something in the mission story.

11. THE CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

[171] It has been known, for about twenty years, that aboriginal craftsmen, in widely separated places in Northern Australia, but particularly in north-eastern Arnhem Land, have made carved and painted figures in wood.[10] It was a surprise, however, to find that the Tiwi people, who appear to have been separated from the mainland cultures for a considerable time, were using similar figures in their burial rituals.

Inquiries revealed that, for some years, one or another of the aboriginal craftsmen, skilled in the carving of *pukamuni* poles with steel tools, and, no doubt, experimenting with new shapes, occasionally made a burial pole in the form of a conventionalized human body (Pl. 39), or smaller human figures (Pls. 40, 41), which were placed on the grave.

I gathered information about three old human-headed burial poles as well as adding to the expedition collection, two recently made poles and six smaller figures.

At the burial, about thirty years ago, of the mother of one of my informants, a "worker", called *Kodo*, made and erected a human-headed burial pole. In 1941, Mr. W. E. Harney saw a well-carved head on a burial

[10] Mountford, 1956, p. 415, traces the distribution of the carved wooden figures in Northern Australia and their development at Yirrkalla, from simple human-headed burial posts of Malay origin to carved heads and full-length figures of considerable merit.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

776 After many weeks, the *Paramanua* takes the aboriginal to a forest close
787 to his old camp and releases him, saying, "You're lucky to have been caught by a *Paramanua*. From now onward, if you don't tell anyone about me, and the things you have seen, I'll be your friend. I'll protect you in a fight; I'll chase game toward you so that you'll be known as a good hunter, and because I can see into the future, I'll make sure that you do not get into serious trouble."

To this, the aboriginal always agrees; but should he divulge the source of his good luck, his *Paramanua* guardian, who is always nearby, will either kill the aboriginal for his breach of faith or withdraw his protection.

532 Fig. 14 and Fig. 15, are copies of two crayon drawings of the *Paramanuas*,
776 one (Fig. 15) being the work of a younger sophisticated aboriginal.

Fig. 14 deals with a *Paramanua* and his family at home in a termite mound. The central figure, *a*, is a conventionalized representation of a *Paramanua*. His face and head are at *b*, the radiating lines within the two circles indicating his hair. His feet are at *c*, and shoulder blades at *h*, *h*. I did not gather the interpretation of symbols *d*, *d*, but they may be his arms. The outer concentric circles are the walls of the termite mound and discs, *e*, *e*, the entrances to the *Paramanua's* home.

The *Paramanua* is shown again at *f*, in a more naturalistic form, the line across the fingers of the left hand indicating his long finger-nails. The interpretation of design *g*, was somewhat confused, some informants saying that it was a *Paramanua* woman, others that it was a turtle caught for food.

In the upper left is the son, *j*, and the daughter, *k*, of the *Paramanuas*. In these drawings the various parts of the body are separated[46] and have no relation to normal position or appearance.

The head of the son is at *p*, the upper radiating lines being his hair; *q*, is his mouth, the upper lines symbolizing the teeth; *r*, *r*, are two goose-feather balls, and *s*, *s*, his feet. The lines *t*, *t*, indicate his ribs.

On the right is the *Paramanua's* daughter. Her eyes are at *n*, *n*; her eyebrows at *m*, *m*; breasts at *l*, *l*, and her feet at *o*. The chevrons on either side of her body indicate her ribs. The cooking hearths of the *Paramanua* are at *v*, *v*, *v*; piles of rocks at *u*, *u*, *u*; and a jungle is at *w*.

In the middle of Fig. 15 is a *Paramanua* with a goose-feather ball, *tokwiange*, *b*, around his neck, and on the lower right at *a*, his camp in the middle of a large anthill. Within the camp are many foods and weapons; *c*,

[170] [46] The separation of the parts of the body is not unusual in aboriginal art, Mountford, 1937, Fig. 2, illustrates a crayon drawing of the Ngadadjara tribe of the western Australian deserts, where these characteristics are present.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

4. THE SEA-DOGS, THE WANKUIS

773 A fragment of a myth tells of how, at the close of the creation period, a mythical man, called *Kirinua*, assembled all the dogs and asked them whether they would prefer to live on the land or in the sea. The present-day dingos, the *Kirijunas*, chose the land, and others, the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, the sandbanks in the sea.

776 The home of one group of the sea-dogs is a long sand-bar on the eastern side of the entrance to Snake Bay, about a mile from the expedition camp, over which, except at the spring tides, the waves break continuously. [823] The aborigines look on the breaking waves as the wagging tails of the *Wankuis*.

When the tide is out in the day-time and the sandbank exposed and dry, the sea-dogs, to escape being seen go to their camps under the sand.

When it is dark, the *Wankuis* leave their watery home, come on shore and make their camps in low caves at the base of a cliff at Snake Bay (Pl. 47E). While there, the *Wankuis* capture the sea-foods of the shallow waters, sting-rays, shell-fish and crabs. The aborigines claim that on the still nights they often hear the *Wankuis* barking.

In the shallow waters of a sandbar near Cape Fourcroy, the aborigines frequently see another kind of *Wankui* which walks on three legs, waving the fourth in the air.

*532 Pl. 47D pictures the *Wankuis* at the sandbar in Snake Bay. In the centre, with many teats, is the mother surrounded by her twelve sons. It is significant 776 that there was no mention of the father.

5. THE RAINBOW, MARATJI

● 171 A belief in a mythical serpent-like creature, which is associated with, or is, 776 the rainbow, and is dangerous to strangers, but not to the local inhabitants, [821] occupies an important place, not only in the mythology of the Australian aborigines, but in the mythologies of people in many parts of the world. These mythical creatures are usually highly-coloured (like the rainbow), of huge size and have both mane and beard.

I have traced these mythical creatures, in their various forms, from the River Murray in South Australia, through Central Australia to Arnhem Land. In the western deserts of Central Australia, Mountford, 1948, p. 138, writes, "The snake (*wonambi*) is a huge, many-coloured creature with a [778] mane and a beard. It is feared . . . because it attacks all strangers who approach

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

the water in which it lives, usually calling with a deep booming note. The rainbow serpent . . . is related . . . to water, rainbow . . ." The rainbow-serpent myth is widespread throughout Arnhem Land. At Oenpelli (Mountford, 1956, p. 210), "mythical serpents live in deep waterholes. . . . The aborigines are . . . afraid of these mythical creatures for should anyone interfere with their . . . home, the serpents, particularly *Ngaloit*, will make their waterholes overflow and drown everyone. The rainbow-serpent woman, *Narama*, of the Liverpool River area . . . destroys all aborigines who approach her home." 171 776 778

In north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 462; Warner, 1937, p. 541) the rainbow-serpents live, in one form or another in most of the important water-holes; they are associated with water, the rainbow, lightning, and thunder. Again these serpents are usually highly coloured (like the rainbow), and have a mane and beard. The aborigines claim that they are dangerous to all strangers who approach their waterholes, and even to local aborigines who do not perform the proper rituals before drinking. On Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 75), however, it is a lizard, the gekko, *Ipilja-ipilja*, which takes the place of the rainbow-serpent. It is highly coloured, about one hundred feet in length, has long hair on its head and whiskers on its lower jaw. It lives in a swamp, called Numarika, on south-western Groote Eylandt. Should anyone drink from this swamp, they will surely die. *Ipilja-ipilja* is associated with thunder, thunderstorms, and rain, but not, as far as I could ascertain, with the rainbow.

The lizard-like *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands[47] have many of the characteristics of the gekko, *Ipilja-ipilja* of Groote Eylandt[48] as well as the rainbow serpents of the Central Australian deserts, and Oenpelli, in Arnhem Land. 776 [171]

The *Maratjis* are highly coloured lizards, the males being up to one hundred yards in length, with horns on their heads instead of hair, and long projecting jaws in the place of beards.

Should any unauthorized person interfere with their waterholes, the *Maratjis* become annoyed. They roar loudly, make the water bubble up (like the Oenpelli serpent, Mountford, 1956, p. 210), and send a waterspout into the air which, falling as torrential rain, floods the countryside. One of the *Maratjis* then changes himself into the rainbow and travels across the land seeking to injure the offender or anyone else in its path. [821]

[47] Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 231, refers to *Maratji* as the rainbow snake.

[48] It is of interest to note that on isolated places, such as Groote Eylandt and Melville Island, these mythical creatures resemble lizards, and on the Australian mainland, and in most other places in the world, they take the form of snakes.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

776 The *Maratjis* belong to the totem of *Andjahi* (fresh water), in common with *Pakadringa* (thunderstorms), *Tomituka* (monsoon rain) and *Bumerali* (lightning). They are mortal creatures who die and disintegrate like everything else (Pl. 48D).

[123] I collected bark paintings and crayon drawings of a number of *Maratjis*, living with their wives and families in three lagoons on Melville and Bathurst Islands, i.e., Maundu, southern Bathurst Island, and Kulimbini, north-western, and Maratjiana, northern Melville Island.

776 The *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands are not always of the same
778 temperament. For instance, the *Maratjis* who live at Kulimbini (Pl. 48A) are so dangerous that should any aboriginal dare approach their water, they will steal his *imunka* (spirit), and he will die.

Although the *Maratjis* of Maundu (Pl. 48C) are feared, it is possible, if certain rituals are performed, for even a stranger to drink the water without harm; while those who live in the Maratjiana lagoon at Goose Creek, are looked upon by the aborigines as "properly quiet fellow".[49]

776 The rainbow, as a *Maratji*, however, is universally feared, the aborigines
821 believing that the primary bow is the *imunka* (spirit) of a male, and the secondary bow, that of a female *Maratji*.

If a rainbow goes too near an aboriginal camp, the occupants will quickly [789] build up their fire[50] and call out to frighten *Maratji* away, but should he come too close, the people will feel ill and break out into a cold perspiration. If an aboriginal is overtaken by a rainbow,[51] it will kill him by taking his spirit.

Should some aboriginal be so foolish as to throw a spear at a rainbow and injure it, the *Maratjis* would destroy the whole country and the people who live in it.

776 Two heavy wind-storms, which occurred whilst the expedition was at
821 Melville Island, were supposed to have been caused by angry *Maratjis*. The first was due to some foolish aboriginal who broke a *kulama* ceremony taboo
648 (p. 142) by throwing some of the termite mound from the *kulama* oven into the sea. The second happened when a *pukamuni* pole, taken from a grave by one of the senior officers of the Native Affairs Branch, was being loaded on a boat for transport to Darwin.

The aborigines explained that as these poles are a gift from the living to

[49] Further research will no doubt reveal other waterholes on Melville and Bathurst Islands, inhabited by *Maratjis*.

[171] [50] This would suggest that *Maratji*, like the *Wonambi* of the Central Australian deserts, is afraid of fire (Mountford, 1948, p. 138).

[51] These conditions are, of course, impossible because the rainbow is always several feet from the observer.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER VI

The Secular Bark Paintings

×532 THE designs used by the Tiwi on many of their secular bark paintings are strongly influenced by those employed in decorating the poles and the large bark baskets of the *pukamuni* ceremony. For instance, all of the patterns on Pl. 49 would be similar to those used on a burial pole, while a number of the paintings of the totemic places, for example, those shown on Pl. 10, have the same fundamental designs as those on the *pukamuni* baskets.

As mentioned previously, one of the remarkable aspects of the art of the [171] Tiwi is that it is highly formalized, whereas, on the mainland, only fourteen miles away, across the dangerous waterway of Dundas Strait, the art is fully representational. This difference in the art forms of the Tiwi and that of the aborigines of the adjacent mainland is an excellent example of how a natural barrier can isolate one culture from the influence of another.

1. TOPOGRAPHY

×532 133 137 The obverse side of a large *pukamuni* basket (Pl. 49A, B), illustrates the trees and shrubs of Cape Van Diemen, arranged in a decorative pattern, and on the reverse side (Pl. 49C, D), the natural features at Imilu, in the same locality.

Cape Van Diemen

On Pl. 49A, B, the series of rectangles at *a*, on the top of the basket, represent a forest of stringybark trees, and the groups of vertical and sloping lines at *k*, *k* (bottom), many bloodwood trees. The vertical lines, *f*, *f*, etc., are also stringybarks and the horizontal lines, *e*, *e*, etc., bloodwood trees.

The many circles, *d*, *d*, etc., are *pukamuni* arm ornaments, *palmatjinas* (Pl. 31E, F); the cross-hatching in rectangles *c*, *c*, etc. (upper) are spider webs, and the dots at *b*, *b*, etc., black and red seeds of a jungle vine lying on the ground.

Imilu

On Pl. 49C, D, the circles *a*, *a*, etc., in the border, represent the many hives of wild bees in the trees at Imilu, and the intervening panels, *f*, *f*, etc., and

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

grove swamps, and the dotted panels, *b*, *d*, *f*, *h*, and *k*, to the seaweed growing on the sea-bottom. 532X

3. THE FAUNA

The Sea-Creatures

Two bark paintings, 55A, B, and 56A, B, depict the creatures who live on the floor of the ocean. 532X 136

On Pl. 55A, B, design *a*, represents a shark; design *b*, and *f*, are large sea-snakes; *e*, is a smaller species, and *g*, another snake that lives in the mangrove swamps. At *c*, is a saw-fish; at *d*, a porpoise, and at *h*, a sea-slug or *bêche-de-mer*. Designs, *m*, *m*, etc., are shells; and *l*, boulders on the sea-bottom; *k*, is a creek in the mangrove swamp, and *j*, a sandbank in Snake Bay.

Pl. 56A, B, also deals with the creatures of the sea. In the central section panels *a*, *a*, are star-fish; panel *b*, refers to an octopus; *c*, to pearl-shell oysters; *d*, to a crab, and *e*, to a turtle. The cross-hatching, throughout the design, is symbolical of the scale pattern on a crocodile skin, and the two transverse white bands are the creature's intestines.

The Snakes

Two bark paintings, Pl. 57D and Pl. 55E, depict the snakes of Melville and Bathurst Islands.

Pl. 57D pictures, in conventionalized form, a number of sea-snakes, some of which were poisonous and much feared.

Pl. 55E illustrates a number of snakes that live in the forest and jungle adjacent to the expedition.

Reading from the right, *a*, is the venomous bush snake, *jaruwini*; *b*, a copper-coloured non-venomous snake, *ilinga*; *c*, a venomous snake, *buliaringa*, that lives in the mangrove swamps, and *d*, a harmless water-snake, *patinga*. The short, more or less horizontal lines at *f*, *f*, are tall eucalypts in the forest and the dots, the grass at their base. [137]

A Goanna

Pl. 57C is a simple X-ray bark painting of a goanna, on which the backbone and ribs are indicated. This is the only example of that curious art form which I saw on Melville Island, although on the adjacent mainland, the X-ray art has reached its highest development.[88] [171]

The Sea-going Turtle

Pl. 55C pictures the sea-going turtles. The central design represents the

[88] Mountford, 1956, p. 256.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER VII

The Astronomy of the Tiwi

171 THE Tiwi's knowledge of the night sky does not appear to be as extensive as
773 that of the aborigines of the adjoining Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, Part 6).

821 Although myths relating to the sun, the moon, the Milky Way, the stars and Orion and the Pleiades were often told, I was unable to find any relating to the Southern Cross, Scorpio, the Magellan Clouds and other constellations well-known to the aborigines of Arnhem Land.

The Universe

821 The Tiwi believe that the earth is flat, and so limited in area that, if they travel far from the shores of their tribal country, they would fall over the edge. As evidence of this they point out that, in the morning they can see *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman, rise above the eastern rim and, at the end of the day, disappear beneath the western rim of the world.

The earth, too, is of limited thickness, the aborigines believing that, if they dug a hole sufficiently deep they would reach the lower world, *Ilara*.[66]

772 The aboriginal universe of the Tiwi consists of four levels, (*a*) a subterranean world, Ilara, (*b*) the earth on which the aborigines live, (*c*), the sky-land, Jurruku, and (*d*) an upper world, Tuniruna.

On Ilara where it is always dark, there are two high stony ranges with a
772 valley between. It is along this valley that the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,
776 and according to some informants, the moon-man, *Tjapara*, guided only by
821 the light of their glowing torch of bark, travel each day from the western horizon to their homes in the east. As there are no plants or animals on Ilara, the celestial travellers cannot gather any food during their underground journey, although they can quench their thirst at a stream which flows from the top of one of the high mountains.

During the wet season, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms; *Tomituka*, the woman of the monsoon rains; *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, with her husband and her many children, make their home on the sky-land,

[171] [66] I did not find a belief among the Melville Islanders, like that of the aborigines of Groote Eylandt, that the earth was a thin crust resting on the top of the water. (Mountford, 1956, p. 67.)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

824 This belief probably accounts for the fact that I did not hear any songs chanted, or witness any ceremonies (with the possible exception of the *kulama*) that would bring about a plentiful supply of food. Nor did I hear of any increase centres such as I saw on Groote Eylandt, (Mountford, 1956, pp. 84, 91), and were seen by Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 166), and myself (1948, p. 145) in Central Australia.

[171]

The Sky and the Upper World

×532. 821 772 Pl. 63D is a bark painting of the sky and the upper world, Tuniruna. The central series of concentric circles represent an unidentified planet, one of the wives of *Tjapara*, the moon-man; the designs, *d, d, d, d*, are some of the stars, *Tapalinga*; *f, f*, are the plum trees (already mentioned), which grow in the upper world. The radiating lines are the limbs of the plum trees.

The inner square, *b*, is the upper world, Tuniruna, the chevron patterns are the clouds in the sky, and the outer square the surface of the earth.

The groups of dots, throughout the painting, are the spirit fruits of the many trees at Tuniruna, which (as mentioned earlier), fall from the upper world to the earth beneath.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala

773 776 A myth, belonging to the early creation period, tells of how *Wuriupranala*, one of the first women, was given the task of keeping alight a torch of blazing bark. When, after the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, the men and women changed themselves into creatures and plants, *Wuriupranala* became the sun-woman, who travels daily across the sky, her torch of blazing bark providing the world with light and heat.

776 821 However, before *Wuriupranala* sets out from the eastern horizon, she powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which flying into the air, reddens the clouds of early morning.

When she reaches the western horizon, *Wuriupranala* again powders her body (this accounts for the brilliant sunsets), extinguishes her torch and rests for a while beside a celestial lagoon, Kumpinulu, before returning to the east along a path through the subterranean world, Ilara. On this journey, she is guided only by the light from the glowing end of her smouldering torch.[58]

×532 773 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60A, B, Pl. 61A, B, and Pl. 63A, B, deal with the myth of the sun-woman.

776 821 The designs on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 61A, B, picture the sun, moon and stars.

[58] See pp. 35, 40 for more details of the sun-woman.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Orion and the Pleiades

Pl. 6aa illustrates the myth of Orion and the Pleiades. In the astronomical myth Orion, *a*, is a pack of dingoes, called *dalimini*, who are for ever chasing the *Pleiades*, *b*, a group of wallabies, *karaka*. 532x 776 821 [773]

The black vertical lines on either side of *a*, and *b*, starless spaces in the Milky Way, *Maludaianini*, are the trunks of celestial bloodwood trees; the short lines at right-angles, their limbs, and the dots on the background, the many spider-webs on their branches.

The large outer ovals, unidentified parts of the Milky Way, are patches of bare and grass-covered land of the sky, and the eight discs on the insides of the ovals, some of the larger stars.

Discussion

There is a wide difference between the astronomical myths of Melville Island and those of the adjacent mainland. Nor do the Melville Islanders have such a detailed knowledge of the night sky as the tribes of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 479). This fact suggests, as do other aspects of the culture, that the natives of Melville Island have been isolated from the mainland cultures for a long time. 171 773 821

The effects of this isolation are most evident in two of the sky myths, i.e., the Milky Way, and the constellations of Orion and the Pleiades.

Throughout Australia, with few exceptions, the Milky Way is looked upon as a celestial river, along which the sky people travel in their canoes, and gather their food (Mountford, 1956, p. 491). No trace of this widespread myth is present on Melville Island, the Milky Way being a multitude of caterpillar men, the *Maludaianini*.

Similarly with Orion and the Pleiades. In the Australian mainland myths, Orion is a man or men, and the Pleiades, a group of women, more often than not, the wives of the men of Orion.

In the place of this widespread myth, the Melville Islanders look upon the stars of Orion as a group of dingoes chasing the Pleiades, a mob of wallabies.

Even in the myth of the moon-man, there is a reversal of the adjacent Arnhem Land beliefs. In Arnhem Land, it was the moon who brought death to the world (Mountford, 1956, p. 495; Warner, 1937, p. 523). On Melville Island, it is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, who tries to stop *Purukupali* from imposing death on all living creatures.

CONCLUSION

105 This study of the Tiwi tribe of Melville and Bathurst Islands, made through the medium of their art, their myths, and their ceremonies, reveals wide ●171 differences between many phases of their cultural life and that of the aborigines who live on the adjacent mainland. These differences are probably the result of isolation caused by the dangerous tideways which have separated the two peoples from each other for an unknown, but probably lengthy, period.

Though both are of aboriginal stock, and from the same cultural back-[174] ground (as indicated by basically similar creation stories), this isolation has allowed the two groups to develop independently. It may well be that the beliefs of the Tiwi represent those of one of the aboriginal migrations to Australia, and has remained somewhat constant, while the mainland people, enriched by occasional waves of new ideas, have developed a much more varied philosophical and cultural life.

The main differences between the two cultures can be summarized as follows:

171 (a) The art forms of the Melville and Bathurst Islands are so highly ×532 formalized that they seldom resemble the objects they represent. In contrast, the art of their neighbours on the mainland, the Arnhem Land aborigines, is not only entirely representational, but is probably a more vital and colourful art than exists in any other part of the continent.

171 (b) Compared with the rest of Australia, too, the ceremonies of the Tiwi are particularly limited, there being only two in the whole culture. The 765 major ceremony, that of burial, is by far the more elaborate. It extends over several months, involves the co-operation of many people, and provides the tribe with a complete outlet for their grief, their music, their dancing, and their art. This ceremony is without parallel in Australia, and, so far as we know, elsewhere in the world.

The other ceremony, the Kulama, is a blending of several rituals: the 171 initiation of men and women into the social grades of the tribe; the cere-881 mony of preparing a poisonous yam for food,[66] which ceremony the participants believe prolongs the wet season; and the airing of grievances

[114] [66] Spencer, 1928, p. 661, speaks of the Kulama as a food increase ritual. It is probable that Spencer was only expressing an opinion, having previously carried out research in Central Australia where increase rituals are both numerous and important. I did not obtain any evidence which indicated that food increase rituals were carried out by the Tiwi.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

without quarrels. Again, there is no comparable ceremony on the mainland. 171 [881]

(c) Throughout the mainland of Australia, women occupy a low social status within the tribal framework. They are rigidly excluded from almost all aspects of the ceremonial life, and of initiation; they also are ignorant of most of the creation myths, the procedures of the secret rituals, and even the existence of the sacred objects. 171 562

These restrictions do not apply to the women of the Tiwi. They are initiated, side by side, with the men, and take similar though not identical parts in the ritual. They also participate in all phases of the burial ceremonies, at which they usually perform their own dance, the *Amburu*, but occasionally take part in dances which are performed by the men (Pl. 25c). A woman even has the right to cut and paint a burial pole, if her husband, who has been allotted the task, is unavoidably absent. In short, I was unable to find any aspect of Tiwi ceremonial life in which women could not take their part if they so desired.

(d) Although the creation story of the Tiwi is basically similar to that of the aborigines elsewhere in Australia, it is not as elaborate as, say, the travels of the Wawalik and the Djunkgao Sisters of Arnhem Land, recorded by Warner (1937), nor those of Central Australia, described by Spencer and Gillen (1899). I did not witness, nor did I hear of any specific Tiwi ceremony that commemorated the myths of the creation period. The dances in the *ilawiar*, and the final rituals of the burial ceremony, usually referred to the various creatures or the elements, but seldom to an incident in the creation myth. 171 773 [535]

(e) There are also important differences between many of the myths of the Tiwi and those of the mainland people. For instance, in northern Australia, it is the moon man who brings death to mankind; in Melville Island the same moon-man endeavours to prevent death from coming to the world. I have already pointed out other wide differences between the astronomical myths of the mainland and those of the adjacent Melville Island.

On Arnhem Land, in fact, as far as South Australia, the aborigines, almost without exception, believe that their spirits go to a distant land not visible to human eyes, where there is continuous good weather, and an abundance of easily gathered food. 171 775

On the other hand, the Tiwi believe that at the close of the burial rituals the spirits of their dead return to their separate birthplaces, where each one hunts for food in the same manner as its living relatives, suffering, as they do, from exposure if the weather is inclement, and from hunger if the food supplies are limited.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly
412 limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe
[177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of
[415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the
[285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[66]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[66] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female
[114] ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This
[173] information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

184 they speak one language and they regard a certain defined area of land as
619 belonging to them.

[171] The Australian tribe is a collection of persons who speak a common
619 language, or what they themselves regard as such, practise the same
101 customs, and normally have a name by which they distinguish themselves and their language. The inhabitants of Melville and Bathurst Islands are therefore to be regarded as a single tribe, but it is difficult to find a true tribal name. The Uwaidja of Port Essington call the Melville Islanders, *Wuŋuk*, as Spencer notes, but the Melville Islanders scarcely
186 regard it as necessary to call themselves anything. The local group of
648 which a man is conscious of being a member is the horde, and until the
101 advent of the white man, the Melville Islander was not aware that any other people existed except themselves. It was impossible and also quite unnecessary for them to visit the mainland in their bark canoes more
[172] especially as the coast around Cape Don and Cape Hotham, dimly seen on clear days, was regarded as the abode of departed souls, *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead. It was apparently just as impossible or unnecessary, or perhaps danger was the chief deterrent, for the Uwaidja or the Larakia to visit Melville Island.

The result was that the people, with no contact with people not of their own tribe, did not really need a tribal name, and very seldom used the word *Tiwi*, which is the only one that can be regarded as the name of the tribe.

101 Tiwi is a word that is known and but seldom used. Some of the younger men were in fact surprised and interested when they heard the old men using it in response to my enquiries. There is no question of secrecy or tabu about it. In common everyday use are the words *tini*, meaning a man of one of the Melville or Bathurst Island hordes, *i.e.*, a male member of the Tiwi, and *tiŋa* meaning a female member of the tribe. *Tiwi* is the plural form of *tini* and *tiŋa*. It is often said by informants that *tini* means a man, and *tiŋa* a woman, irrespective of colour or race, but in point of fact these words are only used as applying to members of the *Tiwi*, and some other word would be used in referring to a white man, or a Larakia or Uwaidja.

101 Objection may be made to the adoption as the tribal name of these
619 people of a word that theoretically at any rate seems simply "men" in the ordinary language. But in point of fact the word is never used except

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 0120 Tiwi 0120

PERSONAL NAMES AMONG THE TIWI[1]

By C. W. M. HART

[171] 551 THE Tiwi, who inhabit Melville and Bathurst Islands in North Australia, are in many respects unlike the other Australian peoples. So little is known, however, about the subject of personal names among Australian tribes that it is impossible to say whether in this respect also [121] they are atypical. Among the Tiwi at any rate personal names and the customs attaching to them play a very important part in the life of the tribe, and in this paper an attempt is made to describe this element of their culture and to explain it.

Every member of the Tiwi has not one name but many, each of which belongs to him or her alone and each having an equal validity as a term of address or of description, though naturally some are used more frequently than others. This is to say, although a man with five different names may be addressed or referred to by any one of those five names, nevertheless the normal thing is for one name to be much more generally used than any of the others, it being for a native, as for us, much easier to think of a person by a single name than by several.

553 602 The multiplicity of names is accounted for by the fact that quite a number of the relatives have the right to bestow names upon a new-born child and a certain proportion of them will always exercise that right. The father may always bestow names upon his own children, and the father's brothers, who are of course the classificatory fathers of the child, have the same power. The mother's brothers may also bestow names upon a child, should they so desire, and less frequently children will be found bearing names given to them by the older men of their own totem clan, that is not only the mother's brothers but also other

[122] [1] This paper, which was presented to Section F, Anthropology, of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science at the Brisbane Meeting, May 1930, contains part of the results of research carried out in 1928 and 1929 as Science Research Scholar of Sydney University, and with the aid of a grant from the Australian National Research Council.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

By Herbert Basedow, M.D., M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., etc.

With Plates VII–XX.

Local Correspondent of the Royal Anthropological Institute, London, and Honorary Fellow of the Anthropological Society, Göttingen; late Chief Medical Inspector and Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Introduction.

In August of last year (1911), I visited Bathurst Island to inspect the natives on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. Accompanied by one of my inspectors (Mr. J. H. Kelly) and a crew consisting of a Chinaman, a Manilaman, and three natives of the Larrekiya Tribe,[1] I left Port Darwin at eleven o'clock in the evening and entered Apsley Strait early the next morning. We spent nine days in the examination of the island, entering the numerous salt-water arms and rivers, effecting a landing wherever possible and traversing the island on foot. Landing was, in most places, difficult on account of the thick growth of mangroves that fringes the island on the east. It had been my intention to circumnavigate the island, but a heavy monsoonal gale prevented us from even making the attempt in the small motor-craft at our disposal. I therefore decided to return *viâ* Apsley Strait and inspect part of Melville Island.

The plates included in this paper are all reproductions of my original photographs and coloured drawings.

Condition of Natives.

I estimate the population of the island to be about 500. Their isolation and, no doubt in a measure also, their reputation as being cannibalistic and treacherous in their habits, have guarded their primitive condition to the present day.[2] Before

[1] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. of S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 1.

[2] Compare the statement :—

"Melville Island, about 30 miles north of Port Darwin, is inhabited by a tribe of which very little is known. They do not circumcize, and speak a different language from those on the mainland. They are represented as a very strong and powerful race.

"Before the arrival of the Hon. B. T. Finniss at Escape Cliffs in 1864, the Melville Island natives occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras, in which they invariably succeeded; but they have not done so since. This tribe is of a very hostile nature, and on several occasions have attacked Europeans visiting the island. Their canoes and weapons are similar to those on the mainland." P. Foelsche: "Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia," *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 17.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

BEFORE the advent of the buffalo-hunters, few white men had visited the islands since the 648
early days of the naval settlement at Fort Dundas, established by Sir Gordon [175]
Bremer in 1824, but abandoned four years later. Malays and Japanese pearlers
have been in the habit of taking in water from either of the islands and have
frequently come into disastrous conflict with the natives. It is perhaps also on 164
account of their isolation from civilization that I found the blacks comparatively
free from any serious disease. Apart from the various minor ailments such as
traumatic lesions and their after-effects, cataracts and keratitis, a few congenital
deformities and such like, only a few cases of tertiary syphilis came under my
notice.

A young gin was suffering from a disease of the hip, apparently chronic, but
she was too timid to permit me to make an examination. They are on the whole 142
a healthy, sturdy people of moderate stature, with a good muscular development
and a square, big thorax. The characteristics are Australoid and yet they present [144]
certain insular peculiarities.

The Head.

The forehead is low, with a marked supraorbital development; the face
somewhat depressed and the lower jaw strong. The eyes are sunken and the nose
is small. The wavy black hair of some of the males was worked up into numerous [362]
small, cylindrical, pendant masses with clay and ochre.[1] This, so far as I could [765]
ascertain, designated mourning. Others had besmeared their hair with ochre. The
hairs on the upper lip are pulled out. The growth of the beard of the men varies,
but is, on an average, good.

The natives of either island do not practise the knocking out of one or two 304
incisors as they do on the mainland. Major Campbell,[2] however, reports having 171
observed the custom on Melville Island.

The face is painted symmetrically with differently coloured ochres, charcoal, 302
and pipeclay, in various degrees of complexity (Fig. 1). A few of the simpler designs
might be described briefly:—*Case* (1): The whole surface of the face blackened
with charcoal. *Case* (2): The nose red and the rest of the face charcoal-black.
Case (3): Face (including the shaven upper lip and upper part of chin) charcoal-

[1] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* London, 1852, vol. ii, p. 13: "The characteristic mode of dressing the hair among the Torres Strait Islanders is to have it twisted up into long pipe-like ringlets, and wigs in imitation of this are also worn"; and again, "at Cape York I have at times for a week together seen all the men and lads with the hair twisted into little strands well daubed over with red ochre and turtle fat."

Also P. P. King, *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114: "The [184]
men were more muscular and better formed than any we have before seen, they were daubed over with a yellow pigment which was the colour of the neighbouring cliff (Luxmore Head on Melville Island); their hair was long and curly and appeared to be clotted with a whitish paint."

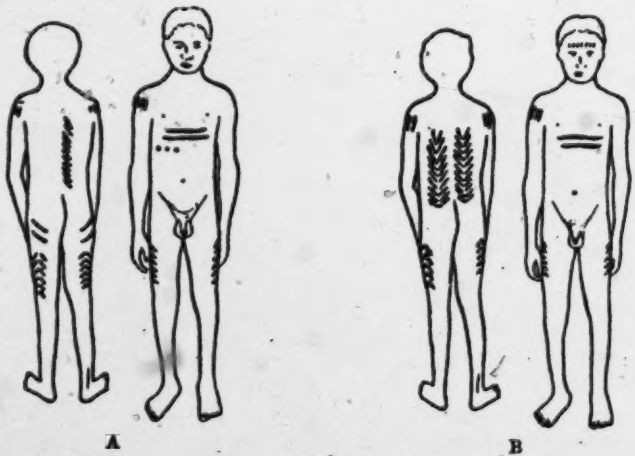
[2] *Journ. Geogr. Society*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 153. *Cf.* also H. Klaatsch: *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 591.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

302 black; ears, red; hair and beard on lower part of chin, yellow. *Case* (4): Lower half of face from below the eyes to the chin, yellow, excepting the lips and the immediate surrounding, which are red; the upper half of face divided vertically in a median line, the left segment being black and the right red. *Case* (5): A broad, horizontal band of black extends across the forehead and the eyes; beneath this, the whole face is yellow, excepting (as in the previous case) the nose and lips, which are red. *Case* (6): A broad horizontal band of black across the forehead; beneath this, the whole surface from the eyes to the level of the nostrils, yellow; the remaining portion including the lips and chin, red. *Case* (7): The crown of the head and hair, red, the forehead yellow; a black horizontal band across the eyes, below which the whole surface is yellow, excepting the nose and lips (as in previous cases), which are red. More complicated patterns are better understood by referring to the sketches.

Body Scars.

304 [101] A type of cosmetic body-scars is prevalent on the island, which is unique and different from the system found on the mainland. The production of this permanent ornamentation is, as elsewhere, dependent on the formation of an elevated cicatrix. This is done by cutting the skin and artifically inducing a prolific granulation by



A B

FIG. 2.

keeping the edges of the wound apart with foreign matter, such as ochre and ashes. [171] On the mainland we find such cicatrices in the form of horizontally or vertically disposed parallel ridges on various parts of the body. Although to a small extent such are also found on Bathurst Island, the characteristic pattern there is one made in direct imitation of an object of nature, namely, the frond of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*). The former simple type of cicatrices, consisting of two to five,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. 372 Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

301 bordered with red. Each of the intervening spaces is again sub-divided into two
531 squares at the centre (and a "half-square" at the sides) by three vertical, white lines bordered with red. The squares and "half-squares" are shaded diagonally with from four to six lines passing downwards and away from the central line in the topmost group, and upwards and away from the centre in the two lower groups of squares. The combined effect resembles the windmill or "wanningi" pattern [171] common throughout Australia. The shading is all in white on one side, but red and white in alternate squares on the opposite side.

301 In another type of this arm decoration, which is also made of bark, the upper
322 united portion is shorter than in the previous case (*vide* Plate VII, Figs. 1 and 3). The top edge is concave and only one oblong window is cut beneath it. The sides have been united by hem-stitching and by the insertion of a few wooden pins which answer the same purpose as rivets. The edges are thickly plastered with beeswax. As in the previous case, the stitches (and the plaster also) are continued only along one side of the loop. A fairly stout rod of wood projects vertically from either end of the top concave edge. Shorter rods project laterally from either top corner of the loop. To the end of each of these rods a plume of white is attached with beeswax. Cockatoo feathers have been chosen and they are [237 531] fastened by their distal ends so that the fluffy portions are exposed. A number of twisted strands of fur and vegetable fibre pass from the extremity of one horizontal rod diagonally upwards to the base of the vertical rod above, along it to the top, thence horizontally across to the top of the other vertical rod, whence it is continued the same way down the other side to the extremity of the opposite horizontal rod. Beeswax retains these strands in position at the rod-tops, while more strands, wound horizontally from the base of one vertical rod to the other, and also round the base of each, make the former strands secure there. The painted design in this
301 case consists of one large cruciform figure on either side of the looped portion, the
531 arms being modified at the base in a manner suggestive of a snake design. One arm of the cross is white, the other yellow, both being bordered with red. The intervening spaces are shaded red and yellow, the constituent lines being parallel and straight up-and-down in the upper segment and crossed in the lower.

532 *Corrobboree-mask.*—An interesting object is what I take to be a corrobboree-mask (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 5). As I did not see it in use and did not receive the specimen until it was too late to make inquiries, I cannot, with certainty, describe it as such. The object represents an oval structure, 15 centimetres long and 8 wide, which encloses two connected circular rims resembling a solid pair of spectacles. The internal framework is made of split cane, bound together with vegetable strands. The oval portion is covered with human hair string, wound around it and knotted along the outer edge after the modern "button-hole-stitch" fashion. The rims are broad and covered with beeswax. A circle of the red beans of *Abrus praecatorius*, embedded in the wax, surrounds the "eye-holes" on the front side. At one of the lateral extremities, a band of five human hair strings emerges from a cylindrical mass of beeswax and is surrounded, at 6 centimetres distance,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

764 displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there, and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilized people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed round with trees of 7 feet or 8 feet high, some of which were carved with a stone or shell, and further ornamented by rings of wood, also carved. On the tops of these posts were placed the waddies of the deceased. . . . At the head was placed a piece of a canoe and a spear, and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and the earth were cleared away from the sides, and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."

Major Campbell,[1] who in 1826 relieved Captain Barlow as commandant of Fort Dundas, in his interesting memoir to the Royal Geographical Society also refers to native graves observed by him. He writes: "It appears to be the custom of the natives to bury their dead, their burial places being in retired spots near their most frequented encamping ground. The burial place is circular, probably 10 or 12 feet in diameter; it is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberds, 14 or 15 feet high; and between these the spear and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground." This description applies equally well to those seen by us, [114] with the exception that the cleared circular space was considerably larger in our case, while the height of the posts, above the ground, was less.

171 764 In 1847, Bete Jukes,[2] naturalist to the expedition of H.M.S. "*Fly*," described and figured a native tomb seen at Port Lihou in Endeavour Strait; "Round a central mound of sand there had been a broad ditch or hollow scooped out and swept quite clean for several yards in width. The mound was of a quadrangular form, 8 feet long, 4 feet wide, and 3 feet high. A stout post stood upright at each corner, and the sides were ornamented by rows of the ribs of the dugong placed regularly along them. . . . On each post was either a large shell or the skull of a dugong, and on the grave were several other dugongs' skulls and shells of the *Nautilus pompilius*. All these, as well as the posts, were smeared with red ochre." Additional interest is attached to the description of Jukes, since he states that "between the two posts, near the sea, a long stick had been inserted, ornamented with feathers and streamers of grass, and fastened to the post by other cross-sticks similarly ornamented." From this wording, and more so from the [778 114] figure reproduced by him, it would seem that the decoration between the posts was one of those sacred ornaments to which I have elsewhere referred as the *wanningi*.[3]

[1] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 158.

[2] *Narrative of the Surveying Voyage H.M.S. "Fly,"* vol. i, pp. 149 and 150 (1847).

[3] *Vide* also George French Angas, *S. Australia*, illustrated, 1847, Plate XXIV; Edge Partington, Album III, Plate CXIV; Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes Cent. Australia*, pp. 230 and 231; W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies, Queensland Aborigines*, Fig. 427;

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

A record of something of the kind having existed on the mainland is 171
contained in MacGillivray's narrative (1852). In referring to the burial-ceremonies 765
of natives of the Cobourg Peninsula, this author[1] states that "when decomposition has gone on sufficiently far, the bones are carefully removed, painted red, wrapped up in bark, and carried about with the tribe for some time; after which they are finally deposited, either in a hollow tree or a shallow grave, over which a low mound of earth and stones is raised, occasionally ornamented with posts at the corners."

This same author refers to similar burial ceremonies which he observed of the 171
"Kowraregas," natives inhabiting the Prince of Wales group of islands, situate 764
near Cape York in Torres Strait. He writes[2] of a grave he saw at Port Lihou, some time after Bete Jukes' visit: "When the head of a family dies at Muralug, the body is laid out upon a framework[3] of sticks raised a foot from the ground and is there allowed to rot . . . until the head of the corpse becomes nearly detached by the process of putrefaction, when it is removed and handed over to the custody of the eldest wife. . . . The body, or rather the headless skeleton, is then interred in a shallow grave, over which a mound is raised, ornamented by wooden posts at the corners painted red, with sometimes shells or other decorations attached to them. . . ."

Perhaps it would not be out of place to make a passing reference to the native burial-place discovered by Captain Sturt[4] near Lake Buddah, off the Macquarie River, in New South Wales (latitude 32° 5′, longitude 148° 10′). "It consists of an oblong mound, with three semicircular seats. A walk encompassed the whole from which three others branched off, for a few yards only, into the forest. Several cypresses, overhanging the grave, were fancifully carved on the inner side, and on one the shape of a heart was deeply engraved." A similarity of method will be apparent. Instead of having separate carved posts surrounding the grave, the natives of Macquarie River carved the trees surrounding it. The walk encompassing the mound might be regarded as the equivalent of the cleared space characteristic of the island graves.

Mr. P. Foelsche and I have described painted and ornamented poles that are erected close to the graves of deceased members of the Larrekiya tribe in the Port Darwin district.[5]

During our geological explorations of the north-west coast of the Northern 764

E. Clement, *Publication of Royal Ethnological Museum at Leiden*, series ii, No. 6 (Catalogue by J. D. E. Schmeltz), vol. xvi, Plate V, Fig. 8; H. Basedow, *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxviii, 1904, pp. 22 and 28, Plate III, Fig. 4; H. Klaatsch, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1906, pp. 792, and 1907, p. 654.

[1] J. MacGillivray, *Narrative of the Voyage of H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* 1852, vol. i, p. 149.

[2] *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 32.

[3] *Vide* references given by me in *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 6.

[4] *Vide* Charles Sturt: *Two Expeditions into the Interior of Southern Australia*, London, 1834, vol. i, p. 14, and frontispiece.

[5] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 5, and *op. cit.*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 7.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

level, further material has been cut away to reduce its thickness by about 1 centimetre all round. The top portion, which has the appearance of a knob, has been daubed with red ochre; the sunken portion, immediately beneath, is white (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 2). The lower surface of the post bears five vertical bands, three being of white pipe-clay and two of yellow ochre. Two of the former have a border of red, the third one of yellow; and both of the latter (yellow) are bordered with white. Three of the intervening spaces are shaded with inclined lines of white, the remaining two are each filled with a vertical row of white cricoid figures. The original surface upon which the pattern was drawn is charred. 532 764

Having persuaded the natives to repaint the designs on the tomb-posts, in places where they were defective or missing, they set about the work with enthusiasm and did not rest until they had repainted the whole of the surfaces. To accomplish this they leaned the posts against trees and divided themselves into small groups of two to four, each of which undertook part of the work (*vide* Plate XVI, Figs. 1 and 2). Youths were sent to the main camp, whence they soon after returned with lumps of red and yellow ochre and white pipe-clay (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 2). From these they broke off small pieces and crushed them by hand in the strong concave shells of the bivalve mollusc *Cyrena essingtonensis*.[1] To this crumbled pigment sufficient water was added to make a thick paint, more water being added from time to time as required. One might look upon these shells containing the mixed paint as representing primitive palettes (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 1). The paint is applied to the surface by means of crudely made, yet effective, brushes. Short pieces of the creeping calamus are cut with the sharp edge of a shell and one or both of their ends chewed until all the fibres have become separated (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 3); much in the same way as the flower-stalks of the fan-palm are chewed when feeding on honey (*vide* p. 300). Both of these small artists' requisites are highly interesting inasmuch as they show us a decidedly primitive, yet to the present day practically unaltered stage in the evolution of art. [126] 386 [413] 532 [413]

It is evident that the posts have been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk. Captain Flinders[2] as far back as 1803 noticed that the natives on the north coast (Caledon Bay) were familiar with the use of iron instruments and that they tried to steal his axes. He, therefore, suspected that "they had been previously visited by people possessing iron instruments." Later, he was himself able to confirm this supposition when he discovered, near to Cape Wilberforce, a fleet of proas from Macassar, the crew of which were in the habit of visiting the north coast of Australia to collect trepang, which they took to Timor and sold to the Chinese.[3] 412 [322] 177 171

[1] We have before us an interesting analogy, when we recollect that in our own country the shells of fresh-water mussels were, in former days, much used and are still used as a receptacle for mixing water-colours; whence also the name *Unio pictorum*.

[2] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, pp. 213 and 228–231.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 177 412 When Captain King[1] dropped anchor in Apsley Strait in 1818, and came into contact with natives near Luxmore Head on Melville Island, he noticed that "they repeatedly asked for axes by imitating the action of chopping."

171 764 532 Ethnologically these tomb-posts are of the greatest importance. With the exception of the records left by Jukes and MacGillivray, we know of nothing of the kind existing nowadays on the mainland. That, however, the inhabitants of some of the Torres Strait islands adopt methods of preserving the memory of their dead by means of painted and decorated structures of a different type is an established fact. The Continental Australian certainly, also, has methods of his own to mark a place of burial, but in a decidedly more transitory and less laborious way. The latter leaves already existing belongings of the deceased upon the grave; the islander, in addition, surrounds the spot with specially prepared posts such as have been described herein. Apart from the carvings, the painted designs, alone, are quite superior to anything existing on the mainland. The marked symmetry of the individual patterns and their diversity, when compared with one another, can hardly find a parallel on the mainland. We might look upon these island productions as representing interesting and independent transition stages between the primitive art of the Continental Australian, on the one hand, and the more perfected types of equatorial island tribes to the north of Australia, on the other.

APPENDIX.

NATIVE OCHRE DRAWINGS ON BARK FROM MELVILLE ISLAND, NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA.

531 While visiting Bathurst Island in 1911, I also entered several of the inlets of Melville Island from Apsley Strait. At one point, not far from the southern entrance to the Strait, where some aborigines were living in huts near to Cooper's Buffalo-Shooters Camp, I found the drawings here described. They were upon sheets of bark of the Woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*), used for building their shelters and huts. All drawings are in pipe-clay and red ochre; these materials having been smeared or squirted on to the bark in the form of a thin paste or in aqueous suspension. Typical among the drawings of the aboriginals on the mainland are the negative imprints of hands produced by holding the palm of the hand flat against the surface and squirting a mouthful of pipe-clay or ochre, suspended in water, against the back of the hand and around it. The surrounding surface is thus coloured so that, when the hand is removed, its outline stands out conspicuously by the absence of colour.[2]

[1] *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, pp. 111 and 121.

[2] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, 1907, vol. xxxi, p. 56, Plate XII. Among other references note E. Giles, *Australia Twice Traversed*, 1889, vol. i, p. 78. "The drawing is done

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YOUNG GIRL AND BOY accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

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part of Tiwi speech. Poetic license in pronunciation and syllabification often occurs. The Tiwi have high regard for the linguistic ability needed to become a good Tiwi composer and singer, and instruction in the art of song composition and delivery is given to the initiates. Each initiate must perform in the *Kulama* before he can be considered a "graduate." According to my Tiwi informants, this requirement is the hardest of all, and it is also the reason for there being no set age for initiation. The old people are said to watch the young, and when the observers consider them mature enough, they swoop down upon their choices "like chicken hawks, without warning"—as the Tiwi say—and start the initiates along the path to adulthood.

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[171]

As far as I know, the *Kulama* ceremony has no parallel elsewhere in Australia. And there are many interesting questions that come to mind concerning the origin of the *Kulama* as it exists today. For instance, why is instruction in the preparation of a poisonous yam that is not part of the daily diet considered so important for initiation into adulthood? What is the origin of the idea that a yam has power over good and evil, and health and sickness? Why is such prominence accorded a yam in what is principally a hunting and gathering society?

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Any answers to these questions must be highly speculative, for the origin of the ceremony and its development lie in the unrecorded history of the Tiwi. However, I believe the following statements may well be valid.

Instruction in the natural resources of the land was considered vital to becoming an adult. Because the *Kulama* yam is poisonous and is not widely distributed, it was never part of the regular diet, but it could be used in economic emergencies if properly prepared. Instruction in its preparation was therefore extremely important as a potential survival measure. However, since the Tiwi live in a favorable environment, it is highly probable that such emergencies were very rare, so it was considered expedient to hold annual instruction periods. Because knowledge of

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[SEE P. 15 (A) FOR OTHER PART OF CAPTION AND PICTURE -- ANALYST]

884 the technique had to be made meaningful to the initiates,
174 the lifesaving qualities of this famine food were explained as health-giving powers. A ceremony accompanied by song and dance was certainly a dramatic and effective means of impressing the initiates in preparation methods. The ritual served another purpose as well: because traveling is so
[180] difficult during the rainy season, each household is isolated from the others. The *Kulama* ritual follows this period, and it is natural to expect a reunion to be an occasion to exchange news, settle differences, and tell stories or sing songs that keep traditions alive.

885 MUCH harder to account for is the Tiwi idea of adulthood. That every adult is solely responsible for his own health and wealth, and that success in life depends entirely on personal behavior and industry, are ideals strangely similar to those that underlie the American way
●[171] of life, despite the great gulf between the aboriginal culture and our own. But it is not at all surprising that the Tiwi
177 have a great sympathy for much of Western civilization. Many hold the same views as the *Kulama* singer quoted earlier in this article who saw his children wearing clothes and shoes and going to school to learn to write, for this is
[181] the Tiwi's contemporaneous idea of success in a way of life introduced to them only a few short years ago.

Early in the summer of 1962 I revisited the Tiwi for
[114] two weeks. Although I knew that the Tiwi desired schooling and training in European ways of life and would seize any such opportunity afforded them, I was hardly prepared for the tremendous changes that had taken place during the eight years that had elapsed since my first visit.

Three months after the *Kulama* ceremony of 1954, a
[871] government school was opened. Now all the Tiwi children go to school, and some who have finished the six-year program in the government school have received subsequent training as teaching or nursing assistants. Some others have had "on-the-job" training in various activities connected with a large-scale forestry project that has been started on Melville Island. In fact, all the able-bodied Tiwi men and women are currently employed, and their tasks bear little or no relation to their old life in the bush.

It is perhaps significant—but to me not at all surprising—that I did not hear a single real complaint from the Tiwi regarding their new manner of living. They seem to like it and are anticipating bigger and better things (in the
[324] Western sense) for their children. Hunting has become a week-end diversion and the children receive little or no
[868] real instruction in that traditional skill.

178 SOME aspects of Tiwi life are slow to die, however. Most
784 of the old taboos, the observance of which was considered necessary in the past in order to insure health and wealth, are still observed, although at least one teen-ager expressed doubt that the taboos had any actual effect on
177 the outcome of one's life. Western medicine and public health practices are fast replacing belief in the *Kulama*.
884 During the past eight years only three men have begun the six years of training for *Kulama* initiation, and some of the older men no longer participate in the ceremony. However, as long as even a small number of Tiwi believe in the *Kulama*, the ritual will survive, but I doubt that it will for long.

000 NEAR END of *Kulama* ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.
[P. 16, (B)]

797 The couples marry young without any thought for the future.
They just marry as, and when, they feel inclined, and the mission
582 fathers provide the new home. Under the palms beside the
342 Strait are many of the queer little iron humpies provided, just a
roof, as it were, sloping on each side from the ridge-pole to the
ground. The whole can be picked up and moved to a fresh
position when fleas become too numerous and the surroundings
otherwise unpleasant. These humpies scarcely seem attractive
to white folk, but the islanders like them, and they are at least
a great improvement on the dog-kennels of old iron that the
blacks persist in erecting for themselves on the beach at Darwin.

797 Proper houses are provided in the Kahlin compound there, but
the blacks despise them; and, although the miserable humpies on
342 the beach are demolished from time to time by the authorities,
they are all up again by next evening. The good fathers know
what the islanders prefer, and they have given the married
couples the kind of accommodation in which they feel most
happy. The humpies may be hot and stuffy, but they are dry
inside when it rains.

142 The island blacks, in many respects, differ considerably from
the tribes of the mainland. They are excessively hirsute, and,
144 on attaining maturity, the men grow long beards, many being of
truly patriarchal proportions. The upper lip is kept bare, which
practice seems to emphasize the magnificence of the beard.
Shocks of hair, sometimes standing six inches high, add to a
wildly impressive appearance. They are tall and muscular, and,
as they stride along, they seem the very acme of physical develop-
ment, a living advertisement for the natural, open-air existence.

302 The hairs, by the way, are plucked from the upper lip one by
one, and this painful proceeding is undertaken in the calmest
manner, certainly with less fuss and facial distortion than the
average white man makes during his morning shave.

● 171 The use of the woomera for throwing spears, and of the
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[p. 15 (A)]

171 boomerang, is unknown to the islanders. Ceremonial customs,
[411] language, origin, and burial rites all differ from those of the mainland tribes, and constitute an interesting study for anthropologists. They are the only aborigines who erect memorials on
764 the graves of the departed, and, in the forest beside the aerodrome, you may see a typical grave surrounded with queerly-
[322 carved ironwood totem-poles. The poles, some eight feet in height, are carved in varying patterns. They had been painted
532] in highly decorative designs with red, yellow, and white ochre, with black bands of charcoal to give sharp and artistic contrast. Each kindred totem to that of the deceased must place a pole at the grave. Failure to erect a pole is supposed to signify that no sorrow is felt for the death, and punishment will follow. Something unpleasant always *does* happen to those who neglect this duty.

797 AFTER these necessary digressions, let us return to my visit to the mission station. We followed the fathers over the stile, up an avenue of palms, and on through the garden, where
[245] pineapples and bananas grow, and there are rows of immense and beautifully shady mango-trees. Sturdy, fuzzy-headed aborigines strode in front (one of them had just come in with
[262] a couple of kangaroos for the larder), and the boys trooped along behind us. The quarters of the fathers are very much those of bachelors, perfectly bare, with guns in the corners and a few native weapons and curios hanging on the walls.

Here two lubras brought us morning tea, and here I learnt much of the foregoing matters. The fathers themselves are entertaining men of the world, and their white cricket shirts and khaki slacks gave no indication of their calling. The boys gathered at the foot of the steps leading up to the quarters,
797 and every now and then black-bearded Father McGrath would
522 banter them in their own language. Like all the native peoples

[p. 15 (B)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Tiwi Marriage

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Cultural Isolation

PEOPLE WHO LIVE in the congested cities and towns of the modern world have difficulty in realizing how different life can be at the hunting and gathering level of human existence. The basic fact about the life of hunters and gatherers is the thinly spread-out manner in which they live and the isolation of families and households from each other. In the case of the Tiwi, these conditions of isolation and dispersal were accentuated by their island habitat. Melville and Bathurst Islands lie off the northern coast of Australia some fifty to eighty miles from Darwin, which is the administrative capital of the empty north. They are separated from the mainland by about twenty-five miles of open sea at the narrowest part. This distance is slightly greater than the distance that separates England from France at the Straits of Dover, and just as the dim outline of coastal France can be seen from England on clear days, so the dim outline of the Australian mainland can be seen from the southern edges of the islands. However, Tiwi tradition is firm and certain that before the white man's arrival there was no contact between the islands and the mainland. To them, the dimly seen coastline of Australia was *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead, to which all Tiwi souls went after death. It follows from this they they regarded the inhabited world as composed of their own two islands, and on those islands they lived a self-contained and exclusive existence. Occasionally outsiders appeared, either castaways from surrounding areas, including presumably the Australian mainland, and in recent centuries, fishing boats and pirates from Indonesia, loosely called "Malays" in the literature. To such visitors from outside, the Tiwi were consistently and implacably hostile. Their own traditions and what little written history there is of "Malay" penetration into the Arafura Sea both tell the same story. Outsiders who landed on the islands were massacred or vigorously resisted. Whether they were classified as *Malai-ui* ("Malays") or *Wona-rui*

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 609 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human [101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

● [173] 171 Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distributional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how [411] isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their [531] wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus- [764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the [511] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

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[177 524] [1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

southern coast of Bathurst Island. In 1886, the Australian government tried to erect channel markers on the southern shore of Melville Island, whereupon the Tiwi immediately "salvaged" both cloth and iron from them. During June and July of the same year the ship *Jane Anderson* was stranded on the shoals of first Melville and then Bathurst Island. Also in 1886, two Malay proas were wrecked on the north coast of Melville Island. That year was a great one for looting. 175 648

Occasionally visitors came ashore on the islands. The Stokes' survey party landed in the late 1830's, but saw no natives. A government party crossed Melville Island in 1887; the Tiwi speared its leader. In 1893, a government tourist party went to look over the ruins of old Fort Dundas; they kept their eyes open and no one was injured. In 1897, Joe Cooper, a buffalo shooter, tried to make a living from the Melville Island buffalo; he was speared and retreated to Darwin.

Tiwi treatment of outsiders prior to 1900 had been to rob them, spear them, kill them. This is not, however, the picture painted by modern Tiwi when talking of their past. They claim that their ancestors greeted each new group of strangers with the cry: *"Pongki! Pongki!"* (meaning, "Peace! Peace!"). But then it should be noted that before 1900 many a Tiwi peacemaker carried a spear between his toes. Yet under these circumstances the Tiwi world view did alter. First there were those changes which came from an attempt to understand the new objects which were suddenly thrust into the Tiwi world: the trade knives and axes given by Dutch navigators, the matchlock guns used by the Malays and probably the Portuguese, the rice given to Tiwi by the surveyors under P. P. King, the Indonesian water buffalo introduced by the British at their short-lived settlement, the coconut palms the English left behind them, the cups and plates from shipwrecks in the 1880's, and the flour tossed overboard to lighten foundering vessels. The Tiwi cherished iron knives and axes, readily recognizing their greater efficiency. The Tiwi begged for them; they stole them; and, when a spar washed ashore bound round with iron bands, the natives burned away the wood and took the iron away to grind into axes. The matchlock gun, and even the later flintlock, could be coped with; when one saw the flash, one ducked flat, just in case the weapon worked, and then rushed in to impale the stranger with a spear. Rice was useless; it looked like the larvae of the termite, which was not good for anything anyway. Buffalo were to be killed; they kept wallowing in the best waterholes. Coconut palms were a great disappointment; they were bigger than the local cabbage palm, but when cut down, did not have the same succulent interior. Plates were too much bother to carry around, but cups were worth saving for a while. Flour could be used for white paint, but it was not as good as the best white pigment near at hand. [173] [411] 175 177

Other modifications took place in Tiwi life before 1900 as a result of action by outsiders. Probably the greatest of these alterations came as a result of slave raiding, or "black birding" as it is called in the South Seas. The Tiwi always kept their young women hidden from strangers, even if they were just visitors from other bands. The old men rarely left camp. Therefore, it was the 175 648 [609]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

takes the part of a hunter endeavouring to drive his spear into the enraged kangaroo on the opposite side of the ring. 527 535

Corrobboree of the ship of war.—The next item in the ceremony appeals to us Europeans in a twofold sense. Firstly, the mimicry on the part of the aboriginal in an introduced scene is excellent: its effect being still more enhanced in that his artistic genius has expanded the original impressions by adequate interludes of his own invention and taste. Secondly, the observer's sentiment and appreciation are kindled afresh when he sees this savage folk, who are oft not credited with the possession of anything but vice and immorality, present to a subsequent and younger generation, scenes in living picture, which happened long ago in the days of the naval settlement of Fort Dundas. To us the records are available in the libraries throughout the world; to the aboriginal the events can only be handed down by tradition and such ceremonies as that which is now to be described. 177 527 535 [173 182]

The chorus or semicircular group of men have again started their rhythmical accompaniment by clapping upon the lateral aspect of their thighs with the arched palm of one hand. A performer rushes into the centre of the half-ring and, after going through a few preliminaries, stands with one of his legs placed a short distance in front of the other and slightly flexed at the knee. Throwing his head back and looking upwards, he starts a vigorous hauling action by alternately throwing one arm out in the direction he is looking, closing the fist and making an imaginary pull right down to his loins, while at the same time the opposite arm is thrown out and returned in a similar way. Accurate time is kept by the time-beaters. This act is in imitation of the hauling-in of a sail on a European man-of-war, such as the natives saw at Fort Dundas nearly a century ago. The performer now turns and runs to the opposite corner of the half-ring; the onlookers marking the time by clapping to it in a quickened beat produced with both hands upon their buttocks. The same act is repeated there several times. Next, the same hauling motion is continued, but reversed from below towards the body, in imitation of the hauling-up of an anchor. Several short and harsh interjections suggest the orders of the commanding officers and the whole ceremony, in fact, is reproduced with a suspicion of caricature upon the strictness of naval discipline. During this part of the performance, several cries of "poop" and "iah" are again sounded. The actor now moves about in the semicircle with the familiar stamping of feet and cutting out the most grotesque antics. He first extends his arms straight out on either side, throws his head back and moves his thorax laterally in a pendulous manner from the hips. Then he turns his arms through a right-angle frontwards, so that they project slantingly upwards, whence he again changes them to the former position. Then again he extends his arms downward and bends them so that the elbows project behind and his fists rest against his flanks, from which position they are presently changed to a straight pendulous one. After remaining in that position a short while, he suddenly throws them furiously upwards in front of him; the stamping, which has been

11:Goodale E-5 (1954,1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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YAMS TO BE USED in *Kulama* ceremony are retrieved from a fresh-water pool in which they had been soaked overnight.

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For instance, The composer of the following song had just returned from Brisbane, where he and a group of eight other aborigines had performed dances in honor of Queen Elizabeth's 1954 visit to Australia:

[539]

"The Queen was talking in England,
'I would like to see a blackfellow dance.'
When I was in Brisbane, the Queen said,
'I would like to meet a black boy!'
And I went up.
King Philip, he had a good look at me.
He was watching a lot as I danced.
I was singing into a loud-speaker."

[173]

Some songs are historic in nature, retelling an event that must be kept alive according to the traditions of the tribe. One such composition recalls the Japanese attack on Darwin during World War II:

[539]

"An enemy plane flies low over Melville Island.
The men on the ground, at the word 'Standby,'
Shoot it down with a cannon."

The children of the singer are often song subjects. This first example describes how the children behaved in one of their father's dreams.

[539]

"My children have gone to the other side
of the island.
But they must come back as they are hard up
for tobacco.
My children have now come back.
I know this for they have taken the tobacco
which I have held in my hand."

or

"My children will wear clothes and shoes.
They will go to school and learn to write."

All the songs have the same chanting tune, which is associated with the *Kulama* ceremony, and the composer must fit his words to the set meter of the chant. In many cases this requires using archaic words that are no longer a

[P. 14, (1)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

scientists use to account for the continued survival in Australia of eucalyptus trees, kangaroos, koala bears, and the duck-billed platypus—namely, the long-continued isolation of early forms, which elsewhere have either died out or changed into something a little more modern. Australia is a large and geologically an ancient country, but in relation to the other large land masses on the earth, it is very "cut-off" and remote. Recent white settlement in Australia has built up large modern cities which are similar in many respects to those in America. During World War II, American troops stationed in these Australian cities were astonished to find so many of their cherished American institutions—department stores, drug stores, movie theaters—located in a country "so far from everywhere." It is this isolation that accounts for the preservation in Australia of plants, animals, and a native race which, deprived of contact with the rest of the world until recently, developed or retained characteristics which are unique in the modern world.

Most of what we know about the first entry of men into Australia is based on probability and inference. Since Australia is in such an out-of-the-way corner of the earth's surface, man is not likely to have originated there. He must therefore have migrated—probably accidentally—from somewhere else. A glance at a world map will show that this migration can hardly have been from any continent other than Asia. The long chain of islands stretching down into the Pacific from the neighborhood of Singapore suggests the obvious migration route. There was a time in the geological past when many of these islands were joined to each other by land bridges which also tied them to Asia and Australia, so that early animals such as marsupials were able to walk (or hop) from Asia to Australia without getting their feet wet. But these land connections disappeared under the ocean long before the appearance of man on earth, and therefore the early ancestors of the Australians, in moving down from Asia through the islands, must have encountered stretches of open ocean on their route. Such inferences pose the general shape of the problem. The early Australians came from Southeast Asia; they came, part of the way at least, by water, and they must have remained isolated in Australia after their arrival.

How early in terms of years these first humans reached Australia can be inferred from indirect evidence. The crucial point is the simplicity of the Australians' tools and weapons. Present-day anthropology does not subscribe to the idea that human technological development has only been along a single line (the doctrine of unilineal cultural evolution), but nonetheless in a rough sense the presence or absence of certain basic pieces of human technology can be used as time indicators. When the Europeans first encountered the natives of southeastern Australia in the 1700's, the following items of technology were completely lacking among them: all use of metal, agriculture, domestic animals (except the dog), pottery, and the bow and arrow. As they had none of these in 1700, the belief is that their ancestors had none of them when they first arrived. Since those ancestors came from Asia via the islands, they must have left Asia before these items of culture were

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

invented or known there. Agriculture, pottery, and metal using were developed 174
comparatively late in human history, but the absence of knowledge of the bow and arrow in the southern parts of Australia is particularly notable since this weapon is relatively ancient and very wide-spread among hunting and gathering peoples. Moreover, its value to hunters is so great that it is unlikely to be given up. Hence, we infer that the earliest Australians migrated down from Southeast Asia at a time so early that knowledge of the bow and arrow had not yet reached that area. Evidence regarding the origin of the bow and arrow is still not certain. In Western Europe this weapon is usually dated as first appearing in the Mesolithic Period (roughly 20,000–6,000 B.C.). Dr. Kroeber includes the bow among the artifacts which the first ancestors of the American Indians carried across Bering Straits around 15,000 B.C. This last date will suffice as an approximation. By 15,000 B.C. the bow and arrow were present in Northeast Asia (that is, the section lying towards Bering Straits) and probably were also known in Southeast Asia. We may hazard the conclusion, therefore, that the ancestors of the Australians must have already left the vicinity of the Asiatic mainland by that date. This leads to the inference that when discovered by Captain Cook in 1770, the Australians had been in Australia for something like 17,000 years,[1] having drifted down from the mainland of Asia possessing only the primitive technological equipment that the rest of the world had evolved at that time. Having arrived "at the end of the line" in Australia, they could go no further, and survived there in isolation, keeping, but not improving upon, the simple technology they had brought with them.

But why were they left alone while other peoples, at later dates, with improved tools and weapons (including the bow and arrow) occupied the islands behind them and beyond them? For today the island chain from the mainland of Asia down to New Guinea and the numerous island groups further out into the Pacific (Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia) are occupied by peoples who not only differ from the Australians in physical type but also possess such cultural items as the bow and arrow, agriculture, domesticated pigs, pottery, and many others, which were unknown in Australia. The answer to this second part of the problem seems to hinge upon the types of ocean transportation employed by these early migrants.

In reconstructing the early culture history of the Pacific region, it is impossible to operate without one general assumption—namely, that the type of tools (including the type of canoe) possessed by a given native people when the white man first arrived was approximately the same as that which the early ancestors of those people brought with them when they first entered the area in question. (This assumption can, of course, only be made if there is strong supporting evidence that changes in the tools (and canoes) *after arrival* were minimal or superficial.) On this assumption the early Australians

[1] So far, very little archaeological investigation has been carried out in Australia. The earliest dated cultural material from the continent is about 8,500 years old. However, Australian archaeologists have located human artifacts which apparently are earlier than this dated culture.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

174 are thought to have arrived in the type of canoes that were still in use by their descendants in the 1700's. These craft, mostly in use in Cook's time on the northern and eastern coasts and the inland waterways, were called canoes by courtesy but were incredibly frail. They consisted of a single sheet of bark bent roughly into the shape of a boat, laced together at the ends, caulked with wild honeycomb or some vegetable gum, their sides held apart by a few sticks. Such "canoes" are little better than rafts; even in calm water they are likely to swamp, capsize, or disintegrate, and the only thing that can be said for them is that when swamped or capsized, the bark will still float, enabling the occupants to cling to the remains, at least briefly. Hanging on to a swamped sheet of bark is not an activity that merits the name seafaring, and in the shark-invested waters around the Australian coastline and in the crocodile-infested rivers of the north it is not conducive to survival. Such canoes were until recently in use here and there by Australians as these [177] craft could be very quickly constructed. But today where the natives use canoes, those made of bark have been replaced by the dugout canoe.[8] No Australian would willingly have ventured very far from land in a bark canoe, and therefore, as we said earlier, the crossing of open stretches of ocean by the first Australians on their migration down from Asia through the Indonesian islands must have been accidental and involuntary, by being blown or carried on, whether they liked it or not. In short, they finally reached the Australian coastline as castaways drifting in from the islands to the northwest or north.[8]

When they arrived on the North Australian coast, their sea wanderings were over, for they possessed no boats which could carry them onward to the far-off Pacific Islands. These first human occupants of Australia had to make the best of the inhospitable country they found. They moved into the large, empty land mass before them and their descendants remained there without much alteration in their way of life for succeeding millennia. Those who stayed near the coast or found rivers to settle along retained the use of crude bark canoes, while those who reached the desert interior forgot about them entirely.

Such a pattern of reasoning brings us to the final question: Why were these Australians left isolated from the influence of later migrants who came by way of the same series of islands? The answer is that all later migrants—whose descendants we know today as Melanesians, Polynesians, or Micronesians—had much better canoes when they left Asia. Hence they could control where they went and had greater freedom to move on further if they did not like an area where they had landed. Evidence seems to suggest that the bulk of these later peoples, and certainly the Melanesian peoples, came from the direction of Southeast Asia around the *northern* side of New Guinea

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[8] Lloyd Warner and others have established that the Australian tribes along the northern coasts learned about dugouts from Malay visitors in relatively recent times. (Warner 1937)

[8] See Andrew Sharp who has recently demonstrated this to be true for the Pacific generally. (Sharp 1957)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

and therefore never approached the northern coasts of Australia at all, being carried on past the eastern end of New Guinea toward the Solomons and the New Hebrides. If any such later peoples did sight or land on the northern coast of Australia, they stayed only briefly, leaving no trace, probably because the region appeared uninviting. More recently, others have also found the northern coastline of Australia unattractive; these include the Japanese Navy, in World War II, which carefully by-passed it and followed the route of the Melanesians along the northern shores of New Guinea, through the Bismarcks and the Admiralties toward the Solomons and Guadalcanal. Thus the early Australians were left in isolated possession of an empty continent during the fifteen thousand or more years following their arrival. 174

For those who maintain that human progress is an inevitable movement, it should be noted that all the evidence indicates that during those long centuries the Australians remained at almost the same technological level as they were when they first landed.

Australian Culture When the White Men Came

The continent of Australia varies a good deal in such matters as climate, rainfall, and amount of vegetation, but in general it may be said that well over half of it is country in which keeping alive is fairly easy, even for people of such a low level of culture as that represented by the first Australians. In particular, there were no dangerous animals (except snakes), and much of the climate being like that of Southern California, the country was mostly free of tropical jungles and the diseases that are associated with them. For a primitive hunting and gathering people, the main problem of existence in Australia was lack of water, as indeed it still is today, despite modern technology. At least one-third of the continent, comprising about a million square miles, is arid desert or semidesert where rain rarely falls, and the so-called river beds are bone dry for years at a stretch.[4] Elsewhere there are well-watered areas which provide an adequate food supply for a hunting and gathering people. The Murray River Valley in the southeast and the coastal strips along the east, southeast, and north coastlines are the best watered regions, and these were the areas that supported the largest native populations when the white man arrived. But even in such favorable tracts the population was spread very thin. The best estimate of size of the native population for the whole continent before the arrival of Europeans is that within the total area of approximately three million square miles there lived slightly above a quarter of a million people, giving an average density of one person to every twelve square miles. Since over one-third of the continent is almost waterless and could support, then or now, very few humans, the density for the livable parts is more re-

[4] It rained in Alice Springs in Central Australia on New Year's Eve, 1929-30. According to their parents, white children six to seven years old were then seeing rain for the first time in their lives.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

291 observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission,
[797] automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for
177 the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst
[20] of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their oppo-
[578] nents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark
834 aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We
174 think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were
291 needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at
535 dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households
511 enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

433 1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were econom-
595 ically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to
182 produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

[556] 5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired
[175] the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indi-
[177] cate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even
[609] had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in which they invariably succeeded. Their canoes and weapons were similar to the mainland."[4] 177 [114]

The probability that the Tiwi have been isolated from external influences for a long time is still further supported by their culture. Their artefacts are remarkably simple—they do not even possess a spear-thrower or small mounted stone tools—their art forms and ceremonial life are unlike those in any other part of Australia, there are no secret rituals, and the social status of the women is on a much higher plane than that of any other aboriginal women. 174 105

[4] From the evidence given above we can safely discard this writer's statement. Foelsche, who was a police officer in Darwin, probably quoted a rumour without checking its accuracy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER II

The Creation Period

WHATEVER differences may exist between the Melville Island cultures and those of the mainland, and, in some aspects, those differences are considerable, the creation stories indicate that the two cultures sprang from the same source.[1]

At the close of the creation period, both on Melville Island and the mainland, the original creators, men and women, were transformed, or transformed themselves, into various creatures, plants, natural forces or heavenly bodies.

Although I would not claim that the list of totems is complete, I feel certain that the aboriginal artists pictured, on the bark paintings, most of the areas created by their mythical forbears. More detailed research may reveal additional totemic places.

The list of the thirty-four totemic ancestors illustrated on the bark paintings is curiously unbalanced in its distribution. More than a third of these are trees, almost all eucalypts. The remaining four groups are: the natural forces, creatures of the air, the sea, and one inanimate totem, i.e. red ochre. Neither land animals nor reptiles are referred to in the bark paintings of the totemic places, although they appear in the myths.

These facts contrast strongly with the Central Australian beliefs regarding their totemic creatures (Mountford, 1948, p. 23; Spencer and Gillen, 1899, p. 387), where almost every living thing, particularly the creatures, took some part in the creation of the topography; plant totems are uncommon in Central Australia.

The same Central Australian characteristics are also evident in the myths of Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 21), although in the adjacent Arnhem Land, the great creators, i.e., the *Wawalik* Sisters (Warner, 1937, p. 250), and the *Djunkgao* Sisters (Berndt, 1952; Mountford, 1956, p. 267; Warner, 1937, p. 336), made the bulk of the topography, plants and creatures.

Although the Groote Eylandt pantheon, like that of Melville Island, originated as men and women, they were, almost without exception, changed to non-human totems, whereas the great creators of Arnhem Land, the *Wawalik* and the *Djunkgao* Sisters, have always remained human.

[1] Little research has been carried out on the creation stories of the Australian aborigines; Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 387) giving the most detailed account.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

3. THE DEATH OF PURUKUPALI

While many of the people of the early creation period were spreading over the island, the original family, *Wuriupranala*, *Murupiangkala* and *Purukupali*, and their descendants, had established themselves on south-eastern Melville Island; *Murupiangkala*, with her daughter *Tukumbuna* and her grandchildren, *Tukimbini*, *Wilinduala* and *Numanirakala*, at Murupianga; *Wuriupranala* with her son *Wuriuprinili*, at Wuriupi; and *Purukupali*, his wife *Bima* and their infant son, *Djinini*, at Impanali (Fig. 1). 773

Purukupali was strongly attached to *Djinini*. Every morning, when *Bima* went out food-gathering, she would take *Djinini* with her, bringing him back to *Purukupali* at the end of the day, together with the food she had collected.

In the same camp lived an unmarried man, *Tjapara*, who used to persuade *Bima* to leave her child asleep under the shade of a tree and sneak into the forest with him. This intrigue had been going on for some time when, on one very hot day, *Bima* stayed away from her child too long, for, when she returned, the shade had moved and *Djinini* was lying dead in the hot sun. Distraught with grief, *Bima* chanted her song of remorse—

Bili wangia tingatia
(Evil woman am I to have caused the death of my son.)

When *Purukupali* heard of the death of *Djinini*, his anger knew no bounds.[18] Striking his wife on her head with a throwing stick, and hunting her into the forest, he decreed that death should come to the whole world. As his son had died, said *Purukupali*, so the whole of creation would die, and once dead, never again would come to life. There was no death before that time.

Tjapara remonstrated with *Purukupali*, and pleaded for the dead body of *Djinini*, promising to restore him to life in three days.[19] But *Purukupali* was so adamant that the two men quarrelled about this matter until *Purukupali*, losing his temper, threw a *muruguna* (Pl. 32D) at *Tjapara* who replied with the forked throwing stick, *miluanta* (Pl. 32C) known today as *Tjapara's muruguna*. Soon the two men were locked in a deadly struggle, each wounding the other severely in the face and body.

[18] My informant stated that it was not the intrigues of *Tjapara* and *Bima* that enraged *Purukupali*, but that, by their selfishness, they had caused the death of his son.

[19] This is a reversal of ideas. In the mainland myths it is the moon that brings death to mankind (Mountford, 1956, p. 503), but among the Tiwi, it is the moon who endeavours to prevent death coming to the world. This is one of the many factors that suggest that the Tiwi must have been separated from the effects of the mainland cultures for a considerable period. [171] [174]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

elaborately shaped nor decorated, often being covered with no more than a series of dots.[1] 211 765

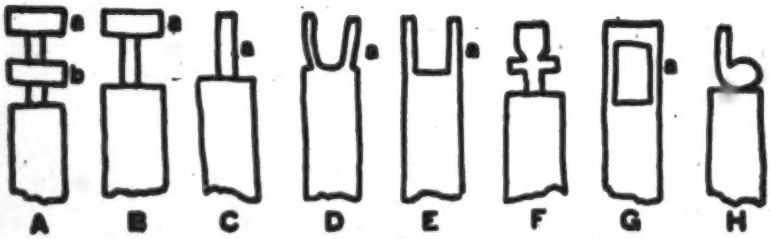

FIG. 8. *The Burial Poles*

Origin of the Pukamuni Poles

At present we have no evidence to show whether the custom of erecting burial poles around the grave in such numbers, not as a memorial, but as a gift to the dead, is confined entirely to the Tiwi tribe, or whether it is used in any other part of the world, and has reached the Tiwi by diffusion. There certainly are no similar burial poles on the Australian continent. 171 765 211 [769]

In north-eastern Arnhem Land, some of the decorated log coffins are as high as seven feet.[2] But the function of those coffins bears no relationship to that of the burial poles of Melville Island, the former being no more than coffins to hold the bones, and the latter, gifts to please the spirit of the dead.

It is possible that, during the long period of isolation from the mainland cultures, the Melville Islanders may have changed coffins of north-eastern Arnhem Land into the burial poles of the Tiwi.

The only examples of burial posts outside of Australia known to me, that are in any way comparable in function to those on Melville Island, are the *malanggan* burial ornaments of New Ireland described by Kramer.[3]

Methods of Manufacture

Although, at the conclusion of the *pukamuni* rituals, the grave is totally neglected and the poles allowed to decay, the "workers", using steel axes[4] 765

[1] Although *Tjamalampua* is not fully correct (see Bremer's and Campbell's statement in the early nineteenth century, pp. 107, 108), it indicates that both the poles and their painted decorations have, with the passing of the years, and the acquisition of steel tools, become more complex.

[2] Mountford, 1956, p. 317. [3] Kramer, 1925.

[4] The evidence of Bremer, Spencer and the aborigines, suggests that before the advent of metal the only cutting tools owned by the aborigines would have been crude stone axes, and the shells of cockles. It is likely that, under these conditions, the poles would 412 174 322

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 and the hardest and most durable timber available, spared no pains to make the best poles they could.[6]

×532 765 When the "workers" had finished shaping the poles they notified the leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, who then gave the order for the poles to be scorched over a fire of blazing leaves to make a black ground on which to paint the design (Mountford, 1956, p. 427). Then, setting up the poles in a double row near the grave (Mountford, 1956, p. 426), the men began their task of decoration (Pl. 33B, D). At the same time, the ceremonial leader sent message sticks (p. 98) to notify the outlying groups that the final rituals were about to start.

386 The materials used for decoration were: red and yellow ochres from Imilu, Cape Van Diemen, a white ochre from a beach nearby, crushed charcoal for black, one of three types of fixatives, i.e., the white of turtle eggs, wild honey and beeswax mixed together, and the particularly gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids.

The ochres were crushed, mixed with water and one or more of the fixatives, and applied to the poles with brushes made from chewed strips of bark or vines (Fig. 2).

517 ×532 As I watched these primitive artists at work, I was impressed with the care they took in the arranging of their simple patterns, and with the obvious pleasure they experienced in their work. A quiet air of contentment pervaded the outdoor studio as each of the ten artists made his own pole as beautiful as possible.

Each artist appeared to be certain as to the designs he would use; there was no evidence of copying; in fact, *Pulanimbuwi* showed me the rough draft of the designs of his pole (Pl. 35A, B, Fig. 9), scratched on the back of a cigarette tin, days before he had even felled the tree.

×532 765 A puzzling aspect of the *pukamuni* poles is the wide variety of the painted designs used, and the almost total absence in those designs of any reference to the myths and totemic localities.[6]

At first sight it would appear that the pole shapes, collected by both Fry and myself, were inventions of the moment. An analysis of the poles

174 412 322 have simpler shapes than at the present time, although Campbell (1834, p. 158) speaks about "poles with tops like lances and halberts". The aborigines may have used fire to assist in the shaping of the poles, in fact, this is suggested by Klaatsch (1907, p. 587).

[6] Not far from our camp was the deserted grave of the father of *Muranajua* (Pl. 38D), who died when his son was an infant. *Muranajua* was then over forty years old, yet the poles, although somewhat eroded and disarranged by the elements, are still in a fair state of preservation.

[177] [6] This and old *Tjamalampua's* statement, p. 109, could indicate that the poles and their designs are a recent cultural trait that is not yet fully absorbed into the culture.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pole at Punata on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), while I saw and photographed the third example in the form of a highly conventionalized human figure (Pl. 38A, B, C), which was on an old grave not far from our camp. No doubt there are other examples of these poles on the deserted graves of the Islands. I saw recently, in the Musée Ethnographique et Musée Suisse de Folklore, Bâle, Switzerland, two full-length human figures which had been collected at Bathurst Island by Mr. Karel Kupta in 1956. 532x 765

This evidence indicates that, for thirty years, at least, the men and women of the Tiwi,[11] occasionally carved burial poles in human form; we do not know when the practice of carving the smaller figures[12] began.

At first sight it appeared that these wooden figures might have been a cultural trait borrowed, as in north-eastern Arnhem Land, from the Malay trepangers. Further research, however, did not confirm this hypothesis. [177]

Although now and again some Malay prau, driven off its course by contrary winds, must have touched the shores of either Melville or Bathurst Island, it is certain that the men of the Tiwi, who were notably unfriendly, would have endeavoured to drive them away. This unfriendliness probably explains why the Malays were not able to establish themselves on these Islands as they did in north-eastern Arnhem Land. The old men of the Tiwi do not remember any Malay fishermen visiting their country. This evidence that the Malays did not settle on the land of the Tiwi is further supported by Campbell (1834), who writes (p. 143), "The Malays were never seen near Melville Island", and later (p. 155), ". . . Malay fishermen were forbidden to go near Melville Island . . . alleging that it was infested with pirates. . . ." 174 648 [114]

This evidence suggests that the Tiwi practice of carving human figures in wood was not, like that of the aborigines of Arnhem Land, borrowed from a Malayan source, but is a recent local development, probably stimulated by the acquisition of steel tools and the other possessions of the white man. For instance, it would be easy to imagine a skilled aboriginal trying to make his pole resemble the tall bodies of the white man's saints in the mission church. From these larger would develop the smaller figures. 532x 765 177

It is unlikely that any elaborately carved burial pole, much less one in the form of a human figure, would be more than fifty years old. Before that time, except those stolen from the short-lived Fort Dundas settlement, the Tiwi would have owned few, if any steel tools. 532x 765

Although the Tiwi have no specific myth about the larger burial poles, 773

[11] A woman may cut a burial pole instead of her husband, should he be absent.

[12] There is a difference, however, between the two; the *tudini* poles, in human form, are cut from the hardest and most durable eucalypt; the smaller figures from the soft wood of the beach kapok, a wood which is quickly destroyed by insects.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 they do have one which explains, to their satisfaction, the origin of the small
×732 figures.[15]
765

On the occasion of the first *pukamuni* at Tapararimi, a man, *Piamatilidjara*, who later become the tawny frogmouth (*Podagus strigoides*), made and painted a small figure, similar to Pl. 40c, *r*. This he placed on the grave to impersonate *Purukupali*, whose body was not buried there, he having walked into the sea and drowned himself.

×532 At present these human figures, both large and small, are made, either at
765 the request of the chief mourner, or by the "worker" himself. This happens if the man cutting the pole, holding the dead person in especial esteem, wishes to please his spirit. The smaller figures may represent either a son of the dead or mythical men and women of creation times.

When the burial poles are being erected, one of them, in human form, or a smaller figure, is occasionally placed at the head of the grave.[16] The *mopaditi*,
[775] on leaving its body, sees the wooden figure, and thinking it is either its son, or one of its old companions, stays at the grave and talks to it about old times. These wooden figures have no *imunka* (life essence), nevertheless the *mopaditi*, who is believed to be stupid and easily misled, thinks it is talking to a living person.

I collected two burial poles (Pl. 39) in the form of highly conventionalized
[126] human beings, and six smaller, full-length figures (Pl. 40, 41). I also photographed a pole, in human form, on an old grave (Pl. 38A, B, C).

Pl. 39A, B, C, is a *pukamuni* pole representing a performer, ready to take part in the final burial rituals. The projection *m* (39B), is his hair; *n*, *n*, are his ears, and *o*, *o*, his arms; *p* is a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball), and *s*, (39A), his backbone.

The cross-hatched squares, *a*, *a*, *a* (39A), represent patches of grass on the floor of the jungle; the designs, *e*, *e*, *e*, jungle trees, and *b*, *b*, *b*, spider webs in the branches.

The waves of the sea are indicated by the bands of short vertical lines, *c*, *c*, *c*; a boulder on the sea-shore by oval *f* (39A); oysters on the rocks by the squares with diagonal lines, *d*, *d*, and paper-bark trees by the groups of intersecting lines at *e*, *e*.

The designs on the face and head (39C) are: *k*, edible fruit, *h*, grass in

[174] [15] This myth does not necessarily indicate great age because those of non-literate people tend to keep up-to-date. Mountford, 1956, p. 98, and Worsley, 1955, p. 856, both give examples of how the Groote Eylandt aborigines have incorporated foreign elements in their creation stories.

[16] This is only one of many safeguards used by the Tiwi to keep the *mopaditi* away from the camp of its old companions, particularly during the first few days after death.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CONCLUSION

105 171 THIS study of the Tiwi tribe of Melville and Bathurst Islands, made through the medium of their art, their myths, and their ceremonies, reveals wide differences between many phases of their cultural life and that of the aborigines who live on the adjacent mainland. These differences are probably the result of isolation caused by the dangerous tideways which have separated the two peoples from each other for an unknown, but probably lengthy, period.

Though both are of aboriginal stock, and from the same cultural background (as indicated by basically similar creation stories), this isolation has allowed the two groups to develop independently. It may well be that the beliefs of the Tiwi represent those of one of the aboriginal migrations to Australia, and has remained somewhat constant, while the mainland people, enriched by occasional waves of new ideas, have developed a much more varied philosophical and cultural life. [174]

The main differences between the two cultures can be summarized as follows:

171 ×532 (a) The art forms of the Melville and Bathurst Islands are so highly formalized that they seldom resemble the objects they represent. In contrast, the art of their neighbours on the mainland, the Arnhem Land aborigines, is not only entirely representational, but is probably a more vital and colourful art than exists in any other part of the continent.

171 765 (b) Compared with the rest of Australia, too, the ceremonies of the Tiwi are particularly limited, there being only two in the whole culture. The major ceremony, that of burial, is by far the more elaborate. It extends over several months, involves the co-operation of many people, and provides the tribe with a complete outlet for their grief, their music, their dancing, and their art. This ceremony is without parallel in Australia, and, so far as we know, elsewhere in the world.

171 881 The other ceremony, the Kulama, is a blending of several rituals: the initiation of men and women into the social grades of the tribe; the ceremony of preparing a poisonous yam for food,[68] which ceremony the participants believe prolongs the wet season; and the airing of grievances

[68] Spencer, 1928, p. 661, speaks of the Kulama as a food increase ritual. It is probable that Spencer was only expressing an opinion, having previously carried out research in Central Australia where increase rituals are both numerous and important. I did not obtain any evidence which indicated that food increase rituals were carried out by the Tiwi. [114]

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YOUNG GIRL AND BOY accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

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part of Tiwi speech. Poetic license in pronunciation and syllabification often occurs. The Tiwi have high regard for the linguistic ability needed to become a good Tiwi composer and singer, and instruction in the art of song composition and delivery is given to the initiates. Each initiate must perform in the *Kulama* before he can be considered a "graduate." According to my Tiwi informants, this requirement is the hardest of all, and it is also the reason for there being no set age for initiation. The old people are said to watch the young, and when the observers consider them mature enough, they swoop down upon their choices "like chicken hawks, without warning"—as the Tiwi say—and start the initiates along the path to adulthood.

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As far as I know, the *Kulama* ceremony has no parallel elsewhere in Australia. And there are many interesting questions that come to mind concerning the origin of the *Kulama* as it exists today. For instance, why is instruction in the preparation of a poisonous yam that is not part of the daily diet considered so important for initiation into adulthood? What is the origin of the idea that a yam has power over good and evil, and health and sickness? Why is such prominence accorded a yam in what is principally a hunting and gathering society?

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Any answers to these questions must be highly speculative, for the origin of the ceremony and its development lie in the unrecorded history of the Tiwi. However, I believe the following statements may well be valid.

Instruction in the natural resources of the land was considered vital to becoming an adult. Because the *Kulama* yam is poisonous and is not widely distributed, it was never part of the regular diet, but it could be used in economic emergencies if properly prepared. Instruction in its preparation was therefore extremely important as a potential survival measure. However, since the Tiwi live in a favorable environment, it is highly probable that such emergencies were very rare, so it was considered expedient to hold annual instruction periods. Because knowledge of

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[See P. 15, (A) for other part of caption and picture -- analyst]

884 the technique had to be made meaningful to the initiates,
174 the lifesaving qualities of this famine food were explained as health-giving powers. A ceremony accompanied by song and dance was certainly a dramatic and effective means of impressing the initiates in preparation methods. The ritual served another purpose as well: because traveling is so
[180] difficult during the rainy season, each household is isolated from the others. The *Kulama* ritual follows this period, and it is natural to expect a reunion to be an occasion to exchange news, settle differences, and tell stories or sing songs that keep traditions alive.

885 MUCH harder to account for is the Tiwi idea of adulthood. That every adult is solely responsible for his own health and wealth, and that success in life depends entirely on personal behavior and industry, are ideals
[171] strangely similar to those that underlie the American way of life, despite the great gulf between the aboriginal culture and our own. But it is not at all surprising that the Tiwi
177 have a great sympathy for much of Western civilization. Many hold the same views as the *Kulama* singer quoted earlier in this article who saw his children wearing clothes
[181] and shoes and going to school to learn to write, for this is the Tiwi's contemporaneous idea of success in a way of life introduced to them only a few short years ago.

Early in the summer of 1962 I revisited the Tiwi for
[114] two weeks. Although I knew that the Tiwi desired schooling and training in European ways of life and would seize any such opportunity afforded them, I was hardly prepared for the tremendous changes that had taken place during the eight years that had elapsed since my first visit.

Three months after the *Kulama* ceremony of 1954, a
[871] government school was opened. Now all the Tiwi children go to school, and some who have finished the six-year program in the government school have received subsequent training as teaching or nursing assistants. Some others have had "on-the-job" training in various activities connected with a large-scale forestry project that has been started on Melville Island. In fact, all the able-bodied Tiwi men and women are currently employed, and their tasks bear little or no relation to their old life in the bush.

It is perhaps significant—but to me not at all surprising—that I did not hear a single real complaint from the Tiwi regarding their new manner of living. They seem to like it and are anticipating bigger and better things (in the
[224] Western sense) for their children. Hunting has become
[868] a week-end diversion and the children receive little or no real instruction in that traditional skill.

178 SOME aspects of Tiwi life are slow to die, however. Most
784 of the old taboos, the observance of which was considered necessary in the past in order to insure health and wealth, are still observed, although at least one teen-ager expressed doubt that the taboos had any actual effect on
177 the outcome of one's life. Western medicine and public health practices are fast replacing belief in the *Kulama*.
884 During the past eight years only three men have begun the six years of training for *Kulama* initiation, and some of the older men no longer participate in the ceremony. However, as long as even a small number of Tiwi believe in the *Kulama*, the ritual will survive, but I doubt that it will for long.

000 NEAR END of *Kulama* ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.
[P. 16, (B)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Friend and Foe
(1600-1928)

ON NEARLY ALL SIDES, the emptiness of a great sea surrounded the Tiwi; 131
to the south, the only path which might have led to the outside was blocked by the hostility of their nearest mainland neighbors. The Tiwi retained this isolation until the very end of the last century, even though for several centuries outsiders had been seen by them; ships passed along the coast and occasionally strangers landed or were cast ashore. Changes in the 177
life on the islands were few, however, until about 1900, when the Tiwi began their integration into the modern world.

Hostility toward Outsiders (1600-1900)

Although in June of 1636 the sailor Pieter Pieterszoon in command of 175
the ships *Cleen Amsterdam* and *Wesel* sailed along the western twenty miles of the north coast of Melville Island and named the region Van Diemensland,[1] our first real knowledge of the natives of Bathurst and Melville islands was gained by the Dutch expedition to this region in 1705 under Maarten van Delft. Men from his three ships spent about two weeks in surveying the north coast of Melville Island, the northern two-thirds of Apsley Strait between Bathurst and Melville islands, and the entire west coast of Bathurst Island.[2] They met natives several times and even allowed them aboard their ships.

Following this meeting between islanders and Europeans was a period 648
during which the natives became extremely hostile to outsiders. Tiwi distrust of 175
foreigners probably stemmed from these decades when the Portuguese on Timor were raiding Melville Island for slaves. Although very little has been

[1] Heeres 1899.
[2] *Ibid.* See also Mander Jones 1948 for some further data concerning Dutch knowledge of Melville Island.

[p. 96 blank]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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published concerning this era, such lack of information should not be taken as a refutation of such practices; the Portuguese archives remain today the only major block of libraries concerning a European colonial power important in the East Indies which has not been examined for material relevant to the history of Australia. From what little is known we may conclude that the Portuguese stopped capturing Tiwi as slaves about 1800.[8]

Even before the Portuguese made their last raids on Melville Island, another type of stranger, the "Malays" (or as we would call them today, the Indonesians), began to have encounters with the Tiwi. It was the search for the Chinese delicacy, the trepang or sea slug, which annually caused the Malays to sail past Melville Island eastward to Arnhem Land and the Gulf of Carpentaria. Neither the free-lance trepangers nor those sailing out of Macassar in the fleet of the Radaj of Boni wanted to stop at Melville Island, and they considered their misfortune to be great if their proas happened to be wrecked on its coast. They, like other Indonesians blown in to the homeland of the Tiwi, had little chance of surviving, for the Tiwi normally speared such poorly armed intruders and asked questions later.

The nineteenth century was an era of decreasing isolation for the Tiwi; during it, the outside world was knocking hard and often on their door. In 1802, a French expedition under Baudin mapped the southwestern tip of Bathurst Island, although its members apparently did not make a landing. In 1818, a British ship under P. P. King made a detailed coastal survey of Bathurst Island and all except the southeastern coast of Melville Island. Then on September 26, 1824, the British founded Fort Dundas on northwestern Melville Island, the first European settlement in the tropical part of Australia. The British and the Tiwi did not make friends. The imaginative commander of this outpost of empire, Major John Campbell, tried to capture a Tiwi and teach him sufficient English so that he could tell his tribesmen that the British would shoot them if they did not stop spearing the Englishmen and their buffalo imported from Timor. One Tiwi was captured but escaped within a fortnight under cover of darkness; meanwhile the British mourned for their doctor and storekeeper who had gotten in the way of well-aimed Tiwi spears. No native learned English. The British, disillusioned by their perpetual battle with the Tiwi and with tropical decay, abandoned Fort Dundas on March 31, 1829. Four and a half years of exposure to the British had affected the Tiwi little.

But the Tiwi were not to remain without external intruders. Shortly before 1844 a Dutch ship was wrecked on their coast. In 1858, an English vessel was lost on Melville Island. In 1869, the city now known as Darwin was founded and ships began to pass Bathurst or Melville islands almost daily. In the 1880's two ships, the *Afghan* and *Northern*, went aground off the

[8] The following statement from George Windsor Earl's *The Native Races of the Indian Archipelago: Papuans* (London: Hippolyte Bailliere, 1853, p. 210,) is probably the most significant passage concerning the Portuguese relations with Tiwi: ". . . According to . . . the older inhabitants of Timor, Melville Island was only less a source of slavery than New Guinea, in proportion to its smaller extent of surface, at the period in which the slave-trade was encouraged or connived at by the European authorities . . . ."

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
0120 Tiwi 0120

southern coast of Bathurst Island. In 1886, the Australian government tried to erect channel markers on the southern shore of Melville Island, whereupon the Tiwi immediately "salvaged" both cloth and iron from them. During June and July of the same year the ship *Jane Anderson* was stranded on the shoals of first Melville and then Bathurst Island. Also in 1886, two Malay proas were wrecked on the north coast of Melville Island. That year was a great one for looting. 175 648

Occasionally visitors came ashore on the islands. The Stokes' survey party landed in the late 1830's, but saw no natives. A government party crossed Melville Island in 1887; the Tiwi speared its leader. In 1895, a government tourist party went to look over the ruins of old Fort Dundas; they kept their eyes open and no one was injured. In 1897, Joe Cooper, a buffalo shooter, tried to make a living from the Melville Island buffalo; he was speared and retreated to Darwin.

Tiwi treatment of outsiders prior to 1900 had been to rob them, spear them, kill them. This is not, however, the picture painted by modern Tiwi when talking of their past. They claim that their ancestors greeted each new group of strangers with the cry: *"Pongki! Pongki!"* (meaning, "Peace! Peace!"). But then it should be noted that before 1900 many a Tiwi peacemaker carried a spear between his toes. Yet under these circumstances the Tiwi world view did alter. First there were those changes which came from an attempt to understand the new objects which were suddenly thrust into the Tiwi world: the trade knives and axes given by Dutch navigators, the matchlock guns used by the Malays and probably the Portuguese, the rice given to Tiwi by the surveyors under P. P. King, the Indonesian water buffalo introduced by the British at their short-lived settlement, the coconut palms the English left behind them, the cups and plates from shipwrecks in the 1880's, and the flour tossed overboard to lighten foundering vessels. The Tiwi cherished iron knives and axes, readily recognizing their greater efficiency. The Tiwi begged for them; they stole them; and, when a spar washed ashore bound round with iron bands, the natives burned away the wood and took the iron away to grind into axes. The matchlock gun, and even the later flintlock, could be coped with; when one saw the flash, one ducked flat, just in case the weapon worked, and then rushed in to impale the stranger with a spear. Rice was useless; it looked like the larvae of the termite, which was not good for anything anyway. Buffalo were to be killed; they kept wallowing in the best waterholes. Coconut palms were a great disappointment; they were bigger than the local cabbage palm, but when cut down, did not have the same succulent interior. Plates were too much bother to carry around, but cups were worth saving for a while. Flour could be used for white paint, but it was not as good as the best white pigment near at hand. [173] [411] 175 177

Other modifications took place in Tiwi life before 1900 as a result of action by outsiders. Probably the greatest of these alterations came as a result of slave raiding, or "black birding" as it is called in the South Seas. The Tiwi always kept their young women hidden from strangers, even if they were just visitors from other bands. The old men rarely left camp. Therefore, it was the 175 648 [609]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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young males who went, or were sent, to try to satisfy their curiosity and to get iron from the Portuguese—and it was these young males who would make the best slaves in Timor. The anthropologist is left to wonder to what extent the removal of a disproportionate number of young men from a group might alter the form of the society. Is it possible that such happenings might be a factor which contributed to the dominance of the old Tiwi men and their near monopoly of wives? Could it be that the politics involved in wife trading were an indirect result of the Portuguese slave raiding? The possibility at least exists, and perhaps research in Portuguese archives will give us some clearer idea of how many young Tiwi men were carried off to Timor during this period. Present-day Tiwi, of course, remember nothing about it.

The Beginning of Friendly Contact (1900-1928)

Today the Tiwi have been incorporated into the modern world as a part of the Australian nation, yet they came to understand outsiders, including Australians, through persons with many national backgrounds. Individuals who have helped to shape Tiwi views of non-Tiwi have been Indonesians, Filipinos, mainland natives from the Cobourg Peninsula, Frenchmen, and Japanese, as well as Australians from the southern parts of Australia.

The Tiwi were first drawn out of their hostile insularity by curiosity and the desire for iron, the same factors which had attracted them toward the Portuguese a century earlier. Iron looted from shipwrecks, channel markers, and the camps of casual visitors to the islands was not sufficient; the Tiwi desired a permanent avenue by which they could obtain the metal. The oldest Tiwi in the early 1950's stated that during the 1890's the Tiwi began to feel that opportunity was passing them by as they noted ship after ship sail in and out of Darwin; the islanders therefore came to the conclusion that they wanted a permanent European settlement in their midst, like the earlier Fort Dundas, for only in this way could they be guaranteed an uninterrupted source of iron.

About 1895, events began moving toward the establishment of a long-term European center on the islands. The vanguard of the movement was not European, however. In 1885, mother-of-pearl shell of commercial value was found on the bottom of Darwin Harbor. A few years of intensive diving by "Malay," "Manila," and Japanese pearlers soon worked out the Darwin beds, making it necessary for the growing fleet of pearling luggers to go further afield. They stripped the coast north of Darwin, moved on to the south coast of Melville Island, and finally began working the great shoals at the south end of Apsley Strait. Cautiously at first, the pearlers went ashore for water and firewood, Young Tiwi men became curious and paddled out to visit the luggers hove to just off the southern beaches in the neap tides. Aboard the luggers Tiwi youth had occasional meals, smoked tobacco, and were given iron tools. The Mandiimbula of southern Melville Island in particular began to look

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

forward to the periodic visits of the luggers, for they brought a new source of iron and trinkets. 175 648

Joe Cooper, the Australian buffalo hunter who had been chased out of the islands on his first attempt in 1897, returned again a few years later having first kidnaped two Tiwi women so that his mainland native helpers of the Yuwatja (Iwaidja) tribe near Cape Don could learn the language. When they had, he returned with a strong mainland detachment and well equipped with guns and horses. By 1900, European firearms were efficient weapons and a Tiwi spearman no longer could expect to kill a man armed with a modern rifle. Cooper is said never to have gone unarmed in his fifteen or so years (from about 1900-1916) as "King of Melville Island."[4]

In retrospect it is apparent that the agent through whom the Tiwi learned of the outside world was not Cooper, the white man, but his companions the Yuwatja (Iwaidja). They were more numerous and more approachable than Cooper, and several of them even had Tiwi wives whom they had captured. Tiwi accounts of these captives are noteworthy. It was the young Tiwi men hanging around Cooper's camp who suggested to the Yuwatja that they go and capture, by force of arms, Tiwi females who had recently become widows. The young men were thus performing their customary role of agents in widow remarriage—but in this case for foreign clients.

Cooper and his Yuwatja camped at various localities on Melville Island until about 1916 when their last base, at Paru opposite the site of the Mission, was abandoned and he and his mainlanders withdrew from the islands. It was this last camp at Paru that was made headquarters by Sir Baldwin Spencer, the well-known Australian anthropologist, when he visited the Tiwi in 1912.[5] [114]

While Cooper was at Paru he was also visited by a young Alsatian priest, Father Francis Xavier Gsell, M. S. C., who was contemplating establishing a mission on adjacent Bathurst Island. Cooper tried to discourage Father Gsell by telling him that the Bathurst Islanders had guns and were dangerous; apparently Cooper did not want any missionaries around his rough-and-ready establishment. But Father Gsell did not scare easily; in June 1911 he returned and built his mission station on the southeast corner of Bathurst Island, where it still stands today. Cooper left Paru permanently about five years later. 175 717

By 1916, five years after its founding, the Mission had two French priests, several French nuns and some Filipino workmen, and a lugger which ran to and from Port Darwin once a month. It was not until the nuns came that the local Tiwi put any trust in the missionaries; they could not understand why a man who claimed to be as important as Father Gsell claimed to be did not have any wives. When the nuns arrived, the Tiwi were more ready to accept the priest as "a big man" and began to bring their women around.

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[4] Hardly a year goes by without a newspaper in Australia running a Sunday supplement article on Cooper's stay at Melville Island. Such stories often are titled "The King of Melville Island" and are normally extremely romanticized.

[5] Spencer 1914. Spencer's account of the Tiwi is remarkably inaccurate and confused. On this trip to the Northern Territory in 1912 he was without his usual collaborator, Gillen.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Thus Cooper with his well-armed retinue of mainlanders had made the islands safe for white men and introduced a desire for white men's goods, particularly tobacco. His retirement from Melville Island left the newly established Mission on Bathurst Island as the only source of supply for these goods. After World War I, however, another influence began to grow in importance. Large numbers of Japanese pearling boats came and anchored off the coasts of southern and southeastern Melville Island, where they traded with the local bands—the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula. These bands got tobacco and European-type food (flour, rice, tea, sugar) from the Japanese in quantities which the Catholic missionaries could not afford to provide; all the Japanese asked in return was access to young native women. Men who controlled many women—as fathers, as husbands, or as brothers—were thus in a favorable position to profit by the traffic with the Japanese.

Whereas the demands made by the Japanese on the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula for women were quite straightforward and uncomplicated, Father Gsell's demands on the bands of south Bathurst Island were somewhat more complex in their consequences. Many aspects of the old pattern of Tiwi life had to be abandoned to make them into Christians. To the missionaries, polygamy was sinful and could not be part of the new Tiwi life. Prenatal and infant bestowal had to be abolished. Marriages should be between agemates and should be arranged freely and solely by the couple involved. Such changes were the crux of Father Gsell's program, and the story of how he went about it has run in many a Sunday supplement in the cities of Australia under the title "The Bishop With 150 Wives."[6] Father Gsell did not try to convert or drastically change the behavior of the older Tiwi; he believed that they were too set in their ways. Rather, he built toward a distant day by working among the younger generation. When infant girls became widows, he purchased them from their fathers. Men with young widowed daughters and those with spare young wives sold such girls for axes, flour, tobacco, cloth, and trinkets. Such "Blackies," as they became affectionately called,[7] lived in the convent with the French (and later Australian) sisters. When such a girl reached the age of about 18, she was asked to choose one of the young single men for her husband. For his part in this excellent deal which provided him with a wife long before he would get one under the old tribal system, the young man had only to promise that he would never take another wife. Such a wedding was not a Mass, for neither party was Catholic. However, the children born of this new union were baptized and reared as Catholics. Later, a few of the girls who had been sold to Father Gsell before they were ten went through confirmation as did their youthful fiances. The first nuptial Mass between two such Tiwi took place in 1928.

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[6] Father Gsell became Bishop of Darwin in 1938. He lived on in retirement to 1958, having seen in his lifetime the fulfilment of his dream of the Tiwi as a Catholic tribe.

[7] The Tiwi today strongly resent being called "African," "Negro," or "nigger," but they do not seem to mind being called "Blacks." The term "Blackie" for a young female is in general use by Mission school girls for themselves; it is in no sense derogatory.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

INTRODUCTION

MELVILLE ISLAND (Fig. 1), the research field of the 1954 National Geographic expedition, is, with the exception of Tasmania, the largest of the Australian islands. Eighty miles from east to west, and seventy from north to south, it rises barely five hundred feet above the sea. Its level surface is covered with a monotonous grey-green forest of eucalypts and acacias, whose monotony is broken only by the steep cliffs and sandy beaches of the coastline, the salt-water creeks which cut deeply into the northern coasts, and the almost impenetrable mangrove swamps that line those waterways.

Between Melville Island and the mainland are the swiftly running tideways, the reefs and shoals of the Clarence and Dundas Straits, tideways so dangerous that, before the installation of a series of flashing light-buoys, no ocean-going ship would attempt to navigate their broken waters in the darkness.

Abel Tasman, in 1644, was the first European to sail along the east, north, and west coasts of Melville Island and the adjacent Bathurst Island,[1] naming Cape Van Diemen and Van Diemen Gulf after the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. As Tasman's account of that journey was lost, we do not know whether he actually landed on the islands, or only saw them in the distance.

Sir Philip King circumnavigated the two islands in 1818 and in 1824 the British Government, both to prevent the French from settling along the northern coasts of Australia and to protect British commerce from the rapidly expanding Dutch trade, established a military post at Fort Dundas, on the Apsley Straits. After five unhappy years the authorities moved the garrison to Port Essington, on the Coburg Peninsula, on the mainland, but not before both Sir Gordon Bremer (12th Nov. 1824) and Major Campbell (1834, pp. 135–60) had made some excellent observations on aboriginal graves, burial poles, bark paintings and canoes.

In the early days of this century, a buffalo hunter, Joe C. Cooper, having gained the confidence of the warlike people of Melville Island, known as the Tiwi tribe, established a camp near Cockle Point (Fig. 1) on the south-western corner of Melville Island. There he earned a living shooting buffaloes for their hides, buffaloes whose forbears had escaped from the settlement at Fort Dundas.

[1] Melville and Bathurst Islands, separated by the narrow Apsley Straits, are both a geographic and cultural unit.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After Cooper had established himself a number of investigators, Brown in 1905, Klaatsch in 1906, Spencer and Basedow in 1911, and Fry in 1913, paid short visits to the Islands, and recorded valuable information on the aborigines and their ceremonial life. 175● 114

Following their departure no research work was carried out until 1929, when Hart spent a year or more among the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands. But though Hart must have collected a great deal of data among the almost untouched aborigines of those times, he has published only two short papers on their customs. (Hart, 1930, pp. 167–80; pp. 280–290.)

Again there was a lag in time, except for a short paper by Harney and Elkin (1942, pp. 228–34), until Pilling in 1953, stationed at the Bathurst Island Sacred Heart Mission, spent over a year studying aboriginal life and social organization.[8]

In 1954 the National Geographic Society's expedition established a camp at Snake Bay on the north coast of Melville Island (Fig. 1), and for six months studied the ethnology, the geology and the ornithology of the area. Although the National Geographic Society of America provided the bulk of the funds, Mr. John Bonython of Adelaide financed the geological survey of Melville and Bathurst Islands. 121 114 [122]

The expedition party of American and Australian scientists was an excellent example of international co-operation. It was made up of Miss Jane Goodale, ethnologist, and Dr. Carleton Coon, Professor of Anthropology, both from the University of Pennsylvania; Mr. David Parsons, ornithologist from Yale University; Mr. Brian Daily, geologist from the University of Adelaide; Mr. William E. Harney, guide, Mr. George Joy, cook, and myself, as leader and ethnologist.

Our combined research covered a wide field. Miss Goodale concentrated on the place of the women and children in the community, Mr. Parsons collected and studied the birds of the island, Mr. Daily, by an examination of the outcropping rocks, established the geological history of Melville and Bathurst Islands, whilst I, apart from the duties of leadership, concentrated on the art, myth, and particularly the burial ceremonies.

During their visit, Dr. Carleton Coon and his wife made a special study of the physical characteristics of the aborigines.

I chose Melville Island as a centre of research, because it was evident from the scattered writings of Basedow, Fry, Hart, Harney, Spencer and 121 101

[8] The Sacred Heart Mission was established on Bathurst Island, opposite Cooper's camp, during 1911. [797]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indicate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

[175] [177] [609]

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

THE TIWI OF MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDS

By C. W. M. HART[1]

MELVILLE and Bathurst Islands lie off the north coast of Australia (3) some fifty to eighty miles north-east of Port Darwin. They are divided from the mainland by Dundas Straits, which at their narrowest part are about twenty-five miles wide, this being the approximate distance between the Vernon Group and Cape Gambier on Melville Island. The latter is the largest island in the Commonwealth of Australia with the exception of Tasmania, being some seventy miles long by forty miles wide, and containing about one and a half million acres. Bathurst Island is about one-third of that size, and is separated from its neighbour by Apsley Strait, which varies in width from about a quarter of a mile opposite the mission to two or three miles below Fort Dundas.

The first settlement in Northern Australia was made on Melville 175 Island at a spot named Fort Dundas in Apsley Strait. It was founded on the 26th September, 1824, by Captain Gordon Bremer, R.N., of H.M.S. *Tamar*, who had been specially sent from Sydney for the purpose. Chiefly owing to difficulties with the natives, the settlement was abandoned on 31st March, 1829, when the convicts, troops, stores, etc., were transferred to Fort Wellington, on the Coburg Peninsula of the mainland. To-day a few piles of stones and a dilapidated ramparted ditch are all that is to be seen of this outpost of empire.

From 1829 until 1911, when the Sacred Heart Mission Station was established on Bathurst Island, no permanent settlement was made on either of these islands, though they were visited from time to time, and various buffalo shooters and timber-getters resided there for varying periods, the best-known of them, R. J. Cooper, having lived on Melville (where his house still stands) from 1894 until 1914. At present Bathurst 648 Island is a native reserve with the missionaries as protectors, and hence

[1] This paper contains some of the results of research carried out as Science Research Scholar of the University of Sydney and with the aid of a grant from the Australian National Research Council. [122]

[P. 167]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

BEFORE the advent of the buffalo-hunters, few white men had visited the islands since the 648
early days of the naval settlement at Fort Dundas, established by Sir Gordon [175]
Bremer in 1824, but abandoned four years later. Malays and Japanese pearlers
have been in the habit of taking in water from either of the islands and have
frequently come into disastrous conflict with the natives. It is perhaps also on 164
account of their isolation from civilization that I found the blacks comparatively
free from any serious disease. Apart from the various minor ailments such as
traumatic lesions and their after-effects, cataracts and keratitis, a few congenital
deformities and such like, only a few cases of tertiary syphilis came under my
notice.

A young gin was suffering from a disease of the hip, apparently chronic, but
she was too timid to permit me to make an examination. They are on the whole 142
a healthy, sturdy people of moderate stature, with a good muscular development
and a square, big thorax. The characteristics are Australoid and yet they present [144]
certain insular peculiarities.

The Head.

The forehead is low, with a marked supraorbital development; the face
somewhat depressed and the lower jaw strong. The eyes are sunken and the nose
is small. The wavy black hair of some of the males was worked up into numerous [302]
small, cylindrical, pendant masses with clay and ochre.[1] This, so far as I could [765]
ascertain, designated mourning. Others had besmeared their hair with ochre. The
hairs on the upper lip are pulled out. The growth of the beard of the men varies,
but is, on an average, good.

The natives of either island do not practise the knocking out of one or two 304
incisors as they do on the mainland. Major Campbell,[2] however, reports having 171
observed the custom on Melville Island.

The face is painted symmetrically with differently coloured ochres, charcoal, 302
and pipeclay, in various degrees of complexity (Fig. 1). A few of the simpler designs
might be described briefly:—*Case* (1): The whole surface of the face blackened
with charcoal. *Case* (2): The nose red and the rest of the face charcoal-black.
Case (3): Face (including the shaven upper lip and upper part of chin) charcoal-

[1] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* London, 1852, vol. ii, p. 13: "The characteristic mode of dressing the hair among the Torres Strait Islanders is to have it twisted up into long pipe-like ringlets, and wigs in imitation of this are also worn"; and again, "at Cape York I have at times for a week together seen all the men and lads with the hair twisted into little strands well daubed over with red ochre and turtle fat."

Also P. P. King, *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114: "The men were more muscular and better formed than any we have before seen, they were daubed over with a yellow pigment which was the colour of the neighbouring cliff (Luxmore Head on Melville Island); their hair was long and curly and appeared to be clotted with a whitish paint." [184]

[2] *Journ. Geogr. Society*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 153. *Cf.* also H. Klaatsch: *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 591.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

demands it; but usually, when on a simple turtle or dugong hunting expedition, 501
two persons only occupy places in the craft, one near the bow and another near
the stern (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). The boatmen, while propelling the [516]
craft, squat with their buttocks resting upon the heels and with their knees pressed
against the sides. The weight of their body being thus well within the boat, its
stability is thereby considerably increased.

Paddles.—Propulsion is effected by means of paddles which are made of hard 501
wood. They have a single well-shaped blade and a rounded handle (*vide* Plate
XII, Fig. 2). The edges of the blade are parallel or taper slightly towards the end,
which is square or rounded. Apart from the marks left by the tomahawk used in [531]
its making, the implement is without ornamentation. In one case only, a circular
collar was carved around the handle, immediately above the sloping shoulder of the
blade. The longest paddle noted measured 167 centimetres in length, its blade
80; the shortest was 115 centimetres in length and its blade 45. The width
of the blades ranges from 7 to 9 centimetres. Both hands clasp the paddle,
which is dipped alternately on one side or the other as the occasion and the steering
require it.

Balers.—Water that accumulates in the canoe, either by leakage or overwash [415
in a rough sea, is removed by means of a baler which is made out of the melon 824]
shell[1] (*Melo diadema*). The columella of the shell is carefully cut away, leaving
only the large body-whorl, which is used as a scoop (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 3 and 4).
The outer surface of the shell is painted with red and yellow ochre in large cross [531]
pattern, with a fine cross shading.

Dug-outs.—The dug-out canoes to which I have elsewhere referred[2] have, in [175]
all probability, been introduced by Malays from whom the natives obtain them by
barter. Dr. Walter Roth has also proved that the dug-outs met with along the coast of
Queensland are of Papuan origin. The form observed in Apsley Strait is without
outrigger and hollowed out of a single tree trunk. The bow and stern are raised
(*vide* Plate X, Fig. 2).

Corrobborees.

As with all primitive folk, song and dance constitute the ultimate stage of 535
any social intercourse or festivity. The islanders are even more ready than ~~their~~ 527
brothers on the mainland to resort to this means of entertainment. It thus
happened that, wherever we came into contact with the blacks and presented them
with divers small articles, a corrobboree was immediately inaugurated; even though
the encounter happened to occur in the middle of the day. Corrobborees on the

[1] *Cf. Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* vol. ii, p. 17: "the baler (a melon shell) is in constant requisition."

[2] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 53. Among others, note that Major Campbell says of the Port Essington natives that "such of the canoes as I saw were hollowed from the trunks of trees, like those of the Malays and were probably either left by these people or stolen from them," *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 170.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(a) One of the first series, when the "workers" were appointed, which was held in the main camp. 765

(b) One of the second series, held at a ceremonial ground mid-way between the first and the place of burial.

(c) An *ilania* performed by the Bathurst Island group who attended to take part in the final *pukamuni* rituals.

(a) *The First Ilanias*

The first series of *ilanias* was performed on a ceremonial ground, about forty feet in diameter, adjacent to *Wurarbuti's* camp. All stones and tree roots had been dug out so that the dancers would not injure their feet. In the centre of the dancing circle, or *milimika*, a fire was laid ready for the later ritual of *wandiatapinda*, or fire-jumping,[80] a ritual which was carried out at most but not all of the *ilanias* (Pl. 24B). At some of the later *ilanias*, particularly at the second *milimika*, aborigines, close relatives of the dead, performed a similar ritual by climbing a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and dead leaves (Pl. 23C).

Although I suspect that the ritual of jumping over the fire once had a deeper significance, the present day belief is that the fire, by burning the hair on the legs of the aborigines, protects them from stumbling over logs; from their limbs becoming tired on long journeys, or from dead trees falling on them as they travel through the forest. The smoke from the fire also brought them good health. No women took part in the *wandiatapinda* rituals, although the men often held their small children in the smoke. [751] [372]

Wurarbuti, the ceremonial leader or *alouwia* (frontispiece) of the *Waniampari's pukamuni* rituals, was an intelligent, sophisticated aboriginal, who had worked for long periods in Darwin, and, more recently, had visited the southern States to dance before the Queen of England. 765 177

Because of his knowledge of European ways and the goods of the white man, the songs and dances of this first series of *ilanias* were a curious mixture of the old and the new cultures. Although most, if not all, of the dances performed at the *ilanias* are traditional and totemic, it is permissible to modify them for the song of the moment. [176]

The ceremony opened when the assembled aborigines, about twenty of them, standing within the *milimika*, gave the low-pitched honey call, with the high-pitched mosquito call, which precedes and finishes all *ilanias*.

[80] Spencer (1928, p. 648), saw this rite at Cockle Point, on Apsley Strait (Fig. 1), during 1911. [114]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

174 are thought to have arrived in the type of canoes that were still in use by their descendants in the 1700's. These craft, mostly in use in Cook's time on the northern and eastern coasts and the inland waterways, were called canoes by courtesy but were incredibly frail. They consisted of a single sheet of bark bent roughly into the shape of a boat, laced together at the ends, caulked with wild honeycomb or some vegetable gum, their sides held apart by a few sticks. Such "canoes" are little better than rafts; even in calm water they are likely to swamp, capsize, or disintegrate, and the only thing that can be said for them is that when swamped or capsized, the bark will still float, enabling the occupants to cling to the remains, at least briefly. Hanging on to a swamped sheet of bark is not an activity that merits the name seafaring, and in the shark-invested waters around the Australian coastline and in the crocodile-infested rivers of the north it is not conducive to survival. Such canoes were until recently in use here and there by Australians as these [177] craft could be very quickly constructed. But today where the natives use canoes, those made of bark have been replaced by the dugout canoe.[8] No Australian would willingly have ventured very far from land in a bark canoe, and therefore, as we said earlier, the crossing of open stretches of ocean by the first Australians on their migration down from Asia through the Indonesian islands must have been accidental and involuntary, by being blown or carried on, whether they liked it or not. In short, they finally reached the Australian coastline as castaways drifting in from the islands to the northwest or north.[9]

When they arrived on the North Australian coast, their sea wanderings were over, for they possessed no boats which could carry them onward to the far-off Pacific Islands. These first human occupants of Australia had to make the best of the inhospitable country they found. They moved into the large, empty land mass before them and their descendants remained there without much alteration in their way of life for succeeding millennia. Those who stayed near the coast or found rivers to settle along retained the use of crude bark canoes, while those who reached the desert interior forgot about them entirely.

Such a pattern of reasoning brings us to the final question: Why were these Australians left isolated from the influence of later migrants who came by way of the same series of islands? The answer is that all later migrants—whose descendants we know today as Melanesians, Polynesians, or Micronesians—had much better canoes when they left Asia. Hence they could control where they went and had greater freedom to move on further if they did not like an area where they had landed. Evidence seems to suggest that the bulk of these later peoples, and certainly the Melanesian peoples, came from the direction of Southeast Asia around the *northern* side of New Guinea

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[8] Lloyd Warner and others have established that the Australian tribes along the northern coasts learned about dugouts from Malay visitors in relatively recent times. (Warner 1937)

[9] See Andrew Sharp who has recently demonstrated this to be true for the Pacific generally. (Sharp 1957)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 609 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human [101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate [173] to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distribu- 171 tional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how [411] isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their [531] wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus- [764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the [511] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

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[177 524] [1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

621 Tiklauila" or "My wife is a Munupula woman"; a mourner would say, "He
619 died when visiting the Munupula and therefore we will have to go to Munupi for the funeral"; an old man would reminisce about being brought up as a youth by his mother's brother, who was a Turupula, and the good times he had in Turupi; and another would recount details of big battles between the Munupula and the Malauila. All of these were band names or band territories. The nine bands thus acted, psychologically, as small tribelets or semisovereign groups, since it was with one of them that every Tiwi most closely identified in his day-to-day life on the islands. It is only when, as nowadays, he leaves the islands to go to work for the white man in Darwin that he has to think of himself as a Tiwi, since there he mingles with men of other tribes. Even then,
[177] work and residence in the white man's town does not entirely obliterate band identification. A Tiklauila in Darwin prefers to work with and to consort in the evenings with other Tiklauila, and Malauila with Malauila.[8]

Because of certain peculiar features of Tiwi domestic life, to be dis-
621 cussed below, it is difficult to sum up the Tiwi band in any simple formula.
591 People, especially women, changed their band residence frequently in the course of their lives, and being born into a band did not at all require permanent residence with that band, either for males or for females. Thus the district (for example, Tiklaru or Malau) was a firm, fixed, known quantity, but the people who "owned" the district (for example, Tiklauila or Malauila) were a flexible and constantly shifting collection of individuals.

The territorial boundaries between bands were clear and well known
423 to everybody, though they were not the sharp lines on a map such as we
621 regard as essential for a frontier or a land boundary. All pieces of country—clumps of jungle, stretches of grassland, sections of thick woods—had names. One such piece of country, say a thickly wooded area, belonged to one band, while the more open country that began where the woods thinned out belonged to another; thus the boundary was not a sharp line but a transitional zone—
[137] perhaps of several miles—where the change from trees to open savannah became noticeable, with the band territories thus fusing into one another rather
[823] than being separated by sharp lines. The Tiwi, so to speak, thought of the landscape as a sort of spectrum where a man moved gradually out of one district into another as he passed from one type of horizon to the next. Since
[133] rivers, and even Apsley Strait, a very narrow arm of the sea separating Melville from Bathurst Island, usually have similar types of vegetation on *both* sides or banks, none of the island rivers nor Apsley Strait was a boundary or frontier between bands. The Mandiimbula, predominantly a Melville Island

[8] In the early 1930's the situation at the Government Hospital in Darwin offered
177 a good illustration of this. The hospital authorities said they gave preference for house-
797 boy jobs to "Melville Islanders because of their greater intelligence and reliability." In
181 point of fact, some of the younger Tiklauila had established a monopoly on hospital jobs and no Tiwi other than a Tiklauila was ever hired there. The whites thought they were hiring Tiwi but the Tiklauila saw to it that they hired only Tiklauila and felt no vestige of obligation to other Tiwi to help them get these desirable jobs. The alleged greater intelligence of the islanders was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Tiklauila, having had a Catholic mission in their territory since 1911, were more used to white requirements.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 887 [166]

Middle of October: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[7] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing.

[578 764]

End of October: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

[881 574]

End of January: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

[881]

End of February: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

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[7] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeimpi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.

[17] [548]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission, automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their opponents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were economically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

Women were, however, a form of capital that possessed the power of talking back to the investors. As daughters or as wives they were quite thoroughly subordinate to the wishes of their fathers or husbands, and Tiwi wives were as frequently and as brutally beaten by their husbands as wives in any other savage society. But as mothers and as sisters the women were not coerced by their sons and their brothers. On the contrary, sons or brothers wishing to use their mothers or their sisters in their political schemes (typically when those mothers or sisters became or were about to become widows) could only do so with the active collaboration of the women concerned. Tough-minded young widows could drive a hard bargain with their brothers as to where they remarried, since each needed the other to make the remarriage acceptable to the tribe at large and to beat down the other competitors (the dead husbands' brothers, for example) who wished to control the remarriage of the widows. Young girls thus had no bargaining power but young widows had a good deal. Old mothers with influential senior sons were extremely powerful. Any affront to an old woman was an affront to her sons, and some of the strongest influence networks were alliances of several senior brothers, in which their old mother seemed to be the mastermind and the senior sons largely the enforcers of what the old mother and her middle-aged daughters (their sisters) had decided among themselves. 562 593 587

Thus, for women, as for men, age and political skill were the crucial factors in determining their position. Young girls were chattels and as such were passed around from husband to husband. But with increasing age, smart young women, especially in alliance with their smart young brothers, could control their own fate with some firmness, and if they and their brothers had a shrewd old mother (also with powerful senior brothers still alive) to advise them and support them, then the decisions of such a group as to where the girls remarried were very difficult decisions for anybody else to combat or oppose. Not as independent operators, but as behind-the-scenes allies of their sons and brothers, Tiwi mothers and sisters enjoyed much more essential freedom in their own careers as often-remarried widows than would appear at first sight in a culture which ostensibly treated all women as currency in the political careers of the men. No matter how males, both old and young, might connive, they were constantly aware that no remarriage of a widow could ever be arranged and made to stick unless the widow herself was agreeable. 562 888 553 587

In the limited space available, all we can offer are a few samples of how the influence game was played by a few selected individuals of various ages. Age was of great importance in Tiwi careers and therefore we select our samples from all the adult male age-groups. We have selected them all from the same band—the Malauila—so as to show as clearly as possible the interplay between one career and another for men of the same band. And finally we select men of the Malauila band for our examples because in 1928-29 it was a band little affected as yet by the outside influences—Catholic missionaries and Japanese pearl divers—which were beginning to modify Tiwi marriage customs among some of the other bands. 557 888 177 797 121

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

162 [621] The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

561 [858 882] [591] Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

561 589 884 [582] [177] The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

561 884 557 [582] The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

169 554 [589] In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Politics of Widow Remarriage

Ki-in-kumi's large establishment was the sort of set-up that every Tiwi sought to achieve but few accomplished. An establishment such as his meant wealth, power, prestige, and influence for its head, and, in Malau, Ki-in-kumi was the only man with such a household. With eleven males, many of them food producing; sixteen women, all of them food producing; and several of the girls under fourteen able to assist the older women, the amount of food this unit could collect in a day provided an ample food surplus for the establishment. A man whose household was a surplus food producer was a successful man. Moreover, since the large work force that produced the food surplus contained numerous young wives who (usually) could be relied upon also to produce numerous female babies, he was doubly blessed with both the requisites—surplus food and surplus daughters—necessary to increase his influence and make more people beholden to him or dependent on him. Of the thirty-five married women in Malau, sixteen, or over 45 percent, were in this one establishment.

By comparison, the other old men of Malau were less successful.[5] Through pooling their work forces, Enquirio and Merapanui had achieved an establishment (Unit II) almost as big as that of Ki-in-kumi, and probably its members ate almost as well as the members of his, but their effort was a shared effort and their influence and prestige had to be divided between them. They had been lucky with daughters but, divided between the two fathers, the eleven daughters in their establishment were less impressive than Ki-in-kumi's eight, and the total of seven young wives between them was quite overshadowed by Ki-in-kumi's nine. The two old brothers were successful men and headed a successful operation, but their prestige and success must be rated at least one whole degree below that of Ki-in-kumi.

Another pair of elderly brothers, White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua, had also joined forces (Unit III), but the results can be judged as only fair. They were at least the best off of their age group, the 45- to 55-year-olds, but the competition in that age group was weak, as can be seen by comparison of their establishment with Units IV and V, the households of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai. Perhaps the best indication of the respective success in life of the seven oldest men is that given in the column of Table III headed "young wives." Of the twenty-three such women in the band, eighteen were in the establishments[6] of the three oldest men (Units I and II); the next five men in age shared the remaining five (Units III, IV, and V).

It might be thought that the small establishments of the unsuccessful junior elders like White Man, Ku-nai-u-ua, Pingirimini, and Tipiperna-gerai could be expected to increase sharply in size and these men to grow in relative prestige and influence when death removed the three old men at the heads

[5] It will be noticed that as we move into the older group of men we have to use their native names, since most of them had no "whiteman" names.

[6] Two of these eighteen were of course actually married to Padimo, but still part of the establishment of their father, Ki-in-kumi, since Padimo's wives all lived with Ki-in-kumi's wives.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

sidelines. Two or three or four senior men would leave the spectators and range themselves alongside the accuser, spears in hand. Other senior men would quietly leave their seats and sit down in the audience alongside close relatives of the young defendant, particularly his full brothers or his father, if they were present, and gently lay restraining hands upon them. Within a few minutes there was no longer an old man facing a young man but as many as four or five old men facing one young man, and no sign of support for him. His close male relatives would keep their seats or (more often) allow themselves to be led away as if they did not want to witness what was coming next. Never, in any of these cases, did any supporter of the young man step into the ring and line up with him. He remained an isolate, faced by several older men, and of course he had no chance. It was easy to dodge the spears of one opponent, since they had to be thrown one at a time; it was impossible to dodge the spears of more than one, since they could be thrown more or less simultaneously. 627 684

Usually this baring of its teeth by society-at-large was enough. The group of elders did not need to throw many spears simultaneously. The accused capitulated by throwing aside his spears or throwing sticks, or if the defiance had been only of the mildest form—namely, an undue prolongation of the dodging—he allowed his accuser to score a direct hit and the duel ended in the normal way. In the rare cases of the accused refusing to give up, even when confronted by a menacing line of several elders, a concerted volley or two from them quickly knocked him out, and in pre-white days, usually killed him.[3] Crime thus paid even less for the accused who chose defiance than it did for the accused who allowed himself to be wounded in a duel by a doddering ancient three times his age. The greater the amount of defiance, the more clear it became that the doddering ancient, acting ostensibly as an outraged husband, was the responsible agent of society dispensing public justice. If he needed help, all responsible elders went to his aid, and the kinsmen of the accused stood aside and let justice take its course.

WARFARE Apart from the occasional castaways and the very occasional other visitors such as "Malays," the Tiwi in pre-white times had nobody to fight with except each other. Duels of the type we have just described were their only formula for settling disputes, and these occasionally became sufficiently broadened to warrant being called warfare. The expedition of Tiklauila and Rangwila to the country of the Mandiimbula which was listed in Chapter 2 among the travels of Tu'untalumi in 1928 was an example of this sort of activity. At least half a dozen senior members of the two first-named bands had disputes with various individuals among the Mandiimbula. Some of these were seduction cases but some of them involved charges by elder against elder, 628

[3] Since the coming of white administration, the Tiwi have found that when a man is killed in a native duel, there is a strong likelihood that white policemen will appear and will drag some of them off to Darwin where incomprehensible proceedings called murder trials then take place. To avoid such nonsense, since about 1925 they have tended to use throwing sticks rather than spears in their fighting. Throwing sticks, while dangerous, seldom kill people outright and as long as nobody is killed, the police in Darwin show no interest in native fights on the islands. 177 648

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Friend and Foe
(1600-1928)

ON NEARLY ALL SIDES, the emptiness of a great sea surrounded the Tiwi; 131
to the south, the only path which might have led to the outside was blocked by the hostility of their nearest mainland neighbors. The Tiwi retained this isolation until the very end of the last century, even though for several centuries outsiders had been seen by them; ships passed along the coast and occasionally strangers landed or were cast ashore. Changes in the 177
life on the islands were few, however, until about 1900, when the Tiwi began their integration into the modern world.

Hostility toward Outsiders (1600-1900)

Although in June of 1636 the sailor Pieter Pieterszoon in command of 175
the ships *Cleen Amsterdam* and *Wesel* sailed along the western twenty miles of the north coast of Melville Island and named the region Van Diemensland,[1] our first real knowledge of the natives of Bathurst and Melville islands was gained by the Dutch expedition to this region in 1705 under Maarten van Delft. Men from his three ships spent about two weeks in surveying the north coast of Melville Island, the northern two-thirds of Apsley Strait between Bathurst and Melville islands, and the entire west coast of Bathurst Island.[2] They met natives several times and even allowed them aboard their ships.

Following this meeting between islanders and Europeans was a period 648
during which the natives became extremely hostile to outsiders. Tiwi distrust of 175
foreigners probably stemmed from these decades when the Portuguese on Timor were raiding Melville Island for slaves. Although very little has been

[1] Heeres 1899.
[2] *Ibid.* See also Mander Jones 1948 for some further data concerning Dutch knowledge of Melville Island.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

southern coast of Bathurst Island. In 1886, the Australian government tried 175
to erect channel markers on the southern shore of Melville Island, where- 648
upon the Tiwi immediately "salvaged" both cloth and iron from them. During June and July of the same year the ship *Jane Anderson* was stranded on the shoals of first Melville and then Bathurst Island. Also in 1886, two Malay proas were wrecked on the north coast of Melville Island. That year was a great one for looting.

Occasionally visitors came ashore on the islands. The Stokes' survey party landed in the late 1830's, but saw no natives. A government party crossed Melville Island in 1887; the Tiwi speared its leader. In 1895, a government tourist party went to look over the ruins of old Fort Dundas; they kept their eyes open and no one was injured. In 1897, Joe Cooper, a buffalo shooter, tried to make a living from the Melville Island buffalo; he was speared and retreated to Darwin.

Tiwi treatment of outsiders prior to 1900 had been to rob them, spear [173]
them, kill them. This is not, however, the picture painted by modern Tiwi when talking of their past. They claim that their ancestors greeted each new group of strangers with the cry: *"Pongki! Pongki!"* (meaning, "Peace! [411]
Peace!"). But then it should be noted that before 1900 many a Tiwi peace-maker carried a spear between his toes. Yet under these circumstances the Tiwi 175
world view did alter. First there were those changes which came from an 177
attempt to understand the new objects which were suddenly thrust into the Tiwi world: the trade knives and axes given by Dutch navigators, the matchlock guns used by the Malays and probably the Portuguese, the rice given to Tiwi by the surveyors under P. P. King, the Indonesian water buffalo introduced by the British at their short-lived settlement, the coconut palms the English left behind them, the cups and plates from shipwrecks in the 1880's, and the flour tossed overboard to lighten foundering vessels. The Tiwi cherished iron knives and axes, readily recognizing their greater efficiency. The Tiwi begged for them; they stole them; and, when a spar washed ashore bound round with iron bands, the natives burned away the wood and took the iron away to grind into axes. The matchlock gun, and even the later flintlock, could be coped with; when one saw the flash, one ducked flat, just in case the weapon worked, and then rushed in to impale the stranger with a spear. Rice was useless; it looked like the larvae of the termite, which was not good for anything anyway. Buffalo were to be killed; they kept wallowing in the best waterholes. Coconut palms were a great disappointment; they were bigger than the local cabbage palm, but when cut down, did not have the same succulent interior. Plates were too much bother to carry around, but cups were worth saving for a while. Flour could be used for white paint, but it was not as good as the best white pigment near at hand.

Other modifications took place in Tiwi life before 1900 as a result of 175
action by outsiders. Probably the greatest of these alterations came as a result 648
of slave raiding, or "black birding" as it is called in the South Seas. The Tiwi [609]
always kept their young women hidden from strangers, even if they were just visitors from other bands. The old men rarely left camp. Therefore, it was the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Thus Cooper with his well-armed retinue of mainlanders had made the islands safe for white men and introduced a desire for white men's goods, particularly tobacco. His retirement from Melville Island left the newly established Mission on Bathurst Island as the only source of supply for these goods. After World War I, however, another influence began to grow in importance. Large numbers of Japanese pearling boats came and anchored off the coasts of southern and southeastern Melville Island, where they traded with the local bands—the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula. These bands got tobacco and European-type food (flour, rice, tea, sugar) from the Japanese in quantities which the Catholic missionaries could not afford to provide; all the Japanese asked in return was access to young native women. Men who controlled many women—as fathers, as husbands, or as brothers—were thus in a favorable position to profit by the traffic with the Japanese.

Whereas the demands made by the Japanese on the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula for women were quite straightforward and uncomplicated, Father Gsell's demands on the bands of south Bathurst Island were somewhat more complex in their consequences. Many aspects of the old pattern of Tiwi life had to be abandoned to make them into Christians. To the missionaries, polygamy was sinful and could not be part of the new Tiwi life. Prenatal and infant bestowal had to be abolished. Marriages should be between agemates and should be arranged freely and solely by the couple involved. Such changes were the crux of Father Gsell's program, and the story of how he went about it has run in many a Sunday supplement in the cities of Australia under the title "The Bishop With 150 Wives."[6] Father Gsell did not try to convert or drastically change the behavior of the older Tiwi; he believed that they were too set in their ways. Rather, he built toward a distant day by working among the younger generation. When infant girls became widows, he purchased them from their fathers. Men with young widowed daughters and those with spare young wives sold such girls for axes, flour, tobacco, cloth, and trinkets. Such "Blackies," as they became affectionately called,[7] lived in the convent with the French (and later Australian) sisters. When such a girl reached the age of about 18, she was asked to choose one of the young single men for her husband. For his part in this excellent deal which provided him with a wife long before he would get one under the old tribal system, the young man had only to promise that he would never take another wife. Such a wedding was not a Mass, for neither party was Catholic. However, the children born of this new union were baptized and reared as Catholics. Later, a few of the girls who had been sold to Father Gsell before they were ten went through confirmation as did their youthful fiances. The first nuptial Mass between two such Tiwi took place in 1928.

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[6] Father Gsell became Bishop of Darwin in 1938. He lived on in retirement to 1958, having seen in his lifetime the fulfilment of his dream of the Tiwi as a Catholic tribe.

[7] The Tiwi today strongly resent being called "African," "Negro," or "nigger," but they do not seem to mind being called "Blacks." The term "Blackie" for a young female is in general use by Mission school girls for themselves; it is in no sense derogatory.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

When between the mid-1920's and the early 1940's the Japanese began to give trade goods to men for sexual access to their wives, Father Gsell's missionization program ran into competition. The Japanese gave the old Tiwi males a much better deal than did Father Gsell. The Japanese with their continuous payment for access to women poured into the households of these old men the same sort of goods which Gsell provided. But in the case of the Japanese, the goods were paid time and again over a matter of years and the old father or husband was kept permanently in tobacco and food. Thus, oddly indeed, the two chief outside influences which came to bear upon the traditional Tiwi system of marriage, after about 1920, were both agencies which were anxious (for entirely different reasons and ends) to "buy" young girls and pay their ancient husbands or fathers for relinquishing them; temporarily in the case of the Japanese, permanently in the case of the missionaries. The Tiwi could scarcely be expected to cease putting a high value on women, and upon control over women, under these conditions.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

648 lished between the northern Tiwi and the Japanese. A government ration depot was founded at Garden Point about 1939 and many of the local Tiwi females were taken by the government to Darwin in order to stop their use by Japanese pearlers. However, by that time many Japanese half-castes had been born to the women.

797 In 1940, a new Catholic mission was established at Garden Point to care for these half-castes. This Melville Island Mission brought together not only the island part-aborigines, but also other Catholic half-castes from all over the Northern Territory. By late 1940, it became clear that the existence 648 of a government depot for aborigines at Garden Point was incompatible with a policy aimed toward educating the adjacent half-caste children for life [164] as members of the white Australian community. The government ration center was removed to Snake Bay. Also, by 1940, the government had begun to remove lepers from both Bathurst and Melville islands to a leprosarium on Channel Island in Darwin harbor. Here, over the following years, developed a community of Tiwi which often numbered as many as forty persons. At Channel Island they found themselves forcefully confined amongst natives from many mainland tribes. Tiwi who returned from Channel Island after [177] years of residence there were more sophisticated in European ways than their fellow-tribesmen and found themselves agents of white Australian culture.

The winter (our summer) of 1941 was the last in which the Japanese came to Garden Point. The Catholic brothers who were there at the time viewed at least one extraordinary event in those months before Pearl Harbor. On this occasion, a man in the uniform of a Japanese naval officer was seen aboard the mother ship of the Japanese pearling fleet which called in at Garden Point; under Australian law neither ship nor officer were allowed within the three-mile limit. Pearl Harbor occurred a few months later.

The year 1942 brought modern warfare to the Tiwi. An American plane running out of the Philippines lacked enough fuel to get to Darwin; it landed on the small airstrip at Bathurst Island Mission. Then on February 19, 1942, Darwin was bombed. Japanese planes flew over Bathurst Island Mission on their way to commit what became "Australia's Pearl Harbor." Father McGrath, the local priest, recognized the raiders as Japanese and radioed his warning into Darwin twenty minutes before the horror commenced. The message went unheeded and the loss of life and property was great. Bathurst Island Mission was itself strafed, possibly for the attempt to warn Darwin. The bombing of Darwin left the Northern Territory in chaos. The white residents evacuated southward by any means at hand; in one case, two men drove a road grader seventy miles "down the track" before they felt safe enough to stop.

The disruption of the Tiwi community was as great as that of the white settlement at Darwin, although no Tiwi were killed in the bombing and strafing by the Japanese. The Catholic authorities realized that they could not [797] guarantee a food supply to the natives, and the Tiwi families at the Mission were sent to the bush to support themselves. Tipperary, a Tiwi who was by 1942 an old hand in Darwin, told Pilling (1954) of the privation he had [177] endured when he had taken to the bush and had not had a smoke for four months after the attack on Darwin.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

months after the attack on Darwin. Many of the older Tiwi who were in Darwin during the bombing did not survive the war; the psychological strain and lack of sufficient food was too much for them. Genealogies show that an unusual number of deaths occurred among Tiwi between 1942 and 1946.

When Western food supplies again became available, the old Tiwi bush living seems to have departed. The Tiwi suddenly realized their full dependence upon the products which only the whites could provide. As the war came to an end and one after another of the temporary military bases were abandoned, the missionaries and the Tiwi salvaged what they could, transporting large amounts of corrugated iron to Bathurst Island Mission for native huts. The Tiwi were drawn together around the Mission in larger numbers than ever before, their camps ranging in a line along the Mission beach. The majority of the Tiwi, about 600, considered Bathurst Island Mission their home, although some of the young adult males spent most of the year in Darwin. About 50 islanders lived adjacent to the half-caste Melville Island Mission at Garden Point. Another 150 were permanently located at the government settlement at Snake Bay. The remaining Tiwi, about 150, were year-round residents of Darwin; over one hundred lived at Bagot Native Compound and at an unsupervised native camp at Point Gunn directly opposite the southernmost tip of Melville Island; the rest were inmates at the leper colony. The resulting total population of about 950, in 1954, is only about a hundred less than the figure of 1062 which Hart obtained in his census of 1928-29.

Marriage Arrangements

We have discussed how, under the traditional Tiwi pattern of life, the greatest energies of mature males were expended in bargaining with each other for new wives. The old social system was one which had as normal features prenatal and early childhood engagements for females, remarriage for all widows, considerable age difference between marriage partners, and polygamy. The new Catholic system introduced by Father Gsell outlawed, or at least discouraged, polygamous marriages, nuptial unions between persons of greatly differing ages, and all prenatal or childhood betrothals. As indicated, Father Gsell initiated his new policies by purchasing young females and then allowing them to choose their own partners from among their single agemates.

It is of interest to inspect the actual circumstances surrounding one of the earliest unions which took place under Father Gsell's supervision. About 1914, Polly, an attractive young female who had already had a rather checkered career, having been stolen by a Yuwatja male from her rightful mate, was "stolen back" by another Tiwi, Timalarua of the Rangwila. Polly, however, decided that she did not want an old husband like Timalarua, so she ran away to the sisters and Father Gsell. In time, old Timalarua allowed Father Gsell to buy this wife who did not want to live with him. Shortly afterward, Father Gsell asked Polly whom she wanted to marry. Polly named Cabbagee as the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 177 584 797 male of her choice and the couple soon set up housekeeping with Father Gsell's blessing. This was, at least, how the missionary saw it.

But what were the real circumstances surrounding this "free choice" by Polly? Her real father—that is, the husband to whom her mother Rita was married when Polly was born—had promised Polly to Kardu. Timalarua had "stolen" Polly from Kardu, her rightful husband. Nor is this the whole story. Rita had been "stolen" by Puti from Polly's father Turimpi. After several fights between Puti and the aging Turimpi and after Rita's complete refusal to return to Turimpi, Turimpi allowed Puti to keep Rita as his wife. Polly, however, was ultimately to go to the man to whom she had been promised, Kardu. But Puti, as the potential next father of Polly, had promised Cabbagee that as soon as Kardu died Polly was to be Cabbagee's wife. That is, when Polly chose Cabbagee as her mate she was only bypassing Kardu and taking as her husband the next normal alternative open to her.

When one considers what parts of Father Gsell's reform were significant in this case, one finds that only late consummation of marriage, monogamy, and marriage between agemates were important. A female did not actually have a "free choice" of her mate as Father Gsell had hoped and, in fact, had specified. She selected a youth to whom one of her relatives had at least tentatively promised her. Or (to put it in Hart's terms) she married—under Mission auspices—a young man who had at least a second or third mortgage on her.

159 177 595 797 Let us follow the case of Cabbagee's marriage further. He married Polly when he was about 23; he was too young to be married in the old pattern and was, therefore, happy to get a wife and be on his way up the social ladder. But when the next female promised to him (before her birth) came of age and he collected her, Polly made a terrific row. She did not want any younger female around her household as a second wife and told the priest at the Mission so. He in turn deprived Cabbagee of all gifts of tobacco and food and sent him and his family to the bush to think over the matter. After a few months, Cabbagee decided that he wanted tobacco and that after all the only place he could get it was at the Mission. He and his family returned and he gave up his second wife to Father Gsell, for a payment of food.

Younger men who were getting wives from among Father Gsell's convent girls thus found that they were unwise to accept a second wife from any other source. But such a young man, married under Catholic auspices, soon 584 found that he could enhance his prestige without invoking criticism from the Mission if he gathered around him his own female relatives, the younger of 557 whom he could give away later, one at a time, to men of his choice. A married man like Cabbagee, who gave another man his sister or sister's daughter, was in a position to ask all sorts of favors from the recipient, especially gifts of food, tobacco, and trade goods, and support in politics.

177 583 By the end of World War II, even these newer concepts of marriage agreement had begun to alter. There were many young Christian females desiring to have husbands whose fathers and brothers were not asking further wives as repayment. The fathers began to ask for new types of concessions

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

from their future sons-in-law and demands which look very much like bride price and bride service developed as a basis for marriage arrangement. A young girl had a relatively "free choice" of her future spouse. But following this selection, her father let it be known to the young man what he expected. The desired payment was often stated in Australian money by the 1950's; some men were asking as much as a hundred pounds for a daughter. (This was a very high sum, since Tiwi males working for the Army received four pounds a week as normal wages.) Other men were asking that their sons-in-law live with them, thus leaving their own parental home, and contribute regularly to the upkeep of the household of the father-in-law. This was, indeed, quite a practical arrangement, for when such a young man went to work in Darwin his wife had to be supervised at home and, further, his employer was supposed to send home to the Mission part of the young man's wages.

Thus, by 1954, the following type of marriage agreement was initiated by the great majority of Tiwi with marriageable daughters, specifically those who centered their activities at Bathurst Island Mission and Garden Point. A young girl chose her future husband from her single, male agemates, sometimes with a suggestion from her father. Her father informed his future son-in-law of the obligations incumbent upon him, which normally included matrilocal postmarital residence and a bride price. An older woman with children, or even one without any offspring, who became a widow, was discouraged from remarrying by her father, if he survived, and by her brother after her father's death. The father or eldest brother of a widow with a daughter reaped the benefits of allowing that daughter to marry the young man whom she desired. The widow herself did not remarry but stayed in the household of her father or brother.

Residence Patterns

By 1953, traditional Tiwi residence patterns had undergone major modifications, some of which have already been mentioned. The old residence areas of the bands had been depopulated; in fact, nearly all the Tiwi were located around one of four European establishments—those at Darwin, Bathurst Island Mission, Garden Point, or Snake Bay. In each of these areas a centralized village pattern had developed. Within the Tiwi communities at Snake Bay, Garden Point, and Bathurst Island Mission there remained a few of the old large households with a polygamous base. But in all these camps the household heads were well past sixty and in most cases past seventy. Polygamous households were dying out by 1953.

But what was replacing them? One might assume that the European pattern of the single family household based upon neolocal residence would have emerged as the new Tiwi system. This was not the case, however. Just as Hart found in 1928-29 that successful Tiwi men were the heads of large establishments, so in 1953-54 the younger male leaders had gathered around

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few uncomfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Carmel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a listing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent. Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

riage with a boy who was willing to become the "worker" of the girl's controller.[8]

From the economic standpoint, the large household has much the same function as before the days of the Mission. The younger women go out together and gather food; the old women stay home with the young children. The younger men bring home choice items, which now are trade goods and money from Darwin. The "boss" of the great household is wealthy; today, he has food, tobacco, clothes, and usually sufficient money to gamble. The composition of the great households has altered, but their function is very much the same. The establishment of the monogamous Catholic Cabbagee is even larger than that of the polygamous old pagan, Ki-in-kumi, described in an earlier chapter; Cabbagee, with only one wife, has more women under his "control" than ever Ki-in-kumi had, despite his list of twenty-one wives. The Tiwi have thus been able to retain their large households even under the Mission-imposed system of monogamy.

The Change from Patriliny to Matriliny

In the pre-Cooper era of feuding, the largest significant units among the Tiwi were the bands; the Tiwi never, in that by-gone day, acted as a tribe, even in their attacks upon such outsiders as the British. In the 1950's, when informants talked of the old days they commonly mentioned that male members of old bands came together as units to go on war parties. These old bands did not have a strict rule of descent. But, as has already been indicated, the majority of the males were regarded all their lives as members of the band to which their father belonged. That is, the major unit of the old Tiwi social structure was patrilineal in emphasis.

There also existed in the old Tiwi pattern a strictly matrilineal clan organization, related primarily to totemism. One of the totemic animals of a clan stood for a member of that clan in the song composed to commemorate his death; for instance, the first line of the mourning song for a deceased male of the Red Paint Clan might be "I am red paint." Occasionally, several members of a clan helped one of their number in a fight, but this was apparently not very common before the Mission era. This clan-organization pattern prevailed among the Tiwi through about 1930. Then major and most unpredictable changes began.

What does one expect to happen when a society which has a patrilineal emphasis, like the old Tiwi one, comes into contact with a European society where, if there is any emphasis, it is a patrilineal one? Although one would ordinarily expect a strengthening of patriliny, such was not the case among the Tiwi. The old social unit which was predominantly patrilineal was a territorial group with its major functions in the system of feuding. When the

[8] By 1953, the terms "boss" and "worker" had come into the local Tiwi dialect to indicate superordinate and subordinate status interrelationships.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

feuding system departed and the Tiwi community became more centralized, especially around the Bathurst Island Mission, the utility of the old band organization diminished and the underlying clan organization dominated. Suddenly, fighting was no longer in terms of band membership, for the matrilineal clan had become the only social unit of significance.

Today young Tiwi often deny that they have any band membership. But it is not unknown for teen-age Tiwi males to lie awake at night counting up the members of their matrilineal clan. According to informants, in the 1940's and 50's the major fights which occurred at Bathurst Island Mission were interclan skirmishes.

Thus, among the Tiwi, we have an example of how a society with a patrilineal emphasis under strong influence from another society with a patrilineal emphasis may, if there is an underlying matrilineal organization, become a society which is for all practical purposes solely matrilineal. The introductory student of anthropology is thereby warned that characterizations of societies as matrilineal or patrilineal are rarely adequate to form the basis for reconstructing past or predicting future forms of such societies.

Tiwi and the Australian Nation

Finally, let us consider those aspects of modern Tiwi life which attract national attention in Australia. What do the newspaper-reading members of the Australian public know about the Tiwi?

Probably the best known Tiwi is a male in his thirties, formerly known to other Tiwi and local residents of Darwin as Bobby Wilson. About 1953, an Australian movie producer, Charles Chauvel, went hunting for a "full-blood" aborigine who could act well enough to portray an aboriginal male in what became the Australian movie "Jedda." In Darwin, the producer found a football star from the Darwin group of Tiwi who could fill the part. Bobby Wilson soon was billed as Robert Tudawali.[3] He went "on location" at several spots in the Territory and finally traveled to Sydney for the studio shooting. The Sydney papers caught his story and spread his bearded face over the country. Bobby Wilson's photo from the local newspaper was hung up in several native huts at Bathurst Island Mission. After much publicity, he ultimately returned to his wife and their hut in the Bagot Native Compound in Darwin. Again the newshounds caught his story. According to them, he had returned to a life of degradation. The Australian public was shocked that a star of one of their best films should be discarded to live again like every other aborigine in Darwin. Tudawali was "rescued" and given a second role in another Australian film.

Bobby Wilson was only one of a large number of young Tiwi who are recognized as fine athletes. There are two football teams in Darwin which have Tiwi members: the Catholic team, St. Mary's, which often takes the local

[3] The last name Tudawali is an attempt to spell the Tiwi word for shark.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pennant, and the Wanderers, which draws from the permanent native population in Darwin and includes such Tiwi as Bobby Wilson. It is normal for one of these Tiwi players to be considered among the top three in Darwin football circles. 177 526 648

For a while, Edmund, a Tiwi from Bathurst Island Mission, was one of the players on the newly organized St. Mary's basketball team; other Tiwi have played on the Bagot Compound basketball team. Billy Larrakeyah, a Darwin Tiwi, was thought to have Olympic potentialities as a javelin thrower, but strained his arm in the try-outs.[4] Most recently, a group of young Catholic Tiwi has been organized into a water polo team called the Seals. National magazines suggest that they may be the best water polo team in the country, but so far they have not gone south to play any non-Darwin group.

Tiwi carving and painting have had recent popularity in Australian art circles. Traditional Tiwi gravepsts are finely carved in geometric designs and painted with precise and complex networks of cross-hatching and other simple, but effective, motifs. The first modern innovation in Tiwi art occurred about 1945 when a native known as Katu (or Short Katu) made his first attempt to carve a human figure atop a mourning post. When Pilling later asked Katu why he had carved this post, he said, "Me see 'm along Darwin. Me savvy." That is, Katu transferred the concept of Western realistic statuary in the round into the Tiwi art form. He carved a second realistic post for presentation to Queen Elizabeth II in 1954. More recently, Tiwi carvers at Snake Bay have taken to realistic carving. Two figurines, both carved by Tiwi at Snake Bay, were given to the Perth Museum in 1958. Sixteen mourning posts from Snake Bay were purchased by the National Art Gallery in Sydney the same year. An art display of Tiwi carving has been held in the United States in Philadelphia. 177 532 322

Tiwi have received recognition in the Northern Territory for other art forms. One of the thirty-year-old female Tiwi at Bathurst Island Mission usually takes first prize for embroidery at the annual Territorial fair. There has also been interest shown by outsiders in the double-barbed ceremonial spears. Male Tiwi skill in dancing has attracted wide attention in Australia. When natives from all over the Territory were sent to dance before Queen Elizabeth in Queensland during her 1954 tour, three Tiwi were among the delegation. The Tiwi contingent, directed by the innovator Short Katu, made every news story covering this part of the Royal Visit. In Darwin, when Bagot Compound needs to raise money for native participation in sports, the Tiwi, usually led by Katu, present a public dance. As a result, Katu's clan under his direction has invented many new dances for white Australian audiences. 177 [531] 177 535 648

Perhaps we may look forward to the day when American television audiences can enjoy such a Tiwi dance, one of Australia's best native products. Yet only sixty years ago, and therefore in the lifetime of many people still living, very few Tiwi had even seen a white man, and white men who set foot on Tiwi soil, like Cooper in his first attempt in 1897, were ferociously chased out.

[4] He was killed in a brawl in Darwin in the spring of 1959.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired
[175] the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indi-
[177] cate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even
[609] had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in which they invariably succeeded. Their canoes and weapons were similar to the mainland."[4] 177 [114]

The probability that the Tiwi have been isolated from external influences for a long time is still further supported by their culture. Their artefacts are remarkably simple—they do not even possess a spear-thrower or small mounted stone tools—their art forms and ceremonial life are unlike those in any other part of Australia, there are no secret rituals, and the social status of the women is on a much higher plane than that of any other aboriginal women. 174 105

[4] From the evidence given above we can safely discard this writer's statement. Foelsche, who was a police officer in Darwin, probably quoted a rumour without checking its accuracy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER III

The Pukamuni Ceremony

765 THE burial ceremonies of the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands,
182 based on the *pukamuni* of the mythical man, *Purukupali*, are, by far, the most important events in their ceremonial life.

These ceremonies, which allow the aborigines full expression for their grief, provide, at the same time, a complete cultural outlet for their philosophical beliefs, their music, their art and their dancing. No one, watching these
[781] primitive rituals, night after night, could fail to be impressed by the obvious pleasure experienced by both the participants and the onlookers.

114 Spencer (1928, pp. 647–52), is the only investigator to describe and illus-
765 trate any details of the *pukamuni* ceremony. Although he saw but one day of the ceremonials, and that of the closing rituals, he records, briefly, many of the procedures which we witnessed in 1954, i.e., the rite of fire-jumping (p. 73), the spearing of the grave (p. 83), and (p. 89), the "spearing" of one of the participants and the erecting of the poles. This evidence shows
177 that, in spite of the disturbing effects of civilization and the complete
765 ecclesiastical ban on Bathurst Island, the *pukamuni* ceremony is still a vital force in the lives of the Tiwi people.

123 During the six months the expedition was on Melville Island, Miss Jane Goodale, Mr. W. E. Harney and I witnessed some, or all of the rituals of four *pukamuni* ceremonies; one of a man, *Waniamperi*, who had been buried within half a mile of our camp; another of an old woman, *Makapini*, who, against the wishes of her relatives, had been buried in the mission cemetery on Bathurst Island; still another of a premature infant; and, only a few weeks before I left Melville Island, one of *Nulatini*, the deceased wife of our helper, *Pulanimbuwi*.

I will describe the burials of *Waniamperi* and *Nulatini*, and the final rituals
123 of *Waniamperi* and *Makapini*. However, as we saw, in all, twenty-seven
128 *ilenias*, the general pattern of which was similar, I will describe but five of them; three belonging to *Waniamperi*, one to *Makapini* and one to *Nulatini*.[46] The short rituals, associated with the dead infant, will be treated as a separate unit.

[46] The final rituals took place after my departure from Melville Island. These will be dealt with by Miss Goodale.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

I. BELIEFS IN THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

The fear of the spirits of the dead and the desire of the living to propitiate them are the bases for the complicated burial rituals, not only of the Tiwi, but of all Australian tribes. 769 763

The Tiwi spirits of the dead, the *mopaditis*, live in self-contained communities at the various totemic places on Melville and Bathurst Islands. The *mopaditis* have the same appearance as the aboriginal folk, except that their bodies no longer have substance, being but nebulous images of their former selves. 775 [778]

No living person has seen these *mopaditis*, for they are invisible by day, white in the moonlight and black in the darkness. Although, normally, the *mopaditis* travel on the surface of the ground in the same manner as the aborigines, they are able, when crossing a river, or an arm of the sea, to walk on the surface of the water.

In the spirit land, the *mopaditis*, who are eternal, retain their totems (*pukwi*), marry spirit women of the correct tribal relationships, and have children who grow to maturity.[47] They eat the same food as the aborigines, going hungry if the hunting is poor,[48] and use the same implements and weapons.[49]

At the death of an aboriginal, the *mopaditi* rises out of the chest of the corpse. If the corpse is that of an infant, or a very small child, its *mopaditi* stays in the immediate neighbourhood, sleeping with the bereaved mother every night, but leaving in the morning before she wakes up. This continues until the woman has recovered from her grief.

After some months, the spirit child, now called a *buda-buda*, re-enters the body of its previous mother through her vulva and starts life again as a human being. [842]

On the other hand, if the person has lived for some time, its *mopaditi* stays around the grave, mourning because it has to leave its old companions. But after three days have elapsed, the *mopaditi* calls out "*Nimbungi*" (good-bye), and sets off, unaccompanied,[50] to the locality where it was born, which, before

[47] The aborigines are not certain whether the children, like their parents, have eternal life.

[48] This is unusual; in most of the aboriginal heavens I have heard of, for example, north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 323), there is ample, easily-gathered food. [171]

[49] These days, the *mopaditis* have even the modern wooden canoes, although, up to fifty years ago, their canoes, like those of the living people, were made from a folded sheet of bark. [177]

[50] Some aborigines believe that the father, or some close relative, comes to the grave and guides the spirit to its birthplace.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(a) One of the first series, when the "workers" were appointed, which was held in the main camp. 765

(b) One of the second series, held at a ceremonial ground mid-way between the first and the place of burial.

(c) An *ilanias* performed by the Bathurst Island group who attended to take part in the final *pukamuni* rituals.

(a) *The First Ilanias*

The first series of *ilanias* was performed on a ceremonial ground, about forty feet in diameter, adjacent to *Wurarbuti's* camp. All stones and tree roots had been dug out so that the dancers would not injure their feet. In the centre of the dancing circle, or *milimika*, a fire was laid ready for the later ritual of *wandiatapinda*, or fire-jumping,[69] a ritual which was carried out at most but not all of the *ilanias* (Pl. 24B). At some of the later *ilanias*, particularly at the second *milimika*, aborigines, close relatives of the dead, performed a similar ritual by climbing a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and dead leaves (Pl. 23C).

Although I suspect that the ritual of jumping over the fire once had a deeper significance, the present day belief is that the fire, by burning the hair on the legs of the aborigines, protects them from stumbling over logs; from their limbs becoming tired on long journeys, or from dead trees falling on them as they travel through the forest. The smoke from the fire also brought them good health. No women took part in the *wandiatapinda* rituals, although the men often held their small children in the smoke. [751] [372]

Wurarbuti, the ceremonial leader or *alouwia* (frontispiece) of the *Waniampari's pukamuni* rituals, was an intelligent, sophisticated aboriginal, who had worked for long periods in Darwin, and, more recently, had visited the southern States to dance before the Queen of England. 765 177

Because of his knowledge of European ways and the goods of the white man, the songs and dances of this first series of *ilanias* were a curious mixture of the old and the new cultures. Although most, if not all, of the dances performed at the *ilanias* are traditional and totemic, it is permissible to modify them for the song of the moment. [176]

The ceremony opened when the assembled aborigines, about twenty of them, standing within the *milimika*, gave the low-pitched honey call, with the high-pitched mosquito call, which precedes and finishes all *ilanias*.

[69] Spencer (1928, p. 648), saw this rite at Cockle Point, on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), during 1911. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Parading around the unlit fire in the centre of the *milimika*, the performers
177 chanted a telephone song, the literal translation of which is, "Hallo, that
533 telephone there, hallo, yes, yes," some, as they did so, imitating the winding
[539] of the handle of an old-type magneto telephone.

When the fire, which had been started by a young man, was well alight, the men performed the ritual of *wandiatapinda* by jumping through flames and smoke, each shouting "telegraphy".

The men again assembled at the edge of the *milimika*, and, led by the *alouwia*, called the localities on Melville Island where the white men had camped. As each name was called the aborigines shouted "*wia*" (yes).

One dancer held his hands high above his head, symbolizing a radio aerial, while his companions chanted the following words to the refrain of the telephone song:

[539] "The Queen sent a radio asking *Wurarbuti* and other men to dance for her."

Then followed songs related to the radio and the telephone. These were usually performed with the traditional steps and gestures, except that, at the end, the actor mimed the ringing up with one hand, and the holding of the
[535] telephone to the ear with the other.[60] As the men danced, the women moved into the *milimika* from the side, performing their own dance, the *amburu* (Pl. 30F), some of them crying and endeavouring to beat themselves. They were, however, restrained by their companions.

765 After a number of dances came the ceremony of appointing the men to carry out the work near the grave.

At the death of any person the tribe divides into two groups: the *puka-*
[616] *munis*, near relatives of the dead, who are forbidden to touch food with their hands (Pl. 24A), or go near the grave, and the distant relatives, who can visit the grave site without fear of attack from the spirit (the *mopaditi*).

At *Waniamperi's* first *ilania*, the ceremonial leader chose, from the latter group, ten men, the *wanaras*, colloquially called the "workers". It was their duty to cut and paint the burial poles (one each), help to clear the grave site and dancing ground of sticks and stones, and to carry out other menial tasks associated with the final rituals. For these tasks, the "workers" were paid on the last day of the rituals.

When "workers" were chosen, the aged brother, *Nalgui*, of the dead man,

[60] This mixture of the ancient and the modern, shows how a living culture gradually absorbs the characteristics of an adjacent people, particularly those from a culture as dominant as our own.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

announced that he had bought enough food from the store at the settlement to feed all the men who were to cut the poles.[61] 765

Following this announcement, the chief woman mourner, *Prupadau*, whose privilege it was to decide on the size of the burial poles, marked with her toe, in the dust of the *milimika*, the length and thickness of a series of oversized poles.

This led to a great deal of discussion between the leader, *Wurarbuti*, and the woman, *Prupadau*, before he finally persuaded her to reduce the dimensions of the poles to a reasonable size. *Prupadau* wanted the poles for her relative to be as many and as large as possible.

This matter settled, the "workers" brought a number of steel axes into the *milimika*. The *alowia*, painting the handles white and putting red cross lines on the blades, stood the axes in the centre of the dancing ground. Then both the *alowia* and the other performers walked around the axes singing the telephone song. [177] [531]

A series of traditional dances followed, representing *Jirakati*, the white-headed sea-eagle (Pl. 30j), *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Tjalati*, the jabiru (Pl. 29a).[62] Two women and two young boys performed the shark (*Taduwale*) dance (Pl. 25c), the ritual finishing with the honey and mosquito calls. The "workers" picked up their axes and walked away, accompanied by everyone except *Prupadau*, who remained behind, still chanting the *amburu* song of mourning. 535 765 [825]

(b) *The Second Ilanias*

The second series of *ilanias* was performed about halfway between *Wurarbuti's* camp and the burial ground. 765

In this series, we were able to see the traditional pattern of the *ilanias* in operation, including the return and feeding of the "workers" after their day's labour of cutting the poles near the grave site. The songs and dances, too, instead of referring, as in the first *ilanias*, to the goods of the white man, his radio and his telephones, dealt almost exclusively with dances belonging to the locality of Wallu, north-eastern Melville Island, the country of *Waniamperi's* father and the totemic place of fresh water, *Andjalui* (p. 42). [533] [177]

This series of *ilanias* could be divided into five sections,

[61] At the present time, this is just a traditional gesture, reminiscent of the days when it was the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the workers while they cut and painted the poles (Pl. 23a).

[62] In a creation myth, the jabiru is called *Tipuru-undunga*. It is likely that the bird has several names. Hart (1930, p. 280), draws attention to the multiplicity of names among the Tiwi. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Neither *Jilungliahuni* nor any of the Bathurst Islanders performed spirited 765
dances to these songs. The leader, impersonating a *Ningaui*, walked round
the *milimika* with awkward, bent gait, either beating his music sticks together [534]
or holding his hands tightly against his sides with his fingers outstretched
(Pl. 30E).

Following the *Ningaui* songs, the men lit a fire at the base of a eucalyptus tree which *Katopi*, *Nangrinini*, and several other relatives of the dead man, climbed to perform the rite of *wandiatapinda*. As each man slid down the trunk, the aborigines called the totemic place of Wailu, and the names of rain, thunder and lightning. Later, the men performed the rain dance (Pl. 30B) in [535]
the *milimika*, while the women, coming in from the side, danced the *amburu* (Pl. 30F).

(ii) *The Mission Lugger Songs and Dances*

765
The dances started with a long *ai, ai, ai*, which announced that the boat 533
had been sighted. Then, while the men danced the sail of the boat, with their 535
hands held above their heads, the leader chanted— 177

"The waves beat the sides of the boat, but it goes straight on."

With high prancing steps and hands rotating one over the other, the aborigines mimed the engines and the propeller of the lugger.

"The engines spark together as the waves hit the side of the boat."

Other songs, to which the performers danced the relevant actions, were—

"The wake of the lugger."

"The lugger is on the slips ready to be painted."

"We are scrubbing off the old paint and giving it a new coat."

Every time *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, took part in the dance, the women set up a wail.

At the conclusion of the boat songs, the men and women took part in the 765
punuti, lightly beating each other's spouses and their relatives with boughs.

(iii) *The Jabiru Songs and Dances*

The last series of dances were given by a middle-aged Bathurst Island 765
man, *Nilituma*, who imitated, with humorous gesticulation and much 535
abandon, the antics of the long-legged jabiru, *Tjalati* (Pl. 29A), as it walked, fished and rested in the lagoon.

The words of the *Tjalati* song were— [539]

"When *Tjalati* lifts one leg, he is ready to fly."

At the conclusion of the *Tjalati* dance, the *ilania* ended with the honey [825]
and mosquito calls.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 "The sea-eagle, *Jirakati*, dives upon the flying foxes, catching them in
539 her claws and eating them. The rest fly away."
765 "The flying foxes call to each other, the sea-eagle is attacking us—let us go."

As these songs were being chanted, a number of men clustered in the centre of the *milimika*, like a group of flying foxes in a tree.

With a loud call, *Nangrinini*, his outspread arms symbolical of the wings of the sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), "swooped" down, scattering them in all directions.

As *Nangrinini* returned to the outside of the *milimika*, the "flying foxes"
[535] reassembled and, with prancing steps again danced with their little fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30c).

The flying-fox songs continued—

"Cast your throwing sticks where the flying foxes are thickest and break many wings at one time."

"Hit the flying foxes so that they will drop in the mud."

"Cook the black flying foxes and dry them in the sun."[90]

Again the men assembled and danced the flying-fox while *Malumerinita* called the totemic places of the flying fox at Muranapi (p. 56), interspersed with calls of "*Wia*" from his companions. *Pulanimbuwi* still wandered.

(ii) *The crocodile songs*

"You cannot cross the river because it is full of crocodiles."

"Beware, the crocodiles are in the mangroves waiting to catch us when we cross the river."

These songs were accompanied by the spirited crocodile dance (Pl. 30z),
[535] while *Malumerinita* called the names of the totemic places of the crocodile, *Jirakupai*, on south-west Bathurst Island.

(iii) *The shark and the stingray song*

"Do not spear the shark, it is chasing a stingray."

To this song several men performed the exhausting shark dance (Pl. 30o).

(iv) *The flag songs*

"The wind blows and the flag moves."

[177] "The Government Administrator gets his flag from the Queen."
535 To these songs, the man danced with their hands, as a flag, moving above
765

[90] This song suggests that the Melville Islanders stored or traded the cooked and dried bodies of these creatures.

765 their bodies (p. 138). Again, a man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, symbolised the pouring out of the cooked *kulama* yam on a sheet of bark and patted it to the *kulama* call of "*Brr, brr, brr*". This action completed the dance.

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

431 While other dances, which I did not see, were being performed in the two
765 *milimikas*, the *pukamuni* men and their wives unpacked the gifts for the "workers", and spread them out on the ground (Pl. 26a). There was much good-natured discussion about their equitable distribution before the presents were finally separated into lots and placed one on the top of each pole.

177 *Wurarbuti*, resplendent in his body paint and coloured *pukamuni* orna-
533 ments, mounted one of the larger poles and chanted songs telling how he
765 became possessed of the great wealth which enabled him to buy the presents
[302] for the "workers".

[539] "I am a big Government man," he boasted, "so I was able to get plenty of money."

"I stole the money from the Government to pay for the presents and the police locked me up."

[535] While *Wurarbuti* chanted this song, *Marawani* and the women danced with their hands crossed as if in handcuffs.

As the song continued, *Marawani* ran after *Pulanimbuwi*, dragged him into the *milimika*, and struggled with him in imitation of a policeman making an arrest.

Other songs were chanted ridiculing a Government clerk at Darwin, while one of them "wrote" out an order, passed the "money" to a *pukamuni* man through a window (an opening in a pole) and then demanded, in a loud domineering voice, his thumb-print on a scrap of paper as a receipt.

177 *Wurarbuti*, still seated on the top of a pole, started to distribute the
431 presents, imitating, as he did so, the actions and broken English which the
765 same clerk used when dealing with aborigines.

"You a worker," said *Wurarbuti*. "Have you a wife? How many children? You work for me, make proper good pole, I pay you."

The "worker" on accepting his payment, put his thumb-print on a scrap of paper (initialled—with a twig—by another *pukamuni* man), and walked away satisfied[81] with his square of printed calico, pipes and tobacco. As each "worker" received his gift the *pukamuni* men performed a dance.

[81] This is not always so. Sometimes a "worker" becomes so annoyed over inadequate payment that he will not allow his pole to be carried to the grave, preferring to let it rot in the forest. On several occasions we saw a pole which had been left in the forest because its maker was dissatisfied with the payment.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

When all the "workers" had been paid, *Wurarbuti* called my name and presented me with a number of *pukamuni* arm and chest ornaments (Pl. 31), which normally would have been left on the grave. 431 765 123

These ornaments, *Wurarbuti* explained, were a gift from the dead man, *Wenimperi*, because I had assisted in making his *pukamuni* a success.[86]

In the Bathurst Island *milimika* the three "workers" were also receiving their payments. 765

Jibunglialumi, although he did not have as good a story to tell as *Wurarbuti*, danced around the poles with some of the presents in his hand, singing, "Here I come in an expensive motor-car, with lots of money to pay the 'workers' for cutting such beautiful poles."[87] [535] [539] [177]

(d) *Erecting the Poles around the Graves*

The distribution of the last of the presents was a signal for the "workers" to carry the poles from the respective *milimikas* to the grave. 765

Some of the poles were both large and heavy; in particular that illustrated on Pl. 34D, which was eighteen feet long, and so heavy that it took seven "workers" to carry it from the *milimika* and up-end it in the hole prepared for it at the grave (Pl. 26A).

As the poles were carried past the Bathurst Island ceremonial ground, *Jibunglialumi* threw short sticks over them to commemorate the time when the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, took part in a spear-throwing contest at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* (p. 33).

While the "workers" nonchalantly carried the poles to the grave, the women, with tears running down their cheeks, beat themselves with sticks (until someone restrained them), and the close male relatives, mourning loudly, hysterically cut their heads with steel knives. 765 785

Katopi, the son of the dead man, had washed the painted decorations from his body, and was about to cut his head when he was stopped by his stepmother, *Dominao*. On seeing this, *Marawani*, one of the chief *pukamuni* men, took the knife from the woman and gave it to *Katopi*, who gashed his head two or three times, and, with blood pouring down his face, threw himself on the ground in a paroxysm of grief.

[86] To help them in their payments I had given the *pukamuni* men some printed calico.

[87] Although these stories about great wealth to pay the "workers" are much Europeanized, they are probably following a traditional pattern, when, instead of referring to money and the goods of the white man, the ceremonial leaders exaggerated the number of spears, ornaments, and other goods they had collected to pay the "workers".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

(c) *The Final Mourning Rituals*

765 As soon as the poles were in place the "workers" pulled away the bushes covering the grave. This was a signal for the closing phases of the final rituals. Everyone, men and women, from both Melville and Bathurst Islands, rushed forward and threw themselves on top of one another at the base of the burial poles, until the ground, and even the grave itself, was covered with a mass of human beings, each mourning heartbrokenly.

After a period of mourning, *Jibunglialumi* and *Wurarbuti* rose to their [302] feet, cut off the beards they had grown for the occasion,[84] and washed the painted decorations from their bodies, while the mourners, assembling close [535] to the poles, impersonated, in almost hysterical dance and song, the shark, the rain-woman, the jabiru, and many other mythical heroes of creation times.

Nangrinini, assisted by his wife, first performed the basket dance (Pl. 26c),[85] then once more the dance of the bark canoe. *Pulanimbuwi*, who danced beside him, acted the part of *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), the sea-eagle, swooping down on its prey.

The return of the ceremonial leaders to the grave was the signal for another exhibition of mass hysteria. Weeping women, beating themselves with sticks, threw themselves on the top of the grave, while men, leaning over the burial poles, mourned continuously in high-pitched wails.

Gradually the sounds of lamentation became less. One by one the mourners left, until there remained only the crouching body of *Waniamperi's* widow, painted entirely in black, a little wizened woman, whose span of life was almost spent.

(2) *The Final Pukamuni of Makapini*

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

[302] A little before sunset, the Melville Island men and women assembled to decorate themselves for the final rituals, while *Kisapipatu* (Pl. 27a), a sister of the dead woman, *Makapini*, carrying a long stick, and painted entirely in white, wandered among the *pukamuni* people, crying the *amburu* song.

[184] The body decorations finished, which neither took as long, nor were as elaborate as at the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*, the performers assembled about twenty yards from the three burial poles (Pl. 34a, b, c), which the "workers" had hidden from view by a screen of boughs.

[84] Before the days of the white man, the Tiwi men did not cut their beards at the final [177] *pukamuni*, but plucked them out in handfuls. Spencer, 1928, p. 673, Fig. 467, both illustrates and records having seen this curious ritual in the *kulama* ceremony.

[85] Mountford, 1956, p. 434.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The ceremony opened with the honey call, then, as the men stepped across a fire lit in the centre of the *milimika* (Pl. 24B), a long sustained mosquito call. Following this, the men formed a circle around the fire, and chanted a song which described the bombing of a ship off the coast of Bathurst Island. 765 [533] [177]

Close female relatives, standing in a line facing the poles, sang the *amburu*, while three men, painted white, each carrying a spear, rushed toward the screen of boughs, peered through them, then returned to the *milimika*. Three other men were given spears, one of whom, with a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball) in his mouth, took a stand as if to throw a spear at the poles, remarking to his companions as he did so, that he was about to spear a *mopaditi*.

As soon as the "workers" removed the boughs which shielded the poles from view, an old woman, *Jibandaui*, ran forward and beat the ground near the poles, while the six men, with spears poised ready, followed and stabbed around the base of the poles. These rituals, the signal for all the participants to rush to the grave poles and (Pl. 27B) mourn, were carried out to frighten the *mopaditis* from the vicinity of the grave.

A young man with his head and shoulders through an opening in one of the poles, and his arm around an old woman, sobbed bitterly (Pl. 27C) while others stood around either crying or singing the *amburu*.

As the sounds of grief became less, a young man, miming a killing which had taken place some time ago, sneaked up with great stealth, and "speared" *Tjamalampua* who was lying on the ground in the *milimika*.[66] Shortly afterwards the ceremony closed with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

(*b*) *Songs and Dances*

The next morning about 10 a.m., the ceremonies started afresh. On this occasion, all of the songs and dances dealt with secular incidents; a crocodile creeping upon a man to kill him, an aboriginal sailing a European racing boat, another paddling a bark canoe, still another spearing an enemy, and so on. 177 765 [533]

Several of the aborigines created much laughter by miming the actions of our physical anthropologist, Dr. Carleton Coon, who had just completed a series of body measurements and observations on the Melville Islanders. [123] [535]

One man, using a short stick, measured the arms, legs and body of old *Tjamalampua* as he lay stretched out full length on the ground; he then danced around the *milimika* with his hands round his head, in imitation of the head callipers; another mimed Dr. Coon weighing an aboriginal, cutting his hair and looking at his teeth.

[66] Spencer, 1928, p. 651, describes a similar episode. No doubt the spearing of Tjamalampua had a much deeper symbolism than appeared at the time.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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765 533 *Wurarbuti* described, in song and dance, how some aborigines from the northern end of the island had tried to kill his father, but the father, being forewarned, had run into the mangrove swamp for shelter. A spear, however, thrown by his enemies, hit him in the side but did not kill him.

[535] [177] Then followed a long series of songs and dances, made up by *Wurarbuti*, describing how the mechanics from Darwin erected a large steel tank at the nearby settlement. To the chanting of songs and beating of buttocks, the actors "rolled" the tank (actually a small log) along the ground, tilted it on one end, rigged blocks and tackle and lifted the "tank" in place. These dances lasted about a half an hour.

Toward the end of this performance, which finished about mid-day, a woman, *Narlaui*, painted entirely in white, and carrying a throwing stick, called upon the dead woman to fight her because, at one time she, *Narlaui*, had reprimanded her for running after men. The aborigines applauded her when she had finished her song. Emboldened by this, *Narlaui* stood in front of one of the poles and challenged the dead woman to a fight.

[535] [177] The ceremony finished[97] with an aeroplane dance, the men posturing in a similar manner to that of the *Jirakati* dance (Pl. 30j).

About sunset, the rituals started afresh with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

Pulanimbuwi and *Muramajua*, acting the part of little children, struggled with each other in the dust of the *milimika* while one of them sang,

[539] "You can't drink from the same breast as I can because we have different mothers."

Old *Malumerinita*, taking up the same refrain, pushed the two "children" aside as he sang,

[539] "I'm a big man, so I'll drink the milk."

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

765 It was after dark before the three "workers", who had cut and painted the burial poles, received their payment (Pl. 27D). As each *pukamuni* man passed the goods, loin cloths, and tobacco to the "worker", he cut his head with a [535] knife, and started a dance in which even a number of little girls took part (Pl. 25A). They had been told by some of the older women what to do, so [868] that the youngsters would be conversant with the woman's place in the rituals.

[97] This ceremony would have probably, like that of *Wanampari*, finished at mid-day had not the Superintendent of the settlement insisted on sending the chief woman mourner to a distant locality from which she had been unable to return on time.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending
535 over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milinika* to the
766 rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first
[177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[80]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten-
[114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and
[775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[81] the fundamental idea
[517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the
[775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[82]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon
[126] drawings[83] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[80] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.
[832] [81] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women were attracted to them.
[82] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.
[83] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

211
765 where they have not suffered from ecclesiastic prohibitions, are still using a
[178] similar form of grave and posts.

Major Campbell (1834, p. 158), writing of a grave he saw on Melville Island in 1826, states: "It (the grave) is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberts, 14–15 feet high, and between these the spears and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground."

Brown (1905, p. 28) found a grave on Luxmore Head, in Apsley Straits surrounded . . . "by wooden slabs, portions of which had been burnt. Aboriginal markings were faintly discernible in places on the wood, some of the posts had the wood cut away from the outside toward the centre, leaving a short spike standing up in the middle of the post."

Klaatsch (1907, p. 257), in referring to the same burial poles at Luxmore Head, writes: "In some examples the slab was so carved that the upper part was only connected with the lower by two thin pillars or, on others, the top was mushroom-shaped.

"It is easy to see that the aborigines used fire for this work of sculpture, scratching the burnt part away with shell."

Basedow,[99] in 1911, came across a grave of an infant, on Bathurst Island, surrounded by five simply decorated posts, which had "been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk."

Basedow persuaded the aborigines to renovate the designs, which did not vary greatly from those in use at the present day.

[114] Spencer,[100] in 1911, made sketches of many of the burial poles, and arranged for the aborigines to redecorate a group which was later displayed in the National Museum, Melbourne. He states (1928, p. 682) that: "It (the pole)
●[177] was slowly and laboriously cut with an iron tomahawk, but formerly with a sharp shell, until it has the form decided upon by the artificer."

Dr. Kenneth Fry, who visited Melville Island in 1913, was the first investigator to ascertain the meanings of a number of poles. These, with his permission, are illustrated on Fig. 8. All of these shapes, but two, are those still most commonly used among the hundred or more which I saw on Melville Island.

[115] An old aboriginal, *Tjamalampua*, told me that in *palaneri* times, i.e., a long while ago, before there were any steel axes, the aborigines used stone axes to fell the hollow trees for *pukamuni* poles. Although there were just as many poles around the grave as there are today, they were neither as

[99] Basedow (1913), p. 314, Fig. 4, Pls. 13, 14, 16, 17, 18.
[100] Spencer (1928), p. 682, Figs. 475–7, Pl. X.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 and the hardest and most durable timber available, spared no pains to make the best poles they could.[8]

×532 When the "workers" had finished shaping the poles they notified the leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, who then gave the order for the poles to 765 be scorched over a fire of blazing leaves to make a black ground on which to paint the design (Mountford, 1956, p. 427). Then, setting up the poles in a double row near the grave (Mountford, 1956, p. 426), the men began their task of decoration (Pl. 33B, D). At the same time, the ceremonial leader sent message sticks (p. 98) to notify the outlying groups that the final rituals were about to start.

386 The materials used for decoration were: red and yellow ochres from Imilu, Cape Van Diemen, a white ochre from a beach nearby, crushed charcoal for black, one of three types of fixatives, i.e., the white of turtle eggs, wild honey and beeswax mixed together, and the particularly gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids.

The ochres were crushed, mixed with water and one or more of the fixatives, and applied to the poles with brushes made from chewed strips of bark or vines (Fig. 2).

517 As I watched these primitive artists at work, I was impressed with the care they took in the arranging of their simple patterns, and with the obvious ×532 pleasure they experienced in their work. A quiet air of contentment pervaded the outdoor studio as each of the ten artists made his own pole as beautiful as possible.

Each artist appeared to be certain as to the designs he would use; there was no evidence of copying; in fact, *Pulanimbuwi* showed me the rough draft of the designs of his pole (Pl. 35A, B, Fig. 9), scratched on the back of a cigarette tin, days before he had even felled the tree.

×532 A puzzling aspect of the *pukamuni* poles is the wide variety of the painted 765 designs used, and the almost total absence in those designs of any reference to the myths and totemic localities.[9]

At first sight it would appear that the pole shapes, collected by both Fry and myself, were inventions of the moment. An analysis of the poles

174 have simpler shapes than at the present time, although Campbell (1834, p. 158) speaks 412 about "poles with tops like lances and halberts". The aborigines may have used fire to 322 assist in the shaping of the poles, in fact, this is suggested by Klaatsch (1907, p. 587).

[8] Not far from our camp was the deserted grave of the father of *Muramajua* (Pl. 38D), who died when his son was an infant. *Muramajua* was then over forty years old, yet the poles, although somewhat eroded and disarranged by the elements, are still in a fair state of preservation.

● [177] [9] This and old *Tjamalampua's* statement, p. 109, could indicate that the poles and their designs are a recent cultural trait that is not yet fully absorbed into the culture.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 765 [114] Dr. Kenneth Fry, when visiting the islands during 1913, made sketches of the pole shapes of eight *tudinis* and found out the meanings of five of them. These are reproduced on Fig. 8.

Fig. 8A represents a man carrying a roll of blankets on his back, *a*, being his hat, and *b*, his blankets. Fig. 8B also represents a man, *a*, as before, indicating his hat. On Fig. 8C, *a*, is the mast of a boat; on Fig. 8D, *a*, is the crutch in the boom of a pearling lugger (usually called branches of trees in the 1954 series); and on Fig. 8G, *a* is a window.

Dr. Fry did not find out the meanings of Fig. 8E, F, and H.

The present-day meaning of design, Fig. 8F, which could have applied to Dr. Fry's example, is somewhat interesting. The aborigines at the Bathurst Island mission are warned of the terrors of their future life if they are not buried "under the cross", i.e., in the mission cemetery. [177] [797]

When I asked the aborigines at Melville Island what was the significance of the cross they had carved on the top of several of their *pukamuni* poles, they explained that it was there purely as a "safety measure", just in case there was something in the mission story.

11. THE CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

[171] It has been known, for about twenty years, that aboriginal craftsmen, in widely separated places in Northern Australia, but particularly in north-eastern Arnhem Land, have made carved and painted figures in wood.[10] It was a surprise, however, to find that the Tiwi people, who appear to have been separated from the mainland cultures for a considerable time, were using similar figures in their burial rituals.

Inquiries revealed that, for some years, one or another of the aboriginal craftsmen, skilled in the carving of *pukamuni* poles with steel tools, and, no doubt, experimenting with new shapes, occasionally made a burial pole in the form of a conventionalized human body (Pl. 39), or smaller human figures (Pls. 40, 41), which were placed on the grave.

I gathered information about three old human-headed burial poles as well as adding to the expedition collection, two recently made poles and six smaller figures.

At the burial, about thirty years ago, of the mother of one of my informants, a "worker", called *Kado*, made and erected a human-headed burial pole. In 1941, Mr. W. E. Harney saw a well-carved head on a burial

[10] Mountford, 1956, p. 415, traces the distribution of the carved wooden figures in Northern Australia and their development at Yirrkalla, from simple human-headed burial posts of Malay origin to carved heads and full-length figures of considerable merit.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pole at Punata on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), while I saw and photographed the third example in the form of a highly conventionalized human figure (Pl. 38A, B, C), which was on an old grave not far from our camp. No doubt there are other examples of these poles on the deserted graves of the Islands. I saw recently, in the Musée Ethnographique et Musée Suisse de Folklore, Bâle, Switzerland, two full-length human figures which had been collected at Bathurst Island by Mr. Karel Kupta in 1956. 532x 765

This evidence indicates that, for thirty years, at least, the men and women of the Tiwi,[11] occasionally carved burial poles in human form; we do not know when the practice of carving the smaller figures[12] began.

At first sight it appeared that these wooden figures might have been a cultural trait borrowed, as in north-eastern Arnhem Land, from the Malay trepangers. Further research, however, did not confirm this hypothesis. [177]

Although now and again some Malay prau, driven off its course by contrary winds, must have touched the shores of either Melville or Bathurst Island, it is certain that the men of the Tiwi, who were notably unfriendly, would have endeavoured to drive them away. This unfriendliness probably explains why the Malays were not able to establish themselves on these Islands as they did in north-eastern Arnhem Land. The old men of the Tiwi do not remember any Malay fishermen visiting their country. This evidence that the Malays did not settle on the land of the Tiwi is further supported by Campbell (1834), who writes (p. 143), "The Malays were never seen near Melville Island", and later (p. 155), ". . . Malay fishermen were forbidden to go near Melville Island . . . alleging that it was infested with pirates. . . ." 174 648 [114]

This evidence suggests that the Tiwi practice of carving human figures in wood was not, like that of the aborigines of Arnhem Land, borrowed from a Malayan source, but is a recent local development, probably stimulated by the acquisition of steel tools and the other possessions of the white man. For instance, it would be easy to imagine a skilled aboriginal trying to make his pole resemble the tall bodies of the white man's saints in the mission church. From these larger would develop the smaller figures. 532x 765 177

It is unlikely that any elaborately carved burial pole, much less one in the form of a human figure, would be more than fifty years old. Before that time, except those stolen from the short-lived Fort Dundas settlement, the Tiwi would have owned few, if any steel tools. 532x 765

Although the Tiwi have no specific myth about the larger burial poles, 773

[11] A woman may cut a burial pole instead of her husband, should he be absent.

[12] There is a difference, however, between the two; the *tudini* poles, in human form, are cut from the hardest and most durable eucalypt; the smaller figures from the soft wood of the beach kapok, a wood which is quickly destroyed by insects.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

88 ill. The *Marukumunis* were fed behind their bark shelter and the *Wadjeniatis* in the open camp.

(2) *The Opening Rituals*

After dark, on the day following the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, the fully initiated *kulama* men, and all people above the grade of *Mikinatrina*, prepared for the opening ceremony by clearing an oval about fourteen feet long and six feet wide. The *Marukumuni* initiates were brought from their hiding place, the *Wadjeniatis* from their camp and both were seated just outside the ceremonial ground. Neither of those grades, however, took part in the opening rituals.

[372] [758] In the middle of the ceremonial ground were two smouldering logs, but no flames, for fear of attracting *taini*, the *kulama* sickness. Among the trees outside of the ring, were a number of families of uninitiated men, women and children.

Normally the *kulama* party would have been made up of *Mikintaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, and the songs chanted by the men in that order.

● 177 533 981 539 On the occasion of our visit the ceremony opened when a *Mikingula*, *Wurarbuti*, seated on the ground, beating his throwing sticks, started to hum a song softly. Becoming more confident, he stood up, and pacing backward and forward still beating his sticks, chanted the following three songs.[28]

(*a*) "My father was king, therefore I am the Prince of Wales. As King George was King, so was the old man on the hill, my (dead) father. I will have warships, money and a flag of red and white." When the singer mentioned his dead father there was a high-pitched wail among the near relatives.

(*b*) The second song dealt with the invitation he had received to dance before the Queen of England. "When the Queen was in England, she said 'I would like to see a black-fellow dance', and so I went up. King Philip watched me a lot while I danced."

(*c*) "My uncle in Darwin said to me 'Why haven't you made a lot of *pukamuni* arm rings. If you don't soon do so, you'll cause a lot of trouble among the *pukamuni* people."

Muramajua also chanted three songs;

(*a*) In the first, of which I did not collect the words, he explained, at length,

[28] This man, who was the ceremonial leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, described earlier, had been invited, only a few months previously, to visit the southern States, and dance before the Queen of England. Naturally, this left such a strong impression on his mind that many of his songs dealt with that remarkable experience.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

how a slow canoe journey had made him late for a recent *pukamuni* ceremony. 177

(*b*) "I was sick in the Darwin hospital. Sister Philips said it was because I had had too much grog." 533 539

(*c*) "There was a man at Cockle Point (opposite the Bathurst Island Mission), who wanted to kill me with a spear. So I changed myself into a mullet and he didn't see me." 881

Another singer chanted,

(*a*) "I am a goose and a man cast his throwing stick and hit me." 533

(*b*) "I want that girl from Bathurst Island to wash her with fresh water to make it square for giving away my sister."[86] 539 881

Another *Mikingula*, *Palitara*, aired his differences with a woman, *Batali*, in the following song.

(*a*) "I fed *Batali*, but she did not give her daughter to me as a wife."[87]

(3) *Collecting the Kulama Yam*

Early on the following morning, the *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikintaras*, the *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, went to the ceremonial ground of the previous evening. They first dipped their hands in a bark container filled with water, throwing some over their bodies; then, taking a mouthful, they squirted water into the air in imitation of rain, afterwards calling out "Oom-oom", to symbolize thunderstorms. Taking two small sticks, one in each hand, the men used them to clean the wax from their ears, afterwards standing the sticks upright in the ground.[88] 881 [515]

Placing their palms on a sheet of bark covered with white paint, the men patted their hair, chest, wrists and pubes (Pl. 44c), turning toward the north as they again called out "Oom-oom", in imitation of thunder.

Following this ritual, each *kulama* man painted another with a design in white (Pl. 42L). The leader then picked up the bark basket, held it on his arm, and facing north, south, east and west, again called "Oom-oom", while he made a drum-like sound, symbolical of thunder, by hitting the basket with his hand. After this the men set out to collect the *kulama* yams. They were

[86] I did not find out the significance of this ritual.

[87] When a woman promises her daughter to a man, it is the duty of the future son-in-law to give her continuous presents of food. On this occasion, the woman had accepted *Palitara's* gifts, but when her daughter was old enough, she gave the girl to another man. [584]

Quarrelling at a *kulama* ceremony is forbidden, otherwise *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, will destroy all the participants. This prohibition allows an aboriginal, such as *Palitara*, to air his grievances without causing a quarrel, even though, as on this occasion, the defaulting person was present. [626] [753]

[88] The meaning of this ritual is obscure. According to the aborigines it prevents trouble and quarrelling during the *kulama* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Dry sticks, about three feet in length, were pushed upright into the ground around the *umarapi* (oven), kindling wood was laid between them, other pieces of dried wood piled cross-wise between the uprights until there was a stack about three feet high (Pl. 45A). 881 [372]

(5) *Placing the Uncooked Yams in Water*

About sunset, the *kulama* men went to the bloodwood tree, the *wuringalua*, where the *Mikinaarinas* had stored the yams in the morning and, on pulling bushes away, revealed some of the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates squatting, holding in their arms a basket of the uncooked *kulama* yams. The *Marukumuni* initiates took the yams to the water, everyone assisting in laying them on a pad of grass in the bed of the stream (Pl. 46a).

Immediately this task was completed, the *kulama* men pushed the *Marukumuni* initiates over,[50] and, holding them by the legs and arms dragged them backward and forward through the now muddy water to wash off their body paint. They were then taken back to camp, seated beside the *milimika* and painted with a different pattern (Pl. 42F). Neither the *Marukumuni* nor the *Wafjeniasi* initiates took any further part in the rituals of that day. When, after dark, the *kulama* men entered the *milimika* to chant another series of songs, the camp fires were allowed to burn brightly, because the aborigines said that the yams, being in the water, were now "quiet" so that there was no fear of *taini*, the spirit of *kulama* sickness. [302]

The chanting men walked counter-clockwise around the *milimika* because *Purutjiikini* did so at the first *kulama*. To have walked in the opposite direction, even then, would have made the spirit of the *kulama* yam angry. 881

The following are literal translations of a selection of the songs. 533

(*a*) "I had a quarrel with Tom Crow, the Superintendent of Snake Bay Settlement." 539 [177]

(*b*) "My mother-in-law is good to me, she did not take away my promised wife."

(*c*) "The fruit of the *binania* (*Eugenia* sp.) ripens and falls to the ground."

(*d*) "The little *Pitipituis* (spirit children) are dancing on the beach."

[50] Spencer, 1928, p. 664, describing a similar ritual, states, "Several old men seized the *Wafjinyeri* (my *Wafjeniasi*), and plunged into the water with him. As many as could get near him gripped him by the legs and arms, and yelling, splashing and churning up the mud, . . . dragged him backward and forward several times, . . . As soon as the *Wafjinyeri* were released, the men turned their attention to the *Marukumuni* boys. . . ." Although my informants did not say so it is likely that the *Wafjeniasi* initiates were also pushed into the water to remove their body paint in readiness for the second design of a *Mikinaarina* (Pl. 42I). [114]

21 Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (e) "The salt water (sea), brings plenty of drift-wood up on the beach for
539 our fires."
881 (f) "The *nukwall* (shark) killed a stingray."
(g) "The boat sails fast and the waves are beating its sides."

At approximately 8.30 p.m. the chanting ceased and the aborigines retired to their camps.

(6) *The Lighting of the Ceremonial Fire*

About 6.30 the next morning, the *Mikinastrinings* women collected pieces
[137] of termite mound and put them on the top of the sticks for the fire which had been piled over the oven, the *tumarapi*. This fire could be lit by any man above the grade of *Mikinastrina*. Whilst the fire was burning down, the *Mikingulas* walked around it, and sang a few *kulama* songs, only one of which was recorded.

[177] (1) "When I see the shining iron of the new schoolhouse, I think how my children will go to school and wear boots."[81]

By 9.30 a.m. after everyone had had a meal, most of the aborigines, includ-
881 ing several children, painted themselves in red and made their way to the swamp to take part in the ritual of bringing the *kulama* yams from the water, to the *milimika*.

On reaching the swamp, the leader took the yams from the pad of grass under the water, placed them carefully in the basket, with a bundle of rushes plucked from a nearby swamp on top, then, putting the basket on his shoulder, carried it to the *milimika* and stood it beside the fire "to warm up the yams".

881 The *Mikingulas*, walking anti-clockwise as before, chanted another series
533 of songs.
539 (a) "I went to Native Affairs (Darwin), drew out £10 (with which to
[177] gamble) and bought a pack of playing cards."[82]

Striding around the ring with two spears in one hand and a throwing stick in the other, the same man sang.

(b) "I have many spears. If the white people were not here, I would kill you all."

881 At the end of the song, the performer called out the name of his dead
765 father, striking himself on the head with his throwing stick to indicate his sorrow. The people on the outside of the ring cried in sympathy.

[185] [81] A parent's hope in a changing society that his children will live at a higher social level than the one which he himself occupies.

[82] A number of the younger Melville Islanders work for extended terms in Darwin, periodically returning to their homeland to take part in the ceremonies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(8) *Cutting up the Yams*

881 After the yams had been in the oven for about one and a half hours, the
252 men gathered around the oven, felt it, and, after a short discussion began to scrape the warm sand away from the paper-bark covering. As they did so, they pressed handfuls of the warm sand against their elbows, chest, shoulders and knees, believing that this sand made their joints strong and supple (Pl. 45c).

When the paper-bark, carefully removed strip by strip, exposed the
881 cooked yams, the women, who had been quietly standing on the outside of the *milimika* murmured reverently, "Ah, *kulama*, ah, *kulama*." Taking the hot yams from the oven each man held them against his chest, and his
[827] head. This they said would give them added strength and vitality. The women although they did not participate in this ritual, sent their children into the *milimika* to have the yams pressed against their bodies so that they would grow to healthy and strong adults.

As the men peeled the yams, exposing the soft, yellow flesh, they sang
[177] about preparing and eating various kinds of food belonging to the white
[533] man,[86] "cutting bread for a meal, carving steak from a bullock and roasting it on the coals, cooking the tongue of a bullock, eating corn beef", and so on. When all the yams were peeled they were left on a sheet of bark whilst
[412] everyone had a meal and a sleep. In the late afternoon the *kulama* men started
[177] to slice the yams (cockle shells, *irakapi*, were used before the advent of steel). As they did so, the men mashed up some of the sliced *kulama* between the palms of the hands, mixed this with red ochre, and each rubbed it on his hair, face, whiskers and body. This, they believed, aided by the earlier rituals, would ensure them good health until the next *kulama*.

(9) *Initiation of the Kilipaniatis and Mikinatrinas*

The sliced yams were put in the basket, and stood in the centre of the *milimika*. A *kulama* man walked into the forest, and collected a length of flexible vine. Returning to the *milimika* he bent the vine round the necks of the male *Marukumunis* and the female *Marukumuningas* in such a way that it could not be removed. These initiates were then *Kilipaniatis* and *Kilipaniatingas* respectively. This neck ornament, which had a number of cords
[301] hanging from it, is called a *mariguani* (Pl. 42c). After these initiates had been further decorated with bark armlets, *tjungutis*[86] (Pl. 42D and G), and cane

[86] No doubt, in times past, they sang about abundant supplies of their own favourite foods.

[86] Spencer, 1928, illustrates the bark armlets, *tjungutis*, on Pl. XI and the belt, *ukarimi*, on Pl. IX, No. 1.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 *Wurarkui* described some of his experiences when he visited Brisbane to
533 dance before the Queen of England.
539 (*a*) "I saw the big boat, Marella, beside the jetty at Brisbane, many motor
881 cars, boats and trains. The boats went under a big bridge over the river, and across that bridge went the motor cars. The ship's flags were flying."

Another man sang.

(*b*) "The *tapalingas* (stars) are like those on the American flag in Darwin. They lifted the flag up in the morning, and let it down at night."

(*c*) "The *tadawali* (shark) swims about the sea looking for stingrays."

[535] The onlookers applauded this song and asked the singer to perform the shark dance (Pl. 300), which he did to the delight of all.

(*d*) "I am a wireless man, and have sent native tucker (food) all over Australia. The Native Affairs branch in Darwin listened in."

(*e*) "Leo Hickey's boat comes quickly to Snake Bay with a cargo of food from Darwin."

Another *Mikingula* chanted a lengthy song describing the making of a wooden canoe, the felling of a tree in the jungle, the length and shape of the craft and the final launching.

After these songs, the *kulama* men rested in the shade, and the initiates sat by the side of the *milimika*, until about sunset.

(10) *Taking the Cooked Yams to Water*

881 The *Mikingulas*, starting from equally spaced positions on the periphery, crawled toward the basket of cooked and sliced yams standing in the centre of the *milimika*, and pretended to fight over it. While this was going on, the women, beating sticks together, called out "Brr-brr", as did the owl-man, *Purutjikini*, at the first *kulama*. Meanwhile two of the *Mikingulas* vigorously
[535] performed the crocodile dance (Pl. 302). Then with a loud cry, one of them picked up the basket containing the yams, and followed by most of the women and children, carried the basket to the water.

With long-drawn-out calls, and the sound "Brr-brr", the men tipped the cut-up yams from the basket on to a grass bed on the bottom of the stream. While the leader patted the surface of the water, the rest of the people called in a high trilling note, similar to the mosquito call of the *pukamani* ceremony,
[821] ending up in a loud *yai*. These calls, they said, would cause still more thunder storms and heavy rain.

533 It was quite dark (about 7.30 p.m.) when the *kulama* people assembled to
881 hear the *Mikinastrina* initiates sing for the first time. For, at this stage of the ceremony, each male initiate of the *Mikinastrina* grade was invited by the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Mikingulas to enter the *milimika* and chant his first song, known as the *Ai-ipa*, which he had been practising for some time.[40] The female initiates, the *Mikinastrinaga* assisted the *Mikinastrinas* by beating the time on the outside of the *milimika* in the same way as *Pinsema*, the owl-woman, assisted her husband, *Purujikini*, at the first *kulama* ceremony during creation times. 533 881

One *Mikingula* told me that when he was passing through the *Mikinastrina* grade of initiation, he chanted three songs; one was about a fish, one about a rifle and a third about a crocodile.

When the *Mikinastrina* initiates had finished their songs, the men of the higher initiation grades, the *Mikinstaras*, *Mikiastarimas* and the fully initiated *Mikingulas*, entered the ring, one by one, and walking anti-clockwise chanted the following songs:[40]

(*a*) "A big ship brings many things to Darwin." 177 ●

(*b*) "A Japanese plane was flying low over Melville Island. The men on the ground said 'stand-by' and shot it down with a cannon." 533 539 881

(*c*) "In Darwin, I saw a kite, on a long string, which flew into the sky."

(*d*) "The Government plane flew me to Brisbane to see the Queen. It flew through the clouds. I went into the pilot's room in the front of the plane and the wireless told them Brisbane was only seven miles away."

(11) *The Kararijui Songs*

About nine o'clock, the character of the songs changed and all but one dealt with the spirit, *imunka*, of their children.[41] These songs are called *kararijui imunka*. 533 539 881

(*a*) "The spirits of my children have gone to Karslake Island (Wulrungku), and are playing there." [774]

[40] At the conclusion of the *kulama* ceremony, both the male and female *Mikinastrina* initiates wear their ornaments and keep themselves decorated for a month, and every evening when seated in the camp, they chant the same *Ai-ipa* songs as they did at the *kulama* ceremony.

At the end of a month, the initiates wash the paint from their bodies, discard their ceremonial ornaments, and resume a normal life until the next *kulama*.

Two years later, the *Mikinastrina* becomes a *Mikinstara* retaining that grade for another year, when he enters the grade of a *Mikiastarima*. On the following year, the initiate reaches the full status of a *Mikingula*.

During the last two stages, i.e., *Mikinstara* and *Mikiastarima*, the initiates are not subject to any special restrictions nor do they have to pass through any special rituals. Their body decorations too, are similar to those of the fully initiated men.

[40] The men did not carry their throwing stick in the same manner as they did in the afternoon performance (Pl. 44A).

[41] The Melville Islanders in common with most aboriginal tribes, believe that their spirit (*imunka*) leaves the body during sleep and wanders around. The songs refer to the spirits of their children, who, during the hours of sleeping, play in the forest and on the sea-shore.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (*b*) "The spirits of my children are dancing on a sand-bank beside the sea."
539 (*c*) "My children's spirits are paddling about in a canoe, looking for fish
881 and turtle eggs."

Another man first chanted a secular song, which he had tried to do earlier, but had forgotten the tune.

[177] (*d*) "I saw a tractor pulling big trees out of the ground to make the new aerodrome."

Then he continued with his *Kararijui* song.

(*e*) "My little children have gone to the island, but they must come back because they are short of tobacco." After a pause he continued, "They're back because someone has just taken the tobacco out of my hand."

(12) *The Ceremonial Eating of the Kulama Yam*

881 On the third day, at early dawn, everybody went to the swamp to eat some of the prepared yams. The leader quietly plucked a bunch of grass from the edge of the water "to waken the *kulama* yam", for should it get a fright the yam would cause much sickness in the camp.

The fully initiated men, the *Mikingulas*, ate the first few pieces "to tame the yam", after which everyone took some to eat. This ritual ensures for all the participants, good health until the next *kulama*. Some of the prepared yam is left in the water for others to eat should they desire it.

This ritual completed the *kulama* ceremony. Everyone returned to his camp, and, except for the initiates of the lower grades, pursued a normal life. The grass ring and the pieces of antbed were left in place but the *kulama* ground and the *milimika* were deserted (Pl. 45D).

784 There are, however, a number of taboos and restrictions associated with
881 the deserted *kulama* ground and oven. For instance, should anyone make
[778] his camp or light a fire in the deserted *milimika*, the spirit of the *kulama* yam would be offended and blind the culprit.

If anyone were so foolish as to toss a piece of the antbed, from the oven, sand from the *milimika* or a fragment of cooked *kulama* yam into the sea, *Marajji*, the rainbow, would be angry and create heavy seas and storms.
[821] The aborigines of the Cape Fourcroy area were convinced that a recent hurricane, which devastated the whole area, was caused by some foolish person throwing a piece of *kulama* into the sea.

On the other hand, if a *kulama* man takes a piece of antbed from the oven,
[224] and throwing it at a tree, hits the mark, his hunting will be successful, until the next *kulama* ceremony. But, if he misses his mark, his hunting will be poor.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

former locality make their camp in a dense jungle, and at the latter, in the forest near the sea-coast. At one time, these *Pitipituis* lived at Juruna, but left after a while and established these camps at Jurilupa and Jampatural. 776

(9) Unakumbi (Buchanan Island). Here, the home of the *Pitipituis* is on a sandbank on the southern side of the island. When the tide is low, the little people play on the sandbank, but when it is high, they go to their underground homes, where it is warm and dry.

During the early creation (*palaneri*) times, *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the *Pitipituis* in a bark canoe, brought back some of the little people and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala* so that they could have children. In a later period, *Purukupali* gave the *Pitipituis* to his wife, *Bima*, who in turn presented them to their future mothers. 773 776

Before *Purukupali* drowned himself, after the death of his son, *Djinini*, he told the *Pitipituis* that they must find their own mothers. Now, should one of these little people wish to become a human being, it travels to a native camp, and giving her name, asks one of the married men (when he is asleep) where its future mother is camping. After the father has indicated the particular wife, the little sprite waits a suitable opportunity to enter her vulva and start life as a human being. 776 842 787

The aborigines believe implicitly in the *Pitipituis* and the mystical origin of their children; several of them gave me details of how their children came to them in dreams.

Old *Tjamalampua* told of the time when, while he was asleep, the *mopaditi* of his dead father brought him a spirit child, and sat it on his knee saying, "This is your daughter." *Tjamalampua* directed the little *Pitipitui* to one of his wives, who later became its mother.

Muramajua described how his three children came to him.

(1) A boy, now dead, came from a Japanese plane[48] and asked for his wife as a mother. Later she felt the movements of the child. [177]

(2) A little girl came to him in a dream and spat at him. His wife conceived soon afterwards.

(3) His last girl hit him on the head whilst he was asleep, and, in his fright, he slapped her face. It was not long afterwards that his wife became pregnant.

Those accounts indicate that although, ideally, the child comes to the father and asks for the mother, in actual practice they visit the father under a number of conditions.

[48] This aboriginal had worked with the Australian Navy during the war; an example of acculturation.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

and black seeds. The dotted rectangles, *c*, *c*, at the top and bottom of the paintings are lily-covered lagoons (dots represent the blossoms); the cross-hatched panels, *b*, *b*, etc., between them are spider webs in the trees and the meandering lines, *d*, *d*, etc., along the outer edge, a jungle vine hanging from the branches of the trees. The black design *h*, in the middle of the painting, is the beach at Imilu; the irregular circles, *g*, *g*, etc., are large rocks on the shore, and the dots, the eucalyptus trees that grow along the top of the cliff. The series of large rectangles, *m*, *m* (top and bottom) indicate the sandy shores of the lagoons, and the short vertical lines at *k* (bottom), a forest of eucalypts. 532x 133 137

A large *pukamani* basket, Pl. 51A, B, C, D, pictures (*a*) Pl. 51A, B, the topography near the mission station at Garden Point, near Punata (Fig. 1), and (b) Pl. 51C, D, the surroundings near the expedition camp.

Punata (Garden Point)

The series of rectangles on the obverse side of the basket (Pl. 51A, B), represent a house at Garden Island mission. At *a*, are the foundations; *b*, *b*, the walls; *c*, *c*, the upright posts of the house; *d*, the beams of the roof, and at *e*, is the ridge pole. [177]

At *f*, *f*, etc., on the upper edge, are the tall eucalyptus trees of the surrounding forest. At *j*, is the red ground on which the trees grow; at *g*, the dots are black and red seeds on the ground, and at *h*, the cross-hatching is the spider-webs in the trees.

At the bottom of the painting, *n*, *n*, etc., and *o*, *o*, etc., are more large eucalyptus trees. Symbols *k*, *k*, etc., and *m*, *m*, etc., represent hives of wild honey in the trees; the meandering lines at *s*, are jungle vines hanging from the branches; the cross-hatched areas are spider webs among the leaves, and the dots, as before, red and black seeds on the ground.

Snake Bay

The central black circle, *a*, on the reverse side of the basket, Pl. 51C, D, is a black rock in the sea, and the circle, *b*, immediately surrounding it, the broken water at its base, while circle *c*, indicates large rocks at the bottom of the cliffs, the white outer rectangle, *e*, being the sea-sand and the rectangle, *d*, the waves breaking on them. The white dots are the pebbles on the shore.

The upper and lower panels of the painting deal with the land. The white design *f*, on the upper edge, is a forest of large eucalyptus trees, and the cross-hatching, *g*, spider-webs on their branches. The five circles at *h*, are hives

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly
412 limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe
[177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of
[415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the
[285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[44]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[114] [44] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This
[773] information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

648 has no other white inhabitants, while Melville is held under lease by the meat firm known as Vesteys Ltd., but has no permanent white inhabitants, though occasionally campers, beachcombers, and hunters from Darwin stay there for a few months.

●177 All the earlier accounts lay stress on the ferocity and hostility of the
648 natives of these islands, but long albeit intermittent contact with the whites has tamed them. At the present time it is no exaggeration to say that except for the Larakia, who are almost extinct, no tribe in the Northern Territory has so assimilated white ideas or is so familiar with white men. A proof of this is afforded by the fact that members of this tribe are more in demand in Darwin as houseboys than members of any other tribe, simply because, as it is generally expressed, they have more "savvy," that is they are more intelligent and more adaptable to white conditions.

But while their proximity to Darwin and their long experience of white men have taught them much of our ideas and customs, the absence of a permanent white settlement in their country with its consequent massacres and epidemics has on the other hand prevented their numbers being depleted and their social organization being broken down. It is therefore still possible to obtain fairly full and satisfactory information about the life and culture of these islands as they were before white influence began.

181 The ferocity of these people, I am convinced, has been much exag-
648 gerated even by the earliest settlers. As a matter of fact their outstanding characteristic is not their fierceness but their sense of humour, as noted by Spencer. They are constantly laughing, even at the most solemn moments, and this applies to practically every man, woman and child on the island. I am inclined to think that their superior physique, which is very apparent, their huge spears—which incidentally they seldom use, except ceremonially—their striking method of painting their faces and their years of conflict with the Malays, which had accustomed them to stand and fight rather than to run at sight of a stranger, gained them in large part their evil reputation.

144 In physical appearance they are certainly Australoid, but the men are on the whole taller, sturdier and better proportioned than any of the mainland tribes. This is obvious even in Darwin, where it is an easy matter to pick out almost at a glance a member of the Tiwi. I agree
153 also with Sir Baldwin Spencer that they are superior to the mainlanders,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

By Herbert Basedow, M.D., M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., etc.

With Plates VII–XX.

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Introduction.

In August of last year (1911), I visited Bathurst Island to inspect the natives on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. Accompanied by one of my inspectors (Mr. J. H. Kelly) and a crew consisting of a Chinaman, a Manilaman, and three natives of the Larrekiya Tribe,[1] I left Port Darwin at eleven o'clock in the evening and entered Apsley Strait early the next morning. We spent nine days in the examination of the island, entering the numerous salt-water arms and rivers, effecting a landing wherever possible and traversing the island on foot. Landing was, in most places, difficult on account of the thick growth of mangroves that fringes the island on the east. It had been my intention to circumnavigate the island, but a heavy monsoonal gale prevented us from even making the attempt in the small motor-craft at our disposal. I therefore decided to return *viâ* Apsley Strait and inspect part of Melville Island. 121 [137]

The plates included in this paper are all reproductions of my original photographs and coloured drawings.

Condition of Natives.

I estimate the population of the island to be about 500. Their isolation and, no doubt in a measure also, their reputation as being cannibalistic and treacherous in their habits, have guarded their primitive condition to the present day.[2] Before [161] [177] 648

[1] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. of S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 1.

[2] Compare the statement:—

"Melville Island, about 30 miles north of Port Darwin, is inhabited by a tribe of which very little is known. They do not circumcize, and speak a different language from those on the mainland. They are represented as a very strong and powerful race. 304 197

"Before the arrival of the Hon. B. T. Finniss at Escape Cliffs in 1864, the Melville Island natives occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras, in which they invariably succeeded; but they have not done so since. This tribe is of a very hostile nature, and on several occasions have attacked Europeans visiting the island. Their canoes and weapons are similar to those on the mainland." P. Foelsche: "Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia," *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 17. 648 [171]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

takes the part of a hunter endeavouring to drive his spear into the enraged kangaroo on the opposite side of the ring. 527 535

Corrobboree of the ship of war.—The next item in the ceremony appeals to us Europeans in a twofold sense. Firstly, the mimicry on the part of the aboriginal in an introduced scene is excellent: its effect being still more enhanced in that his artistic genius has expanded the original impressions by adequate interludes of his own invention and taste. Secondly, the observer's sentiment and appreciation are kindled afresh when he sees this savage folk, who are oft not credited with the possession of anything but vice and immorality, present to a subsequent and younger generation, scenes in living picture, which happened long ago in the days of the naval settlement of Fort Dundas. To us the records are available in the libraries throughout the world; to the aboriginal the events can only be handed down by tradition and such ceremonies as that which is now to be described. 177 527 535 [173 182]

The chorus or semicircular group of men have again started their rhythmical accompaniment by clapping upon the lateral aspect of their thighs with the arched palm of one hand. A performer rushes into the centre of the half-ring and, after going through a few preliminaries, stands with one of his legs placed a short distance in front of the other and slightly flexed at the knee. Throwing his head back and looking upwards, he starts a vigorous hauling action by alternately throwing one arm out in the direction he is looking, closing the fist and making an imaginary pull right down to his loins, while at the same time the opposite arm is thrown out and returned in a similar way. Accurate time is kept by the time-beaters. This act is in imitation of the hauling-in of a sail on a European man-of-war, such as the natives saw at Fort Dundas nearly a century ago. The performer now turns and runs to the opposite corner of the half-ring; the onlookers marking the time by clapping to it in a quickened beat produced with both hands upon their buttocks. The same act is repeated there several times. Next, the same hauling motion is continued, but reversed from below towards the body, in imitation of the hauling-up of an anchor. Several short and harsh interjections suggest the orders of the commanding officers and the whole ceremony, in fact, is reproduced with a suspicion of caricature upon the strictness of naval discipline. During this part of the performance, several cries of "poop" and "ish" are again sounded. The actor now moves about in the semicircle with the familiar stamping of feet and cutting out the most grotesque antics. He first extends his arms straight out on either side, throws his head back and moves his thorax laterally in a pendulous manner from the hips. Then he turns his arms through a right-angle frontwards, so that they project slantingly upwards, whence he again changes them to the former position. Then again he extends his arms downward and bends them so that the elbows project behind and his fists rest against his flanks, from which position they are presently changed to a straight pendulous one. After remaining in that position a short while, he suddenly throws them furiously upwards in front of him; the stamping, which has been

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 continued all the while, is at this stage strengthened. Any of these acts may be
527 interrupted at any moment by changing to the "hauling of sail or anchor" scene
535 and many interjections of "poop" and "iah" accompany them. The performer himself now ceases to stamp with his feet, but in place thereof he bends his legs at the knees and knocks his thighs together while he extends his arms outwards, either in front or at the side of him.

527 *Corrobboree of a fight.*—During several of the corrobborees described, a chant
535 was heard which accompanied the acting in addition to the clapping of hands against the thighs or buttocks. In trying to reproduce the words or syllables of this chant, the nearest analogy I can find is—

[533
539]

"*Tupera monan la jerra*
Tupera monan la jerra,"

and

"*Tupatunan tenakomejona.*"

These chants are muttered uninterruptedly throughout the particular part. The corrobboree of a fight consists in the imitation of a spear duel between two angry blackfellows. They carry the same kind of reed-spears as was described under the "kangaroo ceremony." They first place themselves in defiance of one another at either side of the half-circle and go through all sorts of antics, brandishing their spears, rolling their eyes, and furiously throwing their bodies about. Next they start running about the ring and stamp their feet, throwing up their arms and knocking their thighs together in much the same way as previously described.

Corrobboree of the jungle fowl.—After the usual excessive amount of shouting, jabbering, and excited shrieks of laughter, an old man runs forward into the ring. He bends his arms at the elbow and holds them close against the sides of his body, while the closed fists rest on his chest, an attitude resembling that of a professional runner. This is to resemble the wings of the bird (*Leipoa*). He looks about the ground from side to side as though in search of something. Presently he imitates the bird's call with a shrill penetrating voice which sounds like "he-r-r-r-l." The onlookers' accompaniment consists in producing short spluttering and bubbling noises with their lips that sound like "brrl, brrl, brrl." The performer often interrupts the proceedings by shouting "he," to which all others respond with a loud "yeh." Now he throws up clouds of dust behind him with his feet, in imitation of the way in which the jungle fowl scratch and throw up the earth into the enormous mounds that contain their eggs.

To conclude the ceremony, all performers are led off again by the original leader in Indian file and go through much the same performance as they did in the initiation of the ceremony; the final shouts and shrieks, after the completion of the "trot" in spiral line, being particularly loud and enthusiasic.

114 Captain King[1] was probably the first white man to have witnessed the
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[1] *Survey Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

level, further material has been cut away to reduce its thickness by about 1 centimetre all round. The top portion, which has the appearance of a knob, has been daubed with red ochre; the sunken portion, immediately beneath, is white (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 2). The lower surface of the post bears five vertical bands, three being of white pipe-clay and two of yellow ochre. Two of the former have a border of red, the third one of yellow; and both of the latter (yellow) are bordered with white. Three of the intervening spaces are shaded with inclined lines of white, the remaining two are each filled with a vertical row of white cricoid figures. The original surface upon which the pattern was drawn is charred. 532 764

Having persuaded the natives to repaint the designs on the tomb-posts, in places where they were defective or missing, they set about the work with enthusiasm and did not rest until they had repainted the whole of the surfaces. To accomplish this they leaned the posts against trees and divided themselves into small groups of two to four, each of which undertook part of the work (*vide* Plate XVI, Figs. 1 and 2). Youths were sent to the main camp, whence they soon after returned with lumps of red and yellow ochre and white pipe-clay (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 2). From these they broke off small pieces and crushed them by hand in the strong concave shells of the bivalve mollusc *Cyrena essingtonensis*.[1] To this crumbled pigment sufficient water was added to make a thick paint, more water being added from time to time as required. One might look upon these shells containing the mixed paint as representing primitive palettes (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 1). The paint is applied to the surface by means of crudely made, yet effective, brushes. Short pieces of the creeping calamus are cut with the sharp edge of a shell and one or both of their ends chewed until all the fibres have become separated (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 3); much in the same way as the flower-stalks of the fan-palm are chewed when feeding on honey (*vide* p. 300). Both of these small artists' requisites are highly interesting inasmuch as they show us a decidedly primitive, yet to the present day practically unaltered stage in the evolution of art. [126] 386 [413] 532 [413]

It is evident that the posts have been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk. Captain Flinders[2] as far back as 1803 noticed that the natives on the north coast (Caledon Bay) were familiar with the use of iron instruments and that they tried to steal his axes. He, therefore, suspected that "they had been previously visited by people possessing iron instruments." Later, he was himself able to confirm this supposition when he discovered, near to Cape Wilberforce, a fleet of proas from Macassar, the crew of which were in the habit of visiting the north coast of Australia to collect trepang, which they took to Timor and sold to the Chinese.[3] 412 [302] 177 171

[1] We have before us an interesting analogy, when we recollect that in our own country the shells of fresh-water mussels were, in former days, much used and are still used as a receptacle for mixing water-colours; whence also the name *Unio pictorum*.

[2] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, pp. 213 and 228–231.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 177 412 When Captain King[1] dropped anchor in Apsley Strait in 1818, and came into contact with natives near Luxmore Head on Melville Island, he noticed that "they repeatedly asked for axes by imitating the action of chopping."

171 764 532 Ethnologically these tomb-posts are of the greatest importance. With the exception of the records left by Jukes and MacGillivray, we know of nothing of the kind existing nowadays on the mainland. That, however, the inhabitants of some of the Torres Strait islands adopt methods of preserving the memory of their dead by means of painted and decorated structures of a different type is an established fact. The Continental Australian certainly, also, has methods of his own to mark a place of burial, but in a decidedly more transitory and less laborious way. The latter leaves already existing belongings of the deceased upon the grave; the islander, in addition, surrounds the spot with specially prepared posts such as have been described herein. Apart from the carvings, the painted designs, alone, are quite superior to anything existing on the mainland. The marked symmetry of the individual patterns and their diversity, when compared with one another, can hardly find a parallel on the mainland. We might look upon these island productions as representing interesting and independent transition stages between the primitive art of the Continental Australian, on the one hand, and the more perfected types of equatorial island tribes to the north of Australia, on the other.

APPENDIX.

NATIVE OCHRE DRAWINGS ON BARK FROM MELVILLE ISLAND, NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA.

531 While visiting Bathurst Island in 1911, I also entered several of the inlets of Melville Island from Apsley Strait. At one point, not far from the southern entrance to the Strait, where some aborigines were living in huts near to Cooper's Buffalo-Shooters Camp, I found the drawings here described. They were upon sheets of bark of the Woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*), used for building their shelters and huts. All drawings are in pipe-clay and red ochre; these materials having been smeared or squirted on to the bark in the form of a thin paste or in aqueous suspension. Typical among the drawings of the aboriginals on the mainland are the negative imprints of hands produced by holding the palm of the hand flat against the surface and squirting a mouthful of pipe-clay or ochre, suspended in water, against the back of the hand and around it. The surrounding surface is thus coloured so that, when the hand is removed, its outline stands out conspicuously by the absence of colour.[2]

[1] *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, pp. 111 and 121.

[2] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, 1907, vol. xxxi, p. 56, Plate XII. Among other references note E. Giles, *Australia Twice Traversed*, 1889, vol. i, p. 78. "The drawing is done

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

548 by the Japanese issue, since it tempted the conservative with several wives to
595 violate all the old tribal sanctions by renting out his wives, and it provided
648 the Mission adherent radicals with a grand opportunity to pose as the real de-
668 fenders of the old culture and to charge the old polygamists with being the real
797 renegades from the ancient ways.

It can be easily guessed how high feelings ran on these issues and how hotly
159 they were debated when a number of Tiwi gathered together. But on neither
177 of these issues or on any aspect of them did Antonio show any signs of leader-
797 ship. He accumulated wives but always apologized in a rather deprecating and apple-polishing way when he met the missionaries, and spent part of his time hanging around the Mission despite the contemptuous attitude which the missionaries adopted toward him. He thus contrasted very unfavorably with some of his contemporaries, notably one Dooley who, having been for years a one-wife man and a Mission favorite, inherited a second wife at around the age of forty. Dooley's decision was clear-cut and highly spectacular. He accepted the second wife, shook the dust of the Mission station from his feet and never set foot near it again, taking up again the traditional life of a Tiwi elder, deep in the bush, with his two wives and later additions, ignoring all white innovations, even tobacco.[4] Dooley's uncompromising behavior was greatly admired by the tribe but few had the strength of character to emulate him, certainly not Antonio.

159 On the Japanese issue Antonio was just as vacillating. Prodded by others to make a statement he would in ringing tones denounce as disgraceful and scandalous the behavior of the Yeimpi wife-renters, but on his visits to the Yeimpi country ostensibly "to see for himself what was going on"— he shared eagerly in the proceeds of vice which his friends there offered him and was even heard on a few occasions to wonder aloud why the Japanese always went to the Yeimpi country when there were plenty of secluded beaches in Tiklauila country. Instantly challenged, "Would you want the Japanese to come here?" "Would you rent your wives to them if they did?" poor Antonio quickly turned it into a feeble joke, saying deprecatingly, "Oh no, no, no. I just wondered why they always go to those ugly Yeimpi women?"

In summary we might say that Antonio's personal behavior appeared to be that of a man pushed into a position rather too big for him to fill. He was not by nature particularly aggressive or domineering, but as the eldest son of
[55 4] Turimpi he was constantly being pushed by public opinion onto the center of
[62 6] the stage, whereas he would have been much happier if public opinion had left him alone to be an ordinary, average member of the crowd. The role he was called on by his status position to play seemed to give him little or no pleasure, little or no personal satisfaction. Such a view of his "personality" is supported by the fact that when alone in the bush with his own family and away from the society of his peers Antonio was relaxed and at ease. As Durk-
159 heim pointed out, the basic factor in Australian social psychology is that men
571 spend a great part of their lives hunting and collecting in the bush, completely out of physical contact with all people except members of their own households,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 548 595 668 797 (b) had each a number of wives at home, (c) had not rented any to the Japanese as yet (mainly because of lack of opportunity), but (d) were all suspecting each other of contemplating an early trip to the Yeimpi country and therefore were in chronic indecision on the whole matter. Hence Mariano's arguments were greeted with the applause that any group of people caught among a complicated set of moral alternatives will give to one of their number who has solved for himself the conflicts that beset them and has solved them moreover in a way perfectly consistent with all his previous attitudes. It was the applause and approval that is expressed in our culture by some such phrase as "I may not agree with him but at least he is sincere and you always know where he stands."

159 593 But like similar people elsewhere Mariano inspired no close intimate loyalty. Nobody felt warmly toward him. The missionaries used him but didn't like him, the anthropologist found him invaluable as an informant but intensely irritating in his self-importance and his belief in his own indispensability; among the natives he had no intimates and no close friends. His relations with his wife were much more formal and distant than was usual among monogamous couples and she frequently criticized him both in public and in private for what she called his "failure to talk to her"—undoubtedly the Tiwi equivalent of the American wife's complaint against her husband's absorption in business or politics. He was fond of his children but played with them little and then in a silent, brooding sort of way, confining his caresses to tickling and squeezing them, unlike Antonio whose play with his children was always carried on in an endless flow of chatter and two-way conversations. Child-talk, one surmises, was beneath Mariano's dignity.

177 159 All in all, Mariano was a forceful, domineering, self-important, introverted man, pursuing his dedicated way as the leader of a cause—collaboration with and imitation of the whites—but having personality traits which prevented him from inspiring any of the affection or warm devotion that other types of leaders inspire. There were many Tiwi, especially among the younger men, who were ready and willing to adopt at least the easier aspects of white culture such as clothes, work in Darwin, disrespect for tribal laws, violation of taboos, but in no sense can they be described as Mariano's followers, still less his admirers. Everyone respected Mariano, everybody consulted him, everybody made use of him and listened to him, but nobody warmed to him. He was as sound, as domineering, as aggressive, as humorless, as dedicated, as admirable as one of the Old Testament prophets—and just as difficult to like.

LOUIS

159 Of the five sons of Turimpi, it may be that the two who were most similar in whatever it is that is called personality were the second and third sons, Mariano and Louis. Both were "lonely ones," both had about them a kind of gloomy, inward-focused aura which inhibited warm friendly relations with others. Among a people to whom laughter and gaiety come easily, both were completely devoid of humor. Both were men dedicated to a cause, but in the

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

garded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker. The tribe thought of him in much the same way, the missionaries and anthropologist agreed with the estimate. Bob was essentially a "good boy." He never did anything wrong, never answered back, never spoke out of turn, never stepped out of line, never deviated from the behavior expected of him. He was, of course, too young in Tiwi categories to have any influence or importance. But it is hard to see how age could turn him into anything more positive than he was at 28, at which age he invited the comment that he had very little personality. About all that could be said is that he was a born follower and always tried to do the right thing, the right thing consisting in conforming to the expectations of whatever group he happened to be with at the moment. When with the tribe Bob did what the elders told him to do. If they disagreed among themselves, Bob waited until the majority decision was clear and then added his voice to the chorus of agreement. The same faithfulness which caused his white employers to label Bob "a good boy" caused the tribal elders to regard him as among the sounder of the young men, though they deplored his tendency to spend so much time in Darwin. But even on his trips to Darwin Bob did not depart too much from the norms for men of his age who had been children when the Mission came and who therefore constituted a post-white generation. He did not stay more than three or four months at a time in Darwin, he returned for all the steps of his initiation ceremonies, he observed his food and other taboos even when in Darwin, and during his sojourns there he never caused scandal back-home by getting into the slightest "trouble." He went to Darwin when the tribe could raise no valid objection to his going, he returned whenever his absence led to criticism. Bob was a barometer of which line offered the least resistance at any given time. His chief motivation seemed to be to escape public attention, to always be where he would attract the least notice.

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The only occasion I ever saw Bob forced to emerge from the background and take the center of the stage was on one occasion when he returned from Darwin and was told by the local gossips that his wife had been unfaithful to him during his absence. The man involved was—not surprisingly—his brother Louis. This really put Bob on the spot. In pre-white days a youngster like Bob would not have had a wife, and therefore the situation of a man of Bob's tender years calling an older man to account for seducing his wife could not have arisen. The traditional pattern in seduction cases is for the husband, necessarily an older man, to accuse the alleged seducer, necessarily a young man and therefore a bachelor and a person of no importance, and demand vengeance on him. The accuser is, therefore, traditionally a man of weight and prestige and dignity, and carries on his case against the seducer with style and authority. The accused on the other hand, being young and a person of no importance, stands abashed, cowed and silent, looking guilty while the outranged husband showers him with tirades of abuse, followed finally by spears or throwing-sticks. In the case of Bob versus Louis the casting of these traditional roles was all wrong. Bob, overcome with embarrassment, did his best

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 177 183 561 684

to give an imitation of an angry and indignant elder telling off an impertinent "young punk,"[11] but even to the Tiwi, the spectacle of the subservient and retiring Bob trying to overawe and browbeat the formidable and completely self-reliant Louis was such a perversion of the traditional pattern that it bordered on the farcical. As soon as it was over and the conventions were satisfied, Bob, pale and shaken by the unwonted initiative and aggressiveness he had been forced to display, hurried back to the oblivion of Darwin where no such demands were made on a good boy, and, presumably to ensure that he would not be forced to go through such an ordeal again, took the rather unusual step of taking his wife along with him this time.

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The above brief sketches convey perhaps some idea of the variation in personalities of the five brothers. Obviously no definite conclusions can be drawn from material of this sort. It is merely suggestive of possibilities for theory. What it seems to suggest is, however, at variance with the idea that personality is substantially uniform in the simpler societies. No attempt has been made in this paper to explore the full gamut of personal differences among the Tiwi. By adding half a dozen other individuals (including such as Tu'untalumi and Dooley, already briefly mentioned) to the five siblings we have discussed above, it would be easy to widen the number of "personality types" illustrated. By confining our attention to the sons of Turimpi we have avoided an arbitrary selection of contrasting individuals; the five men selected were chosen *not because* they were different *but because* they were brothers. How different they are in that vaguely defined thing called personality is largely a matter of opinion depending almost entirely upon what is regarded as a "personality" difference. All that we would here claim for them in the way of difference is that on any continuum for a single trait the five sons of Turimpi range themselves about as differentially as any five average men are likely to do in our culture. In aggressiveness, for example, Mariano is well toward one end of the range, Bob well toward the other; Tipperary, Louis and Antonio at different points in between. In decisiveness or decision-making, Mariano, Louis and Tipperary belong to the heavily positive side, Antonio and Bob on the heavily negative side. But if we couple with decisiveness the ability to win friends and influence people, Tipperary, the decisive and popular, must be sharply separated from Louis and Mariano, decisive but unpopular. The three aggressive dominating types differ markedly among themselves in what might be called interest in life or chief motivating force, Mariano expressing his need for dominance through political channels, Louis through sex, Tipperary through laughter and kidding. On an introvert-extrovert continuum, Louis the silent withdrawn lone-wolf has to be placed well toward the introvert pole, with Mariano not very far away from him, but with Tipperary the out-giving friendly "Rotarian" kidder at the other extreme, and Antonio well down toward Tipperary's end. These are of course just a few of the possible ranges along which the sons of Turimpi have to be located.

Whatever facet of behavior we seize on for comparison, we find these five

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 O120 Tiwi O120

121 theorists," says Boas, "assume a mental equipment of primitive man distinct from that of civilized man. I have never seen a person in primitive life to whom this theory would apply. There are slavish believers in the teachings of the past and there are scoffers and unbelievers; there are clear thinkers and muddle-headed bunglers; there are strong characters and there are weaklings" (1951). It is notewofthy that this (for Boas) unusually flat and definite statement was made in an attempt to demolish the views of Levy-Bruhl that between civilized man and the primitive there is an impassable psychological gap. Perhaps—as Tipperary would say, if he understood the matter—perhaps, the personality and culture movement is merely Levy-Bruhl in modern dress, perhaps the latent content of the movement is to deny to the people of the simpler cultures the ordinary elementary human qualities of individual difference and human variation, thereby enabling "personality" and "individuality" to be treated as unique creations of the white races to be found only among the followers of the American way of life. If this indeed be the latent content of much "personality and culture" literature, it seems to warrant a flat and unqualified rejection, in terms as emphatic as those of Boas, by all those anthropologists who, like Boas, may not know projective tests but do know something about the simpler native societies.

NOTES

121 [1] In view of the wide discrepancies in the use of the word "personality" it must be made clear again that all that is meant by the word here is the level of description one is apt to get if in ordinary social conversation one asks the question, "What sort of person is he?"

115 [2] The native names of these men are all polysyllabic and difficult for the reader to remember. I use therefore the names bestowed upon them by white men, to aid in keeping them distinctly in mind. The Spanish names, Antonio, etc., were bestowed by certain Filipino carpenters who built the building for the Roman Catholic missionaries when they first arrived. Tipperary is, of course, a white corruption of a native name.

159 [3] It will be noticed by close students of the above information that Turimpi must have been born in the 1830's, Bosgoladu born somewhere around 1865. She had her first child when she was about 16 or 17, at which time her husband Turimpi was at least 50. This is a perfectly normal Tiwi marital situation, the commonest marriage arrangement being one in which a newly-born female child is betrothed by her father to a man in his thirties.

159 177 797 [4] Even from the anthropologist Dooley would not accept tobacco until he had convinced himself that in return he would not be required to sacrifice any of his principles. Nor would he take his son, to whom he was passionately attached, to the Mission station for medical treatment—perhaps the most striking proof of the uncompromising attitude that Dooley had adopted toward the Mission.

159 [5] Such a speculation about Mariano's personality at the age of 25, seventeen years before the author knew him, is based upon the general belief of social scientists that personality does not change much between 25 and 42, and the particular evidence of the older missionaries that Mariano was "already inclined to throw his weight around" when they first arrived.

13 182 837 [6] Goodenough (1949) is apparently one of the few anthropologists to discuss the relation between extra-marital sexual activity and the opportunities provided by the nature of the physical environment. The point here is slightly different; whether the Tiwi physical environment encourages adultery is uncertain since a social system such as theirs would promote adultery whatever the physical environment, but it certainly helps to increase the suspiciousness of husbands.

837 [7] That seduction has to be a daytime activity is implied in what has already been said. After sundown the women are concentrated in their husband's camp and have no opportunity. Which

7:Fry D-5 (1913) 1949 OI20 Tiwi OI20

A Bathurst Island Mourning Rite.

Sir:

121 Late in February, 1913, word came to Darwin that a fatal epidemic was prevalent in Bathurst and Melville Islands, and I was instructed to visit the islands and do anything possible to help.

122 I arrived at the Roman Catholic Mission Station at the southern end of Apsley Strait on Bathurst Island on March 2nd, and four days later, with the kindly assistance of Father Coudreau, set off up the Strait in a ten-foot sailing dinghy with a Malay, Matthew Gar, who had a smattering of the native language, two adult islanders, Mari and Dulin, a small native boy, Olinyarra, and stores. On the fourth day at Marinlampi, about two miles from Point Brace, at the northern end of the strait, a native camp was found. There were about thirty natives in the group, variously painted. 765 An old man, later found to be named Kerbo, was sitting chanting beside a small heap of red stones in the centre of a cleared circle about twelve feet in diameter. A pile of cooked yams was beside him and he was [177] scraping them with a mission-given knife. The time of my arrival was about ten in the morning. A small boy squatted beside the old man at times but otherwise the natives lounged about outside the circle indifferently coming and going. It appeared that a death ceremony was in progress. A woman sitting with her three boys under a pandanus palm nearby was pointed out as the mother of the dead man. When all the yams had been peeled the old man walked about in [593] the circle chanting and clacking two sticks together. There was an intermission until about 2 p.m., when the old man resumed his chanting. About 4 p.m. he returned again and proceeded to cut up the yams, placing

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9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 0120 Tiwi 0120

192 like this word. They also have a strange way of twisting words; for example Port Darwin is called *Pudarnop*.

177 *The Future.* The people themselves are—in Mr. Harney's opinion—mentally lazy, and hold a curious mixture of mission and native teaching. Although 197 Christians—Roman Catholics—believing in God, they have a fixed dread of *Marutdje*, the rainbow serpent. The good that the mission would do is limited by two facts, in spite of the sincere labours of the missionaries: (1) there is no fixed progressive policy with regard to material advancement. The missions are not self-supporting, probably owing to the poor quality of the soil around that part. (2) The younger natives have too easy an entrance into Darwin. They reach it by short stages with canoe from Melville Island. Moreover, their presence in the town is always welcome and encouraged, because it means cheap labour for the white people. Unfortunately, it is the beginning of the end for the native.

000 One thing is urgently required if they are to be saved: (1) complete control forcing them to stay on their Islands; these provide plenty of native food. And (2) subsidizing of the mission to do "controlled work" in line with government policy. Apart from that, but only if necessary, a station, such as at Garden Point, could be opened and attention given to the medical and other needs of the islanders, in particular, of the aged and sick.

W. E. Harney.
A. P. Elkin.

11:Goodale E-5 (1964, 1962) 1963 OE20 Tiwi OE20

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By JANE C. GOODALE

884 [114] IN 1912 SIR BALDWIN SPENCER, a professor of biology at the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the [824] ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This [114] statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony, [198] however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe that such participation cannot prepare them adequately [197] for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what 161 the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Mel- 131 ville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Eco- 178 nomically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied, [224] and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little 825 physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or 462 digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were 868 taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

000 TIWI NATIVE on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11, (B)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954,1962) 1963 OE20 Tiwi OE20

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YAMS TO BE USED in *Kalawa* ceremony are retrieved from a fresh-water pool in which they had been soaked overnight.

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[177]

For instance, The composer of the following song had just returned from Brisbane, where he and a group of eight other aborigines had performed dances in honor of Queen Elizabeth's 1954 visit to Australia:

[539]

"The Queen was talking in England,
'I would like to see a blackfellow dance.'
When I was in Brisbane, the Queen said,
'I would like to meet a black boy!'
And I went up.
King Philip, he had a good look at me.
He was watching a lot as I danced.
I was singing into a loud-speaker."

[173]

Some songs are historic in nature, retelling an event that must be kept alive according to the traditions of the tribe. One such composition recalls the Japanese attack on Darwin during World War II:

[539]

"An enemy plane flies low over Melville Island.
The men on the ground, at the word 'Standby,'
Shoot it down with a cannon."

The children of the singer are often song subjects. This first example describes how the children behaved in one of their father's dreams.

[539]

"My children have gone to the other side
of the island.
But they must come back as they are hard up
for tobacco.
My children have now come back.
I know this for they have taken the tobacco
which I have held in my hand."

or

"My children will wear clothes and shoes.
They will go to school and learn to write."

All the songs have the same chanting tune, which is associated with the *Kalawa* ceremony, and the composer must fit his words to the set meter of the chant. In many cases this requires using archaic words that are no longer a

[P. 14, (A)]

884 the technique had to be made meaningful to the initiates,
174 the lifesaving qualities of this famine food were explained as health-giving powers. A ceremony accompanied by song and dance was certainly a dramatic and effective means of impressing the initiates in preparation methods. The ritual served another purpose as well: because traveling is so
[189] difficult during the rainy season, each household is isolated from the others. The *Kulama* ritual follows this period, and it is natural to expect a reunion to be an occasion to exchange news, settle differences, and tell stories or sing songs that keep traditions alive.

885 MUCH harder to account for is the Tiwi idea of adulthood. That every adult is solely responsible for his own health and wealth, and that success in life depends entirely on personal behavior and industry, are ideals strangely similar to those that underlie the American way
[171] of life, despite the great gulf between the aboriginal culture and our own. But it is not at all surprising that the Tiwi
●177 have a great sympathy for much of Western civilization. Many hold the same views as the *Kulama* singer quoted earlier in this article who saw his children wearing clothes
[181] and shoes and going to school to learn to write, for this is the Tiwi's contemporaneous idea of success in a way of life introduced to them only a few short years ago.

Early in the summer of 1962 I revisited the Tiwi for
[114] two weeks. Although I knew that the Tiwi desired schooling and training in European ways of life and would seize any such opportunity afforded them, I was hardly prepared for the tremendous changes that had taken place during the eight years that had elapsed since my first visit.

Three months after the *Kulama* ceremony of 1954, a
[871] government school was opened. Now all the Tiwi children go to school, and some who have finished the six-year program in the government school have received subsequent training as teaching or nursing assistants. Some others have had "on-the-job" training in various activities connected with a large-scale forestry project that has been started on Melville Island. In fact, all the able-bodied Tiwi men and women are currently employed, and their tasks bear little or no relation to their old life in the bush.

It is perhaps significant—but to me not at all surprising—that I did not hear a single real complaint from the Tiwi regarding their new manner of living. They seem to like it and are anticipating bigger and better things (in the
[224] Western sense) for their children. Hunting has become
[868] a week-end diversion and the children receive little or no real instruction in that traditional skill.

178 SOME aspects of Tiwi life are slow to die, however. Most
784 of the old taboos, the observance of which was considered necessary in the past in order to insure health and wealth, are still observed, although at least one teen-ager expressed doubt that the taboos had any actual effect on the outcome of one's life. Western medicine and public
177 health practices are fast replacing belief in the *Kulama*.
884 During the past eight years only three men have begun the six years of training for *Kulama* initiation, and some of the older men no longer participate in the ceremony. However, as long as even a small number of Tiwi believe in the *Kulama*, the ritual will survive, but I doubt that it will for long.

000 NEAR END of *Kulama* ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.
[P. 16, (B)]

Tjipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families. 161 361 648

It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace. 361 177 [631] [224] [464]

By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives, 123 [132] [825]

123 The following day we finally went hunting. Peter, his wife Dorrie, and daughter Althea, Filicy and her son Crissy-Boy, Albert, Agnes and I all squeezed into the canoe and paddled about two miles upstream to the next landing. Tudiunginarim, "white-paint-place," [177] used to be an old camp of the white buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who at the turn of the century was the first white contact for many of these people. It was very hot and the women took their children 123 into the water, waist deep near the bank, for a swim. It was easy 291 for them in their *nagas*, for when they came out they merely wrapped a dry one around and slid the wet one off underneath very 515 modestly. I, in my shorts and shirt, finally gave in to the temptation 609 and, vowing that if I were to live here longer I would take up the native costume, went in fully dressed. This modesty was a funny thing; they who wore no clothes until contact with white men, were being modest only for my sake, and in return I could do no less. So with dripping clothes, which incidentally felt wonderful in the heat, I set off following Albert and Agnes.

123 The nature of the bush was the same as that in back of Minianapi and indeed the same as that around Snake Bay: the same 224 trees, the same burned earth, the same fan palms and pandanus, and the same flatness. The natives always knew where they were; I never did. We were looking for possums and as these furry marsupials sleep in hollow trees during the day, we investigated every likely tree for evidence that they had recently climbed it. Sometimes the little tears in the rough bark could only be seen silhouetted against the sun; at other times the dry ground around the base of the tree would show very definite tracks. Soon Agnes, who was off somewhere to the left of Albert and me, gave two high-pitched calls. [198] In the hunting language I had already learned, one call meant "I'm here, where are you?" and would be answered by their companions with a similar single call. However, two calls meant "Come; I've found something." So we turned in the direction of the call and soon found Agnes standing by a short, hollow tree. Albert took his axe and cut a long pole which he then thrust up through a hole in the tree's base and wiggled. Out popped a large grey possum which sat on the top of the tree trying to make itself as small as possible. Agnes and Albert threw all manner of sticks and stones at it and finally managed to knock it down, when it scuttled away.

000 out from East Point, and from the nearest island of the Vernon group, were also clearly visible as we passed over them. Straight ahead, Melville and Bathurst Islands now showed up, the hills a darker blue, and every moment they became more and more distinctly visible.

133 We turned west again as we reached the shores of Melville Island. Below, and near at hand, in turn were sandy beaches,
137 cliffs that come straight down to the water's edge, or low mangrove-flats through which wind serpentine inlets of salt water. Inland, low green hills are covered with open tropical forest, denser on the lower slopes and thinning towards the arid, stony summits. Fan-palms grow among the tropical eucalypts, and the familiar pandanus palm borders open grassy flats just as it does on the mainland across the narrow seas. Buffalo, now
[136] so much reduced in numbers that nobody shoots them, feed on the flats, and in the forest-covered hills are many kangaroos and wallabies. Little bays, and now and then projecting lines of reef, make natural boat-harbours, and far away across the tree-tops a wide expanse of shining water seems to be a great lake surrounded by wooded hills—it is actually an arm of the sea on the eastern side of Cape Van Diemen.

The funnel-shaped entrance to Apsley Strait, the mile-wide, fifty-mile-long stretch of fast-flowing waterway that separates the two islands, soon appeared beneath us. Looking towards the north, on the eastern side of this narrow silvery passage, one sees the wooded hills, the dense patches of vivid green jungle, and the open swampy plains of Melville Island. To the west, on the Bathurst Island side of the entrance, dense plantations of coco-nut palms occupy the foreground. There are cleared fields with a wall of forest beside them, white roofs among the palms, and beyond again are thickly-timbered heights.

DENSE mangroves, of a deeper green than that of forest or jungle foliage, give contrast at the water's edge on either side of the narrow strait, which, a silver streak in the blue distance, leads on to the sea, faintly visible far beyond at the height at which we were flying. The tide runs through this strait like a mill-race; but at the moment it was dead-water, and, with sail set, a large dug-out canoe was making across from Melville to
● 177 Bathurst Island. As the 'plane banked round preparatory to landing, I saw, beyond the canoe and across the strait, the iron roof of the only European dwelling on Melville Island.

It was formerly the permanent camp of Joe Cooper, a famous buffalo-hunter; but, now, since Cooper's death, even this solitary outpost has long been deserted. It is more than a century since the old military settlement of Fort Dundas, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, was abandoned. Nothing of the fort now remains except a few heaps of stone, and, buried in thick scrub, the grass-grown brickwork that faced the surrounding deep trench. The area of Melville Island is 2,240 square miles.
131 Bathurst Island is only half as large. Although Melville
797 Island may, some day, come within the scope of North Australian settlement schemes, the major part of Bathurst Island is vested in perpetuity in the authorities of the Mission of the Sacred Heart, and the latter island will remain, fortunately almost entirely in its virgin state, a sanctuary alike for man and beast.

797 We taxied to a standstill on the well-kept landing-ground of the Sacred Heart Mission in the presence of many spectators. Notified of the time of our arrival by means of the wireless

[p. 14(A)]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

115 owe much, not only for the many bark baskets and paintings they made, but also for the wealth of information they so courteously imparted to me about the creation of their world, their totemic ancestors and the philosophies of their people.

These two old men are the storehouses of the tribal beliefs and philosophies. As the younger men are no longer taking a deep interest in their tribal lore, the passing of *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinin* will be an irreparable loss to the aborigines of Melville Island.

[184]
[178]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tobacco, *b*, matches, *c*, a pipe, *d*, a calico loin cloth, *e*, a pair of short trousers, *f*, a shirt, *g*, sugar, *h*, tea, and *j*, flour. 202 211 439

Secular

Fig. 6D is a carved stick whose designs were thought out by the artist as he walked along the sandy beach near our camp. Although not a message stick, the illustration is included in the section as an example of how an aboriginal expresses his mental images through the medium of simple wood carving. 532x

The horizontal lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the waves breaking on the beach, and the groups of short lines, a pattern of shallow gutters which had been formed on the sandy shore by the fresh water seeping from a nearby lagoon.

10. THE BURIAL POLES

The painted and decorated poles of Melville and Bathurst Islands attracted the attention of all the early visitors. Sir Gordon Bremer in 1824, possibly the first European to see the *pukamuni* poles, when writing about a grave he saw on Melville Island, states: "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilised people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed around with trees, 7 feet to 8 feet high, some of which were carved with stone or shell and further ornamented by rings of wood. On the tops of these were placed the waddies (throwing sticks) of the deceased. The grave was raised above the level of the earth, but the raised part was not more than 3 feet long. At the head was placed a piece of a canoe (probably a bark basket) and a spear and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and earth were cleared away from the sides and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."[66] 765 211 [322] [413]

I have quoted Sir Gordon Bremer's description in full because it shows that, even after a hundred and thirty years, the aborigines of Melville Island, 211 178 765

[66] Bremer, 1843. From this description it would appear that Bremer chanced to see a grave not long after the aborigines had completed the final rituals. Had any time elapsed the whole area would have been covered with grass and leaves, for, after the *pukamuni* ceremonies, nobody is interested in either the grave or the poles.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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765 where they have not suffered from ecclesiastic prohibitions, are still using a
[178] similar form of grave and posts.

Major Campbell (1834, p. 158), writing of a grave he saw on Melville Island in 1826, states: "It (the grave) is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberts, 14–15 feet high, and between these the spears and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground."

Brown (1905, p. 28) found a grave on Luxmore Head, in Apsley Straits surrounded . . . "by wooden slabs, portions of which had been burnt. Aboriginal markings were faintly discernible in places on the wood, some of the posts had the wood cut away from the outside toward the centre, leaving a short spike standing up in the middle of the post."

Klautsch (1907, p. 257), in referring to the same burial poles at Luxmore Head, writes: "In some examples the slab was so carved that the upper part was only connected with the lower by two thin pillars or, on others, the top was mushroom-shaped.

"It is easy to see that the aborigines used fire for this work of sculpture, scratching the burnt part away with shell."

Basedow,[99] in 1911, came across a grave of an infant, on Bathurst Island, surrounded by five simply decorated posts, which had "been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk."

Basedow persuaded the aborigines to renovate the designs, which did not vary greatly from those in use at the present day.

[114] Spencer,[100] in 1911, made sketches of many of the burial poles, and arranged for the aborigines to redecorate a group which was later displayed in the National Museum, Melbourne. He states (1928, p. 682) that: "It (the pole)
[177] was slowly and laboriously cut with an iron tomahawk, but formerly with a sharp shell, until it has the form decided upon by the artificer."

Dr. Kenneth Fry, who visited Melville Island in 1913, was the first investigator to ascertain the meanings of a number of poles. These, with his permission, are illustrated on Fig. 8. All of these shapes, but two, are those still most commonly used among the hundred or more which I saw on Melville Island.

[115] An old aboriginal, *Tjamalampua*, told me that in *palaneri* times, i.e., a long while ago, before there were any steel axes, the aborigines used stone axes to fell the hollow trees for *pukamuni* poles. Although there were just as many poles around the grave as there are today, they were neither as

[99] Basedow (1913), p. 314, Fig. 4, Pls. 13, 14, 16, 17, 18.
[100] Spencer (1928), p. 682, Figs. 475–7, Pl. X.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

recorded on the expedition, however, indicates that this may not be so, i.e., 532x 765

Forks or limbs of trees	26 per cent
Breasts of women	9 per cent
Rocks on sea-coast	18 per cent
Windows and doors (openings in poles)	15 per cent

That is, four shapes make up 68 per cent and the remaining eleven shapes, 32 per cent.

This would suggest that certain shapes have a traditional meaning, and that these shapes predominate. In fact, an examination of the accounts of the early travellers, Bremer, Campbell, Klaatsch, and Spencer, suggests that, except for those poles in the form of human figures, the *pukamuni* poles have not changed in shape to any extent during the last fifty years or more. [114] [178]

Description of the Burial Poles

(a) *The Pukamuni of Waniamperi*

The ten *tudinis* which the "workers" cut and painted for *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were looked upon as a family, a man, his two wives, and their children.

Pl. 32J, a middle-aged man, had two wives; Pl. 34E, a very fat, but young woman, and Pl. 35A, B, her much older sister.

The young wife, Pl. 34E, had three children; Pl. 36A, B, a small boy about ten, Pl. 36D, a girl of twelve, and Pl. 37D, a young married woman without a family.

The older wife, Pl. 35A, B, had four children; Pl. 36F, a boy of five, Pl. 36C, a girl about twelve, Pl. 32H, a young unmarried man, and Pl. 37D, an unmarried woman.

Plate 32J, eighteen feet in height, was by far the tallest pole in the group.

Because the actual shapes of the poles seldom had any relationship to the designs painted on them, the pole shapes and the painted designs will be described separately.

The pole shapes of Pl. 32J are: the projection, *c*, on the top, represents the branch of a tree, the bosses, *a*, *a*, *a*, are the breasts of women, the three cylindrical sections, *m*, *m*, *m*, large rocks on the sea-coast, and the narrow uprights, *n*, *n*, joining them, the limbs of eucalyptus trees.

In the painted designs, *a*, *a*, *a*, are, as before, the breasts of women, and the short vertical lines, *b*, *b*, etc., the teeth of a comb. The painted white projection, *c*, on the top of the pole, is a shovel-nosed shark; the crossed circles, *d*, *d*, are the noses of crocodiles, and the diagonal bands, *e*, *e*, *e*, the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER IV

The Kulama Ceremony

114 881 ALTHOUGH little has been recorded about the colourful *pukamani* burial rituals of the Tiwi, several investigators have published details of the *kulama* ceremony.

Spencer saw a *kulama* ceremony during March 1912. His records of those rituals (Spencer, 1928, pp. 658–76), the most complete we have, show that, [178] during the last forty years the pattern has not changed to any extent. Although the names of the initiation grades given by Spencer do not agree with those recorded by later investigators, it is likely these differences are due to Spencer's interpreter, the buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who was not then fully conversant with the ceremony.

Fry (1949, p. 176), during 1913, witnessed an initiation ceremony in which Reuben Cooper, Joe Cooper's half-caste son, passed from the *Kolloponiati* (my *Kilipaniati*) stage to that of a *Wadjeniati*.

In the same year Fry (1950, pp. 79–80), saw the closing phases of the *kulama* from the peeling of the yam (p. 138), to the final rituals (p. 142). Although Fry was mistaken in considering that this ceremony was part of a burial rite, his record is a valuable and accurate description of the last two days of the *kulama*.

Hart (1930, p. 286), recorded the *kulama* initiation names and the duration of the grades of both male and female initiates. These names correspond closely to those I was able to obtain from the fully initiated men, with one exception. Hart stated that the grade of *Mikingula*, i.e., the fully initiated, lasted for four years. This is obviously incorrect, as the *Mikingula*, being the final grade, lasts for life.

178 881 It appears certain that Tiwi initiation has ceased, although, I feel sure, within comparatively recent times. The *Mikingulas* often talked about initiating some of their companions, but when the opportunity came, they procrastinated.

115 However, the same fully initiated men gave me full details of the rituals at each stage of initiation, explained how those rituals fitted into the *kulama* 881 rituals we had witnessed, and either decorated themselves, or painted designs

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Grades of Kulama initiates		*Period of initiation*
Mikinatrina Mikinatrininga	Male Female	2 years
Mikintara Mikintaringa	Male Female	From one kulama until the next
Mikiatarima Mikiatarimingа	Male Female	From one kulama until the next
Mikingula Mikingulinga	Male Female	Fully initiated for life

2. THE PRELIMINARY RITUALS OF THE KULAMA

881 (1) *The Capture of the Marukumuni Initiate*

According to my informants, any tribesman chosen for initiation, must be a mature man, usually married and with children. In fact, all the men pointed out to me as being suitable candidates were thirty years of age or older.[18]

The first time there is a gathering of people after a *kulama* ceremony, such as at a burial, or an *ilania*,[19] the fully initiated *kulama* men, the *Mikingulas*, ask the permission of the leader of the *kulama*, the *Naripikilitipi*, to capture any man or woman, who is suitable for the first stage of initiation, that of the *Marukumuni*.[20] In preparation for this, the *Mikingulas* have already mixed a quantity of yellow ochre.

At a given signal, one of the *Mikingulas*, who has been standing unobtrusively near, suddenly throws his arms around the chosen initiate. The captive struggles to release himself, protesting against being initiated into the *kulama*. But a number of the *Mikingulas* rush to their companion's aid, lay
[302] the struggling initiate on the ground, paint a design, in yellow, on his upper
[301] arms and body (Pl. 42A), and put the red tail feathers of a black cockatoo in his hair. Meanwhile, other initiated men are walking around the group

[18] The age of initiation has been raised since Spencer and Fry saw the *kulama* in the
[178] early days of the century. Spencer (1928, p. 665) refers to young boys, while Reuben
[114] Cooper, whom I knew in 1920 as a young man about twenty, would have only been about thirteen years of age when Fry saw him as a *Kilipaniati*.

[19] A preliminary ceremony for the burial rituals.

[20] I do not know who captures the female initiate, the *Marakumuninga*.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

discussed the factor of relative age as a major determinant of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in the particular type of contract which is universal for first marriages among females and is also the preferred contract for males. I have also described several variant patterns of Tiwi marriage contracts and have shown that these cannot be considered as alternatives to the preferred type but rather as additional patterns which apply only to a woman's secondary marriages. These additional types of contracts are also, to some extent, conditioned by the relative ages of the participants, but the resultant form of marriage may vary from a continuance of patrilateral cross-cousin marriage to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and even to marriage with certain relatives who are not cross-cousins. The wide variation in contracts leading to secondary marriages for women does not affect the continuance of preferred unilateral cross-cousin marriage or the exchange of wives between particular descent and local groups until the second generation after the variant marriage. Consequently, any change in the social organization of the Tiwi brought about by variations in marriage contracts is a gradual change, but it is also an inevitable and accepted form of change. The Tiwi rightly consider that as individuals they have considerable freedom in the selection of mates from almost any descent and local group and even from among a number of categories of kinsmen. Their Ego-oriented marriage system provides both stability and flexibility, and this is reflected in their system of kin classification.

NOTES

1. The field work on which this paper is based was undertaken in 1954 at the Snake Bay Native Settlement on Melville Island and was jointly financed by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.
2. In 1959, I used the relative age of spouses in a preliminary analysis of Tiwi unilateral cross-cousin marriage (Goodale 1959). It was with considerable pleasure that I found that a similar analysis by Rose (1960) had quite independently arrived at the same conclusions. Even more interesting was the fact that in cases where I had to calculate expected ages for many of my kin relations, Rose, with more complete age data, could give the average and range in ages for the same relatives, and that in most cases his "average" and my "estimated" ages were the same or within one or two years of one another.
3. For their valuable comments, criticisms, and advice I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Robbins Burling, Ward H. Goodenough, Edward B. Harper, Barbara S. Lane, and George P. Murdock.
4. Unfortunately, since the only age data collected in the field were for husbands and wives, I have had to use expected ages rather than average or mean ages throughout most of this paper (see note 2 above).
5. The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche.

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11;Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By Jane C. Goodale

In 1912 Sir Baldwin Spencer, a professor of biology at the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony, however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe that such participation cannot prepare them adequately for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Melville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Economically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied, and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

Tiwi native on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11, (B)]

884 tive, community ceremony, its benefits accrued only to individual participants, and then only to those who had followed the complex procedures correctly. Thus it was vitally important to every Tiwi individual, male or female, to receive instruction in the *Kulama* ritual before being considered a fully adult member of the tribe. The instruction period lasted six years, during which the initiates, among other requirements, had to participate actively in six *Kulama* rituals. Following this training, the individuals were considered responsible adults by other members of the tribe, but only through continued participation in the ritual could that condition be maintained.

[178] TODAY the ritual is still performed by those who believe in it, and it will probably continue until the last initiated Tiwi dies, or until the underlying meaning is totally lost and is replaced by ideas of how to be successful that have their origins in Western thought.

[062] [054] The ceremony itself takes three days to complete and centers on the preparation of a toxic variety of yam, the *Kulama*. To make this yam edible, it must first be soaked. It is then baked, mashed, and again soaked for a time in fresh water. Even after the poisons have been removed by this elaborate process, an extremely bitter taste remains. The Tiwi say they never eat the yam except at the conclusion of the *Kulama* ceremony. Those who believe in the [178] ritual say the yam has tremendous power for causing good or evil, and thus one must handle the yam carefully during the preparation, speak to it softly, sing to it at times, and always treat it with respect. The individual absorbs the power of the yam by touching it, by rubbing the body with it, and finally by eating it. All these steps are ritualized. [462] Special digging sticks are made, and, contrary to the usual practice of having the women gather plants, only men

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 13(B)...]

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174 the lifesaving qualities of this famine food were explained as health-giving powers. A ceremony accompanied by song and dance was certainly a dramatic and effective means of impressing the initiates in preparation methods. The ritual
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885 MUCH harder to account for is the Tiwi idea of adulthood. That every adult is solely responsible for his own health and wealth, and that success in life depends entirely on personal behavior and industry, are ideals
[171] strangely similar to those that underlie the American way of life, despite the great gulf between the aboriginal culture and our own. But it is not at all surprising that the Tiwi
177 have a great sympathy for much of Western civilization. Many hold the same views as the *Kulama* singer quoted earlier in this article who saw his children wearing clothes
[181] and shoes and going to school to learn to write, for this is the Tiwi's contemporaneous idea of success in a way of life introduced to them only a few short years ago.

Early in the summer of 1962 I revisited the Tiwi for
[114] two weeks. Although I knew that the Tiwi desired schooling and training in European ways of life and would seize any such opportunity afforded them, I was hardly prepared for the tremendous changes that had taken place during the eight years that had elapsed since my first visit.

Three months after the *Kulama* ceremony of 1954, a
[871] government school was opened. Now all the Tiwi children go to school, and some who have finished the six-year program in the government school have received subsequent training as teaching or nursing assistants. Some others have had "on-the-job" training in various activities connected with a large-scale forestry project that has been started on Melville Island. In fact, all the able-bodied Tiwi men and women are currently employed, and their tasks bear little or no relation to their old life in the bush.

It is perhaps significant—but to me not at all surprising—that I did not hear a single real complaint from the Tiwi regarding their new manner of living. They seem to like it and are anticipating bigger and better things (in the
[224] Western sense) for their children. Hunting has become
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177 health practices are fast replacing belief in the *Kulama*.
884 During the past eight years only three men have begun the six years of training for *Kulama* initiation, and some of the older men no longer participate in the ceremony. However, as long as even a small number of Tiwi believe in the *Kulama*, the ritual will survive, but I doubt that it will for long.

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[P. 16, (B)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Preface

HART WORKED among the Tiwi during 1928 and 1929, and in Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4 summarizes the main aspects of their culture as it was at that time. Pilling's fieldwork was carried out during 1953 and 1954, and he outlines in Chapter 5 the contacts of the Tiwi with the outside world before and up until the coming of the first missionaries in 1911, and in Chapter 6 describes the modifications in Tiwi culture that have occurred since 1950. It is rare for two anthropologists who have studied the same tribe at widely separated times to collaborate in writing about them, hence it is worth mention (1) that the two anthropologists had never met nor even written to each other until after Pilling had returned to the United States in 1955; (2) that when they finally got together during 1957-1958 to plan and write the present book, they were both astonished at how little basic disagreement there was between them. Arguments about each other's statements have been numerous and prolonged, but almost invariably these concerned matters of detail or emphasis. The chief result of the collaboration has been the discovery, by each author, and exciting for both, of how well the other knows his Tiwi. This is uncommon enough in anthropology to be noteworthy. We are both grateful to the Tiwi for having brought us together and we are both impressed by the fact that the Tiwi who brought us together were the same complicated but delightful people, despite the twenty-five year interval in our respective sojourns among them. 114 121 [18]

C.W.M.H.
A.R.P.

Madison, Wisconsin
Detroit, Michigan
December 1959

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Tiklauila" or "My wife is a Munupula woman"; a mourner would say, "He died when visiting the Munupula and therefore we will have to go to Munupi for the funeral"; an old man would reminisce about being brought up as a youth by his mother's brother, who was a Turupula, and the good times he had in Turupi; and another would recount details of big battles between the Munupula and the Malauila. All of these were band names or band territories. The nine bands thus acted, psychologically, as small tribelets or semisovereign groups, since it was with one of them that every Tiwi most closely identified in his day-to-day life on the islands. It is only when, as nowadays, he leaves the islands to go to work for the white man in Darwin that he has to think of himself as a Tiwi, since there he mingles with men of other tribes. Even then, work and residence in the white man's town does not entirely obliterate band identification. A Tiklauila in Darwin prefers to work with and to consort in the evenings with other Tiklauila, and Malauila with Malauila.[8]

Because of certain peculiar features of Tiwi domestic life, to be discussed below, it is difficult to sum up the Tiwi band in any simple formula. People, especially women, changed their band residence frequently in the course of their lives, and being born into a band did not at all require permanent residence with that band, either for males or for females. Thus the district (for example, Tiklaru or Malau) was a firm, fixed, known quantity, but the people who "owned" the district (for example, Tiklauila or Malauila) were a flexible and constantly shifting collection of individuals.

The territorial boundaries between bands were clear and well known to everybody, though they were not the sharp lines on a map such as we regard as essential for a frontier or a land boundary. All pieces of country—clumps of jungle, stretches of grassland, sections of thick woods—had names. One such piece of country, say a thickly wooded area, belonged to one band, while the more open country that began where the woods thinned out belonged to another; thus the boundary was not a sharp line but a transitional zone—perhaps of several miles—where the change from trees to open savannah became noticeable, with the band territories thus fusing into one another rather than being separated by sharp lines. The Tiwi, so to speak, thought of the landscape as a sort of spectrum where a man moved gradually out of one district into another as he passed from one type of horizon to the next. Since rivers, and even Apsley Strait, a very narrow arm of the sea separating Melville from Bathurst Island, usually have similar types of vegetation on *both* sides or banks, none of the island rivers nor Apsley Strait was a boundary or frontier between bands. The Mandiimbula, predominantly a Melville Island

[8] In the early 1930's the situation at the Government Hospital in Darwin offered a good illustration of this. The hospital authorities said they gave preference for house-boy jobs to "Melville Islanders because of their greater intelligence and reliability." In point of fact, some of the younger Tiklauila had established a monopoly on hospital jobs and no Tiwi other than a Tiklauila was ever hired there. The whites thought they were hiring Tiwi but the Tiklauila saw to it that they hired only Tiklauila and felt no vestige of obligation to other Tiwi to help them get these desirable jobs. The alleged greater intelligence of the islanders was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Tiklauila, having had a Catholic mission in their territory since 1911, were more used to white requirements.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

771 sister's son being initiated, the attitude of a Tiwi toward the whole *pukimani*
784 state was essentially a passive attitude. *Pukimani* behavior was something one accepted and conformed to when required; it was in no way an active attempt to change nature, people, food, gods, spirits, or anything else in the universe. [181] It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that since their *pukimani* system offered them no handle by which to seek actively to alter the universe in which they lived, the Tiwi found that universe to their liking as it was. Unlike the tribes of central Australia who lavished a lot of thought upon magical methods of improving the food supply or the rainfall, the Tiwi believed and acted on the belief that as long as they observed their *pukimani* taboos, the food would continue to be as abundant and the rains as regular as they had always been. [171] The central Australians, by seeking to coerce nature through magic, suggest that they found nature unsatisfactory; the Tiwi, by relying upon passive taboo-observance alone, suggest rather that their relationship to nature was an acceptable equilibrium that they wanted to preserve, not change. And if everybody observed his *pukimani* taboos when required, that equilibrium would remain undisturbed. Hence the antisocial man in Tiwi was not the maker of individual magic (he was unknown, anyway) but the nonobserver of taboo. By his nonobservance he threatened to upset the normally satisfactory equilib-
[626] rium between man and nature. For a senior Tiwi male to be charged publicly with breaking *pukimani* rules was a disgrace and a blow to his prestige and his position in public opinion. His behavior was possibly a sin against the spirits but it was certainly a shame in the eyes of his fellows. *Pukimani* observance was thus a matter of respectability to a much greater degree than it was a matter of pleasing the spirits.

765 DEATH As was mentioned above, death is the natural phenomenon around which the Tiwi had woven their most elaborate web of ritual. The most frequent and most important Tiwi ceremonies were the mourning ceremonies, [554 561] and they came in three sizes—small, medium, and large—depending on the age, sex, and importance of the dead person. The mourning ceremonies which 562 drew the crowds were not held until some time after the death and burial.
764 All bodies of dead persons were buried within twenty-four hours of their death by digging a hole near the camp where the death had occurred and placing the body, wrapped in bark, in it. Near most well-used camping spots there was already a graveyard marked by old graveposts, and the latest corpse was buried there or near there. Seldom was the body carried any distance for burial. If a person died even less than a mile from an old burial ground, there was little inclination to carry the body that far. He would be buried, instead, within perhaps a hundred yards of where he died. This had certain awkward repercussions for social organization, since occasionally a person died while away from his home district and, being buried where he died, his ceremonies were held and his posts erected in a district in which his immediate family
[591] did not live. Young men often used this to validate a change of residence, giving as their reason for living in a band territory in which they had not grown up, the location there of their father's graveposts.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

648 has no other white inhabitants, while Melville is held under lease by the meat firm known as Vesteys Ltd., but has no permanent white inhabitants, though occasionally campers, beachcombers, and hunters from Darwin stay there for a few months.

177 All the earlier accounts lay stress on the ferocity and hostility of the
648 natives of these islands, but long albeit intermittent contact with the whites has tamed them. At the present time it is no exaggeration to say that except for the Larakia, who are almost extinct, no tribe in the Northern Territory has so assimilated white ideas or is so familiar with white men. A proof of this is afforded by the fact that members of this tribe are more in demand in Darwin as houseboys than members of any other tribe, simply because, as it is generally expressed, they have more "savvy," that is they are more intelligent and more adaptable to white conditions.

But while their proximity to Darwin and their long experience of white men have taught them much of our ideas and customs, the absence of a permanent white settlement in their country with its consequent massacres and epidemics has on the other hand prevented their numbers being depleted and their social organization being broken down. It is therefore still possible to obtain fairly full and satisfactory information about the life and culture of these islands as they were before white influence began.

181 The ferocity of these people, I am convinced, has been much exag-
648 gerated even by the earliest settlers. As a matter of fact their outstanding characteristic is not their fierceness but their sense of humour, as noted by Spencer. They are constantly laughing, even at the most solemn moments, and this applies to practically every man, woman and child on the island. I am inclined to think that their superior physique, which is very apparent, their huge spears—which incidentally they seldom use, except ceremonially—their striking method of painting their faces and their years of conflict with the Malays, which had accustomed them to stand and fight rather than to run at sight of a stranger, gained them in large part their evil reputation.

144 In physical appearance they are certainly Australoid, but the men are on the whole taller, sturdier and better proportioned than any of the mainland tribes. This is obvious even in Darwin, where it is an easy matter to pick out almost at a glance a member of the Tiwi. I agree
153 also with Sir Baldwin Spencer that they are superior to the mainlanders,

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YOUNG GIRL AND BOY accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

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part of Tiwi speech. Poetic license in pronunciation and syllabification often occurs. The Tiwi have high regard for the linguistic ability needed to become a good Tiwi composer and singer, and instruction in the art of song composition and delivery is given to the initiates. Each initiate must perform in the *Kulama* before he can be considered a "graduate." According to my Tiwi informants, this requirement is the hardest of all, and it is also the reason for there being no set age for initiation. The old people are said to watch the young, and when the observers consider them mature enough, they swoop down upon their choices "like chicken hawks, without warning"—as the Tiwi say—and start the initiates along the path to adulthood.

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As far as I know, the *Kulama* ceremony has no parallel elsewhere in Australia. And there are many interesting questions that come to mind concerning the origin of the *Kulama* as it exists today. For instance, why is instruction in the preparation of a poisonous yam that is not part of the daily diet considered so important for initiation into adulthood? What is the origin of the idea that a yam has power over good and evil, and health and sickness? Why is such prominence accorded a yam in what is principally a hunting and gathering society?

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Any answers to these questions must be highly speculative, for the origin of the ceremony and its development lie in the unrecorded history of the Tiwi. However, I believe the following statements may well be valid.

Instruction in the natural resources of the land was considered vital to becoming an adult. Because the *Kulama* yam is poisonous and is not widely distributed, it was never part of the regular diet, but it could be used in economic emergencies if properly prepared. Instruction in its preparation was therefore extremely important as a potential survival measure. However, since the Tiwi live in a favorable environment, it is highly probable that such emergencies were very rare, so it was considered expedient to hold annual instruction periods. Because knowledge of

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A [SEE P. 15 (A) FOR OTHER PART OF CAPTION AND PICTURE -- ANALYST]

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[P. 16, (B)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

As mechanisms validating this success of Fathers rights

584 against clan rights there existed two rules: he who bestowed the name had
592 the right to dispose in marriage; and all names given by a woman's previous
614 husband were cancelled by his death and a new set of names given to all her
[553] children by her new husband. Strictly and universally enforced, such rules
would put *all* control over the marriages of *all* women, of every age, in the
hands of their mother's husbands—that is, men from outside the clan of the
women being disposed of, in other words, fathers in the Tiwi sense. But the
Tiwi system failed to achieve such a result though their rules are pointed
toward it. They achieved something close to it as far as infant or even young
girls were concerned, since the fellow clansmen of such girls were either (as
brothers) too young and unimportant to have any power to resist this alien
control over their sisters' hands, or (as mothers' brothers and hence older
men) too involved and absorbed in their own activities *as fathers* to take any
581 position asserting clan rights as against fathers' rights. To be successful in
557 tribal life, an ambitious young Tiwi male was best advised to forget his mother
584 and his sisters' daughters (all members of his clan) and concentrate on getting
[614] wives for himself. Only by getting wives could he have daughters, and only
by having daughters could he build alliances and obtain influence, power, and
more wives. To get wives for himself, he could not use his mother or his
sisters or his sisters' daughters, since their disposal was in the hands of the men
who had named them—that is, their fathers. But there came a time in the life
of an older man when his mother was old, and *her* mother was dead, and there-
fore the rights of the last man to name his mother had lapsed. And a similar
situation would arise in the case of his sisters when their mother's last husband
died. By this age, a man so situated was likely to be powerful enough and
skilled enough in the rules of the game to exert some control over the late
remarriages of his elderly sisters and even of his mother, were she still alive.
592 Whenever this occurred, although the resulting situation might have the super-
584 ficial appearance of clan solidarity—with sons, mothers, brothers, and sisters
587 all acting and planning together as a partnership—such a surface appearance
was illusory. The motivations involved in it were scarcely altruistic desires on
the part of the brothers to look after their mothers and elderly sisters, but
rather efforts by the brothers to use to advantage, in their intricate political
schemes, some women of their own clan (their mothers and elderly sisters).
Earlier in life these men had been prevented from such manipulation by the
control over those women exercised by nonclansmen (their husbands or fath-
ers) through the naming rules. Put another way, we might say that Tiwi men
as a group had acquiesced to the system wherein "the father" had control over
all marriages of his "daughters," because every Tiwi man hoped to be a
"father" himself; but having acquiesced, every Tiwi male tried to beat the
system, especially as he became older and more influential, by intriguing in the
remarriages of his mother and elderly sisters—matters in which, according to
the strict letter of the law, he had no right to interfere, since bestowal rights
resided with the "father" or "fathers" of these women. One factor which
[582] greatly contributed to the setting aside of the rights involved in the naming
582] system was the fact that since, on the whole, old men married young women

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

and young men married old women, in many cases the nominal "father" of an elderly woman was very much younger and less influential than were her brothers, or her sons by an earlier husband. The brothers and/or sons, therefore, were able to override the wishes of their sisters' nominal father since the seniority system was on their side in such contests, even though the renaming rules were not. 182 582 584 587 592

Although it was very rare indeed for any Tiwi male to have a resident young wife until he was nearly forty, long before that age he was likely to acquire an ancient widow or two. In at least ninety out of every hundred cases a man's first resident wife was a widow very much older than himself. According to a complete genealogical census carried out in 1928-29, nearly every man in the tribe in the age group from thirty-two to thirty-seven was married to an elderly widow. Many of them had two elderly widows and a few had three. But very few of them, and certainly not more than one out of five of them, had a resident *young* wife. About half of them had bestowed wives, but these were mostly toddling infants who would not come into residence with them for another ten years or more. Even for the most promising and rapidly rising young man, the first young bestowed wife was not likely to arrive until several years after his marriage to a widow. 582 587

To get a start in life as a household head and thus to get his foot on the first rung of the prestige ladder, a Tiwi man in his thirties had first of all to get himself married to an elderly widow, preferably one with married daughters. This was the beginning of his career as a responsible adult. The widow did several things for him. She became his food provider and housekeeper. She served as a link to ally him with her sons. As her husband, he acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters when they became widowed. And she, as the first resident wife in his household, stood ready to be the teacher, trainer, and guardian of his young bestowed wives when they began to join him after they reached puberty. [593] [595]

Levirate, Sororate, and Cross-Cousin Marriage

We have emphasized infant bestowal and widow remarriage because it was the elaborate development of these two matrimonial mechanisms that brought about the unusual, perhaps unique, character of the Tiwi household. Other matrimonial mechanisms, more usual in preliterate societies, were also used by the Tiwi but always in combination with or as minor adjuncts to the two basic mechanisms. Thus, a man often remarried his dead brother's wives, or at least some of them, within the institution of widow remarriage. Such a practice is known to anthropologists as the levirate, and tribes are said "to have" the levirate or "not to have" it. The Tiwi, with their pluralistic approach to the whole area of marriage relationships, can hardly be said to fall into either category. To them, every widow had to remarry and among the many possible candidates for her, the brothers of the dead husband were recognized as having a reasonable, but far from automatic, claim. Whether the brothers 587

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 jointly, or any one of them singly, were able to translate that claim into marriage depended on the other claims. Brotherhood in itself gave no exclusive right to widows, but of course a brother, being necessarily of the same clan and frequently of the same band as the deceased husband, was well in line to assert a claim to the widow if he could make the claim good. Cursory inspection of the genealogies reveals, however, a surprisingly small number of cases of men taking over the widows of their deceased brothers. At best it was a very minor factor in Tiwi marriage customs.

The parallel custom of the sororate—that is, of sisters being married to the same husband—was more common. It occurred both in connection with [595] infant bestowal, by a father promising *all* his daughters by a particular wife to the same husband, or in connection with widow remarriage, whereby two or [584] more full sisters, previously married to the same husband, passed together on his death to the same new husband. The sororate occurred more frequently in the first form than in the second, largely because, as already mentioned, widows had more say in their own marriages than baby girls had, but there was nothing obligatory nor required about it, as is shown by the frequent cases in which a father bestowed all his daughters by one wife on the same man but on the early death of that man rebestowed them *seriatim* on several different husbands. One got the impression, though no Tiwi ever made the point explicit, that within the Tiwi bestowal system the prevailing high rate 165 of infantile and child mortality was an important factor in sustaining the sororate principle to the extent that it did exist. A father who bestowed upon a 587 man the first daughter borne by a certain wife was almost obliged to bestow upon the same man the second daughter of the same wife if the first one died in infancy. Moreover, since most fathers bestowed their daughters with an eye to their own advantage, it was clearly desirable if he wanted to cement the goodwill of a prospective son-in-law, to promise him *all* the daughters produced by a certain wife, so that even though most of them died in infancy, at least one or two would be delivered in good condition at the age of puberty. [557] The aim of bestowal was to win friends and influence people, and a bestowal of a child who died before she reached the son-in-law did a father little good. A shrewd father could avoid this risk by following the sororate principle; a stupid or feckless father who scattered his daughters widely could well end up with as many disappointed sons-in-law as friendly ones, as the infantile and child mortality took its heavy toll of his young daughters. In the genealogies, sororate marriages in some form occur much more frequently than levirate marriages, but nonetheless their incidence is such as to indicate that they were a relatively minor feature in Tiwi marriages and that their occurrence was most frequently due to careful fathers trying to insure sons-in-law against disappointment, and themselves against charges of nondelivery.

171 No account of marriage in any Australian tribe can go very far without raising the difficult matter of the kinship system, since all the accounts we have 582 of mainland Australian tribes tell us that all marriages there took place within a rigid kinship framework which required everybody to marry somebody who was automatically his or her cross-cousin (for example, a man and a daughter

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of his mother's brother).[10] Enough has been said already to indicate that in Tiwi marriage nothing was automatic. Females were given in marriage by their fathers, or (to a lesser extent) by their brothers, or (to a still lesser extent) by their sons. But fathers died and were succeeded by the men their widows remarried, and these men renamed all the widow's children, and by renaming them established some rights to make marriage decisions for the females. Therefore, cross-cousin marriage in Tiwi was merely part of the total system of marriage and had to adjust itself to the rest of the system. In theory, fathers could only bestow their infant daughters on men who stood to them in the relation of sisters' sons. Conversely, every man who received a bestowed wife received her from a man who was technically his mother's brother and of course the girl's father. To this extent the Tiwi were a tribe who practiced cross-cousin marriage and their kinship system belonged to one of the commonest Australian types, that which Radcliffe-Brown called Type I, having investigated it among the mainland tribe called the Kariera.[11] But a kinship system of the Kariera type could not accommodate all the complexities that had been introduced into Tiwi life by the emphasis on infant bestowal and widow remarriage. In particular, the generations kept getting badly mixed up, as for instance in the very common case of old men bestowing their infant daughters on other old men of their own age group, and in return receiving as infant wives (or wards) daughters of those old men. With this happening constantly, it was difficult to maintain the kinship principle that recipients of wives were always sons of the donor's sister and donors were always brothers of the recipient's mother. Which was mother's brother and which was sister's son in the case of two old men busily swapping daughters was a problem that put a severe strain on a Kariera-type kinship system. And widow remarriage introduced further complexities. We have already mentioned the case of two young men, Antonio and Dominico, who through a judicious use of widow-remarriage had ended up married to each other's elderly mothers. This was no isolated case; many pairs of men of like age were married to each other's mothers. Who called whom "father" and who called whom "son" became an insoluble riddle in such cases.

To avoid further involvement in the labyrinthine complexities of Australian kinship organization, all that we need say here is that the Tiwi had unscrambled the potential confusion introduced into their kinship categories by inventing a few new terms which, superimposed upon their Kariera-type system, kept everything straight. In Kariera, and generally among all the mainland tribes, no kinship distinction was made between potential wife and actual wife or between potential "in-laws" and actual "in-laws." A Kariera male called all the girls who were eligible for marriage to him by the same term (*Nuba*, usually translated mother's brother's daughter); all the fathers of such girls

[10] The definitive work on Australian kinship systems is Radcliffe-Brown 1930-31, and there is a large technical literature on the subject. See also Elkin 1951; Berndt 1955 and 1957; Murdock 1949.

[11] See Radcliffe-Brown 1913.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

601 by the same term (*Kaga*, usually translated as mother's brother); and all the mothers of such girls by the same term (*Toa*, usually translated father's sister or mother's brother's wife). When he married one of these girls he still called her *Nuba*, he still called his wife's father *Kaga*, and still called his wife's mother *Toa*. But not in Tiwi. For them, all potential wives were, in theory, mothers' brothers' daughters and all potential wives' fathers were mothers' brothers. But when a man married any such girl, he immediately called her by a new and different kinship term which can only be translated as "wife," and corresponding new and separate terms were used for the actual wife's father, actual wife's mother, and even for the actual wife's father's sister. Thus marriage introduced for a Tiwi a new set of relatives with new kinship terms different from those he used toward his general run of cross-cousins, mother's brothers, father's sisters, and so on, and these "relatives by actual marriage" terms, being based on actual marriages rather than kinship categories, were capable of handling in a fairly orderly manner all the complexities introduced into Tiwi domestic life by such customs as old men exchanging infant daughters or young men marrying each other's mothers. We may sum it up briefly by saying that Tiwi marriages operated within a general framework of cross-cousin marriage kinship categories identical with the 132 categories of the Kariera, but that females had become such important assets 582 in power and prestige relationships among the senior men—marriage had be- 601 come, so to speak, such a political affair—that a new set of kinship terms based on actual marriages had to be superimposed on the terms geared to cross-cousin marriage; in cases of conflict or anomaly or confusion in the cross-cousin terms, the terms based on actual marriages were controlling or took precedence. Which is only another way of saying that in theory all Tiwi marriages were rather idealistically approximated to marriages between cross-cousins, but in practice they departed quite far from such an ideal; so far, in fact, that extra kinship terms had been introduced to take care of the relationships created by such departures.

"Disputed" Wives

588 There is still one more category of wives to be mentioned, a category for which the Tiwi had no name in their own language but which in pidgin English they referred to as "stolen" wives. A few women so labeled were likely to turn up in the "list" of the wives of most big men, but analysis of the circumstances in each case makes it clear that "stolen" was an unsuitable label and that wives so designated were most often in a status that should be called either "disputed" or "shared." In legal terms they were wives in which there was or had been a divided interest. To explain fully the nature of these cases would carry us over into both the Tiwi legal and sexual systems, and here we are trying to confine our analysis to those aspects of marriage that have consequences for household organization. Since these disputed or shared wives had

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

to at least reside in some household and had at least a nominal current husband at any given moment of time, all we need to note about them at this point is that in any listing of a man's wives we have to include "disputed" wives in addition to all the other categories of wives mentioned previously. 588

The Household: An Overview

In the discussion so far we have selected only those aspects of the Tiwi family complex that had close bearing on the nature of the household. These aspects can be briefly summarized as follows: 582 592

1. the high number of wives per husband that a successful man was likely to acquire if he lived long enough.

2. the two distinct mechanisms by which wives were acquired—infant bestowal and widow remarriage.

3. the operation of the bestowal system in such a way as to prevent even the most promising young man from achieving coresidence with a bestowed wife until he was at least nearly forty years old.

4. the tendency for success to lead to more success, whereby *some* astute men received into their households a number of young wives in rapid succession after the age of forty. [554 595]

5. the tendency of younger men and of nonbetrothed younger men in particular to marry elderly widows while waiting for betrothed wives to grow up or, in the case of those with no bestowals in sight, to enable them to start a household of their own.

6. as a result of the integrated operation of all these customs, the strong tendency in Tiwi households for husbands to be very much older than their wives (as a result of infant bestowal) or very much younger than their wives (as a result of widow remarriage) or—what was commonest of all in the bigger households—some combination of both. Hence many a Tiwi husband had some wives much older than himself, including some already dead (but still counted), and some very much younger than himself, including some who were still babies in their mothers' wombs (with their sex still undetermined). All these dead wives, current wives, nominal wives, "disputed" wives, not-yet-joined-the-household wives, and not-yet-born wives were still counted in a husband's list, and the length of his list was a measure of his influence, power, and importance as a household head. [554 595]

It is now perhaps clear why we chose to begin our account of Tiwi culture with some discussion of Tiwi marriage. Compulsory marriage for all females, carried out through the twin mechanisms of infant bestowal and widow remarriage, resulted in a very unusual type of household, in which old successful men had twenty wives each, while men under thirty had no wives at all and men under forty were married mostly to elderly crones. This unusual household structure was the focal point of Tiwi culture. It linked together in an explicable unity the kinship system, the food-gathering system, the political 592 182 592

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

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and prestige system, the totemic system, the seniority system, the sexual system, and the legal-moral-religious system of the tribe. Or perhaps all these should be labeled as subsystems under the household structure, the master system which unified them. We turn therefore to consider the Tiwi household as it affected the food-gathering and leisure-time activities of the people.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Life in the Bush

Organization: Band and Household

THE PRECEDING CHAPTER should convey something of what a Tiwi band really was. The casual way in which people left one band and joined another shows that the band was in no sense a tight political or legal group. Old men preferred, on the whole, to bestow their daughters on men in other bands, but far from this indicating any tendency towards patrilocality, there was at the same time a strong tendency on the part of such selected sons-in-law, especially if they were young and mobile, to move into the band of the father-in-law, partly, at least, to ensure that the donor did not change his mind. Even the faint prospect of a wife was sufficient to cause young men to change bands, and change of band residence by senior men was not at all rare. 621 591

The emphasis on widow remarriage was another factor that influenced band residence and made the whole matter of band affiliation extremely fluid and arbitrary. For widow remarriage not only caused elderly women to move perhaps several times in their lifetimes, but also caused their younger sons to move with them. Such unmarried sons preferred home cooking and followed their elderly mothers outside the band if remarriage required the widows to move. Almost invariably the question "Why is So and So (a youth of 15-25) living in Turupi if he is really a Malauila?" evoked the response (obvious to a Tiwi) "Because his mother is there." Conversely, mothers often followed their sons, especially when the son began to acquire young wives who needed senior female supervision. Such mothers divided their time between the household of the son (or even several sons) and the household of the nominal husband, and if such part-time residence in two (or more) households involved part-time residence in two (or more) bands, the arrangement did not provoke any comment, nor was it thought to be in any way odd. [587] [182]

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0120 Tiwi 0120

starvation level than was the case with many of the mainland tribes.[8] Even to talk about the Tiwi in near-starvation terms seems quite incongruous, for there was an abundance of native food available the whole year around and their only problem was to collect or catch it. We regard the development of their large multiple-wife household as essentially their own evolutionary solution to the problem of finding the most efficient unit of food production. Abundant food was there in the bush in its raw state; the most efficient way to extract it was by a work unit represented by such households as those of Ki-in-kumi, or Tu'untalumi, with the old remarried widows directing the young women and the hunting and fish spearing being done by the younger males.

Even the smallest households nearly always contained at least one old female veteran of the food quest who knew the bush like the palm of her hand and could wrestle some food out of the most inhospitable district. The only households that ever went hungry—and they only overnight or at worst for twenty-four hours or so—were the small households of only one or two wives, especially if both wives were young and inexperienced or young and flighty or both. Such households were uneconomic and were rare. On the other hand, the apparently absurd households such as those in which two young men shared their respective elderly mothers as wives, made good economic sense. Any attempt by two such young men to substitute two young wives or even four young wives for the two old ladies would have drastically reduced the standard of living of the household. When young wives arrived in Tiwi households they were not regarded as replacements for the old crones but joined as reinforcements and apprentices to the skilled workers—the veterans. The sexual aspects of marriage were necessarily subordinated to the housekeeping or food-production aspects, which is why in the previous section we spoke of every young man laying the foundation of his household by marrying an elderly widow usually long before there was any young wife in sight.

Since the bigger the household the more food it produced for its own consumption, there was a tendency for the smaller and therefore hungrier households to hang around the fringes of the bigger ones. Though every household was autonomous and could camp and collect food anywhere in the band territory in which it roamed, it was rare to find all the households in a band distributed evenly over the available territory. In Malau, Enquirio's household and that of Merapanui were usually to be found camped together, since the two men were full brothers and not in competition with each other. Also camped with or near them on any given occasion would be a few other small households. Such a combined group as this would, all told, amount to between forty and fifty people camping at the same spot and remaining together for weeks at a time. Under mainland conditions in most areas, a gathering of forty people for ten days at a time in the same locality was unheard of, except on

[8] As was pointed out earlier, the best-watered and most fertile areas of the mainland were the areas attractive to white settlement, and the tribes who inhabited such areas (for example, Victoria or coastal Queensland) were wiped out quickly. Most of the mainland tribes who survived long enough to be studied by modern anthropologists were tribes whose habitats were unfavorable both for native and for white occupation.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

361 special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply.
592 The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general
[171] thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably
592 smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during
574 supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger
[593 household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece
604] of meat or a dish of *kuroka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the
[561 general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through
578] all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all
512 resting within easy hearing distapce of each other, became highly animated
517 with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive
[562 work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the
[513 shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an
578] argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

578 Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion
182 with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part
837 of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit
592 that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

he was at the same time the executive director of a work unit which he expected 578
to work for him, and the husband of many of its members whom he expected 182
to be faithful to him. The young wives were willing, under supervision, to 837
meet his first expectation, but found it difficult, even under the strictest supervision, to meet the second. Successful supervision of the morals of young wives 592
was easy to achieve at night because each camp was then gathered together and it was relatively easy for the husband and his senior wives to guard the young wives closely. But during the daytime matters were different. Then the 837
young women of the household were widely scattered through the fairly dense bush and it was impossible for the old wives to watch them every minute of the day. And the young men of other households, or even of their own household, were hunting game in the same neighborhood. Encounters, whether by chance or by previous arrangement, were likely to occur and probably occurred with a high degree of frequency. We say "probably" because no anthropologist working with a tribe which has neither courts nor written records can ever know how often casual extramarital offenses take place. (There is even some difficulty in obtaining reliable statistics on such matters in our own society, as the attacks on the late Dr. Kinsey's statistics indicate.) We therefore make no statement about how common the act of adultery was in Tiwi culture, but we can say that, judging by the public accusations of adultery, its practice must have been widespread indeed. In any Tiwi camp comprising more than 578
two households, few weeks went by without an outraged and angry old husband shouting accusations at one of the younger men sitting by another camp 837
fire a few yards away. The young man accused would (usually) deny it; the old women of both households would enter the argument, the young man's [595]
mother protesting his innocence, the old man's elderly wives (who had of course been the informers) giving details of time and place and circumstance; the young man would produce, or try to produce, an alibi and appeal to a friend to bear him out; the old man would call the friend a liar and the youth's mother an old witch; the youth's mother would retaliate by shouting things she knew (but had never before revealed) about the private lives of everybody in the old man's household, including the old man himself when he was a young bachelor. A good time would be had by all, including the listening anthropologist, but nobody would get much sleep. Such nocturnal uproars, always starting with accusations hurled by an older husband against a younger man and always involving incidents that had allegedly occurred while the young wife was somehow left unchaperoned for a short period during her daytime wandering in search of food, were a commonplace of nightlife among the Tiwi; but no case was ever reported, observed, or hinted at in which even the most adventurous and enterprising bachelor had succeeded in seducing, or had even attempted to seduce, a young wife when she was back in camp [833]
after nightfall. The deeds were always done in the secrecy of the bush during the daytime; it was the recriminations and accusations that occurred in the public glare of the campfires at nighttime.

Sometimes these disputes or accusations went no further than the noc- 578
turnal shouting of charges. Often the young man accused the previous night 684

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

578 quietly slipped away to some other camp and was not seen the following
684 morning. The matter might then die, depending largely on whether the old husband wanted to carry it further or was content to drop it. If the young
[627] man was still in camp the following day, the old man might insist on a duel then and there, but it would take place only if the camp were large, since Tiwi duels were essentially legal actions and as such needed a sizable audience for their correct staging. Disputes between men, of which old men accusing young men of seduction were by far the most common type, usually remained at the verbal level until a large body of spectators was available. Since such large
[527] concentrations of many households were necessary for the performance of the
627] main collective ceremonials, it was at the time of these ceremonials that most verbal arguments were pushed by the aggrieved party to the action level.

554 During the dry season (April to November) when travel was easy, the
764 only collective ceremonials sufficiently important to draw together a large number of households were those held for the funerals of big men. In the wet season (November to March) when the grass and bush were high and travel was difficult, the main collective phases of the male initiation ceremonies were
[881] held (see Chapter 4), and these brought together for a few weeks at a time large numbers of households. The funeral ceremonies for adults were always held some considerable time after the death and burial of the deceased. How long a period elapsed between the death and the funeral ceremonies depended on the expected size of the gathering, and this figure correlated, at least roughly, with the importance of the deceased. Here again the overriding consideration was food supply, since the chief mourners (that is, the deceased's closer
574 relatives) had to feed everybody who came to the funeral while the ceremonies
764 lasted, which might be almost a week. The more important the dead person
433 the bigger the crowd at his funeral, and hence the greater the amount of time
182 needed by the mourners to arrange the catering. As much as a year might elapse between the death and the time when the mourners felt that the funeral arrangements—especially the food supply, but also the ceremonial preparation—were sufficiently well in hand to permit them to set a date and send out invitations for the funeral ceremonies. Funerals, therefore, were not held at regular times but were individually scheduled at times fixed by the chief mourners. They were always held in the dry season, however (except those of
[627] young children, to which nobody came in any case), and therefore an old man who had a dispute to settle or a case to try publicly could always depend on a few big funerals being held in the not very distant future which would provide the large audience necessary to make the settlement of the dispute legal. During the wet season the *kolema* phases of the initiation ceremonial
[881] always drew a large attendance; the annual time of these was pretty definitely fixed by the ripening of the *kolema* yams.

578 Hence the verbal wrangles in the small scattered encampments at night,
684 about seduction during the day, could have any one of three outcomes, depending largely upon the determination of the old man-accuser and the demeanor
627 of the young man-accused. If by the following morning the young man had disappeared and showed no further interest in the old man's menage, the

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O120 Tiwi O120

matter might end there. Or the old man might let matters rest until the time of the next big gathering of people at a funeral or at the *kolema* rituals, and then revive the issue under such public circumstances that the accused young man could not slip away unpunished. If he followed this second course, the old man went to the gathering covered from head to foot in white paint, the Tiwi uniform for anybody who came in anger and intended to pick a fight with somebody. The decision between these two lines of action lay, of course, with the old man, and while that decision was to some extent determined by how vindictive and revengeful he felt, nonetheless it was also influenced by how this dispute was related to all the other feuds, disputes, deals, marriage exchanges, and so forth, in which both parties were already involved. Like a good lawyer in our own culture, the old man had to consider, before he took the matter to court, who the young man was and who his friends and relatives were, and had to ask himself whether in seeking vengeance for the blow to his pride he might not be doing himself more political harm than the injury was worth.

In arriving at his decision, the old man was influenced to some extent also by another variable, the attitude of the young man. If the alleged offense occurred only once and the young man denied it and thereafter kept his distance, the accuser would probably let the matter drop. Offenders were very rarely caught *in flagrante*, and the evidence of seduction was almost always circumstantial or hearsay. In every case there was some element of doubt as to whether the right young male was being accused or whether the whole story had not been invented by some of the old wives out of sheer spite toward a young wife. The old man had to take such factors into consideration, not out of any abstract sense of justice, but because, naturally, he didn't like to be made a fool of, either by young men or his own spiteful old wives. But he was most suspicious and unbelieving of his own flighty young wives, and sometimes the accused young man was defiant and persistent in his attentions to the same young wife, or wives. In effect, such a young man was daring the old husband to do his worst. Such continued defiance of the seniority system could not be permitted; it became a case not of simple seduction but of subversive activity, since it was a threat to the whole social structure of the tribe, centered as that was around the marriage of old men to young women. When confronted by such action, a Tiwi elder said (as people of other cultures might), "What would happen if everybody did that? We'd have complete anarchy and free love." Hence an old husband, so defied, was almost duty bound not just to seek satisfaction for the private injury done to himself, but to defend the public weal by hauling the offender before the bar of public opinion and denouncing him before as large a crowd as possible, as a public enemy. If the situation became so flagrant that he could not wait until the next big funeral or the next *kolema* gathering, he began calling in surrounding camps or going himself, dressed in white paint, to summon them to assist him in meting out public justice to the violator of the system. When a sufficient number of upholders of the right (that is, senior heads of households) had been collected together, the usual one-sided duel (see below, Chapter 4) was

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 The matter of men traveling to distant camps for ceremonials illumi-
595 nates again, and from a new angle, the great value of elderly widows in the
household. Tu'untahumi, during his visit to Malau in August, was able to split
587 his household efficiently by taking a couple of old wives with him to supervise
his young wives on the journey and leaving other old wives at home in Tangio
to begin storing up food for the grass-burning project which he intended to
stage on his return. It will be noticed in the account of his movements that he
began issuing invitations to the grass burning on his way home from Malau,
[224 showing his confidence that the elderly wives he had left at home would
251] have the preparations well in hand during his absence. A big man with a
big household really needed three or four elderly widows because these enabled him to split his work force in various ways as his various political and social obligations required and to be sure of trustworthy supervision of each of the segments. A man without widows in his household, or with only one, could not do this; in fact, it was hard for a man without widows to attend ceremonials at all, or even to receive a large party of visitors to his household. And, as we have already pointed out, since such a man would probably go hungry very often because he would not dare to send his unsupervised young wives into the bush to gather food, there were practically no such men nor such households. Widows were indispensable to a senior Tiwi, both in his public and in his private life.

Making Things

592 Throughout this chapter we have been stressing the contrast between
887 the dull routine of life in an isolated Tiwi household during the greater part
of the year and the sort of life typical on those relatively rare occasions when something special—a festival, a funeral, a fight, a grass burning, a naming ceremony, some collective phase of men's initiation—required the assembling together of several households for joint activity. Before leaving the daily life of the isolated camp, we should mention one other area of activity—namely, the manufacturing activities of the tribe. The Tiwi did not manufacture much,
[32] but spears, throwing sticks, canoes, digging sticks, baskets, bodily ornaments, graveposts, and all the miscellaneous paraphernalia used in ceremonials had to be made in whatever leisure time people could find during the long weeks and months when each of the households lived more or less in isolation from the others. Crude and simple as these artifacts were, their construction required time, and only the older men had the time and the skill based on experience to make the more important of them.

[147] Largely because of their failing eyesight, the older men hunted very little and hence tended to remain in camp all day while the young men were hunting and the women were gathering. There were, of course, some old men who took advantage of this time to do little except doze in the shade, but
182 most of the household heads spent a fairly active day in camp engaged in
511 making things. Here we find another aspect of Tiwi culture that results from
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OI20 Tiwi OI20

the relatively favorable food supply. Some of the Tiwi artifacts, particularly the highly decorative graveposts and ceremonial spears, are unique among Australian tribes, and the carving and painting of these graveposts and spears were skills possessed only by the senior men. They were provided with the leisure time necessary to develop and use these skills by the efficiency in food production of the large household which all old men were expected to accumulate with age, and which many old men did succeed in accumulating. We said earlier that the bigger the household, the better its members ate. We now add the further correlation that the bigger the household, the more leisure time was provided for its head to engage in manufacturing and artistic production. Tu'untalumi has been cited as an example of a large household head (twelve resident wives and thirteen children at home in 1928-29) who loved ceremonial affairs. It would be wrong to infer from this that Tu'untalumi only loved going to parties. He also loved preparing for them, and this preparation (for him as for all other senior men) included the manufacture of ceremonial spears, the preparation of graveposts, and the composition of songs and dances. In the long dull periods between trips outside his home district, he spent most of the days and many of the nights in the creation of these ceremonial necessities. He was not a full-time specialist in the sense that he made spears or posts to exchange with other men who had neither the time nor the skill—the rules of kinship required that every senior man make his own ceremonial spears and contract for his own posts. Tu'untalumi manufactured his graveposts to meet his own ritual obligations, but he took a more magnanimous view of those obligations than did most men. Put in our terms, we might say that he was wealthy enough (in the size of his household) to be generous with his own productions. One example of this attitude was his attendance at funerals that other men of equal kinship to the deceased did not find it necessary to attend; his frequent contribution of an extra gravepost to those provided by the chief mourners of the deceased was a similar gesture. "Tu'untalumi not only came to our mother's funeral, he also made a gravepost for it" was a very gratifying reflection for an obscure group of mourners to cherish among their memories, and of course it was acts of this sort that made the old man so well liked and admired. The economic point of the matter, however, is that only a man with as large a household as his could afford the gesture of giving away, in a situation where kinship obligations did not demand it, a gravepost that required about a week's full-time work.

It was, however, sad to observe that as an artistic producer Tu'untalumi, like many intellectuals in other cultures, tended to operate in too many media. His work as a composer of songs and dances was universally admired, but his graveposts, while appreciated, were not regarded as being as outstanding, technically speaking, as those of another old man, his crony Timalarua. In personality, Timalarua, a successful household head (eleven living wives, ten children at home), was quiet spoken, placid, and only mildly gregarious, and he is mainly of interest because in his leisure-time activity he paid but routine attention to song and dance compositions and concentrated rather single mindedly on making canoes, ceremonial spears, and graveposts. Fre-

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0120 Tiwi 0120

observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission, automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their opponents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were economically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

was entering the junior elder class and, having received wives from other sources than Inglis, was getting to the point where he would soon have free daughters of his own. He had no intention of performing any more services for Inglis who was now nearly sixty. Hence Inglis had not bestowed any daughters on Tomitari since 1923; those of his daughters who had been born since that year were bestowed on men other than Tomitari and men who were younger and less successful than he. 159 584 557

As we see it, the deals involving widows, particularly the pay-offs to young agents for acting to promote the interests of older men, had distorted what might be called the pure theory of Tiwi bestowal. According to the pure theory, mothers' brothers bestowed their daughters on selected sisters' sons, and the older man who gave a young man a wife and became his wife's father, was performing a kindness toward a favorite nephew for which the nephew should be grateful. But the Inglis-Tomitari operation shows how the theory had become distorted in practice. In order that Inglis might have some young daughters whom he would be free to bestow on his favored young nephew, Tomitari, in 1914 he had had to arrange the young man's marriage with an elderly widow to ensure safe delivery to him (Inglis) of some young wives who would bear him those daughters. Everything went smoothly and no slip-up occurred, yet by the time Inglis was in a position to give a wife to his favored young nephew, he found that the latter was no longer a dependent young man but a successful junior elder competing with him in his own field of identifying and using talent among the younger men. Tomitari's first daughter, born in 1927—not to any daughter of Inglis but to an older wife—was bestowed by its father on the distant but very promising Gitjara, a man of thirty-two. Gitjara was thus selected by Tomitari as a promising satellite at about the same age as Tomitari in 1914 had been selected by Inglis. Moreover, Tomitari by this time, far from being the grateful nephew of old Inglis (as the theory stipulated), was looking forward with anticipation to the old man's death, since when that occurred, among the widows of Inglis would be the three sisters of Padimo of whom he was still the nominal father. It was by acting as their step-father when they were children that he had got his own career started. They were indeed the foundation stone of his own career and, having profited so much from them as children, he was keenly interested in their redisposition whenever Inglis' death should put them on the market again. Thus he was simultaneously the husband of some of Inglis' daughters and nominal father of some of Inglis' wives. In the first status, he was expected by the theory to be a grateful son-in-law of Inglis; in the second status, the facts of Tiwi life required him to see Inglis' death as providing him with an opportunity to derive some new benefits for himself from his position as nominal father of the three wives of Inglis whose delivery to Inglis' household he had himself engineered. 183 581 604 159 183 584 604 [557 593]

Thus the politics of bestowal cannot be separated from the politics of widow remarriage. Every case of one had endless repercussions in the other. Sisters' sons who were promised young wives by their mothers' brothers were always too old to be grateful by the time the bestowal occurred or by the even later time when the bestowed child was old enough to come into residence. 182 557 584 604

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 Mothers' brothers, in turn, were unable to endow their nephews any earlier
557 because they as younger men had been caught in the same trap. The only way
584 out was by deals in which older men and younger men collaborated. Ideally
604 such collaborative efforts should always have been between mothers' brothers and sisters' sons, but amid such fierce competition and endless log rolling this was not possible, and in many cases the mother's-brother—sister's-son relationship was a *result* of collaboration between older man and younger man rather than a cause. The bond arose from the deal rather than from their original kinship, particularly when the two men involved were very close in age.

The collaborative deals between older men and younger men were essentially designed to compensate for the older man's inability to bestow a young wife upon the younger man at a reasonable age. As was stated before, not until he was about forty-five would the older man have a free or unencumbered daughter. By then his younger collaborator and satellite had attracted the at-
159 tention of older and wealthier men with many unencumbered daughters. After
557 performing all his services to Inglis, young Tomitari had not had to depend
571 on him for his first bestowal. A wealthier man than Inglis had reached over
584 Inglis' head, so to speak, and bought Tomitari's allegiance by the bestowal of a young wife who provided Tomitari with a free daughter several years earlier than any child the daughters of Inglis could provide. With this first unencumbered daughter, Tomitari promptly bid for the allegiance of Gitjara. Put in terms of allegiances, Tomitari had from 1914 until about 1923 been the henchman of Inglis. During those years he passed from about age thirty to age forty, and his main patron was Inglis, who passed from about forty-four and on the fringes of the elder group to about fifty-four and accepted among the elder group. Then—and this was typical of the shift of allegiance that occurred in most life careers—a senior elder more wealthy in wives and daughters than Inglis bid for Tomitari's allegiance, and Tomitari became his henchman. Five years later, in 1928, Tomitari was a coming junior elder in Rangu and a man of influence in his own right. His oldest bestowed wife had already borne him a daughter whom he used to make Gitjara *his* henchman. The three wives (daughters A, B, and C) of Inglis were nearing the stage when they would join his household and he had other bestowals from other quarters. His relation to Inglis was no longer that of henchman but of rival, since they were now both successful elders in the same band and competitors in the struggle to make younger men dependent on them. Far from bestowing any more daughters on Tomitari, Inglis was bestowing his daughters (now plentiful) on men of Gitjara's generation (though not on Gitjara). Having more free daughters than Tomitari, he had more men of that generation to patronize, but since Inglis was sixty and Tomitari only forty-five, time was obviously on the side of the latter.

557 Thus the crux of the Tiwi system of influence-satelliteship-marriage ar-
571 rangement-wealth centered around what happened to a man in his thirties. This
584 is what we meant when we said earlier that old men with many daughters bestowed them on young men who looked to them like "comers." Old men

1:Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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The Collective Life

Legal Affairs

THE MOST SATISFACTORY overall view of Tiwi culture is that, within the general framework of mainland patterns, it had developed along its own distinctive lines. Some of these distinctive lines of development are traceable to the relatively favorable food and rainfall situation; others are traceable to the absence of neighbors. The unusually large polygamous households are, we think, attributable to the good food supply. But the large households of the Tiwi, economically efficient as we judge them to have been, involved certain social costs, the most obvious of which was the enforced celibacy of the younger men. This compulsory celibacy did not, of course, mean chastity. Not only were there the endless charges of seduction against young men, but there was also the more objective fact that most young wives continued to become pregnant with monotonous regularity, no matter how ancient and senile their husbands. (The Tiwi belief that babies came from spirits prevented pregnancies from being used against young wives as proofs of unfaithfulness.) Despite the numerous cases of seduction or alleged seduction, few young men ever took the most straightforward way of escaping from their state of compulsory celibacy—namely, abducting a young wife and running off with her. Here we encounter the other factor of the Tiwi natural environment that explains so much about their cultural development—and that is the absence of neighbors. Young men did not elope with young wives because there was no place to elope to. On the mainland such elopements were common, and the couple sought refuge with a neighboring tribe. But an eloping Tiwi couple could only take refuge with other more remote Tiwi bands where the system was the same as that which they had rebelled against back home, and the people with whom they sought shelter were interrelated with those whom they had defied back home. Hence, no matter where they fled, the Tiwi system, embodied in a war party of the girl's husband's friends and

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Ep. 78 [blank]

182 583 relatives, soon caught up with them. Several cases of such elopements occurred during the period of fieldwork, including the case of one young couple (Peanut and Jumbo's wife) who made repeated attempts to elope over a period of several years. But despite the relaxation of standards that white contact had [624] brought, as long as they remained on the islands these violators of the system were soon forced back into conformity by outraged public opinion and its punitive sanctions. Unless he fled to the mainland with his girl, the young bachelor who stole an old man's young wife had to restore her sooner or later to her rightful husband. Under pre-white conditions they could not flee to the mainland; if they tried, they both probably drowned on the way or at least were never heard of again.

Thus the isolation of the Tiwi made the rule of the gerontocracy much 182 more absolute, and the enforcement of it much more effective than was possible 691 for any of the mainland tribes where violators of the rules could skip across the border. Tiwi bachelors had to be satisfied, by and large, with casual and temporary liaisons and even in these, because of the constant suspicion of the old husbands and the constant spying and scandalmongering of the old wives, they had to be prepared to be often caught and, when caught, to be punished. [578] Thus we come to another of the main emphases in Tiwi culture—the enormous frequency of disputes, fights, duels, and war parties arising directly or indirectly out of cases of seduction. If we may call this area of life the legal area, then over 90 percent of legal affairs were matters in which women were in some way involved.

THE DUEL The Tiwi formula for handling seduction was very 627 straightforward and clear-cut in its formal outline. Since senior men had young 684 wives and young men had not, seduction was necessarily viewed as an offense by a young man against a senior man. Hence the charge was always laid by the senior and the younger man was always the defendant.[1] At night in camp the accuser hurled his charges at the offender. We described earlier the alternatives available at this stage to both parties. Two of those alternatives were for the old man to press the matter to a public "trial," either the next day, if the camp was already a large one, or else on the next occasion when both men were present in a big gathering.

The basic shape of all Tiwi trials was standardized in the form that we have been calling the duel. Everybody present—men, women, children, and dogs—formed a rough circle in an open space, sitting or standing according to their degree of excitement at the moment. At one end stood the accuser, [302 the old man, covered from head to foot in white paint, with his ceremonial 411] spears in one hand and a bundle of the more useful hunting spears in the

[1] Under pre-white conditions this had to be so. After the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, some young men through Mission manipulation got a young wife at an age that would have been impossible earlier. This resulted in an occasional case around the Mission where a *young* husband charged a man older than himself with seducing his wife. The resulting duel, with an older man as defendant, was regarded by the Tiwi as both embarrassing and ludicrous, perhaps analogous to the average American's attitude toward female professional wrestlers. (See Hart 1954 for a case of this sort, the duel of Rob v. Louis.)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked
789 what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on
[754] the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation.
13 Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because
[182] they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life—
[789] for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals
[164 (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws)
731] scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago.
[761 Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle
764] that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their
101 cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next
131 door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature,
182 though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic
754 making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

784 The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; graveposts were *pukimani*

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

once erected on the grave; the names of dead people immediately became *pukimani* on their deaths and could not be used, and the same was true of all the names bestowed by a dead man on the children of his household and all the other words in the language that sounded similar to the name of the dead man.[4] All ceremonials and rituals were *pukimani* as were the main performers and the armlets, neck ornaments, and other ceremonial objects. People in a *pukimani* state had to observe all sorts of avoidances of and abstentions from everyday actions, particularly with regard to food and sex. Close relatives of dead people could not touch food but had to be fed by nonmourners. That pillar of rigid orthodoxy, Tu'untalumi, was virtually never able to feed himself but was in a *pukimani* state almost the whole year round and needed one of his wives to feed him. (Another advantage of a large household.) Certain spots in the bush or on the banks of streams were *pukimani* places; the dimly seen outline of the Australian coast was *pukimani* as was the ocean near Cape Keith where the Tiwi ancestors had first created the Tiwi world; and finally, the violation of a *pukimani* restriction rendered the violator *pukimani*.

Pukimani as thus applied to people, places, things, names, words, restrictions, and avoidances, meant both sacred and taboo, and was clearly one of that widespread class of words and concepts that is almost standard among the simpler societies. The only noteworthy thing about its Tiwi form is that *pukimani* was a state which people did not actively seek to enter but which happened to people regardless of their wishes. Furthermore, when a man found himself in a state of *pukimani*, his behavior was automatically prescribed for him and for the duration of his *pukimani* condition he observed his avoidances and his abstentions just as automatically as he dropped them when his *pukimani* period expired. When he became *pukimani*, he punctiliously fulfilled the requirements because if he did not, he was likely to be unsuccessful in his enterprises. Big men simply did not dare to be casual about the requirements lest their reputations suffer and they lose face and influence. Less successful men were occasionally explained as probably being secret violators. "His wives and daughters all seem to die young; he must have broken some *pukimani* restrictions sometime" was a reason often given for somebody's failure to be as successful as he might have been. It was noticeable in such explanations of nonsuccess that the failure, or in our terms the bad luck, was attributed to the violation of the taboos, never to the active displeasure of the spirits. The spirits simply did not figure in the picture.

Apart from the big ceremonial occasions, a Tiwi did not have much concern with religion in his everyday life except through some aspect of the *pukimani* system. It was only through *pukimani* that the sacred world impinged upon him at all for most of the year. Since *pukimani* was a condition that could not be actively sought but "just happened" to a person every so often by such common events as the death of a relative, his wife giving birth, or his

[4] When a man named Tibuki died in 1928, a crisis occurred at the Mission where the natives were supposed to make their requests in pidgin English. How could they now ask for tobacco, since that word was now *pukimani*?

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

To avoid constant use of the awkward phrase "mourning ceremony," we refer to it as the funeral though it took place some considerable time after the burial of the body. How long a time elapsed between the burial and the funeral depended upon the importance of the dead person. The more important the deceased, the longer it took after his or her burial to prepare for the funeral, both ceremonially and practically. Babies frequently had no funeral ceremonies at all, especially if they died very young and unnamed. Children were given small funerals, held within a month or so after the death, and the people present were merely the members of the local households. Young adult men and all adult women had funerals of medium size, and old men had the biggest funerals of all. Big funerals were rarely held in the wet season because of the height of the grass and bush and the consequent difficulty of travel. The season after the end of the rains (April-May-June) was a favorite time for funerals since by then people were moving again and there was then an accumulated backlog of funerals to be held for people who had died late in the previous dry season or during the wet. The mourning ceremonies of two or more people were sometimes held together; this obviously required that they be buried close together, although they need not have died at the same time. Seeking as usual to increase his importance in the public eye, a man might hold the medium-sized funeral of one of his children at the same time and place as the big funeral of an important elder—provided their graves were close together—even though two or three months had separated the two deaths.

The actual burial of the body immediately after death was usually a small affair attended only by whatever people happened to be in the vicinity. But some Tiwi ancients were on their last legs for months before they finally expired, and it was typical of Tiwi psychology that people should maneuver to be present when a death occurred. Until the anthropologist understood that even death had its political aspects, he could not understand why the Tiwi were always so anxious to hang around the camp of an old man who was taking an awfully long time to die. Since so very little happened at the actual time of death, this desire to be on the spot seemed merely morbid curiosity.[8] But it was not. A death immediately divided the whole tribe into two groups: a small group of relatives who automatically became mourners and therefore in a state of strict taboo, and the rest who were not sufficiently close to the deceased to have to assume a state of *pukimani*. The mourners, being *pukimani*, could do scarcely anything except weep and wail and gash their heads with stone axes. They could not touch the body or wrap it in bark; nor could they dig the grave, nor put the body in, nor fill in the hole. They had to ask non-mourners to carry out these tasks and thus became obligated to those non-

[8] How else was one to interpret the reluctance of Hart's party to move on, after spending three weeks waiting for old Tamboo to die, and the old man still lingered on? "Let's wait another day; maybe he'll die tomorrow" was the invariable response to suggestions that we move. "And if he does die, what will happen?" "Nothing; we'll move on then." But this was early in the fieldwork period, before Hart realized the all-pervasive character of Tiwi opportunism.

182 557 571 764 mourners for their services. Death, in other words, incapacitated the relatives, so the nonrelatives swarmed in to "help" them—that is, take advantage of their incapacity. A man who could say, "I helped to dig your mother's grave" had a hold for the rest of his life over the man or men to whom he could say it. Such a hold was not as strong, of course, as that of a man who could say, "I helped you get your first bestowed wife," but the difference of obligation was only a difference of degree. The Tiwi were always "helping" each other, but the man who was "helped" therefore "owed" something to his helper. At deaths, mourners mourned and nonmourners did the work; therefore the mourners "owed" the nonmourners, and such debts were carried on the same mental ledgers as other debts, such as marriage debts.

182 571 765 [764] When deaths occurred suddenly and unexpectedly, the mourners had to choose their helpers for the burial from the relatively few people present at the time, and were thus often forced to become obligated to men they did not much relish being under obligation to. At the funerals the same bookkeeping mentality prevailed, but since these were not held until months after the death and burial, the chief mourners had time to select their helpers with ease and political finesse. Satellites were very useful in this connection, since a man could ask his satellites to perform the necessary ceremonial services and thus get a return from them for the debts of gratitude they already owed him. This was one reason why a skillful Tiwi politician did not by any means select only close kinsmen for satelliteship. A death which made him *pukimani* was likely to make his close kinsmen *pukimani* also, hence he needed some satellites who were not close kinsmen.

182 557 571 765 [462] In the interval between the burial and the funeral, the chief mourner, on behalf of all the mourners but fairly independently if he were a big man, allocated all the jobs that had to be done in preparation for the funeral. Everybody who came had to be fed by the mourners, and the collection and hoarding of the necessary food devolved on the women of the mourning households. Thus the mourners provided the food, but everything else necessary had to be prepared by nonmourners. The chief item among the ceremonial necessities was the graveposts. The prohibition on mourners approaching the body and the grave extended to the posts, and therefore the cutting, carving, erecting on the grave, and painting of these central features of the funeral ceremonies had to be carried out by nonmourners, "asked to cut the posts" by the chief mourner. Here there was much room for influence maneuvers. A big man acting as chief mourner for a dead relative wanted the funeral to be as lavish as possible, to show his own importance. But the more important the nonmourners he selected to cut the posts for him, the more he owed them for [554] their services. Such a request was in the nature of asking a favor, and to ask a favor was to put oneself in a subordinate position, in terms of influence. The Tiwi power orientation was so ingrained that, even when acting as chief mourner, an elder could not avoid making his requests and allocating the ceremonial tasks so as to gain ground if possible, or at least not lose any ground, in the influence and prestige race.

765 The mourning ceremonies, though prolonged for several days of con-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus. Most of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony, when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners' state of *pukimani*.

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious occasions. The connecting link was the state of *pukimani* in which death put the relatives. Men in a state of *pukimani* were at a disadvantage in social and political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and thus their own *pukimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to them for many months, came to an end.

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the status of *Marukumarni*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests. The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems; indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he still had six years to go after that, not finishing the final grade of *Mikingula* until somewhere past the age of 24 or 25.

In contrast with the mainland initiation ceremonies, we think the most interesting point about Tiwi initiation resides not in the formal ceremonies but in the removal from the food-production units, for long periods of the year, of all the young males between the ages of 14 and 25. It is true that they did not spend *all* their time in seclusion and that after the age of twenty they remained mostly in their household camps, where they contributed to the household food production. Nonetheless, it remains clear that only a very well-off tribe could afford to allow so much time off from food production to all its young hunters. Tiwi fathers, it would seem, in arranging for the initiation of their sons to begin just when they were becoming productive hunters, were willing to sacrifice that productivity for less tangible advantages. The youths, secluded and guarded in the bush while getting an education, were not only out of the work force but were also out of the predatory-bachelor force. A Tiwi elder made sacrifices to "send his sons to college" but he breathed easier to know that the sons of the other elders were all there too.

All males without exception had to go through the full initiation cycle, and from the time of their first forcible seizure at the age of 14-15 to their final graduation at 24-26, they were in a state of *pukimani* and their personal names were strictly taboo to everybody in the tribe. Each youth was referred to only by his grade name, *Marukumarni* for the first year, *Mikingula* for the last four years, and so on. And here we return finally to a point which was mentioned much earlier—namely, the complete unimportance in tribal eyes of all males below the age of twenty-five. Until they had completed the final stage of initiation, Tiwi males were still boys; they did not even have names. Occasionally, when collecting genealogies and coming upon a reference to a young man, the innocent anthropologist would ask, "Is he married?" In tones of the deepest contempt the informant would reply, "That kid, how could he be married? He's still *Mikingula*." Though *Mikingula* was the stage typically reached by a man at about 20-21 and lasted for the next four years, to the Tiwi it was still a stage in the life of a boy. Not until he had finished as *Mikingula* could he step out into the world and life of men. How he spent the years immediately after finishing initiation decided how soon some senior man would think sufficiently highly of him to aid him in acquiring his first ancient widow.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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riage with a boy who was willing to become the "worker" of the girl's controller.[8]

From the economic standpoint, the large household has much the same function as before the days of the Mission. The younger women go out together and gather food; the old women stay home with the young children. The younger men bring home choice items, which now are trade goods and money from Darwin. The "boss" of the great household is wealthy; today, he has food, tobacco, clothes, and usually sufficient money to gamble. The composition of the great households has altered, but their function is very much the same. The establishment of the monogamous Catholic Cabbagee is even larger than that of the polygamous old pagan, Ki-in-kumi, described in an earlier chapter; Cabbagee, with only one wife, has more women under his "control" than ever Ki-in-kumi had, despite his list of twenty-one wives. The Tiwi have thus been able to retain their large households even under the Mission-imposed system of monogamy.

177 182 592

The Change from Patriliny to Matriliny

In the pre-Cooper era of feuding, the largest significant units among the Tiwi were the bands; the Tiwi never, in that by-gone day, acted as a tribe, even in their attacks upon such outsiders as the British. In the 1950's, when informants talked of the old days they commonly mentioned that male members of old bands came together as units to go on war parties. These old bands did not have a strict rule of descent. But, as has already been indicated, the majority of the males were regarded all their lives as members of the band to which their father belonged. That is, the major unit of the old Tiwi social structure was patrilineal in emphasis.

621 [611]

There also existed in the old Tiwi pattern a strictly matrilineal clan organization, related primarily to totemism. One of the totemic animals of a clan stood for a member of that clan in the song composed to commemorate his death; for instance, the first line of the mourning song for a deceased male of the Red Paint Clan might be "I am red paint." Occasionally, several members of a clan helped one of their number in a fight, but this was apparently not very common before the Mission era. This clan-organization pattern prevailed among the Tiwi through about 1930. Then major and most unpredictable changes began.

614 [533] [765]

What does one expect to happen when a society which has a patrilineal emphasis, like the old Tiwi one, comes into contact with a European society where, if there is any emphasis, it is a patrilineal one? Although one would ordinarily expect a strengthening of patriliny, such was not the case among the Tiwi. The old social unit which was predominantly patrilineal was a territorial group with its major functions in the system of feuding. When the

177 611 614 621

[8] By 1955, the terms "boss" and "worker" had come into the local Tiwi dialect to indicate superordinate and subordinate status interrelationships.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired
[175] the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indi-
[177] cate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even
[609] had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1936, p. 410.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

CHAPTER III

The Pukamuni Ceremony

765 THE burial ceremonies of the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands,
182 based on the *pukamuni* of the mythical man, *Purukupali*, are, by far, the most important events in their ceremonial life.

These ceremonies, which allow the aborigines full expression for their grief, provide, at the same time, a complete cultural outlet for their philosophical beliefs, their music, their art and their dancing. No one, watching these
[781] primitive rituals, night after night, could fail to be impressed by the obvious pleasure experienced by both the participants and the onlookers.

114 Spencer (1928, pp. 647–52), is the only investigator to describe and illustrate any details of the *pukamuni* ceremony. Although he saw but one day of
765 the ceremonials, and that of the closing rituals, he records, briefly, many of the procedures which we witnessed in 1954, i.e., the rite of fire-jumping (p. 73), the spearing of the grave (p. 83), and (p. 89), the "spearing" of one of the participants and the erecting of the poles. This evidence shows
177 that, in spite of the disturbing effects of civilization and the complete
765 ecclesiastical ban on Bathurst Island, the *pukamuni* ceremony is still a vital force in the lives of the Tiwi people.

123 During the six months the expedition was on Melville Island, Miss Jane Goodale, Mr. W. E. Harney and I witnessed some, or all of the rituals of four *pukamuni* ceremonies; one of a man, *Waniamperi*, who had been buried within half a mile of our camp; another of an old woman, *Makapini*, who, against the wishes of her relatives, had been buried in the mission cemetery on Bathurst Island; still another of a premature infant; and, only a few weeks before I left Melville Island, one of *Nulatini*, the deceased wife of our helper, *Pulanimbuwi*.

I will describe the burials of *Waniamperi* and *Nulatini*, and the final rituals
123 of *Waniamperi* and *Makapini*. However, as we saw, in all, twenty-seven
128 *ilanias*, the general pattern of which was similar, I will describe but five of them; three belonging to *Waniamperi*, one to *Makapini* and one to *Nulatini*.[46] The short rituals, associated with the dead infant, will be treated as a separate unit.

[46] The final rituals took place after my departure from Melville Island. These will be dealt with by Miss Goodale.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on The

takes the part of a hunter endeavouring to drive his spear into the enraged kangaroo on the opposite side of the ring. 527 535

Corroboree of the ship of war.—The next item in the ceremony appeals to us Europeans in a twofold sense. Firstly, the mimicry on the part of the aboriginal in an introduced scene is excellent: its effect being still more enhanced in that his artistic genius has expanded the original impressions by adequate interludes of his own invention and taste. Secondly, the observer's sentiment and appreciation are kindled afresh when he sees this savage folk, who are oft not credited with the possession of anything but vice and immorality, present to a subsequent and younger generation, scenes in living picture, which happened long ago in the days of the naval settlement of Fort Dundas. To us the records are available in the libraries throughout the world; to the aboriginal the events can only be handed down by tradition and such ceremonies as that which is now to be described. 177 527 535 [173 182]

The chorus or semicircular group of men have again started their rhythmical accompaniment by clapping upon the lateral aspect of their thighs with the arched palm of one hand. A performer rushes into the centre of the half-ring and, after going through a few preliminaries, stands with one of his legs placed a short distance in front of the other and slightly flexed at the knee. Throwing his head back and looking upwards, he starts a vigorous hauling action by alternately throwing one arm out in the direction he is looking, closing the fist and making an imaginary pull right down to his loins, while at the same time the opposite arm is thrown out and returned in a similar way. Accurate time is kept by the time-beaters. This act is in imitation of the hauling-in of a sail on a European man-of-war, such as the natives saw at Fort Dundas nearly a century ago. The performer now turns and runs to the opposite corner of the half-ring; the onlookers marking the time by clapping to it in a quickened beat produced with both hands upon their buttocks. The same act is repeated there several times. Next, the same hauling motion is continued, but reversed from below towards the body, in imitation of the hauling-up of an anchor. Several short and harsh interjections suggest the orders of the commanding officers and the whole ceremony, in fact, is reproduced with a suspicion of caricature upon the strictness of naval discipline. During this part of the performance, several cries of "poop" and "iah" are again sounded. The actor now moves about in the semicircle with the familiar stamping of feet and cutting out the most grotesque antics. He first extends his arms straight out on either side, throws his head back and moves his thorax laterally in a pendulous manner from the hips. Then he turns his arms through a right-angle frontwards, so that they project slantingly upwards, whence he again changes them to the former position. Then again he extends his arms downward and bends them so that the elbows project behind and his fists rest against his flanks, from which position they are presently changed to a straight pendulous one. After remaining in that position a short while, he suddenly throws them furiously upwards in front of him; the stamping, which has been

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

nature of the cause they diverged sharply. The same single-minded concentration which Mariano devoted to the cultivation of white men, Louis devoted to his sexual activities. Whether two men devoting most of their time one to preaching acculturation, the other to seduction, can be said to have a common basic personality, is a question best left to the personality experts; but at least to the superficial observer there was something vaguely similar in the grim and humorless way in which Louis pursued other men's wives and the way in which Mariano carried on his acculturation campaign.

Sexual irregularities are difficult data upon which to obtain accurate information in any culture. When, therefore, Louis is described as an habitual and constant seducer, no claim is made that he was actually as successful in this line of endeavor as tribal opinion maintained. All that we can be sure of is that Louis had an exalted reputation of this sort and he had it in a tribe where a number of circumstances combine to make seduction almost as easy and almost as common as eating or drinking. The seduction situation is largely the result of the marriage customs of the Tiwi which have the effect of forcing most men to remain bachelors until well into their thirties while concentrating all wives, old and young, in the hands of the older men. This means that the older a man gets the more wives he accumulates, and it would appear that the more he accumulates the more suspicious he becomes that some of them (probably the younger and more physically attractive ones) are being unfaithful to him. These suspicions are accentuated by (a) the way in which the day-to-day food gathering activities of the women are necessarily carried out—the women are widely dispersed through the bush, often working singly, well out of sight and hearing of each other; (b) the fact that young unmarried men are frequently hunting (or pretending to hunt) alone in the same general area of country as that in which an old man's numerous wives are gathering wild foods; and (c) the character of the vegetation in large sections of the Tiwi country, great stretches of it being just open enough to make it easy for native eyes to see somebody slipping through the trees, but just thick enough to make it difficult for them to be sure of identities at any distance.[6]

In such an atmosphere it is rare for any bachelor to live for more than a few months at most without having to face an accusation by some old man that he has been taking liberties with one of the latter's wives, and it is even rarer for an old man with a number of young wives not to have reason to suspect most or all of them of having been unfaithful to him several times at least in the course of a year. But in this setting of daily[7] seduction Louis' reputation was outstanding. In the period with which we are dealing here he had been suspected and publicly accused of adultery with almost every possible woman for miles around. His demeanor when accused by the outraged husbands was characteristic. Whereas other seducers denied the charge and asserted their essential purity, or tried to laugh it off as silly rumor ("Why, I don't even know the woman"), or alibied themselves and accused other men ("I wasn't even hunting in that direction that day, it must have been so-and-so, he was following a kangaroo down that way at the time in question"), or sometimes even

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

121 theorists," says Boas, "assume a mental equipment of primitive man distinct from that of civilized man. I have never seen a person in primitive life to whom this theory would apply. There are slavish believers in the teachings of the past and there are scoffers and unbelievers; there are clear thinkers and muddle-headed bunglers; there are strong characters and there are weaklings" (1951). It is noteworthy that this (for Boas) unusually flat and definite statement was made in an attempt to demolish the views of Levy-Bruhl that between civilized man and the primitive there is an impassable psychological gap. Perhaps—as Tipperary would say, if he understood the matter—perhaps, the personality and culture movement is merely Levy-Bruhl in modern dress, perhaps the latent content of the movement is to deny to the people of the simpler cultures the ordinary elementary human qualities of individual difference and human variation, thereby enabling "personality" and "individuality" to be treated as unique creations of the white races to be found only among the followers of the American way of life. If this indeed be the latent content of much "personality and culture" literature, it seems to warrant a flat and unqualified rejection, in terms as emphatic as those of Boas, by all those anthropologists who, like Boas, may not know projective tests but do know something about the simpler native societies.

NOTES

121 [1] In view of the wide discrepancies in the use of the word "personality" it must be made clear again that all that is meant by the word here is the level of description one is apt to get if in ordinary social conversation one asks the question, "What sort of person is he?"

115 [2] The native names of these men are all polysyllabic and difficult for the reader to remember. I use therefore the names bestowed upon them by white men, to aid in keeping them distinctly in mind. The Spanish names, Antonio, etc., were bestowed by certain Filipino carpenters who built the building for the Roman Catholic missionaries when they first arrived. Tipperary is, of course, a white corruption of a native name.

159 [3] It will be noticed by close students of the above information that Turimpi must have been born in the 1830's, Bongiladu born somewhere around 1865. She had her first child when she was about 16 or 17, at which time her husband Turimpi was at least 50. This is a perfectly normal Tiwi marital situation, the commonest marriage arrangement being one in which a newly-born female child is betrothed by her father to a man in his thirties.

159 177 797 [4] Even from the anthropologist Dooley would not accept tobacco until he had convinced himself that in return he would not be required to sacrifice any of his principles. Nor would he take his son, to whom he was passionately attached, to the Mission station for medical treatment—perhaps the most striking proof of the uncompromising attitude that Dooley had adopted toward the Mission.

159 [5] Such a speculation about Mariano's personality at the age of 25, seventeen years before the author knew him, is based upon the general belief of social scientists that personality does not change much between 25 and 42, and the particular evidence of the older missionaries that Mariano was "already inclined to throw his weight around" when they first arrived.

13 182 837 [6] Goodenough (1949) is apparently one of the few anthropologists to discuss the relation between extra-marital sexual activity and the opportunities provided by the nature of the physical environment. The point here is slightly different; whether the Tiwi physical environment encourages adultery is uncertain since a social system such as theirs would promote adultery whatever the physical environment, but it certainly helps to increase the suspiciousness of husbands.

837 [7] That seduction has to be a daytime activity is implied in what has already been said. After sundown the women are concentrated in their husband's camp and have no opportunity. Which

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

13 *ilimani:* mother's brother; also MoMoSo, MoMoSiSo, MoFaFa. Affinal application: HuFa, FaSiHu, MoFaMoHu. 601

14 *intinganinga:* father's sister; also FaFaDa, FaFaSiDa, MoFaSiDa. Affinal application: HuMo, "MoBr" Wi.

15 *timandinga:* classificatory "father's sister"; also MoMoBrDa. Affinal application: MoBrWi, WiMo (before contract).

16 *ambrinua:* wife's mother (after contract); also DaHu (ws) after contract.

While the Tiwi make no terminological distinction between an actual and a classificatory MoBr (*ilimani*), they do distinguish between an actual FaSi (*intinganinga*), with whom the wife of a classificatory MoBr is classed, and a classificatory "FaSi" (*timandinga*) who is the wife of an actual MoBr. Female informants say: "We cannot marry the son of a real mother's brother, but a long-way mother's brother's son is all right." Male informants phrase the rule differently: "We cannot marry the daughter of a real father's sister; we call our mother-in-law *timandinga* before the contract and *ambrinua* afterwards." This terminology, together with the informants' statements, rather clearly implies unilateral cross-cousin marriage. 582 601

Terminology in the First Descending Generation

17 *intrani:* son (ms); also BrSo (ws), MoBrDaSo, DaDaSo (ms), BrDaDaSo (ws). Affinal application: DaHu (ws) before contract, SiDaHu (ms), SiDaDaDaHu (ms), DaDaDaHu (ws). 601

18 *intraninga:* daughter (ms); also BrDa (ws), MoBrDaDa, DaDaDa (ms), BrDaDaDa (ws). Affinal application: SoWi (ws), SiSoWi (ms) DaDaSoWi (ws), SiDaDaSoWi (ms).

19 *morti:* son (ws); also SiSo (ms), DaDaSo (ws), SiDaDaSo (ms). Affinal application: DaHu (ms), BrDaHu (ws), DaDaDaHu (ms), BrDaDaDaHu (ws), MoBrDaDaHu.

20 *maringa:* daughter (ws); also SiDa (ms), DaDaDa (ws), SiDaDaDa (ms). Affinal application: SoWi (ms), BrSoWi (ws), DaDaSoWi (ms), MoBrDaSoWi.

Although the terms appropriate to the first ascending and first descending generations are in general kept distinct, they are to some extent interchangeable when warranted by differences in relative age and the behavior associated therewith.

The applications of the terms *morti* and *maringa*, in contrast to those of the terminology in the first ascending generation, suggest a rule of bilateral cross-cousin marriage with sister exchange. The rest of my analysis, however, indicates a strong preference for unilateral cross-cousin marriage and the impossibility of sister exchange in Type A contracts. The seeming inconsistencies may, of course, reflect a period of uncompleted change in social structure, but this lies outside the province of the present paper, which is concerned with showing how the system operates today. 182 582 583

Terminology in the Second Ascending Generation

21 *amini:* mother's father; also MoFaBr, FaMoBr. Affinal application: MoMoHu, FaMaSiHu. 601

22 *ama:* father's mother; also FaMoSi, MoFaSi. Affinal application; MaFaWi, MoMoBrWi.

884 the technique had to be made meaningful to the initiates,
174 the lifesaving qualities of this famine food were explained as health-giving powers. A ceremony accompanied by song and dance was certainly a dramatic and effective means of impressing the initiates in preparation methods. The ritual served another purpose as well: because traveling is so
[180] difficult during the rainy season, each household is isolated from the others. The *Kulama* ritual follows this period, and it is natural to expect a reunion to be an occasion to exchange news, settle differences, and tell stories or sing songs that keep traditions alive.

885 MUCH harder to account for is the Tiwi idea of adulthood. That every adult is solely responsible for his own health and wealth, and that success in life depends entirely on personal behavior and industry, are ideals strangely similar to those that underlie the American way
[171] of life, despite the great gulf between the aboriginal culture and our own. But it is not at all surprising that the Tiwi
177 have a great sympathy for much of Western civilization. Many hold the same views as the *Kulama* singer quoted earlier in this article who saw his children wearing clothes and shoes and going to school to learn to write, for this is
[181] the Tiwi's contemporaneous idea of success in a way of life introduced to them only a few short years ago.

Early in the summer of 1962 I revisited the Tiwi for
[114] two weeks. Although I knew that the Tiwi desired schooling and training in European ways of life and would seize any such opportunity afforded them, I was hardly prepared for the tremendous changes that had taken place during the eight years that had elapsed since my first visit.

Three months after the *Kulama* ceremony of 1954, a
[871] government school was opened. Now all the Tiwi children go to school, and some who have finished the six-year program in the government school have received subsequent training as teaching or nursing assistants. Some others have had "on-the-job" training in various activities connected with a large-scale forestry project that has been started on Melville Island. In fact, all the able-bodied Tiwi men and women are currently employed, and their tasks bear little or no relation to their old life in the bush.

It is perhaps significant—but to me not at all surprising—that I did not hear a single real complaint from the Tiwi regarding their new manner of living. They seem to like it and are anticipating bigger and better things (in the
[324] Western sense) for their children. Hunting has become
[868] a week-end diversion and the children receive little or no real instruction in that traditional skill.

178 SOME aspects of Tiwi life are slow to die, however. Most
784 of the old taboos, the observance of which was considered necessary in the past in order to insure health and wealth, are still observed, although at least one teen-ager expressed doubt that the taboos had any actual effect on the outcome of one's life. Western medicine and public
177 health practices are fast replacing belief in the *Kulama*.
884 During the past eight years only three men have begun the six years of training for *Kulama* initiation, and some of the older men no longer participate in the ceremony. However, as long as even a small number of Tiwi believe in the *Kulama*, the ritual will survive, but I doubt that it will for long.

000 NEAR END of *Kulama* ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.
[P. 16, (B)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

right of her clansmen and more specifically her sons (in consultation with her own wishes) to arrange her remarriage became restored as a sort of residual or reanimated right. Moreover, as we shall see, it was in line with their own political interests for the sons to insist on exercising such a right. 584 587 614

Naming Rules

Such a way of integrating the two forms of marriage is supported by the Tiwi rules for naming children, which are very relevant to the issue. We mentioned earlier that the right to bestow a daughter was vested, strictly speaking, not in the actual father, but in the man who named her. Personal names were important in the Tiwi value system[8] and were given to every child a few weeks after its birth by its father or the man currently married to its mother. But whenever a husband died and the widows remarried, all the personal names given to their children by the dead man became strictly taboo, and the new husbands of the widows had the duty (or right) of providing all the children with new names. Since most women were widowed several times in their lives, most children were thus renamed several times in *their* lives, and the names given them by the earlier husbands of their mother dropped completely out of use.[9] Logically under this system nobody would get a permanent name until his or her mother was dead, since as long as she were alive she would remarry and her new husband would rename all her children, no matter how aged they might be. The Tiwi insisted that logically this was how the naming system was supposed to work, and, in fact, the personal names of even prominent senior men did become taboo whenever their mothers' current husbands died. But convenience proved stronger than logic and the personal names of most men and women became well established in their early adulthood as people became used to them. While such names did become taboo when the man who had given them died, the taboo in such cases was temporary rather than permanent, and after a decent interval the name would creep back into use replacing some new and unfamiliar one which might be bestowed by the widow's new husband. In general, the name which thus became permanently or irrevocably attached to a person was the name which a person held when he or she first emerged into tribal prominence or first began to get talked about. For a male, this was most usually the name he was bearing in his late twenties and early thirties; for a female, the name she was known by in her early adolescence when she first left her father's household to take up residence with her earliest husband. 553 768 587 [183] [551]

That convenience thus overbore logic in the Tiwi naming system by

[8] See Hart 1951.

[9] It can easily be seen what headaches this naming system created for an anthropologist trying to collect genealogies. Individuals would occur in one genealogy under one name, and in another under another name, making the task of cross-indexing and cross-checking enormously difficult. [124]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was entering the junior elder class and, having received wives from other sources than Inglis, was getting to the point where he would soon have free daughters of his own. He had no intention of performing any more services for Inglis who was now nearly sixty. Hence Inglis had not bestowed any daughters on Tomitari since 1923; those of his daughters who had been born since that year were bestowed on men other than Tomitari and men who were younger and less successful than he. 159 584 557

As we see it, the deals involving widows, particularly the pay-offs to young agents for acting to promote the interests of older men, had distorted what might be called the pure theory of Tiwi bestowal. According to the pure theory, mothers' brothers bestowed their daughters on selected sisters' sons, and the older man who gave a young man a wife and became his wife's father, was performing a kindness toward a favorite nephew for which the nephew should be grateful. But the Inglis-Tomitari operation shows how the theory had become distorted in practice. In order that Inglis might have some young daughters whom he would be free to bestow on his favored young nephew, Tomitari, in 1914 he had had to arrange the young man's marriage with an elderly widow to ensure safe delivery to him (Inglis) of some young wives who would bear him those daughters. Everything went smoothly and no slip-up occurred, yet by the time Inglis was in a position to give a wife to his favored young nephew, he found that the latter was no longer a dependent young man but a successful junior elder competing with him in his own field of identifying and using talent among the younger men. Tomitari's first daughter, born in 1927—not to any daughter of Inglis but to an older wife—was bestowed by its father on the distant but very promising Gitjara, a man of thirty-two. Gitjara was thus selected by Tomitari as a promising satellite at about the same age as Tomitari in 1914 had been selected by Inglis. Moreover, Tomitari by this time, far from being the grateful nephew of old Inglis (as the theory stipulated), was looking forward with anticipation to the old man's death, since when that occurred, among the widows of Inglis would be the three sisters of Padimo of whom he was still the nominal father. It was by acting as their step-father when they were children that he had got his own career started. They were indeed the foundation stone of his own career and, having profited so much from them as children, he was keenly interested in their redisposition whenever Inglis' death should put them on the market again. Thus he was simultaneously the husband of some of Inglis' daughters and nominal father of some of Inglis' wives. In the first status, he was expected by the theory to be a grateful son-in-law of Inglis; in the second status, the facts of Tiwi life required him to see Inglis' death as providing him with an opportunity to derive some new benefits for himself from his position as nominal father of the three wives of Inglis whose delivery to Inglis' household he had himself engineered. 183 581 604 159 183 584 604 [557 593]

Thus the politics of bestowal cannot be separated from the politics of widow remarriage. Every case of one had endless repercussions in the other. Sisters' sons who were promised young wives by their mothers' brothers were always too old to be grateful by the time the bestowal occurred or by the even later time when the bestowed child was old enough to come into residence. 182 557 584 604

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

627 really wild, such a spear was apt to carom off the ground at an unexpected angle
684 and inflict a severe wound before the spectators (as collective umpires) had time to call it—in which case the duel was over and the accused was punished.[2]

Apart from those that unpredictably deflected off the ground, or even off a neighboring tree, the young man could dodge the old man's spears indefinitely if he wanted to. He was much younger and hence almost invariably in much better shape than the older man. But if he did this, the old man soon
[626] began to look a little ridiculous, and Tiwi society thoroughly disapproved of young men who made old men look ridiculous in public. Continued dodging
[888] and jumping and weaving of the body, no matter how gracefully they were done, were not prolonged by any young man who hoped in time to become a respected elder himself. The elders in the last analysis controlled bestowals, and holding one of them up to public ridicule was sure to antagonize all of them. So the young man, having for five or ten minutes demonstrated his physical ability to avoid being hit, then showed a proper moral attitude by allowing himself to be hit. This took even greater skill in bodily movement. Trying to lose a fight without making it too obvious to the crowd and without getting hurt too much oneself is a problem that confronts some professional athletes in our own culture, and few of them do it with as much skill as the younger Tiwi in the same situation. A fairly deep cut on the arm or thigh that bled a lot but healed quickly was the most desirable wound to help the old man inflict, and when the blood gushed from such a wound the crowd yelled approval and the duel was over. The young man had behaved admirably, the old man had vindicated his honor, the sanctity of marriage and the Tiwi constitution had been upheld, and everybody went home satisfied and full of moral rectitude. Seduction did not pay.

183 This was the Tiwi duel as it ideally should be conducted, and in per-
627 haps as many as two-thirds of all such disputes it was so conducted. Divergences
684 from this form clearly arose from the unpredictability of human beings and their fondness for trying to exercise choice instead of following a set pattern. Though the dice were heavily loaded against them, some Tiwi young men chose defiance instead of repentance. There were various avenues of defiance open to them. The mildest was to refuse to allow the old man's spears to hit
627 the target. Slightly more brazen were the young men who turned up at the
684 beginning of the duel with throwing sticks or hunting spears in their hands, even though they used these not to throw but to knock aside contemptuously the spears of the old man. More brazen still was the young man, rare but not unknown, who went so far as to throw missiles back at the older accuser. All such attempts to defy the traditional pattern of the duel met with the same response, and that very quickly. The duel began as usual with the two antagonists facing one another inside the circle of spectators. As soon as it became apparent that the young man was not conforming to the normal pattern of meekness and nonretaliation, there would be immediate activity on the

[2] Two cases of broken legs below the knee within six weeks of each other in 1928 give some indication of the force with which such badly aimed spears would bounce off the ground.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958 .
OI20 Tiwi OI20

761 [825] [761] wallaby, so that he could see the grave of his victim without being recognised.

On one occasion, when I was travelling with *Pulanimbuwi*, just after the death of his wife, he went to her grave, carefully searched the ground for tracks, then lifting up the sheets of paper-bark, examined the mound. Later, *Pulanimbuwi* announced that a *Marayi* (p. 154) had killed his wife, *Nulatini*, by getting inside of her body. But, although still there when she was buried, the *Marayi* had escaped through the hole *Pulanimbuwi* had seen in the mound.[67]

(2) *The Seclusion of the Grave*

769 The grave of *Waniamperi* was about a hundred yards from the road between our camp and the Snake Bay aboriginal settlement. Although aborigines, who were only distantly related to the dead man, walked backward and forward along this road, all the *pukamuni* people had to take a roundabout path from which it was not possible to see the grave site.

One night, *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, had to pass along the road to our camp. When he was approaching the position from which the grave site could be seen in the day-time, his wife, wrapping his head in a blanket, led him past the spot. This practice was only allowed at night; it was prohibited during the day.[68]

[775] [784] No aboriginal man hunted the creatures, or woman gathered the plant foods adjacent to the grave, so that, should the *mopaditi* of *Waniamperi* return to his burial place for a while he would find ample food.

4. THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONIES, THE ILANIAS

(1) *The Ilanias of Waniamperi*

765 About two months after the burial of *Waniamperi*, *Wurarbuti*, the ceremonial leader of the Melville Island people, sent message sticks to Bathurst Island aborigines telling them that the *ilanias* (preliminary rituals) of *Waniamperi* were about to start.

[123] We saw eleven of *Waniamperi's ilanias*. But, as they were more or less the same, I will describe only three.

[765] [67] *Pulanimbuwi's* action was viewed with considerable disfavour. He, as a near relative, should not have gone near the grave until the final rituals. Only the *wanaras* (workers) who cut the poles are allowed to do that.

[183] [68] Under the normal tribal conditions, these precautions would have been unnecessary, because the place of burial would then have been in some distant, unfrequented locality.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

garded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker. The tribe thought of him in much the same way, the missionaries and anthropologist agreed with the estimate. Bob was essentially a "good boy." He never did anything wrong, never answered back, never spoke out of turn, never stepped out of line, never deviated from the behavior expected of him. He was, of course, too young in Tiwi categories to have any influence or importance. But it is hard to see how age could turn him into anything more positive than he was at 28, at which age he invited the comment that he had very little personality. About all that could be said is that he was a born follower and always tried to do the right thing, the right thing consisting in conforming to the expectations of whatever group he happened to be with at the moment. When with the tribe Bob did what the elders told him to do. If they disagreed among themselves, Bob waited until the majority decision was clear and then added his voice to the chorus of agreement. The same faithfulness which caused his white employers to label Bob "a good boy" caused the tribal elders to regard him as among the sounder of the young men, though they deplored his tendency to spend so much time in Darwin. But even on his trips to Darwin Bob did not depart too much from the norms for men of his age who had been children when the Mission came and who therefore constituted a post-white generation. He did not stay more than three or four months at a time in Darwin, he returned for all the steps of his initiation ceremonies, he observed his food and other taboos even when in Darwin, and during his sojourns there he never caused scandal back-home by getting into the slightest "trouble." He went to Darwin when the tribe could raise no valid objection to his going, he returned whenever his absence led to criticism. Bob was a barometer of which line offered the least resistance at any given time. His chief motivation seemed to be to escape public attention, to always be where he would attract the least notice. 159

The only occasion I ever saw Bob forced to emerge from the background and take the center of the stage was on one occasion when he returned from Darwin and was told by the local gossips that his wife had been unfaithful to him during his absence. The man involved was—not surprisingly—his brother Louis. This really put Bob on the spot. In pre-white days a youngster like Bob would not have had a wife, and therefore the situation of a man of Bob's tender years calling an older man to account for seducing his wife could not have arisen. The traditional pattern in seduction cases is for the husband, necessarily an older man, to accuse the alleged seducer, necessarily a young man and therefore a bachelor and a person of no importance, and demand vengeance on him. The accuser is, therefore, traditionally a man of weight and prestige and dignity, and carries on his case against the seducer with style and authority. The accused on the other hand, being young and a person of no importance, stands abashed, cowed and silent, looking guilty while the outranged husband showers him with tirades of abuse, followed finally by spears or throwing-sticks. In the case of Bob versus Louis the casting of these traditional roles was all wrong. Bob, overcome with embarrassment, did his best 159 177 183 561 684

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 177 183 561 684

to give an imitation of an angry and indignant elder telling off an impertinent "young punk,"[11] but even to the Tiwi, the spectacle of the subservient and retiring Bob trying to overawe and browbeat the formidable and completely self-reliant Louis was such a perversion of the traditional pattern that it bordered on the farcical. As soon as it was over and the conventions were satisfied, Bob, pale and shaken by the unwonted initiative and aggressiveness he had been forced to display, hurried back to the oblivion of Darwin where no such demands were made on a good boy, and, presumably to ensure that he would not be forced to go through such an ordeal again, took the rather unusual step of taking his wife along with him this time.

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The above brief sketches convey perhaps some idea of the variation in personalities of the five brothers. Obviously no definite conclusions can be drawn from material of this sort. It is merely suggestive of possibilities for theory. What it seems to suggest is, however, at variance with the idea that personality is substantially uniform in the simpler societies. No attempt has been made in this paper to explore the full gamut of personal differences among the Tiwi. By adding half a dozen other individuals (including such as Tu'untalumi and Dooley, already briefly mentioned) to the five siblings we have discussed above, it would be easy to widen the number of "personality types" illustrated. By confining our attention to the sons of Turimpi we have avoided an arbitrary selection of contrasting individuals; the five men selected were chosen *not because* they were different *but because* they were brothers. How different they are in that vaguely defined thing called personality is largely a matter of opinion depending almost entirely upon what is regarded as a "personality" difference. All that we would here claim for them in the way of difference is that on any continuum for a single trait the five sons of Turimpi range themselves about as differentially as any five average men are likely to do in our culture. In aggressiveness, for example, Mariano is well toward one end of the range, Bob well toward the other; Tipperary, Louis and Antonio at different points in between. In decisiveness or decision-making, Mariano, Louis and Tipperary belong to the heavily positive side, Antonio and Bob on the heavily negative side. But if we couple with decisiveness the ability to win friends and influence people, Tipperary, the decisive and popular, must be sharply separated from Louis and Mariano, decisive but unpopular. The three aggressive dominating types differ markedly among themselves in what might be called interest in life or chief motivating force, Mariano expressing his need for dominance through political channels, Louis through sex, Tipperary through laughter and kidding. On an introvert-extrovert continuum, Louis the silent withdrawn lone-wolf has to be placed well toward the introvert pole, with Mariano not very far away from him, but with Tipperary the out-giving friendly "Rotarian" kidder at the other extreme, and Antonio well down toward Tipperary's end. These are of course just a few of the possible ranges along which the sons of Turimpi have to be located.

Whatever facet of behavior we seize on for comparison, we find these five

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

men markedly different from one another. Nor does that obvious fact seem due in any way to the circumstance that the observations upon them were made in a post-white situation. The presence of the Mission, the arguments about polygyny, the lure of movies and white jobs in Port Darwin, the coming of the Japanese pearlers—such factors as these obviously influenced a great deal the *cultural* situation, but it is difficult to see how they can be held to account for Mariano's vehemence or Antonio's indecision or Tip's gaiety or Louis' amorousness. Such things as the Mission, the Japanese, Port Darwin, were vehicles for or occasions for Mariano's vehemence and Antonio's indecision and Tip's gaiety, but they certainly did not cause them. These men would, one presumes, have displayed those same temperamental traits through other and more "native" cultural vehicles if the whites and the Japanese had not been there. To argue otherwise, that is that such differences appear in the post-white situation but are absent under pre-white conditions, would seem to be a most blatant form of ethnocentricism. 157

It is equally ethnocentric, though in a different way, to argue that our culture, because of its alleged greater complexity, is able in some mysterious way to produce greater variations in personality traits than other and simpler cultures. What complexity of culture does is increase the number of cultural alternatives or socially acceptable behavior patterns; it cannot increase the number of attitudes which an individual will manifest while choosing a cultural alternative or following a socially acceptable pattern. An individual in any culture will follow a "cultural course" but he will follow it cheerfully or sourly, silently or garrulously, in a relaxed manner or a tense manner, like a leader or like a follower, with his eye on the gallery or regardless of the world's opinion. These alternatives would appear to be human alternatives, since they are ways in which all men respond to cultural stimuli. Since they are human variations they will be present where there are many cultural alternatives and where there are none. They will be present in closed social systems as much as in open social systems. When a man in any culture in the world is practising a cultural pattern, he will still differ from his neighbors—or his brothers—in the way he practises it. "It ain't the horrible things you do, but the horrible way you do 'em," are the words of an old joke which draws attention to the vital difference between the things which a culture requires its people to do and the attitudes with which different people proceed to do them. The five sons of Turimpi all followed Tiwi cultural patterns reasonably closely but as this paper has tried to demonstrate they were far indeed from being "stereotyped personalities." They differed not in what they did but in how they did it. 121 [183]

It follows therefore that since simplicity or complexity of culture is irrelevant to the whole matter, we should expect to find, in any culture in the world, a pretty similar range of variation in what must roughly be called "types of people." If the personality and culture literature is leading young anthropologists into the field expecting to find "stereotyped personalities" in the simpler cultures, they are doomed to disappointment. Years ago, Franz Boas (in a passage that is never quoted nowadays) told them what they *will* find. "Some

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SHARK DANCE is among traditional, imitative figures that are performed during ritual preparation of toxic *Kulama* yams.

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868 ceived additional instruction in spear-fishing and birding, while girls were taught more intensively to locate and identify edible plants. The children, as a result, were generally independent economically in their early teens, by
587 which time the girls were already married. Young males
[883] contributed to their parents' larder and to other households, but did not marry and acquire households until they
[183] were more than thirty years old. Even now, this late marriage age obtains in theory, but not always in practice.

885 THUS, to the Tiwi, economic independence and/or marriage did not alone signify adulthood. The Tiwi adult was intellectually, rather than physiologically, a mature individual who was expected to join actively in the non-economic affairs of the community. An adult was also expected to be almost entirely responsible for his own health, wealth, and future prospects. This included attaining success in hunting and in war and, for the men, in wife-collecting. If an adult became ill or was injured or, as a Tiwi would say, was unlucky in the pursuit of life's benefits, he alone was responsible for not behaving as an adult should.

884 The annual *Kulama* ceremony, held by each community in April at the end of the rainy season, was a most important event to insure individual success. Although a collec-

[P. 11, (C)]

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 12(C)]

emphasized, are presented from the point of view of a female Ego, for I strongly feel that it is only by using a female Ego that one can see the Tiwi marriage "game" as a "system." Following this, I present the kinship terminology together with some comments on the system of kin classification that are relevant to the marriage system. The last section discusses some aspects of the exchange of women between descent groups and local groups. 121 128

I am only too well aware that I do not have all the facts necessary to make a complete analysis of Tiwi social organization. It must also be stated that the relative-age analysis was a desk study based largely on what I believe to be logical deductions from the collected factual information pertaining to the age differences between spouses.[4] More field work is obviously necessary, and I hope that others who become interested in the problems of analysis and classification raised by this paper will comment and thereby suggest what they consider to be crucial areas for reinvestigation. 121

The Factor of Relative Age in Marriage Contracts

Hart and Pilling (1960) have described the dynamic nature of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a male Ego. My study supports their conclusion that for a Tiwi male the acquisition of wives and the acquisition of prestige are dependant variables. A Tiwi male will rarely acquire a wife through any form of contract before the age of 30. A bestowed wife, one who is promised before birth and becomes a cohabiting wife before puberty, is a valuable prestige symbol, but difficult to acquire. Thus a young man will frequently start his household with the acquisition of a less valuable but more easily obtainable type of wife, i.e., a widow, often of advanced age. Some Tiwi males never obtain sufficient prestige or political power to become involved in a bestowal contract, while others who are more fortunate may be involved in several such contracts. 554 554 582 [587]

My study of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a female Ego reveals some interesting differences in perspective. First and foremost is the fact that, while involvement in a bestowal contract is a cultural ideal, albeit rarely realized, for a male's first marriage, it is an inescapable norm for every Tiwi woman's first marriage. Thus, while this type of contract can be considered "preferential" but not normative from the point of a male Ego, it is acknowledged by Tiwi women as an inflexible "rule" governing their first marriage before puberty to a man whom they describe as "the one who grew me up, treated me like a father, and made me a woman."[5] 183 582

Thus a marriage contract for a man's first wife need not be—and frequently is not—the same as the initial contract leading to a girl's primary marriage. Furthermore, the form of the contract for a man's first wife is apt to vary considerably, whereas the form of the initial

5 [The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche. Cf. p.465, cat. 116 -- Analyst.]

183 contract for a girl's primary marriage follows a consistent cultural
582 pattern.

In any discussion of a marriage system all the varieties of
[121] marriage contracts must be considered. If, however, one variety is found to be more frequent, preferred, prescribed, or invariable, then that is the one to which all the others must be related. In the Tiwi marriage system there is no difficulty in determining which type of contract should be considered basic to the others. The initial contract which leads to a first marriage of a Tiwi girl is prescribed and invariable and is thus necessarily the most frequent from the point of view of a female Ego, and it is also a preferred contract from the point of view of a male Ego. In the following discussion, I shall refer to this type of contract as a Type A contract. Types B, C, and D are all contracts leading to secondary marriages of Tiwi widows and will be briefly discussed later.

584 A Type A contract is made during the five-day period in which
606 a girl is isolated in the bush at the time of her first menstrual period. Although she has been living with her first husband, she is separated
[881] from him at this time. When she again returns to her husband's camp, she is not only considered to have reached the status of a woman but also that of a mother-in-law. While she is in the bush, her father places a spear between her legs as she sleeps and then presents it to a boy or man whom he selects to serve his daughter as a son-in-law. The spear is regarded by the recipient as a symbol of a bestowed wife yet to be born to his young mother-in-law. By accepting the spear, the son-in-law becomes obligated to his mother-in-law; from that moment on he must supply her with food and goods and such services as she may request at any time. In return, she is
[582] held solely responsible for seeing that her first daughter is sent to his camp when she reaches the wifely age of eight or ten. After receiving the first daughter, the son-in-law is expected to continue his services to his wife's mother, in return for which he can expect to receive other daughters subsequently born to her. The initial contract continues until either the son-in-law or mother-in-law dies. If either fails to honor his obligation, however, the other may terminate the contract. A Type A contract is therefore essentially a contract between a mother-in-law and a son-in-law. The arranger of the contract is the mother-in-law's father.

582 The Tiwi, like the majority of Australian societies, consider cross-cousin marriage to be the proper form of marriage arrangements. For the sake of simplicity, I shall conduct the following analysis as if the preferential marriage pattern involved first cousins, although in fact it generally involves second cousins. For the purpose of viewing the system from the standpoint of relative age the distinction between a first and a second cousin is irrelevant. The question of classificatory cousins will be deferred until the kinship terminology is discussed.

The following analysis of Type A contracts in terms of the factor of relative age will show that the selection of a FaSiSo rather than a

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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The mobility of people other than household heads was much less. 562
Women and children could move only with the permission, and usually in the 571
company, of their lord and master. Occasionally old and trusted wives might
be sent, unsupervised, on a journey by their husbands or their brothers, [203]
usually to carry messages and bring back gossip, but young wives were never trusted to be out of sight either of the husband or of elderly female supervisors. Young men were less subject to their fathers' orders and hence were fairly free to come and go as they pleased, but the universal suspicion which all husbands bore toward wandering young men put severe restrictions on their mobility and prevented them attaching themselves to any household or camp in which they did not have some close relative.

The fact, then, that a man like Tu'untalumi was (in Tiwi terms) very 159
mobile did not necessarily mean that members of his household shared his 222
degree of mobility. When he took most of his large household with him on his 462
journeys away from home, as he often did, it was always because he was going 527
a considerable distance and was traveling slowly, living off the country as he
went. In such cases he liked to have a large retinue to feed him on the way
and also to permit him to entertain in fitting style when he arrived. For
while it was true that at a funeral or at an initiation the relatives of the de- [594]
ceased or of the novices were supposed to take care of the feeding of all the
visitors, nonetheless, wealthy and generous men like Tu'untalumi believed in
taking along with them a bevy of young wives, with a couple of efficient
elderly widow-wives in charge of them, to contribute to the food-getting and
food-preparing activities. Of course the supervision of the young wives' morals [837
in the strange environment was often difficult, especially in the hectic at- 593]
mosphere of a big ceremonial, but this worry was compensated for by the fact
that the visitor who came so attended was contributing a number of extra
food providers to the labor force of the harassed hosts and thus making a
generous gesture, and also by the fact that such a visitor was not dependent
upon the hospitality provided by the hosts. Having his own food-producing
unit with him, he could live better and stay longer than if he had come alone
or only as one of a party of men. In this respect, as in so many others, a Tiwi
household head's decision had to be reached by balancing against one another
the two competing motives of, on the one hand, the desire to eat well and,
on the other, the desire to keep his young wives safe from prowling bachelors.
Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest man of the Malauila band, usually decided not only
to leave his wives at home but also not even to go himself. But Ki-in-kumi was
a gloomy, pessimistic old man. Tu'untalumi usually decided to do the thing
in style, travel with a large retinue, have all the comforts of home while in
strange districts, and take his chances on the strange bachelors. He clearly
believed that a good booming ceremony with lots to eat and himself in the
center directing the dancing was well worth the risk of a few of his young
wives being seduced off-stage. Men like Ki-in-kumi thought Tu'untalumi an
old fool for not leaving his young wives at home, and Tu'untalumi probably [184]
thought that old Ki-in-kumi might as well be dead, especially since his death
would be the occasion for a really magnificent funeral.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

115 owe much, not only for the many bark baskets and paintings they made, but also for the wealth of information they so courteously imparted to me about the creation of their world, their totemic ancestors and the philosophies of their people.

These two old men are the storehouses of the tribal beliefs and philosophies. As the younger men are no longer taking a deep interest in their tribal lore, the passing of *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita* will be an irreparable loss to the aborigines of Melville Island.

[184] [178]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 Circles *a*, *a*, are places where the women stood at *Purukupali's* ceremony, [532] and lines *c*, *c*, the paths they made as they danced toward the central dancing ground, the *milimika*.

According to other informants, the honey-men from Bathurst Island and [184] other groups from western Melville Island assembled and performed an *ilania* at Tuju, while the people from south and south-western Melville Island performed yet another *ilania* at Puntubu (Fig. 1).

At the conclusion of these *ilanias* the mythical people from the west met [532] at Rulijunga, where *Mantinuria*, one of the eucalyptus-tree women (Pl. 18A) had prepared a ceremonial ground for them. Here the assembled people performed another *ilania*, after which they moved off as a body to Timbaranapi, where the "workers", having cut the poles and prepared the *pukamuni* spears, baskets and other paraphernalia, had already assembled for the final *ilania*.

After a ceremonial fight[28] and the performance of the *ilania* ceremony, the men and women travelled to Tapararimi by different paths to carry out the final rituals.

532 A simple bark painting, Pl. 2A, pictures the *pukamuni* ground of *Purukupali* 773 at Tapararimi.

The lower black space is the ceremonial ground (*milimika*) on which the participants performed their dances, and the white area on the top, the several honey-men, one of whom, *Talinini*, was in charge of the rituals.

The five upright vertical panels are the *tudinis* (*pukamuni* poles); the lower line of black horizontal rectangles represents the red ochre, and the upper line of rectangles, black paint, with which the performers decorated themselves.

The dots represent paint on the bodies of the caterpillar men, the *Maludaianini*, who, at the close of the ceremony, transformed themselves into the [821] Milky Way.

The *pukamuni* rituals and those who mourned beside the poles at Tapararimi are illustrated on a bark painting, Pl. 2D, E.

The central black oval, *c*, is the swift whirlpool off Impanili, where *Purukupali*, walking along the track, *f*, *f*, with his dead son in his arms, drowned himself.

[764] [28] In the ceremonies of the present day, the "workers" when they return from cutting the poles, which are adjacent to the grave, are looked upon as *mopaditis* (spirits of the dead). Before the *ilania* can proceed, the *pukamuni* men and the "workers" take part in a ceremonial fight (Pl. 25D), in which the "workers" (as *mopaditis*) are vanquished. During creation times, a similar fight took place at Timbaranapi, when the *pukamuni* people from the west coast met the "workers" from the east.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765

(i) The ceremonial fight between the *pukamuni* men and the "workers" returning from cutting the poles which are near the grave.
(ii) The feeding of the "workers" by the *pukamuni* men and women.
(iii) The totemic songs and dances.
(iv) The *pumati*, in which married men and women beat the relatives of their spouses with boughs.
(v) The rite of fire-jumping (*wandiatapinda*).

(i) *The Ceremonial Fight.* When, late in the afternoon, the "workers" were returning to the *milimika* from the grave site, where they have been cutting the burial poles, they announced their coming with the honey and mosquito calls.

The *alouwia*, who had assembled the *pukamuni* men in the *milimika* in readiness for this ritual, answered with the honey call.

The "workers" emerged from the forest in a body and, running toward the men in the *milimika*, cast short sticks, as spears, at the *pukamuni* men, who replied vigorously with throwing sticks, neither group of contestants, however, trying to hit the other.

The "workers" having exhausted their spears, rushed into the *milimika*, where, to the accompaniment of much laughter and good-humour, they wrestled with the *pukamuni* men (Pl. 25D), until they (the "workers") were pushed out of the *milimika*.[63]

(ii) *The Feeding of the Workers.* It is the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the "workers" while they are cutting and painting the poles.

On the edge of the *milimika* were two baskets, both painted red, one made by a woman of the rain and freshwater totem of Wailu, and the other by a woman of the fire totem of Wuriupi, the totemic place of the dead man, *Waniampori*. Food caught or gathered by the *pukamuni* men and women was cooked and placed in those baskets for the "workers" only, it being taboo to all members of the *pukamuni* group.

After the "workers" had been "vanquished" in the ceremonial fight, the *pukamuni* men carried the baskets[64] into the centre of the *milimika* and there stood guard while the "workers" had their meal (Pl. 25B).

[184] [775] [789]

[63] There is no clear-cut belief behind this ritual. Some informants said that the "workers", having been adjacent to the grave for many hours, were inhabited by *mopaditis* who must be driven out before the "workers" are "safe" to associate with the *pukamuni* group; others said that the *mopaditis*, following close on the heels of the "workers" had to be frightened away by what, to them, appeared to be a real fight, before the *ilunias* could start.

[64] These baskets, though they always stood on the edge of the *milimika*, were not often used in the *ilunias* we witnessed, as the participants were able to get most of the food they required from the settlement. If, however, the burial ceremony had been held at some remote place, the *pukamuni* men and women would have had to spend the day in hunting in order to provide food for the "workers".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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(e) *The Final Mourning Rituals*

765 As soon as the poles were in place the "workers" pulled away the bushes covering the grave. This was a signal for the closing phases of the final rituals. Everyone, men and women, from both Melville and Bathurst Islands, rushed forward and threw themselves on top of one another at the base of the burial poles, until the ground, and even the grave itself, was covered with a mass of human beings, each mourning heartbrokenly.

After a period of mourning, *Jibunglialuni* and *Wurarbuti* rose to their [302] feet, cut off the beards they had grown for the occasion,[84] and washed the painted decorations from their bodies, while the mourners, assembling close [535] to the poles, impersonated, in almost hysterical dance and song, the shark, the rain-woman, the jabiru, and many other mythical heroes of creation times.

Nangrinini, assisted by his wife, first performed the basket dance (Pl. 26c),[85] then once more the dance of the bark canoe. *Pulanimbuwi*, who danced beside him, acted the part of *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), the sea-eagle, swooping down on its prey.

The return of the ceremonial leaders to the grave was the signal for another exhibition of mass hysteria. Weeping women, beating themselves with sticks, threw themselves on the top of the grave, while men, leaning over the burial poles, mourned continuously in high-pitched wails.

Gradually the sounds of lamentation became less. One by one the mourners left, until there remained only the crouching body of *Waniamperi's* widow, painted entirely in black, a little wizened woman, whose span of life was almost spent.

(2) *The Final Pukamuni of Makapini*

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

[302] A little before sunset, the Melville Island men and women assembled to decorate themselves for the final rituals, while *Kitapipatu* (Pl. 27A), a sister of the dead woman, *Makapini*, carrying a long stick, and painted entirely in white, wandered among the *pukamuni* people, crying the *amburu* song.

[184] The body decorations finished, which neither took as long, nor were as elaborate as at the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*, the performers assembled about twenty yards from the three burial poles (Pl. 34A, B, F), which the "workers" had hidden from view by a screen of boughs.

[84] Before the days of the white man, the Tiwi men did not cut their beards at the final *pukamuni*, but plucked them out in handfuls. Spencer, 1928, p. 673, Fig. 467, both illustrates and records having seen this curious ritual in the *kulama* ceremony. [177]

[85] Mountford, 1956, p. 434.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

202 765 *palmatjinis*, and cane armlets, *jairinis*. Then, taking a female *pukamuni* spear, *punkagani*, in his hand he seated himself within sight of the camp.

[301] [302] The local aborigines went out to welcome him, but on seeing the message stick and hearing the news, they mourned hysterically, cutting their heads [785] and beating themselves with sticks.

When the mourning died down, the aborigines gave the messenger a meal, [574] after which he returned to his own camp.

Although the general distribution of the totemic *purunkitas* has been dis- [126] continued in recent years, the aborigines who knew them well, made nine [184] examples for me. It would seem that each totemic place had its own particular [794] design, for when I showed the *purunkita* (Fig. 7D) to old *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, neither of whom had seen it previously, they recognized it immediately as a message stick which would have been sent to the *Mudungkala* totemic group of Buchanan Island, at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. However, other *purunkitas*, i.e. (Fig. 5C; Fig. 5F, G, H; and Fig. 6A, E) are still being used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

During the early days of our stay, when the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were about to start, three men, two of them, *Marawani* and *Uramatjina*, being the chief mourners, made a journey to the Bathurst Island people for the purpose of giving them a *purunkita* and telling them the news.

A few days later a Bathurst Island man returned with the message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H, and verbal instructions relating to the forthcoming burial rituals.

Although I did not see the message stick which *Marawani* and his com- [126] panions carried to Bathurst Island, I was able to make a rubbing of another (Fig. 7C), which was sent to the same locality on the death of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife.

Later, old *Tjamalampua* sent another message stick (Fig. 7A, B), to the men of the *Mudungkala* totem of Buchanan Island, asking for European goods and food to pay the "workers" at the final rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*.

Notification of Death

202 The designs on message stick, Fig. 7C, which an aboriginal carried to the 211 Bathurst Island people, together with the news of the death of *Nulatini*, did ×532 not, in any way, refer to the message that accompanied it, but to topographical details along the motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point on Apsley Straits.

The upper section, *d*, is the aboriginal camp at Snake Bay, and the indentations, *a*, *a*, are the rocks on its shores. The cross-hatched rectangle in the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The crescent, *a*, symbolises the eastern horizon, beneath which both the sun-woman and moon-man have their camps; the transverse panels, *j*, *j*, *j*, indicate the western horizon. 532 x 773 776 821

The disc, *b*, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, while the black dot in the centre is her life essence, *imunka* (p. 137).

The sun-woman again is represented by the white disc, *s*, on the upper edge. This time she has several of the blazing torches, *m*, *n*, which she carries across the sky. Her many camps in the east are at *p*, *p*, etc. (lower edge).

The white oval, *h* (upper centre), is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, with his torches, shown as a series of radiating lines. Crescent, *g*, is the waxing, *f*, the waning moon, and the three adjacent squares, *e*, *e*, *e*, are places in the east where the moon-man made his camps. The cross-hatched areas, *p*, *k*, etc., indicate the men of the Milky Way, *Maludaianini*, and the groups of dots, such as *t*, the star-women, *Tapalingas*. At *o* (upper right) is an unidentified celestial tree.

Pl. 60A, B, pictures two suns, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*,[50] the moon, *Tjapara* and the stars, *Tapalinga*.

One of the sun-women, *Wuriupranala*, is shown at *f* (upper edge) the circle of radiating lines, *g*, symbolizing the flames of her bark torch. At *h*, on the bottom of the painting, is the other sun-woman, *Murupiangkala* with her bark torch, *j*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, is at *b*, his head at *e*, his shoulders at *c*, and his genitals at *d*.

The oval at *k* (upper right), is a mountain in the east from the top of which *Wuriupranala* or *Murupiangkala* alternately set out on their daily journey across the sky. The white oval at *l* (upper left) indicates the mountain on the western horizon where the sun-women rest for a while before they travel to the Kumpinulu lagoon, and prepare and eat their meal before returning to the east via the underground road, *m* (upper left).

The designs on the lower edge of the painting deal with the journey of the sun-woman, *Murupiangkala*; the white design *o*, is the mountain in the east from which she sets out on her journey across the sky; *p* represents the mountain in the west where she finishes her journey.

At *a*, *a*, etc., are the wives of *Tjapara*, the planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. Black ovals, *s*, *s*, are dark-coloured rain clouds, and ovals, *q*, *q*, clouds reddened by sunrise and sunset light. The dots are the star-women, the *Tapalingas*, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

Pl. 63A, B, deals with the sky journey of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

[50] The artist claimed that two sun-women travelled alternately across the sky. This however, was not the dominant belief.

[184]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 At *c*, is the sun-woman with her *imunka* (life essence) (see Pl. 61A, B).
821 Her palm-leaf baskets are at *u* and *r* (left); her hair-string belts at *k*, *v*
776 (bottom); a dingo-skin hair ornament is at *s* (left), and her head at *m* (top
773 left).

The place where the sun woman appears above the eastern horizon is indicated at *f* (bottom) with her mid-day camp at *g*. There she makes a fire, *e* (the four radiating lines being the firewood), and cooks the food she has collected during the morning. Black rain clouds are indicated at *d*, and a thin cloud, which partly obscures the sun, at *h*.

The upper section of the painting deals with the evening camp *o*, of the sun-woman. Her fire and firewood are at *p*, *q*.

At *n*, on the upper left, is the daughter of the sun-woman (an unidentified star), the central dot at *m*, symbolizing her eye.

The Moon-man, Tjapara

773 At the conclusion of the fight between the moon-man, *Tjapara* and *Purukupali*, during creation times, the moon-man went up to the sky, bearing on his face the wounds he received at the hands of *Purukupali*.[60]

It was then *Purukupali* decreed that the whole of creation once dead, would remain dead for ever. However, *Tjapara*, the moon-man, partly escaped that
821 decree, for, although he dies for three days every month, his life is eternally
776 renewed.

As soon as *Tjapara* comes to life, he eats huge meals of the flesh of the mangrove crabs, which makes him grow fat and round at the end of a fortnight. However, this food makes him so ill that he sickens and dies.

The aborigines look upon the thin crescent of the waning moon as the skeleton of *Tjapara*,[61] and the body of the moon (visible by earth shine) as his spirit, *imunka*.

During his daily journey across the sky, the moon-man follows the same path as the sun-woman. He, however, carries a much smaller torch.

At one time the moon-man used to return to the east by a road just under the southern horizon. But a nest of hornets, which lived along that road, stung him so badly that he changed his path and now returns to his home by a northern route.[62]

The moon has four wives who live in the sky with him. They are the

[60] See p. 29 for details of the fight between *Purukupali* and *Tjapara*.

[825] [61] A larval form of one of the cockroaches which curls up into an almost complete circle, is called *Tjaparalinga*, the son of the moon.

[62] Most informants, however, said that the moon returned to the east through the
[184] same underground world as the sun-woman.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

not only in physique but also in intelligence. I should be surprised to 153
find in any other Australian tribe a man with the intelligence and adaptability of my own head boy Mariano.

The flora and fauna of the two islands is very similar to that of the 133
rest of the Northern Territory. The country is mostly flat with a low range of rocky hills between Cape Gambier and Cape Keith on Melville Island, and a still lower range in the centre of Bathurst. The timber 137
consists of the usual Australian trees; gums, stringy-bark, woolly-butt, bloodwood and ironwood cover most of the two islands, broken here and there by patches of open grassland and in other places by dense patches of jungle where snakes and "devils" thrive and the natives seldom enter. Wallabies are extraordinarily plentiful, but there are no kangaroos. 136
Buffaloes are found on Melville in small numbers. These are the wild descendants of the domestic Indian buffaloes imported for agricultural purposes by the early settlers at Fort Dundas. At one time they had increased and multiplied to such effect that thousands were shot every year without any appreciable effect upon their numbers. At the present time, however, probably owing to many of the cows being killed, there are probably not more than a thousand on the island. The natives are seldom able to kill a buffalo though they realise the fact that it is good to eat.

Not only are wallabies plentiful, but there is also an abundant supply 262
of the other native articles of food, fish, crocodile, birds of all kinds, wild honey, yams and other native vegetables. As a result of this abundance 161
of foods, it would seem that the two islands had a greater density of population than is to be found in almost any other part of Australia.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The people inhabiting Melville and Bathurst Islands are subdivided 621
into a number of local groups. These local groups are the important sections of the population since they act as land-owning groups, war-making groups, have a solidarity of their own which is far stronger than any tribal solidarity that may exist and even to some extent regulate marriage.

Before considering these hordes in detail, however, something must 184
be said about the tribal name. All the hordes practise the same customs, 619
speak the same language and inter-marry. The boundaries of the people speaking this language are of course strictly defined by the sea. In other words, the people of Melville and Bathurst have a solidarity of their own,

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

184 619 they speak one language and they regard a certain defined area of land as belonging to them.

[171] 619 101 The Australian tribe is a collection of persons who speak a common language, or what they themselves regard as such, practise the same customs, and normally have a name by which they distinguish themselves and their language. The inhabitants of Melville and Bathurst Islands are therefore to be regarded as a single tribe, but it is difficult to find a true tribal name. The Uwaidja of Port Essington call the Melville Islanders, *Wuguk*, as Spencer notes, but the Melville Islanders scarcely regard it as necessary to call themselves anything. The local group of 186 648 101 which a man is conscious of being a member is the horde, and until the advent of the white man, the Melville Islander was not aware that any other people existed except themselves. It was impossible and also quite unnecessary for them to visit the mainland in their bark canoes more especially as the coast around Cape Don and Cape Hotham, dimly seen [725] on clear days, was regarded as the abode of departed souls, *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead. It was apparently just as impossible or unnecessary, or perhaps danger was the chief deterrent, for the Uwaidja or the Larakia to visit Melville Island.

The result was that the people, with no contact with people not of their own tribe, did not really need a tribal name, and very seldom used the word *Tiwi*, which is the only one that can be regarded as the name of the tribe.

101 Tiwi is a word that is known and but seldom used. Some of the younger men were in fact surprised and interested when they heard the old men using it in response to my enquiries. There is no question of secrecy or tabu about it. In common everyday use are the words *tini*, meaning a man of one of the Melville or Bathurst Island hordes, *i.e.*, a male member of the Tiwi, and *tiya* meaning a female member of the tribe. *Tiwi* is the plural form of *tini* and *tiya*. It is often said by informants that *tini* means a man, and *tiya* a woman, irrespective of colour or race, but in point of fact these words are only used as applying to members of the *Tiwi*, and some other word would be used in referring to a white man, or a Larakia or Uwaidja.

101 619 Objection may be made to the adoption as the tribal name of these people of a word that theoretically at any rate seems simply "men" in the ordinary language. But in point of fact the word is never used except

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

BEFORE the advent of the buffalo-hunters, few white men had visited the islands since the 648
early days of the naval settlement at Fort Dundas, established by Sir Gordon [175]
Bremer in 1824, but abandoned four years later. Malays and Japanese pearlers
have been in the habit of taking in water from either of the islands and have
frequently come into disastrous conflict with the natives. It is perhaps also on 164
account of their isolation from civilization that I found the blacks comparatively
free from any serious disease. Apart from the various minor ailments such as
traumatic lesions and their after-effects, cataracts and keratitis, a few congenital
deformities and such like, only a few cases of tertiary syphilis came under my
notice.

A young gin was suffering from a disease of the hip, apparently chronic, but
she was too timid to permit me to make an examination. They are on the whole 142
a healthy, sturdy people of moderate stature, with a good muscular development
and a square, big thorax. The characteristics are Australoid and yet they present [144]
certain insular peculiarities.

The Head.

The forehead is low, with a marked supraorbital development; the face
somewhat depressed and the lower jaw strong. The eyes are sunken and the nose
is small. The wavy black hair of some of the males was worked up into numerous [362]
small, cylindrical, pendant masses with clay and ochre.[1] This, so far as I could [765]
ascertain, designated mourning. Others had besmeared their hair with ochre. The
hairs on the upper lip are pulled out. The growth of the beard of the men varies,
but is, on an average, good.

The natives of either island do not practise the knocking out of one or two 304
incisors as they do on the mainland. Major Campbell,[2] however, reports having 171
observed the custom on Melville Island.

The face is painted symmetrically with differently coloured ochres, charcoal, 302
and pipeclay, in various degrees of complexity (Fig. 1). A few of the simpler designs
might be described briefly:—*Case* (1): The whole surface of the face blackened
with charcoal. *Case* (2): The nose red and the rest of the face charcoal-black.
Case (3): Face (including the shaven upper lip and upper part of chin) charcoal-

[1] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* London, 1852, vol. ii, p. 13: "The characteristic mode of dressing the hair among the Torres Strait Islanders is to have it twisted up into long pipe-like ringlets, and wigs in imitation of this are also worn"; and again, "at Cape York I have at times for a week together seen all the men and lads with the hair twisted into little strands well daubed over with red ochre and turtle fat."

Also P. P. King, *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114: "The [184]
men were more muscular and better formed than any we have before seen, they were daubed over with a yellow pigment which was the colour of the neighbouring cliff (Luxmore Head on Melville Island); their hair was long and curly and appeared to be clotted with a whitish paint."

[2] *Journ. Geogr. Society*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 153. *Cf.* also H. Klaatsch: *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 591.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

or more, parallel ridges, is found first, as vertically disposed ridges, about 10 centimetres in length, on the outer surface of the upper arm, in the region of the deltoid muscle (*vide* Fig. 2, A and B); secondly, as two or three horizontal ridges, about 20 centimetres long, upon the chest and abdomen, either in the epigastrium or immediately below the nipples, or in the umbilical region; thirdly, as two or three ridges, horizontally disposed or slightly inclined from back to front, on the buttocks and outer surface of the thighs (*vide* Fig. 2, A). 304

Occasionally a horizontal row of short vertical scars is cut upon the forehead immediately above the eyes (*vide* Fig. 2, B); and also an asymmetrical vertical group on the chest or back consisting of a number of parallel scars which slant outwards and downwards from the sternum or spine, respectively (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

The palm-leaf pattern is composed of a series of V-shaped figures, whose angles rest one within the other and point downwards (or upwards as the case may be) and are so disposed as to lie one immediately above or below the other in a vertical line; the enclosing sides standing out as parallel and inclined ridges. The constituent V's are often slightly larger in the centre of the group than at either

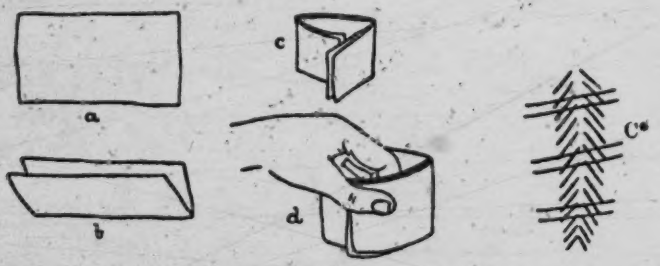

FIG. 3.

end. There is little doubt that the incentive to this design was given by the leaf of the "*Zamia*" (*Cycas media*). The designs, being of different dimensions and of different lengths according to their situation, were observed on the back (on both or either side of the spine) and on the upper and outer surfaces of the arm and thigh (*vide* Plate XVI). The number of the completed palm leaves, in any one particular part of the body, varies. The usual number is from one to three on the arms and thighs, and from two to five, or more, on the back. The design was not noticed on the chest or abdomen. Occasionally a design on the thigh might be seen modified by additional pairs of horizontal scars[1] (*vide* Fig. 3, C*).

[1] I also observed the same "palm-leaf" scars on the chest, back, and arms of Melville Island natives. These natives also paint their faces with ochre; one conspicuous method in use is to paint the hair yellow, the nose red, and to daub the chest yellow over the region of the sternum. [302]

Professor H. Klaatsch also noticed some of the scars on the Melville Island natives and stated that "they are totally different from the ornamentations on the mainland. They seem to imitate leaves arranged on a branch; but I make the suggestion that they are connected with the arrangements of the barbs on spears." *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 566. [101] [184]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

533 (e) "The salt water (sea), brings plenty of drift-wood up on the beach for
539 our fires."
881 (f) "The *tudawali* (shark) killed a stingray."
(g) "The boat sails fast and the waves are beating its sides."

At approximately 8.30 p.m. the chanting ceased and the aborigines retired to their camps.

(6) *The Lighting of the Ceremonial Fire*

About 6.30 the next morning, the *Mikinatrinings* women collected pieces
[137] of termite mound and put them on the top of the sticks for the fire which had been piled over the oven, the *tumarapi*. This fire could be lit by any man above the grade of *Mikinatrina*. Whilst the fire was burning down, the *Mikingulas* walked around it, and sang a few *kulama* songs, only one of which was recorded.

(1) "When I see the shining iron of the new schoolhouse, I think how my
[177] children will go to school and wear boots."[81]

By 9.30 a.m. after everyone had had a meal, most of the aborigines, includ-
881 ing several children, painted themselves in red and made their way to the swamp to take part in the ritual of bringing the *kulama* yams from the water, to the *milimika*.

On reaching the swamp, the leader took the yams from the pad of grass under the water, placed them carefully in the basket, with a bundle of rushes plucked from a nearby swamp on top, then, putting the basket on his shoulder, carried it to the *milimika* and stood it beside the fire "to warm up the yams".

881 The *Mikingulas*, walking anti-clockwise as before, chanted another series
533 of songs.
539 (a) "I went to Native Affairs (Darwin), drew out £10 (with which to
[177] gamble) and bought a pack of playing cards."[82]

Striding around the ring with two spears in one hand and a throwing stick in the other, the same man sang.

(b) "I have many spears. If the white people were not here, I would kill you all."

881 At the end of the song, the performer called out the name of his dead
765 father, striking himself on the head with his throwing stick to indicate his sorrow. The people on the outside of the ring cried in sympathy.

[185] [81] A parent's hope in a changing society that his children will live at a higher social level that the one which he himself occupies.

[82] A number of the younger Melville Islanders work for extended terms in Darwin, periodically returning to their homeland to take part in the ceremonies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

I

Tiwi Marriage

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Cultural Isolation

PEOPLE WHO LIVE in the congested cities and towns of the modern world have difficulty in realizing how different life can be at the hunting and gathering level of human existence. The basic fact about the life of hunters and gatherers is the thinly spread-out manner in which they live and the isolation of families and households from each other. In the case of the Tiwi, these conditions of isolation and dispersal were accentuated by their island habitat. Melville and Bathurst Islands lie off the northern coast of Australia some fifty to eighty miles from Darwin, which is the administrative capital of the empty north. They are separated from the mainland by about twenty-five miles of open sea at the narrowest part. This distance is slightly greater than the distance that separates England from France at the Straits of Dover, and just as the dim outline of coastal France can be seen from England on clear days, so the dim outline of the Australian mainland can be seen from the southern edges of the islands. However, Tiwi tradition is firm and certain that before the white man's arrival there was no contact between the islands and the mainland. To them, the dimly seen coastline of Australia was *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead, to which all Tiwi souls went after death. It follows from this they they regarded the inhabited world as composed of their own two islands, and on those islands they lived a self-contained and exclusive existence. Occasionally outsiders appeared, either castaways from surrounding areas, including presumably the Australian mainland, and in recent centuries, fishing boats and pirates from Indonesia, loosely called "Malays" in the literature. To such visitors from outside, the Tiwi were consistently and implacably hostile. Their own traditions and what little written history there is of "Malay" penetration into the Arafura Sea both tell the same story. Outsiders who landed on the islands were massacred or vigorously resisted. Whether they were classified as *Malai-ui* ("Malays") or *Wona-rui*

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 609 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human [101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

[173] Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate 171 to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distributional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

[411] That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their [531] wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus- [764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the [511] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

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[1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the [197 524] result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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restriction; they have no ceremonies for the increase of the totem species. 614 771

Since the totem of a child is that of its mother it follows that the members of one totemic clan are found in different hordes, and inversely each horde contains persons of several totemic clans. Nevertheless each totem is associated in the minds of the natives with a particular locality or district. This association appears in the myths, there being a number of stories which connect particular natural species with particular localities. Thus each clan may be said to have its ancestral home or centre, but there is little or nothing of any feeling of reverence or ritual attachment to the home of one's totem. Taking it all in all Tiwi totemism does not amount to very much compared with the elaborate forms of totemism found in other parts of Australia. 614 [621] 778 [101]

The word for totem and totemic clan is *pukui*. But the same word means also "sun" and in addition "breath." The connection between these three concepts denoted by one word is not at all apparent. 192

The totems are grouped into three phratries. The term phratry is here used in the sense of an exogamous group containing a number of clans and not being a moiety. The phratries are unnamed. Should a man want to mention a phratry he will call it by the name of one of the totemic clans composing it. He will generally use the name of his own totem clan if his own phratry is in question, or that of the clan that is powerful in the phratry. Thus the phratry that I am calling Phratry 1, will more often be called *Tjilarui* than anything else because at the present time the *Tjilarui* clan is very numerous and many of them are the kind of people who are usually much in the public eye. For a similar reason Phratry 2 is more often called *Timiririyui* than anything else, and Phratry 3 is usually *Tokwombui*. There is a much stronger feeling of solidarity with one's clan than with one's phratry, which will perhaps explain that while the clan name is very important there seems no need, or much less need, for any specific name for the phratry. 615

A complete list of the clans and their totems is given below. Each clan name has three forms, masculine singular, feminine singular, and plural, and these are given in the list in this order. 614 [193]

Clan Name	Totems
Phratry 1.	
(*a*) *Tjilati, Tjilariya, Tjilarui*	jaberoo
(*b*) *Ariri, Arawidina, Arwudui*	mullet

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 render his name tabu. This is the case among the Tiwi. All the names of a dead man become strictly *pukimani* (=tabu) immediately upon his death. Anyone in the tribe who uses a name of a dead person at any time for years after his death but especially in the period—usually about five to six months—that always elapses between the death and the funeral corroboree, violates one of the strictest social sanctions the tribe possesses.
● 192 And this prohibition extends to all words in the ordinary language—
551 though curiously enough not in the sacred language—which bear any
765 resemblance in sound to any one of the names of the dead man. It applies equally to English names in use by the tribe with resemblances to native or English words and to native words which resemble either English or native words. Thus a boy named *Tipuki* having died "tobacco," "baccy," *Tiparkitimiri* all equally became *pukimani*. Similarly when *Mulankina*, one of the Mandeimbula horde died, *mulikina*, one of the commonest words in the language, meaning "plenty," "full," "enough," was dropped completely from the language.

551 Nor does the *pukimani* stop here. Not only is the use of any of the
553 names of the dead man prohibited, but there is an equally strong rule against the use of any of the personal names he has bestowed upon other people, be they his own children or the children of others. A young child may only have one name, that given him by his father, but should his father die he must become nameless until he gets a new name from somewhere. This aspect of the *pukimani* does not extend to similar words in either the ordinary or the sacred language. For instance although
[192 765] *Tambu*, a proper name bestowed by an old man became *pukimani* on the latter's death, the ordinary word *tamu* (imperative form of verb 'to sit down') was not affected.

582 On account chiefly of the extreme form of polygyny practised by the
595 Tiwi whereby most of the girls and young women belong to a comparatively few old men, the father of a family is almost invariably much older than his wife. While a woman goes to live with her husband at about the age of 13, a man is lucky to get his first wife under the age of 35. It follows that in the great majority of cases the father of children dies
587 long before the mother. Therefore as a woman without a husband is unknown amongst the Tiwi, a woman passes through the possession of quite a number of different men during her lifetime and does not remain in an unmarried state for more than a day or two. A widow

4. Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

normally gets a new husband as soon as her previous husband is dead, 587
frequently on the same day. Certainly she does not remain single for more than a week, save in exceptional circumstances as when the man to whom by common consent of the horde she is to pass, is absent. She will then remain with her brothers or with the other wives of her husband-elect until his return.

It can now be seen whence the people with tabued names derive their 553
new names. A child who is nameless because his father has died and there- 587
by rendered *pukimani* those names which he has given the child, gets a new name immediately from the new husband of his mother. It is important to notice that this new husband renames not only the children of the recently dead man by his new wife, but all her children no matter who may have been their father.[8]

These newly acquired names then become the ordinary names of the individuals concerned and are retained until the new husband in turn dies, when once more the names are changed by the next husband of the mother. Thus it is literally true that no one has a permanent name until the death of his mother.

The names themselves are rather interesting. With a few exceptions 551
they can be classified into groups by their endings. A full list of these groups is hardly important enough to warrant inclusion here, and a few examples will suffice. The commonest ending of all is *-miri* as in such names as *Timatalotimiri*, *Pripanyimiri*, *Tipilamberanitimiri*. This is distinctly a masculine ending. There is a corresponding feminine suffix *-mo*, *Kidjibonkimo*, *Munilatimo* being examples.

These suffixes *-miri* and *-mo* are the only two with a definite signification of sex; the others are indeterminate. For example, *Ilimatirimiini* is a man while *Punilantamiini* is a woman. Similarly with *Pripanyimirli* who is a man and *U-lau-undimirli* who is a woman.

To understand the coining of the names it must be understood that 198
amongst the Tiwi there are two languages, one the ordinary language in 192
everyday use, the other a sacred language used only in ceremonies, songs and ritual formulae. The latter is composed entirely of words that

[8] Thus A marries B who has children M and N by the recently dead X, and older children P and Q by T who died years before. When X married B he renamed P and Q, and now on X's death A proceeds not only to rename M and N but also to rename P and Q once more.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

198 apparently were once part of the ordinary language but by reason of their
192 becoming *pukimani* by one of the methods mentioned above have been dropped completely from everyday use and retained only in the memory of the older people until they are brought out again in some new song or substituted in the ordinary language for some word newly prohibited. The meaning then has to be explained to the younger people who have been born since the word formed part of the ordinary language.

It can easily be understood that in this mass of words handed down orally for centuries there are a number retained of which the meanings have been lost. For example it is quite impossible to obtain a word for word translation of any initiation song of the Tiwi, numbers of words being introduced which are totally meaningless alike to the singer, the maker of the song and to the audience. These words correspond to some extent to the "tra-la-la" or other nonsense syllables frequently found in modern American popular songs, being introduced to provide the correct rhythm or metre, to echo the sense of the song or for some conventional reason, certain meaningless words being exclusively found associated with other words, the meaning of which is known.

551 One of the favourite methods of coining names is to select one of these meaningless words and add one of the nominal suffixes mentioned above to it. Thus *matirandjiṇili* is a word frequently used in songs, the meaning of which is obscure. *Materandjiṇimirli* is, however, a proper name.

Place names are sometimes added to by a suffix or otherwise changed to become proper names. Thus *Pripanyimili*, a district of South Bathurst, gives *Pripantimiri* a masculine name; *Poru*, the district opposite the mission station, gives rise to *Porutimiri* a male name and *Porutimiu* a female name. (It should be noted that there is no connection between such a name and the district of origin or residence of the person bearing the name.)

428 The commonest method of all is for the name to descend in the direct
553 male line. That is, after the death of the father one of his sons (usually but not invariably the eldest) disregarding the name bestowed upon him by his mother's new husband, allows a sufficient time to elapse for the tabu to lose its efficacy and then assumes his father's name. This is done either of his own volition or by the older men of his horde who were the contemporaries of his father adopting the practice of using his

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Sickness is cured by beating the ground around the victim to hunt the evil spirit away. Likewise, a song, Upripu, is sung by the wives of the sick man to make him better. The *Kurewa*, a pointed bone, or sometimes a tomahawk is used to stab a person's urine or an article his body has touched (e.g. a bark he has lain upon to sleep) and so cause him to die. Blood thrown into the sea will cause a violent wind and a big tide. The Kulama rite will bring about the same result. No instance has been found of magic being used to entice the spirit from a person's body, yet if a person failed to show sympathy for the dead, the dead person's " shade " would cause that person to die and then run away with his " shade." To mention the name of the newly dead is taboo. If a person accidentally does this he must immediately hit his mouth and spit to cleanse it of the evil.

Names. The names given to the women and men are of three types; the first is the actual name and is given to a person at the Kulama rite; this is an ordinary word such as " honey nest," etc., but it is always in a different language from the ordinary one which is used everyday. The child also receives the name of his father, father's brother or father's sister; this is a traditional name. Then, in the case of a male, come the terms denoting his initiation grade in the Kulama. First stage—*Murakmani*; second stage—*Wadjaneta*; third stage—*Migingartiya*=first song and *Midjintera*=second song; fourth stage—*Mekearterima*=third song; and finally, *Mahagala*, which denotes that the man is qualified to conduct a Kulama. Likewise, both sexes have grade names denoting their status in the Pukamane death ritual. Male terms: first stage—*waniati*; second stage—*warunerera*; third stage—*wanerterima*; fourth stage—*wanderara*. With girls and women these names are the same except for the ending denoting the sex.

In the case of women there are terms denoting age or condition. *Kudjine*—child; *alinga*—girl; *miriyaleta*—puberty; *murogarbra*—breasts developed; *piramuruka*—first sign of pregnancy; *paprungala*—pregnant woman; *wanantaka*—woman who has a child dead, and *umparu*—widow. Other terms are *pilukwen*—widower; *mentuygini* and *padrubanga*—boy and girl respectively, whose mother is pregnant; *indjula*— a woman whose breasts have fallen; and as on the mainland, a mother is always called by the sex of the child she carries in her arms: *oriowri* if a boy, *kudjine* if a girl.

Language. The language is peculiar. In many instances, owing to the masculine and feminine endings of the words, the women seem to speak a different language to the men. In addition, another language, or set of words, which is very rarely spoken, seems to obtrude itself. Thus one article will have many names. This is brought about by the strong death-taboo on names; as soon as a native dies, his names and his son's names are taboo and others are substituted. In this way every year new words are coined. Only recently at a Kulama two new ones appeared as a consequence of this taboo. *Purinteriya*, new name for tree, and *alepwa*, new name for coconut. Or a Kulama name may be given as, say, *wilinkurawa*, the meaning of which will be given as honey nest; and yet numerous words for honey are nothing

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

like this word. They also have a strange way of twisting words; for example Port Darwin is called *Pudarnap*.

The Future. The people themselves are—in Mr. Harney's opinion—mentally lazy, and hold a curious mixture of mission and native teaching. Although Christians—Roman Catholics—believing in God, they have a fixed dread of *Maratdje*, the rainbow serpent. The good that the mission would do is limited by two facts, in spite of the sincere labours of the missionaries: (1) there is no fixed progressive policy with regard to material advancement. The missions are not self-supporting, probably owing to the poor quality of the soil around that part. (2) The younger natives have too easy an entrance into Darwin. They reach it by short stages with canoe from Melville Island. Moreover, their presence in the town is always welcome and encouraged, because it means cheap labour for the white people. Unfortunately, it is the beginning of the end for the native.

One thing is urgently required if they are to be saved: (1) complete control forcing them to stay on their Islands; these provide plenty of native food. And (2) subsidizing of the mission to do "controlled work" in line with government policy. Apart from that, but only if necessary, a station, such as at Garden Point, could be opened and attention given to the medical and other needs of the islanders, in particular, of the aged and sick.

W. E. Harney.
A. P. Elkin.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

restriction; they have no ceremonies for the increase of the totem species.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Thus Cooper with his well-armed retinue of mainlanders had made the islands safe for white men and introduced a desire for white men's goods, particularly tobacco. His retirement from Melville Island left the newly established Mission on Bathurst Island as the only source of supply for these goods. After World War I, however, another influence began to grow in importance. Large numbers of Japanese pearling boats came and anchored off the coasts of southern and southeastern Melville Island, where they traded with the local bands—the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula. These bands got tobacco and European-type food (flour, rice, tea, sugar) from the Japanese in quantities which the Catholic missionaries could not afford to provide; all the Japanese asked in return was access to young native women. Men who controlled many women—as fathers, as husbands, or as brothers—were thus in a favorable position to profit by the traffic with the Japanese.

Whereas the demands made by the Japanese on the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula for women were quite straightforward and uncomplicated, Father Gsell's demands on the bands of south Bathurst Island were somewhat more complex in their consequences. Many aspects of the old pattern of Tiwi life had to be abandoned to make them into Christians. To the missionaries, polygamy was sinful and could not be part of the new Tiwi life. Prenatal and infant bestowal had to be abolished. Marriages should be between agemates and should be arranged freely and solely by the couple involved. Such changes were the crux of Father Gsell's program, and the story of how he went about it has run in many a Sunday supplement in the cities of Australia under the title "The Bishop With 150 Wives."[6] Father Gsell did not try to convert or drastically change the behavior of the older Tiwi; he believed that they were too set in their ways. Rather, he built toward a distant day by working among the younger generation. When infant girls became widows, he purchased them from their fathers. Men with young widowed daughters and those with spare young wives sold such girls for axes, flour, tobacco, cloth, and trinkets. Such "Blackies," as they became affectionately called,[7] lived in the convent with the French (and later Australian) sisters. When such a girl reached the age of about 18, she was asked to choose one of the young single men for her husband. For his part in this excellent deal which provided him with a wife long before he would get one under the old tribal system, the young man had only to promise that he would never take another wife. Such a wedding was not a Mass, for neither party was Catholic. However, the children born of this new union were baptized and reared as Catholics. Later, a few of the girls who had been sold to Father Gsell before they were ten went through confirmation as did their youthful fiances. The first nuptial Mass between two such Tiwi took place in 1928.

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[6] Father Gsell became Bishop of Darwin in 1938. He lived on in retirement to 1958, having seen in his lifetime the fulfilment of his dream of the Tiwi as a Catholic tribe.

[7] The Tiwi today strongly resent being called "African," "Negro," or "nigger," but they do not seem to mind being called "Blacks." The term "Blackie" for a young female is in general use by Mission school girls for themselves; it is in no sense derogatory.

under the surface by the massive roots of the paperbarks. It was in 123
just this sort of pool that the largest of the five crocs landed that [225]
night, was harpooned. The huge 18-foot animal dived into the roots
and it took about twenty tense minutes to dislodge and dispatch him.
Aside from the crocodiles the only wild life seen that night was a
small and very frightened little mouse who suddenly appeared on
my lap and then just as suddenly disappeared over the boat's side.

We returned to Minianapi at daybreak and the hot tea and
roast goose seemed a perfect breakfast, or was it supper? It didn't
matter for we were soon sound asleep.

When we finally awoke in mid-afternoon we found the camp
almost deserted. "Everyone go walkabout; kill geese," Albert
informed us as he and Agnes gathered more wood to build up the
smouldering fire. It was very quiet in the small clearing and only
the little black spots of charcoal spaced in irregular intervals on the
ground were evidence that there were more than our mob in resi-
dence. The clearing itself was quite bare because it had been burned
by the first comers, with the double purpose of clearing out the
four-foot grass itself, and any of the various poisonous snakes [136]
which were quite likely to infest it. In back of the clearing was a
thick tangle of low bushes through which ran a little foot-path.
Agnes started down this path carrying a billy can and I offered to
go with her, but Albert said, "No, by um by we go, him long way,
him only get a little bit now." After one gets used to the pronoun
"him" being used to refer to everything animal, vegetable, and [195]
mineral, this phrase is perfectly understandable: the first "him"
referred to the water, the second to Agnes.

So instead of collecting water, I wandered down to the river
bank where Billy-Two, Brownie, and a few of the other men, were
busy skinning the crocodiles. This they did by cutting the skin first
around the head, then down either side of the rows of bumps
running along the spine to the tail. The skin was then carefully [281]
peeled and cut from the body. Once free it was rubbed with salt
which would act as a preservative until such time as the supply boat
would arrive to carry it to Darwin. There the skins would be sold [439
to the dealer and the proceeds credited to the hunter's account or 452]
sent in the form of hard cash to the settlement for distribution. Now
they were folded into bundles and loaded into the launch, and large [262]

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

father's name towards him and thus implying their approval of his taking 428
that name. To select one example—there is at present in the Tiklowila 553
horde a man *Pwandjilora* whose father was also a *Pwandjilora* who died about fifteen years ago. His father in turn was also a *Pwandjilora*, who is only remembered by the very old people of the horde.

This succession of names also takes place though to a very much lesser degree in the female line, that is from mother to daughter.

It must not be thought, however, that there is any such thing as 424
private ownership of names by a family. A man but distantly related to 553
Pwandjilora II would be quite at liberty to bestow that name upon one of his children were it not already in use and had a sufficient time elapsed since his death. An example is a famous warrior of the last generation called *Walitoami*. This name has recently been bestowed by one of the Tiklowila upon his son though neither he, the child, nor the mother of the child is closely related to the first *Walitoami*. As a matter of fact the child is the mother's brother's son's daughter's son of *Walitoami I*.

One or two other aspects of this subject may be dismissed briefly 551
as they are more important in a study of kinship or ceremonial, than in a 422
study of names as such.

A man may not in any circumstances use the name of the wife of another man, even the names of his brother's wives, without giving the husband a *casus belli*. A woman is a man's own property and the use of her name is an infringement of his property rights. In the same way a man's own name is his own property and cannot be used with impunity, at least in the presence of the owner of the name. In calling out to a person for instance, he will always be addressed by a kinship term, never by a personal name. This also is the manner by which the news of a death is 551
carried to distant camps and the name of the dead man avoided, "your [196-
mother's brother at *Wilraŋgu* of the *Tjilarni* totem and the son of so and so 203]
is dead at *Brega*" being an example of how a relative is informed. The dead man is thenceforward referred to as "he who died recently at *Brega*."

There is another prohibition against the use by a husband of his own 551
wife's name whilst she is in childbirth. For a couple of weeks before the 843
birth and for a couple of weeks afterwards the husband must not look upon his wife, he cannot use any of her names, nor can any others of the tribe mention her either by name or by implication to him. Even such an

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

By Herbert Basedow, M.D., M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., etc.

With Plates VII-XX.

Local Correspondent of the Royal Anthropological Institute, London, and Honorary Fellow of the Anthropological Society, Göttingen; late Chief Medical Inspector and Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Introduction.

In August of last year (1911), I visited Bathurst Island to inspect the natives on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. Accompanied by one of my inspectors (Mr. J. H. Kelly) and a crew consisting of a Chinaman, a Manilaman, and three natives of the Larrekiya Tribe,[1] I left Port Darwin at eleven o'clock in the evening and entered Apsley Strait early the next morning. We spent nine days in the examination of the island, entering the numerous salt-water arms and rivers, effecting a landing wherever possible and traversing the island on foot. Landing was, in most places, difficult on account of the thick growth of mangroves that fringes the island on the east. It had been my intention to circumnavigate the island, but a heavy monsoonal gale prevented us from even making the attempt in the small motor-craft at our disposal. I therefore decided to return *viâ* Apsley Strait and inspect part of Melville Island.

The plates included in this paper are all reproductions of my original photographs and coloured drawings.

Condition of Natives.

I estimate the population of the island to be about 500. Their isolation and, no doubt in a measure also, their reputation as being cannibalistic and treacherous in their habits, have guarded their primitive condition to the present day.[2] Before

[1] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. of S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 1.

[2] Compare the statement:—

"Melville Island, about 30 miles north of Port Darwin, is inhabited by a tribe of which very little is known. They do not circumcize, and speak a different language from those on the mainland. They are represented as a very strong and powerful race.

"Before the arrival of the Hon. B. T. Finniss at Escape Cliffs in 1864, the Melville Island natives occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras, in which they invariably succeeded; but they have not done so since. This tribe is of a very hostile nature, and on several occasions have attacked Europeans visiting the island. Their canoes and weapons are similar to those on the mainland." P. Foelsche: "Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia," *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 17.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

614 Phratry 1 (*continued*) Clan Name	Totems
(*c*) *Mandubani, Mandubuka, Mandubowi*	fly
(*d*) *Udunyini, Uduna, Udunui*	crocodile
(*e*) *Milubruinila, Milubrukela, Milubruwila*	cockatoo
(*f*) *Mierdi, Mierdina, Mierdui*	pandanus
(*g*) *Tanikini, Taninka, Tanikui*	flying fox
(*h*) *Mutuninila, Mutungula, Mutunibila*	a fish
(*i*) *Timilani, Timiluka, Timilowi*	sand fly
Phratry 2.	
(*a*) *Timiririnini, Timiririna, Timiririnui*	woolly-butt tree
(*b*) *Yarinabila, Yarinabunela, Yarinabila*	red paint, sugar bag, (wild honey)
(*c*) *Orandjani, Orandjuka, Orandjowi*	stingray
(*d*) *Paroliunginila, Paroliungula, Paroliungibila*	mud
(*e*) *Iliti, Ilitina, Ilitui*	*malikini* (a wild fruit)
(*f*) *Andjulini, Andjuluna, Andjului*	rain, turtle
Phratry 3.	
(*a*) *Tokwombini, Tokwombuna, Tokwombui*	a bird
(*b*) *Ariynguinila, Ariynguinela, Ariynguwila*	stones
(*c*) *Pinaluwinila, Pinaluwinela, Pinaluwila*	wood
(*d*) *Walikuinila, Walikuinela, Walikuwila*	stars
(*e*) *Wirnigiti, Wirnigitina, Wirnigitui*	bloodwood, *mipari* and a kind of fish.
(*f*) *Taparini, Taparina, Taparui*	moon
(*g*) *Djabijabini, Djabijabuna, Djabijabui*	march fly.

198 614 In reference to the list it must be pointed out that among the Tiwi there are two languages; one is used in common everyday conversation, and the other is a sacred language used on ceremonial occasions, in ritual songs and formulae. Most of the clan-names of the above list are words belonging not to the ordinary language but to the esoteric language. Such words would never be used in ordinary conversation *except as totemic names*. A bloodwood tree in ordinary speech is *urnalaka*, the wild plum is *malikini*, rain is *pakstirina*, the cockatoo is *ingaga*, trees are *tuka* and so on. Of the twenty-two clans nine are normally called by a word in use in the ordinary language; the other thirteen have names taken from the sacred language.

[114] Sir Baldwin Spencer apparently failed to distinguish between the

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

sacred and the ordinary language, with the result that his list of Tiwi clans and their totems is confused and inaccurate.[4]

The Tiwi do not seem to associate very closely the totemic clan and the object that is the totem of the clan. For instance a man of the *Udunui* considers himself as *Udunini*, not as a crocodile, which he normally thinks of as *irungrabai*. The bond of solidarity is between one member of the clan and another rather than between a member of the clan and his totem.

So much is this the case that it is occasionally difficult to ascertain what is the natural object which gives the clan its name, *i.e.*, what is the totem of the clan. The *Ariŋgwila* are a case in point. In order to find what natural object was the emblem of this clan recourse had to be had to a few old men of the clan who were apparently the only people in the tribe who knew what natural object was the emblem of the *Ariŋgwila*. Everyone knew that a number of men, women and children were *Ariŋgwila*, thought of them and referred to them as *Ariŋgwila*, but very few members of the community connected them in any way with stones—" any kind of stones"—which according to these old men, are the *Ariŋgwila* totemic emblem.

With regard to the origin of the totemic clans and their names the natives say that the system of *pukili* was instituted by the old men a very long time ago. One old man said at some time in the distant past " *Udunui nia pukui kapi Primandua*—Udunui is my totem at Primandua," and so everyone knew his totem was *udunui*. Knowing their legends everyone knew the connection between *Udunui* and *Primandua* since it is at this place, a district in Bathurst Island, that *Munutuni*, the father of all crocodiles, still has his home. Another old man decided upon *mandubaui* as his *pukui* because his favourite camping ground was at *Pripanyimili* which has a mythological association with *mandubuka* (the sand fly), such association being founded no doubt on the fact that sand flies breed in great numbers in the mangrove swamps of that region.

The *Ariŋgwila* (the stone totem) are closely associated with a famous rock in *Miŋgu* called *Wurukwompi* which, due no doubt to a hollow interior, gives forth a roll like thunder when beaten with a stick and hence is a sacred object to the natives. The former home of the *Ariŋgwila* is in the

[4] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, page 200.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

normally gets a new husband as soon as her previous husband is dead, 587
frequently on the same day. Certainly she does not remain single for more than a week, save in exceptional circumstances as when the man to whom by common consent of the horde she is to pass, is absent. She will then remain with her brothers or with the other wives of her husband-elect until his return.

It can now be seen whence the people with tabued names derive their 553
new names. A child who is nameless because his father has died and there- 587
by rendered *pukimani* those names which he has given the child, gets a new name immediately from the new husband of his mother. It is important to notice that this new husband renames not only the children of the recently dead man by his new wife, but all her children no matter who may have been their father.[8]

These newly acquired names then become the ordinary names of the individuals concerned and are retained until the new husband in turn dies, when once more the names are changed by the next husband of the mother. Thus it is literally true that no one has a permanent name until the death of his mother.

The names themselves are rather interesting. With a few exceptions 551
they can be classified into groups by their endings. A full list of these groups is hardly important enough to warrant inclusion here, and a few examples will suffice. The commonest ending of all is *-miri* as in such names as *Timatalotimiri*, *Pripanyimiri*, *Tipilamberaŋitimiri*. This is distinctly a masculine ending. There is a corresponding feminine suffix *-mo*, *Kidjibonkimo*, *Muŋilatimo* being examples.

These suffixes *-miri* and *-mo* are the only two with a definite signification of sex; the others are indeterminate. For example, *Ilimatirimiiŋi* is a man while *Puŋilantamiiŋi* is a woman. Similarly with *Pripanyimirli* who is a man and *U-lau-undimirli* who is a woman.

To understand the coining of the names it must be understood that 198
amongst the Tiwi there are two languages, one the ordinary language in 192
everyday use, the other a sacred language used only in ceremonies, songs and ritual formulae. The latter is composed entirely of words that

[8] Thus A marries B who has children M and N by the recently dead X, and older children P and Q by T who died years before. When X married B he renamed P and Q, and now on X's death A proceeds not only to rename M and N but also to rename P and Q once more.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

198 apparently were once part of the ordinary language but by reason of their
192 becoming *pukimani* by one of the methods mentioned above have been dropped completely from everyday use and retained only in the memory of the older people until they are brought out again in some new song or substituted in the ordinary language for some word newly prohibited. The meaning then has to be explained to the younger people who have been born since the word formed part of the ordinary language.

It can easily be understood that in this mass of words handed down orally for centuries there are a number retained of which the meanings have been lost. For example it is quite impossible to obtain a word for word translation of any initiation song of the Tiwi, numbers of words being introduced which are totally meaningless alike to the singer, the maker of the song and to the audience. These words correspond to some extent to the "tra-la-la" or other nonsense syllables frequently found in modern American popular songs, being introduced to provide the correct rhythm or metre, to echo the sense of the song or for some conventional reason, certain meaningless words being exclusively found associated with other words, the meaning of which is known.

551 One of the favourite methods of coining names is to select one of these meaningless words and add one of the nominal suffixes mentioned above to it. Thus *matirandjiŋili* is a word frequently used in songs, the meaning of which is obscure. *Materandjiŋimirli* is, however, a proper name.

Place names are sometimes added to by a suffix or otherwise changed to become proper names. Thus *Pripanyimili*, a district of South Bathurst, gives *Pripantimiri* a masculine name; *Poru*, the district opposite the mission station, gives rise to *Porutimiri* a male name and *Porutimiu* a female name. (It should be noted that there is no connection between such a name and the district of origin or residence of the person bearing the name.)

428 The commonest method of all is for the name to descend in the direct
553 male line. That is, after the death of the father one of his sons (usually but not invariably the eldest) disregarding the name bestowed upon him by his mother's new husband, allows a sufficient time to elapse for the tabu to lose its efficacy and then assumes his father's name. This is done either of his own volition or by the older men of his horde who were the contemporaries of his father adopting the practice of using his

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 To sum up then the main points in the customs of the Tiwi connected with personal names, the outstanding features are these :—

(1) Multiplicity of personal names.
(2) Death renders tabu the names of the dead man.
(3) Death renders tabu similar words in the language.
(4) Death renders tabu names bestowed upon others by the dead man.
(5) Method of coining names.
(6) Tabu on names at certain times (*e.g.*, childbirth, initiation).

551 It is fairly evident from the facts cited in this paper that among the
424 Tiwi at any rate a personal name is the absolute property of the person
725 possessing it. Further than that, it is so identified with his personality
198 that even the use of it by anyone else in resented by the owner. There is no space here to describe the theology of the Tiwi, but it must be pointed out that after the death of a man his spirit does not go with his body to the region of the dead, but wanders about the world in a form both invisible and malignant. Just as an individual when alive would resent the use of his name so too will his spirit and will be much more dangerous an enemy on account of his supernatural form. Spirits are not only malignant, they are also unreasonable, and whereas a live man would not quarrel with you for using an ordinary word resembling his name, his ghost is quite likely not to appreciate the difference. Hence the prohibition against similar words. While in touch with the unseen world it pays to be careful. But in dealing with the unseen world the Tiwi have a special language. This body of words has a sacredness of its own, it is a part of the spirit world itself. Therefore you may incur the enmity of a spirit by using his mundane name or some similar mundane word, but the use of a similar word in the sacred language cannot do any harm ; the spirit will not get annoyed with you for using a spirit word, especially as you can only use it in any case on sacred occasions. Hence there is no tabu on similar words in the sacred language.

551 This principle of the sacred language for use when in touch with
844 supernatural situations also helps us to understand several other things. The birth of a child is, to a native, a most mysterious affair and the woman is regarded as being intimately in touch with the spirit world. Hence her name as part of herself is invested with a ghostly character and this is expressed by the tribe in treating her husband as if she did not exist, as if

123 The following day we finally went hunting. Peter, his wife Dorrie, and daughter Althea, Filicy and her son Crissy-Boy, Albert, Agnes and I all squeezed into the canoe and paddled about two miles upstream to the next landing. Tudiunginarim, "white-paint-place," [177] used to be an old camp of the white buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who at the turn of the century was the first white contact for many of these people. It was very hot and the women took their children 123 into the water, waist deep near the bank, for a swim. It was easy 291 for them in their *nagas*, for when they came out they merely wrapped a dry one around and slid the wet one off underneath very 515 modestly. I, in my shorts and shirt, finally gave in to the temptation 609 and, vowing that if I were to live here longer I would take up the native costume, went in fully dressed. This modesty was a funny thing; they who wore no clothes until contact with white men, were being modest only for my sake, and in return I could do no less. So with dripping clothes, which incidentally felt wonderful in the heat, I set off following Albert and Agnes.

123 The nature of the bush was the same as that in back of Minianapi and indeed the same as that around Snake Bay: the same 224 trees, the same burned earth, the same fan palms and pandanus, and the same flatness. The natives always knew where they were; I never did. We were looking for possums and as these furry marsupials sleep in hollow trees during the day, we investigated every likely tree for evidence that they had recently climbed it. Sometimes the little tears in the rough bark could only be seen silhouetted against the sun; at other times the dry ground around the base of the tree would show very definite tracks. Soon Agnes, who was off somewhere to the left of Albert and me, gave two high-pitched calls. [198] In the hunting language I had already learned, one call meant "I'm here, where are you?" and would be answered by their companions with a similar single call. However, two calls meant "Come; I've found something." So we turned in the direction of the call and soon found Agnes standing by a short, hollow tree. Albert took his axe and cut a long pole which he then thrust up through a hole in the tree's base and wiggled. Out popped a large grey possum which sat on the top of the tree trying to make itself as small as possible. Agnes and Albert threw all manner of sticks and stones at it and finally managed to knock it down, when it scuttled away.

797 of North Australia, they are fond of a joke. They chuckled delightedly. Father McGrath can preach in the native language,
522 but dear old Father Gsell (every one on the north alludes to him in these affectionate terms) must deliver his sermons in pidgin.
[198] Sometimes this greatly amuses the congregation, and many spirited and life-like reproductions are enacted again and again after the service.

797 WHILE taking a walk round the grounds of the mission station, an urchin of no more than three and a half years of age
753 was pointed out. That very morning this little fellow had
761 plunged into the shark-infested straits and saved his baby sister from drowning. She was unconscious when brought ashore, and the usual methods of resuscitation were followed by Father McGrath, who had hurried to the scene. Then arose one of the difficulties the mission staff are constantly encountering. All the
[754] ills that befall the islanders are attributed to magic. No black ever dies a natural death: always there is some evilly-disposed person responsible!

When treatment was commenced, the child had been laid on her stomach while the water was pushed out of her body. The blacks had seen an apparently drowned boy revived when laid on his back, and immediately became excited and angry. It was necessary to turn the child over for a while, otherwise the mission fathers would have been held responsible if she had not recovered. And, all the time that treatment was in progress, an old woman (very much in the way) had sung in the baby's ear.

In the opinion of the women who had gathered round, it was the singing that brought the little girl back to life, and her recovery had nothing whatever to do with the father's efforts, although he would have been held responsible if he had not been able to save her! The old men have some glimmerings of common sense, but the old women are terrible old witches and it is quite impossible to convince them.

When anyone is sick, it is the invariable custom to sing a monotonous phrase over and over again in the patient's ear to bring him back to health; and, wherever a pain is felt, it is usual to cut the skin down to the third integument to let the sickness out. On one occasion a man was suffering from acute abdominal pains, and his relations, who wanted to cut him open, came to the mission fathers to seek their approval of this drastic treatment. Here was an awkward predicament! If the sick man was cut open, he was sure to die; and, since nothing would induce him to go to the hospital at Darwin for skilled attention, he might die in any case. In either event the fathers would be held responsible. They stood firm and refused their approval. However, while the relations were hesitating in view of the emphatic assertions of the mission fathers, the man made a surprising recovery. The cure was of course ascribed to the singing, not to the good advice that kept the man on a starvation diet of water only.

755 The islanders firmly believe that they will be poisoned if they go to Darwin for treatment, but they will always trust their own people. One man, who had been employed on a pearling lugger (all the islanders are naturally good seamen), had a leg taken by a crocodile, and was forced to find some new way of making a living. He had learnt a lot too much in the years that he was away, and, on his return to Bathurst Island, he set up in practice as a witch-doctor. A woman on the point of

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OIZO Tiwi OIZO

411 grass, in the foreground, so that the whirling club slithers on in an unforeseen and most unpleasant manner. It may rise as high as a man's head, or it may strike him on the shins.

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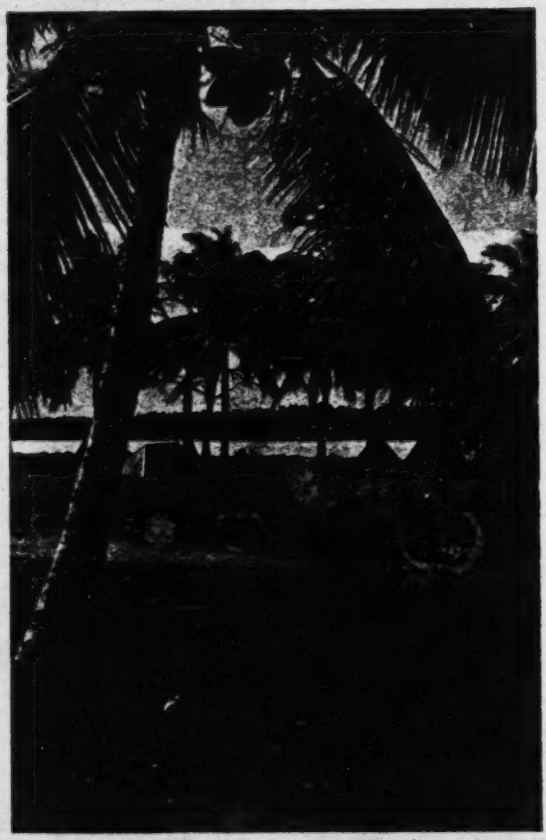

NATIVE "HOUSES" UNDER THE COCO-NUT PALMS AT BATHURST ISLAND MISSION.

726 Sometimes, as in the days of chivalry when English and French knights rode out before the main battle, eight men will advance to fight eight men of the other side, one pair at a time, each warrior throwing his spears and clubs in turn. Sentries are then posted to one side, before and behind the [198] combatants. As a warrior with a stock of pidgin English put it, "That feller, him look out front side. That feller, him look out back side."

At times warriors arrive by canoe to fight a duel on the beach close to the mission station. These are frequently more serious combats, and then men who are camped under the palms chase the duellists off; but these always land later farther down, and fight it out in the long run. Just before my visit, there had been fought the only naval battle in the history of the islands. The encounter took place in the mouth of Apsley Strait to the accompaniment of excited yells as canoes overturned when warriors stopped unevenly in dodging the flying spears. Nobody

797 ters, supervising the lubras' work and ordering stores, which are brought from Darwin by the mission's own lugger *St. Francis*. The pleasant lunch we had at the refectory, where wide windows, open all round, admitted every wandering breeze, was due to their efforts, and later I was to see something of the results of their teaching.

797 School, both for boys and for girls, takes up only two and a half hours each day, but the pupils learn quickly, and the more 871 they are taught the more they can absorb. Reading and writing are mastered without any more difficulty than in the case of white children of the same age, though the pupils were very shy and almost inaudible when exhibiting their prowess. Arithmetic they do not take to so kindly, unless they happen to be interested by some problem that has a definitely practical application to their own lives; but drawing comes natural to the islanders, as it does to the blacks of the mainland, where I had already seen very spirited sketches made by aboriginal children. Of the affection of the children, both for the sisters and the mission fathers, there was no doubt. To be as close to them as possible was an honour they were all bent on securing.

797 THE "blackies," as they call the girls, range in age from tiny 562 tots to those who are practically young women. They were all much excited by the novelty of our visit, bubbling over with laughter, whispering and giggling together. The older "blackies" eye a visitor coyly, smiling over their shoulders with a flash of white teeth; and, when the pilot and I came along with one of the sisters to hear them sing the "Magnificat" and "Adeste Fideles," they fled shrieking, only to turn round and giggle again when they thought that they were far enough away.

"No more gammon!" called the sister, and they lined up demurely to sing their hymns right tunefully, with spasms of giggles in the intervals. To hold up a finger is quite sufficient to bring shrieks of delight from these childish, happy creatures. "Georgie," a very little boy with a very big tummy, so young that he was not yet at the boys' school, sang "Georgie Porgie, puddiny pie, kissed the girls and made them cry" with much aplomb and gesture. If Georgie was at the girls' school, he did not forget [198 that he was a man. He spoke man's language, not woman's 516] talk such as women by custom must use on Bathurst Island, and he sat down like a man with knees wide apart, not together as a woman must.

535 Then, while the older "blackies" formed a circle, chanting in their own language and clapping their hands in time, little girls, [562] two by two, performed women's dances, which again differ from those of the men. There were buffalo, bullock, and lugger dances, when they imitated the animals with arms widespread or bent slightly at the elbows to represent the horns, or held at angles such as those at which sails are set on a lugger, while, now and then, two little fists beaten together faithfully copied the "put-put" of Diesel engines.

More ambitious and complicated was the dance of the overseas mail 'plane that flies from Singapore to Darwin, when whirling arms represented the propellers and stamping feet the beat of [198 the engines. There is, by the way, a sacred language used for 533] songs, and it is only in this language that the name of the dead 768] can be mentioned. If by chance anyone should mention a dead man's name in the ordinary language, every one within hearing will spit with vigour. If defaulters, the maker of such a faux pas will be hit about the head.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

291 observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission,
[797] automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for
177 the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst
[20] of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their oppo-
578 nents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark
834 aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We
174 think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were
291 needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at
535 dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households
511 enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

433 1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were econom-
595 ically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to
182 produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

[556] 5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

arm rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), they seated themselves outside the *milimika*, but took no part in the subsequent rituals. 881 [301]

Other fully initiated men led initiates of the *Wadjeniati* grade to the *wuringalsa* tree, where the yams had been stored on the second morning, told them to sit down and erected a low screen of boughs in front so that the initiates could not be seen from the *milimika*.

The *Mikingulas* first painted the bodies of the *Wadjeniati* initiates with yellow paint, then decorated them with many cane rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), on their upper arms, hair-string belts, *ularini*, around their waists and goose-feather balls, *tokwiangas* (Pl. 31B), on their necks, arms and wrists (see Pl. 42J). This ritual admitted them to the grade of *Mikinatrina* and *Mikinatrinings* respectively. 881 302 [301]

After the *Wadjeniati* initiates were decorated, the senior grades of the *kulama* painted their faces, bodies, hair and beards with elaborate designs in red, yellow, black and white. In one design, peculiar to the *kulama*, the aborigines covered one side of their faces with red paint, and the other side with black,[87] the two colours being separated with a line of yellow (Pl. 42M). The men painted a complex design, usually in red and white on their hair and beards.[88] Some of the men also decorated their children.

The leader of the *kulama* then assembled everyone to see the *Mikinatrina* initiates perform their first dance, which they had been quietly practising for some time. 535 881

At a given signal, each *Mikinatrina* stood up in turn and, gaily decorated with body paint and coloured ceremonial ornaments, and holding a flat fighting club, *jurumila*, in either hand, performed his first dance. As each initiate danced, the assembled people applauded, slapping their buttocks in approbation of both the dancing and the appearance of the initiates. [201]

When the *Mikinatrinas* had finished their dance, the female initiates, the *Mikinatriningas*, similarly decorated, but without the clubs, individually performed their dances. Still painted and wearing their decorations, the male and female *Mikinatrinas* seated themselves outside of the *milimika* beside the newly created *Kilipaniatis*.

After the initiates had finished their dances, several of the *Mikingulas* entered the *milimika* and chanted another series of secular songs. [533]

[87] Spencer, 1928, p. 674, who saw a *kulama* ceremony during 1911, refers to this curious form of facial decoration.

[88] The method of colouring the hair with intricate designs is of some interest. The aboriginal, loading his fingers and thumb with wet ground-up ochre, pinched the hair, instead of rubbing the colour into it. By this means, the operator was able to keep sharp well-defined edges to the design, an effect that could not be achieved in any other way.

123 Although the wind had died and the clouds given way to a clear, light blue sky, the sea still had heavy rollers. However, instead of breaking over the canoe, they gently lifted it high in the air, then let it slide down the incline. We set out as the first rays of the sun appeared over the horizon and soon began to feel revived as our clothes began to dry. We stayed fairly close to the shore, close enough so that landmarks could be easily seen. For a while we coasted by the thin white strip of sand along which we 123 had hunted for turtle eggs the afternoon before. The land in back of the beach was low swampland and all that could be seen was a 133 thin line of green foliage. But soon we approached Tubinu Point. Here the beach gave way to a jutting headland and the steep sea-[134] ward cliff was a rainbow of colors where bands of ocherous clays of yellow and red were separated by clear white and topped by a [137] heavy line of dark humus. Tall eucalyptus trees stood right up to the edge of the 75-foot cliff. We stayed well clear of the base, for a short but ragged, rocky reef extended out under the water.

Rounding the point, we came to a small inlet edged with the 123 ever-present tangle of mangrove trees, beyond which was another clean white stretch of sandy beach. About this time the puppy grew restless and started roaming the canoe from stern to bow. Once he had reached the bow he climbed up to the very point and stuck his nose into the wind. As the canoe rose and dipped he would lose his balance and I would grab him and hand him to Agnes. But he would not stay put and soon would again be a live figurehead pointing the way. Finally, Albert said, "Let him go." As was to be expected, the next roller knocked little Tchuwiunga off his perch and into the sea he went. As the canoe passed, Albert leaned over and fished the frightened, struggling puppy out of the water and handed him to Agnes, who began rubbing him down. "Him gotta learn," remarked Albert. "Sea bin teach him more better." Soon Tchuwiunga revived his courage and again ventured forward, but this time instead of standing on the bow, he curled up on the bag of flour and slept soundly until we reached our destination. He had indeed learned his lesson well.

The rolling motion, sun, and inactivity had made both Agnes and me drowsy and we were all but asleep when Big Jack woke [201] us with, "Black Joe mob. Him camp Anderaningo." I looked in

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 2. Melville Island Coast

123 the direction to which he pointed with his chin, but could see nothing
[201] other than white sand broken in spots with the heavy green of the mangrove jungles. "There," he repeated. "See. Him make big smoke." By straining my eyes and imagination I believed I could see a tiny wisp of white smoke rising above the last patch of green on the furthest point of land.

Distances were deceiving, for the point of land which seemed so many miles away was soon reached. The entrance to the Paluwiunga River was a narrow channel cut through the far edge of a broad sandbank. Rather than circumnavigate the bank, the men decided to go over it, but as the waves breaking over the sand were churned into a tangle of white water by the opposing river current, it was deemed advisable that all surplus passengers disembark. Agnes, clutching the puppy, and I, with my KLM bag, jumped overboard into shoulder-high water and slowly made our way over the bank to the shore. The men also went overboard and, with one on each side, they guided the canoe safely to the quiet water of the river.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 slipped down the tree and jumped clear of the fire, the other participants
372 called his totemic name.

Toward the end of this series of *ilanias*, the "workers" announced that they had finished cutting the poles. The leader, the *alawia*, hearing this, gave permission for the poles to be "cooked", i.e., burnt in a fire of blazing boughs, to provide a black ground on which to paint the designs. The leader
[202] also ordered that the *purunkias* (message sticks, Figs. 5, 6, 7), be sent out to the various totemic groups. These sticks intimated that the final *pukamani* ceremonies would take place in about twenty days.

765 (c) *The Bathurst Island Ilanias*

About a week before the final burial rituals of *Waniampari*, a number of aborigines from Bathurst Island, accompanied by their wives and *Katapi*, the son of the dead man, made their camp and cleared a ceremonial ground not far from the second *milinika* used by the Melville Island people.

The Bathurst Island *ilanias*, under the leadership of an elderly aboriginal, *Jibungfiahuni*, followed the traditional form, except that the first two phases were omitted, i.e., the fighting and the feeding of the "workers".

Three groups of songs were chanted to the accompaniment of the appropriate dances.

(i) The *Ningaui* songs and dances.
(ii) The mission lugger songs and dances.
(iii) The jabiru (*Tjalati*) songs and dances.

(i) *The Ningaui Songs and Dances*

533 The leader, *Jibungfiahuni*, and his companions chanted the following
539 *Ningaui* songs. These are the literal translations.
765 "I am the head man of the *Ningaui*, I am, Eeh, Eeh."[67]

"I push aside the mangrove branches with my hands, Eeh, Eeh."

"The *Ningauis* are out hunting. The calls of the white cockatoos tell them that someone is coming, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* woman, having just given birth to a child, sings—

"The flies are looking at me, the flies are crawling on my shoulder, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* man, looking at his newly born child, sings—

"Little new-born man lying on the ground, Eeh, Eeh."

[825] [67] This is the call of the *Ningauis* which, the aborigines claim, they hear in the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. It is possibly the call of one of the swamp birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The two forms of fire-jumping (described earlier, p. 73) were also used in these rituals. 765

The *ilania* closed with the performance of the rite of *pumuni*, then the usual honey and mosquito calls.

5. THE FINAL PUKAMUNI RITUALS

(1) *The Pukamuni of Waniamperi*

For the sake of simplicity I will describe, under this heading, the rituals carried out during the last two days of the closing phases of the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*. These rituals took place about three months after burial and about a month after the performance of the first *ilania* and the receiving of the message stick (Fig. 5F, G, H) from the Bathurst Island aborigines. [202]

During these final ceremonies, the aborigines divided themselves into two groups; the Melville Island men and women, under the leadership of *Wurarbui*, and the Bathurst Island men and women, with a few of the Melville Island aborigines linked with them totemically, under their leader, *Jibunglialumi*. [616]

The "workers" had cleared two dancing grounds: one, Fig. 4A, about fifty yards south of *Waniamperi's* grave, belonging to the Melville Island aborigines, and the other, Fig. 4B, about thirty yards east, to the people from Bathurst Island.

There were seven decorated burial poles on *milimika*, A, and three on B (Fig. 4). The three poles, although cut and painted by the local men, had been given, with their permission, to the Bathurst Island group who were responsible for the payment of them. [432]

The final rituals extended over two days. After both groups had performed *ilanias* in the middle of the first morning, they spent about six hours decorating each other with elaborate facial and body designs, one of which, that of *Wurarbui*, is illustrated on the frontispiece. Other facial designs are illustrated on Pl. 28. In the late afternoon all the participants, men and women, moved to the two *milimikas* near the grave (Fig. 4A, B), where they performed a series of dances until dark. The aborigines camped nearby, most of them within a hundred yards of the grave. The next morning the final rituals started. [302]

These *pukamuni* rituals can be divided into five distinct phases—

(*a*) The opening rituals.

(*b*) The songs and dances.

F

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 778 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals.

[411] [531] Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear, *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

[114] [322] [412] At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *miluanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *muruguna*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

[302] [413] Pl. 32E, O, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[66]

[515] [413] Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 765 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkitas*, are used by the Tiwi for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, O, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkitas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

[301] [302] As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, his chest ornaments,

[66] The lines of dots on *Wurarkui* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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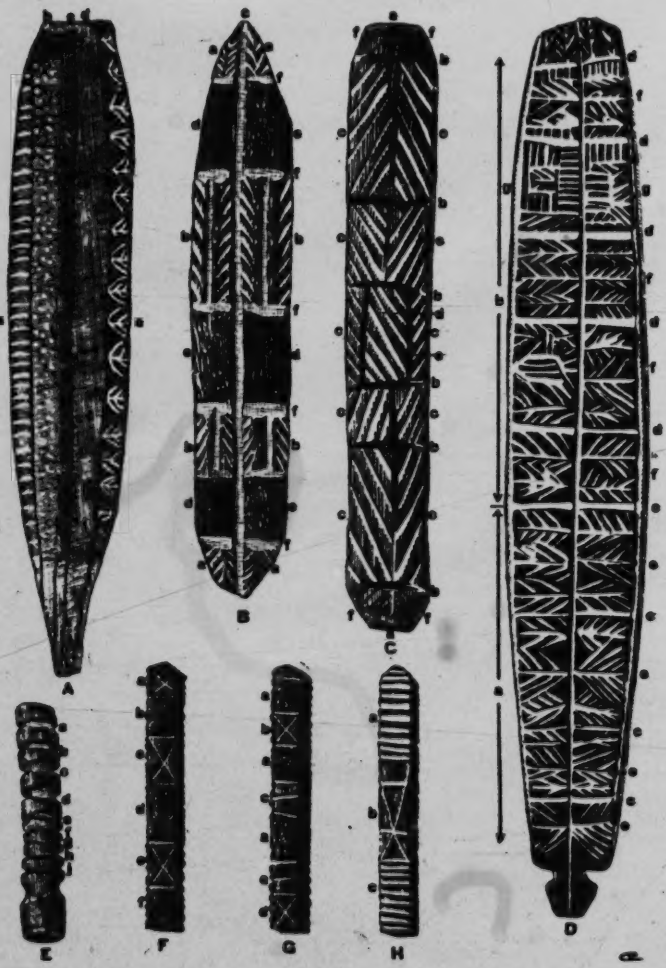

FIG. 5. *The Message Sticks*

A, Numanira; B, Puntubu; C, Muranapi; D, Pirilou; E, Secular; F, G, H, Pukamuni Ceremonial.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

202 765 *palmajinis*, and cane armlets, *jairinis*. Then, taking a female *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaguni*, in his hand he seated himself within sight of the camp.

[301] [302] The local aborigines went out to welcome him, but on seeing the message stick and hearing the news, they mourned hysterically, cutting their heads [785] and beating themselves with sticks.

When the mourning died down, the aborigines gave the messenger a meal, [574] after which he returned to his own camp.

Although the general distribution of the totemic *purunkitas* has been dis- [126] continued in recent years, the aborigines who knew them well, made nine [184] examples for me. It would seem that each totemic place had its own particular [794] design, for when I showed the *purunkita* (Fig. 7D) to old *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, neither of whom had seen it previously, they recognized it immediately as a message stick which would have been sent to the *Mudungkala* totemic group of Buchanan Island, at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. However, other *purunkitas*, i.e. (Fig. 5C; Fig. 5F, G, H; and Fig. 6A, E) are still being used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

During the early days of our stay, when the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were about to start, three men, two of them, *Marawani* and *Uramajina*, being the chief mourners, made a journey to the Bathurst Island people for the purpose of giving them a *purunkita* and telling them the news.

A few days later a Bathurst Island man returned with the message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H, and verbal instructions relating to the forthcoming burial rituals.

Although I did not see the message stick which *Marawani* and his com- [126] panions carried to Bathurst Island, I was able to make a rubbing of another (Fig. 7C), which was sent to the same locality on the death of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife.

Later, old *Tjamalampua* sent another message stick (Fig. 7A, B), to the men of the *Mudungkala* totem of Buchanan Island, asking for European goods and food to pay the "workers" at the final rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*.

Notification of Death

202 211 ×532 The designs on message stick, Fig. 7C, which an aboriginal carried to the Bathurst Island people, together with the news of the death of *Nulatini*, did not, in any way, refer to the message that accompanied it, but to topographical details along the motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point on Apsley Straits.

The upper section, *d*, is the aboriginal camp at Snake Bay, and the indentations, *a*, *a*, are the rocks on its shores. The cross-hatched rectangle in the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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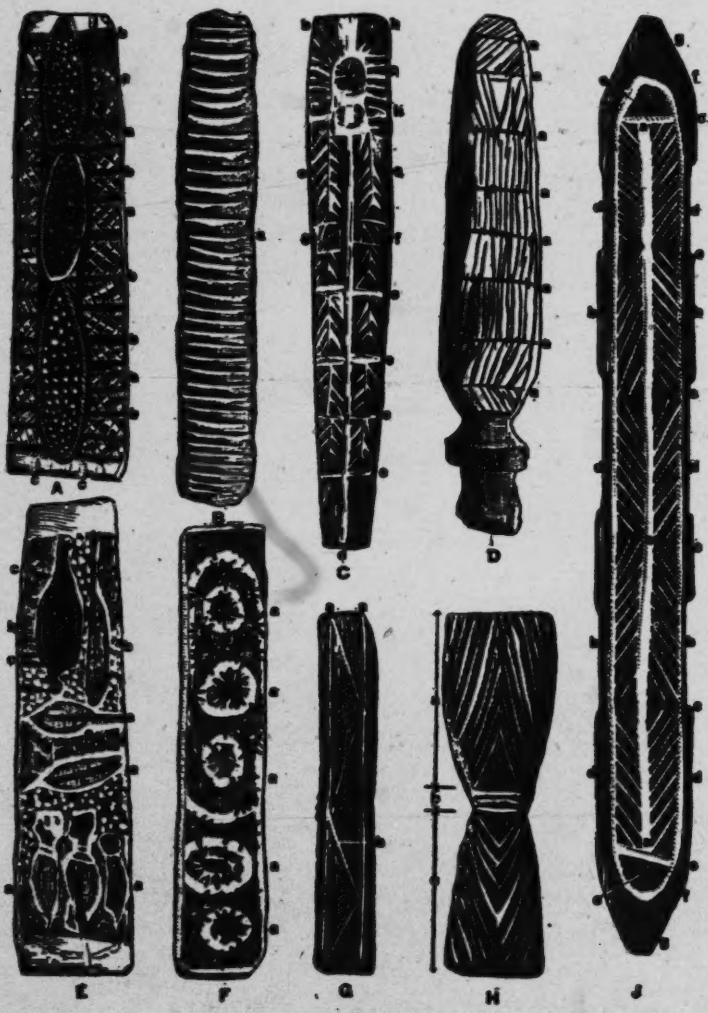

FIG. 6. *The Message Sticks*

A, B, Imilu; B, Ceremonial; C, Wurinpi; D, Secular; F, Kudjatumpi; G, H, Invitation to Secular Ceremony; J, Muranapi.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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centre of the message stick is the freshwater creek, Primbiamili, across which there is a crude bridge of logs (parallel lines *e*, *f*, on either side of the cross-hatched rectangle).

The long rectangle at the top of the message stick is the track between Snake Bay and Primbiamili Creek, and that at the bottom, from Primbiamili Creek to Cockle Point on Apsley Strait. Symbols *b*, *b*, are living stringy-bark trees by the roadside, and *c* is a group of dead trees.

The crossed squares *h*, *h*, indicate trees that had been cut down to clear a motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point. Apsley Strait, indicated by rectangle *g*, was crossed by the messenger in the dug-out canoe, *j*. The triangles at *n*, refer to the houses of the Bathurst Island Mission Station.

Pukamuni Ceremonial Purunkita

The return *purunkita* to that notifying the death of *Waniamperi* is shown on Fig. 5F, G, H. A messenger carried this *purunkita* to the Melville Island aborigines, together with the instructions about the conduct of the *pukamuni* from *Jibunglialumi*, the leader of the Bathurst Island group.

On side F, the crossed square, *a*, refers to *Urumatjina*, *c*, to *Marawani*, and *e*, to *Katopi*, the three chief mourners at the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*. *Katopi* is the son of the dead man.

Square *b* refers to instructions asking the "workers" to build a screen of boughs round the grave so that unauthorized people cannot see it; *d* refers to the cleaning of the grave site, and *f* to a request for the "workers" to dig out the roots and sticks in the ceremonial ground, so that the dancers will not injure their feet.

On side G, the crossed square *d*, is the *milimika* of the Bathurst Island group, and *b*, that of the Melville Island people. Groups of lines, *c*, *c*, refer to the number of "working men" to be appointed, while cross-hatched areas, *a*, *a*, indicate a request to the "workers" to do their tasks well and happily.

On side *H*, the lines, *a*, refer to burial poles to be erected around *Waniamperi's* grave; *b*, to the chief *pukamuni* men at Melville Island, and *c*, to the Bathurst *pukamuni* men whom *Jibunglialumi* will bring with him.

Pukamuni Ceremonial Purunkita

Fig. 6B is a *purunkita* sent by an old man, *Tjamalampua*, to another old man, *Tipumbriaria*, in Bathurst Island, asking him to bring many aborigines to the forthcoming *pukamuni* ceremony at Melville Island. The cross-lines, *a*, indicate the required number of men.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

Kudjatumpi

This *purunkita* (Fig. 6*b*) was sent to the March-fly totemic centre at Kudjatumpi, southern Melville Island. The designs on the message stick were painted, instead of being engraved, because of the difficulty of cutting the circular patterns.

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The white circles and ovals, *a*, *a*, are backwaters and lagoons at the mouth of the freshwater stream at Kudjatumpi and the star-shaped designs, lilies growing on the surface of the water.

Wuriupi

Fig. 6*c* is an engraved message stick sent to members of the fire totemic group at Wuriupi, eastern Melville Island.

The disc, *a*, indicates the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, travelling across the sky, the radiating lines, *b*, the beams of light at sunrise, *f* and *g*, the mid-day camps of the sun-woman (p. 172). The long line, *d*, is the path of the sun-woman across the firmament.

Pandanus trees in the Milky Way are indicated at *c*, *c*, and similar designs and breaks in the galaxy by the transverse lines, *e*, *e*.

Numanira

The *purunkita* (Fig. 5A) belonged to the totemic red-ochre group at Numanira, west of Karslake Island.

The left-hand band of short transverse bars at *a*, represents the lines of coloured ochres in the sands of the sea-shore; the dots on the next band, *b*, to the right, are the oysters on the rocks at Numanira; band *c* indicates the reefs of red and yellow ochres covered at high tide; *d* is the motor road along the cliff on the mainland opposite Karslake Island, and *e*, the trees on the shore of Karslake Island, opposite Numanira.

Puntubu

Fig. 5B illustrates a *purunkita* which was sent to Puntubu, on the upper reaches of the Tjipripu River, central Melville Island, one of the totem places of the eucalyptus-tree woman, *Aragoutourina*.

The central line, *c*, is the Tjipripu River, which flows into Curtis Haven. On the banks of that river grow many *tulini* palms (symbols *b*, *b*, *b*,) from which the aborigines make their palm-leaf baskets. The roots of the palms, *a*, *a*, are indicated at either end of the message stick, and reefs of black and yellow rocks on the banks of the Tjipripu River at *d*, *d*, and *e*, *e*, *e*,

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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respectively. The junctions of those rocks are indicated by the transverse lines, *f, f, f*.

Muranapi

A message stick to invite the aborigines of Muranapi, southern Melville Island, to a *pukamani*, is illustrated on Fig. 6J.

The central white line is Muranapi Creek; the groups of sloping lines on either side are the eucalyptus trees on its banks, and the transverse panels, such as *c, c*, pandanus trees on the subsidiary watercourses.

The semi-circles, *e, e*, on either end of the *purunkita*, represent the hills, *g, g*, the high ground, *f, f*, the sandy soil on the shores of Muranapi Creek, and the indentations, *d, d*, etc., on either edge of the *purunkita*, the *tulini* palms which grow on the edge of the fresh water.

Muranapi

Fig. 5C is another message stick sent to Muranapi, this time to the *Mandubuka* (blow-fly) totemic group.

The central lines, *a, a*, at both ends of the *purunkita* represent the salt-water creek, Duniau. On this creek is the totemic place, *d*, a rock about thirty feet long and six feet above the level of high tide. The transverse lines, *b, b*, etc., are freshwater creeks which flow into Duniau.

The sloping cuts within rectangle *d*, symbolize cracks in the totemic rock of *Mandubuka*. The remainder of the sloping cuts, as at *c, c*, etc., represent bloodwood trees and other eucalypts growing on the banks of the freshwater streams. Marks *f, f*, etc., on either end of the *purunkita*, indicate a point of land at the mouth of Duniau Creek.

Pirilou

Fig. 5D illustrates a message stick sent to the catfish totemic group of Pirilou on the Goose Creek swamps, central Melville Island.

The middle line is the Goose Creek, *a* (lower) being the salt-water section, and *b* (upper), the fresh-water. The transverse lines, *c, c*, etc., are subsidiary mangrove creeks, and *d, d*, etc., the freshwater lagoons or backwaters of the Goose Creek swamps. At *e, e*, etc., are mangrove trees on the shore of the salt-water stream, *a*; and *f, f*, etc., living paper-bark, and *g, g*, dead paper-bark trees in the freshwater lagoons.

Imilu and Buchanan Island

A *purunkita* (Fig. 6A, E), partly engraved, partly painted, was taken from Snake Bay first to the aborigines at Imilu, north-western Melville Island,

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

202 then to a group on Buchanan Island, notifying them of the forthcoming burial rituals.

211 The three large ovals on Fig. 5A are graves on Melville Island, the short
×532 transverse lines, *b*, *b*, the *pukamuni* poles, and the short lines, *c*, *c*, at the bottom of the *purunkita*, the tracks leading to the grave. The cross-hatched panels, *a*, *a*, represent the grass around the grave site.

On the opposite side, Fig. 5B, the designs, *a*, *a*, are *pukamuni* poles, and *b*, *b*, old graves surrounded by poles (short lines, *c*, *c*). The dots represent the mourners at the grave.

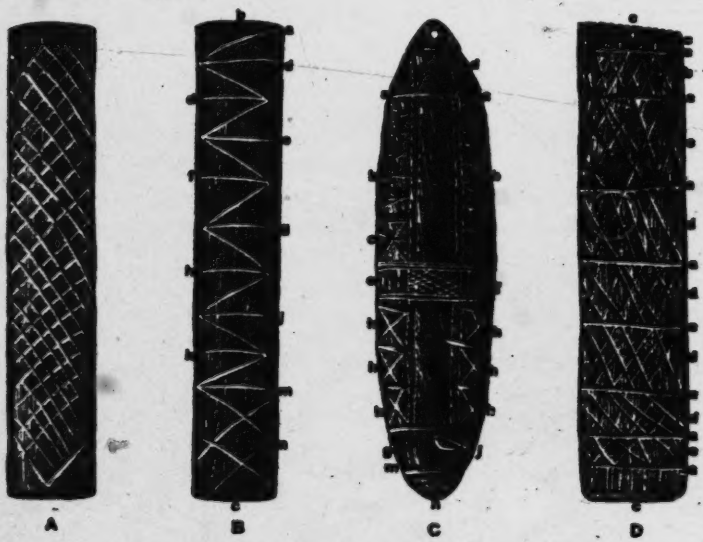

FIG. 7. *The Message Sticks*

A, B, Buchanan Island; C, Notification of Death; D, Buchanan Island.

Buchanan Island

Fig. 7A, B, are two sides of another *purunkita*, which was sent to the *Mudungkuli* (eucalyptus tree) totemic group on Buchanan Island (adjacent to the Bathurst Island Mission Station). This *purunkita* asked for a supply of European goods and food so that the "workers" could be paid at the closing rituals of *Wanianpari's pukamuni* on Melville Island.

The diamond patterns on Fig. 7A refer to the numbers of men in large the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Mudungkala totemic group. On the reverse side (Fig. 7B), the zig-zag line *a*, is the road between Snake Bay (upper end, *b*), and Cockle Point, in Apsley Straits (lower end, *c*). At *d*, *d*, is a request for two six-pound bags of sugar; *e*, for tea; *f*, sufficient printed calico for a loin cloth; *g*, three sticks of tobacco; *h*, a tin of tobacco; *j*, a pair of trousers; *k*, a pocket knife, and *m*, a pipe. The crossed lines at *n* indicate the camp of *Tjamalumpua*, the sender of the message stick.

Buchanan Island

The message stick (Fig. 7D) refers to the Jaulama jungle, about a half a mile south of our camp.

This stick was sent by the chief mourner of the Melville Island *pukamuni* group to the members of the ironwood, *Mudungkala*, totemic group of Buchanan Island, and adjacent Bathurst Islanders, notifying them of the oncoming burial rituals. The designs on the stick, however, have no relationship to either the ironwood tree group or the message they would receive. The short vertical lines at *c*, *c*, are living paper-bark trees, and the transverse lines, *a*, *a*, dead paper-bark trees in the Jaulama jungle. At *b*, are the roots of the trees, and at panels *c*, the vines of the edible *roko* yams on the branches of the paper-barks. The four panels, *d*, *d*, etc., are jungle trees, and *e* indicates their roots.

Invitation to Adjoining Tribe

[574]

Fig. 6G, H, illustrates a message stick (not associated with a *pukamuni* ceremony) from the Melville Island people, inviting the aborigines on the Coburg Peninsula to pay them a visit and to perform some of their mainland ceremonies.[97]

On the obverse side, Fig. 6G, the parallel lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the shores of the Coburg Peninsula, and the zig-zag line, *b*, a mangrove creek in the same locality.

On the reverse side, 6H, the V-shaped patterns, *a*, indicate the men who have been invited from the Coburg Peninsula, and those in the lower section, *b*, the women. The short transverse lines at *c*, represent the Melville Island men who will act as hosts to the visitors.

Secular

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Fig. 5E is a secular message stick sent to an aboriginal, *Marawani*, who was on a visit to Darwin, asking him to bring back the following goods; *a*,

[97] This message stick suggests that, at the present time, members of the mainland tribes and those of the Tiwi, occasionally visit each other.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tobacco, *b*, matches, *c*, a pipe, *d*, a calico loin cloth, *e*, a pair of short trousers, *f*, a shirt, *g*, sugar, *h*, tea, and *j*, flour. 202 211 439

Secular

Fig. 6D is a carved stick whose designs were thought out by the artist as he walked along the sandy beach near our camp. Although not a message stick, the illustration is included in the section as an example of how an aboriginal expresses his mental images through the medium of simple wood carving. 532x

The horizontal lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the waves breaking on the beach, and the groups of short lines, a pattern of shallow gutters which had been formed on the sandy shore by the fresh water seeping from a nearby lagoon.

10. THE BURIAL POLES

The painted and decorated poles of Melville and Bathurst Islands attracted the attention of all the early visitors. Sir Gordon Bremer in 1824, possibly the first European to see the *pukamuni* poles, when writing about a grave he saw on Melville Island, states: "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilised people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed around with trees, 7 feet to 8 feet high, some of which were carved with stone or shell and further ornamented by rings of wood. On the tops of these were placed the waddies (throwing sticks) of the deceased. The grave was raised above the level of the earth, but the raised part was not more than 3 feet long. At the head was placed a piece of a canoe (probably a bark basket) and a spear and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and earth were cleared away from the sides and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."[90] 765 211 [322] [413]

I have quoted Sir Gordon Bremer's description in full because it shows that, even after a hundred and thirty years, the aborigines of Melville Island, 211 178 765

[90] Bremer, 1843. From this description it would appear that Bremer chanced to see a grave not long after the aborigines had completed the final rituals. Had any time elapsed the whole area would have been covered with grass and leaves, for, after the *pukamuni* ceremonies, nobody is interested in either the grave or the poles.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

527 mainland, it will be remembered, are with preference postponed until after night-
535 fall. The women were not permitted to take part in the proceedings, but were,
[562] indeed, kept at some considerable distance off. Youths and male children were allowed to join in the ceremonies without apparent restriction. When we met with men, hunting in the bush, and they had been convinced of our *bona fide* intentions, they would approach us in groups of from two to four, and deliver up their long
[200] spears to us. Several of the young men would, in the meantime, run into the woods as messengers to summon others who were as yet unaware of the presence of the strangers in their haunts.

203 A corrobboree[1] having been decided upon, the signal or invitation to take part
527 in the event is sounded by two or three of the older men, who have previously arranged it among themselves. This initial note is a long-drawn, continuous yell resembling the German diphthong ö! Other members immediately fall in with the same note and are joined, at intervals, by others excitedly rushing up to take their stand alongside of those who started the call. The monosyllabic "ö" is kept continuous by the combined efforts of many voices, each of which individually expires for a moment, after the lungs' capacity for air has been completely exhausted. The note is, however, taken up again immediately after a fresh supply of air has been inhaled. The weirdness of the monotone is suddenly broken by the powerful voice of the "master" of the ceremonies, who brings forth a penetrating, but abrupt, order resembling "wahoi." This is instantly and collectively repeated by all others present. A momentary silence follows and allows the sombre trunks of the surrounding forest to reiterate the final word in ringing echoes.

The leader once more gives the note; this time in a slightly modified form resembling a long-continued "ye," that merges imperceptibly into a "yi." A sudden shrill "wahoi-hoi" brings that note also to a stop. A deadly silence prevails.

527 The primary appellation now being over, the performers congregate themselves into a compact group. In the meanwhile much excited vociferation ensues from every mouth, young as well as old. At this stage their eyes make a survey of any
[628] neighbouring encampment and if, by chance, a likely performer is noticed who has not heeded the appeal and is shirking his duty by non-attendance, he is furiously implored, at times abusively, to join the assemblage of performers. The leader now emerges from the group at a walking pace and is followed, in single file, by all participants, each in his turn falling into regular order as though his place had previously been allotted to him. The course taken by the leader is a winding one; walking, at first, some distance away from the point of starting but returning
527 eventually thereto. The musical accompaniment is started afresh, and though not
533 exactly melodious to the European ear, it is certainly a remarkably clever and original production on the part of the aboriginal. The nearest way we might describe it in words is that it is in the form of a trill, produced by a rapidly repeated

Compare also H. Klaatsch, *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, pp. 589 and 590.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The mobility of people other than household heads was much less. 562
Women and children could move only with the permission, and usually in the 571
company, of their lord and master. Occasionally old and trusted wives might
be sent, unsupervised, on a journey by their husbands or their brothers, [203]
usually to carry messages and bring back gossip, but young wives were never trusted to be out of sight either of the husband or of elderly female supervisors. Young men were less subject to their fathers' orders and hence were fairly free to come and go as they pleased, but the universal suspicion which all husbands bore toward wandering young men put severe restrictions on their mobility and prevented them attaching themselves to any household or camp in which they did not have some close relative.

The fact, then, that a man like Tu'untalumi was (in Tiwi terms) very 159
mobile did not necessarily mean that members of his household shared his
degree of mobility. When he took most of his large household with him on his 222
journeys away from home, as he often did, it was always because he was going 462
a considerable distance and was traveling slowly, living off the country as he 527
went. In such cases he liked to have a large retinue to feed him on the way and also to permit him to entertain in fitting style when he arrived. For while it was true that at a funeral or at an initiation the relatives of the de-
ceased or of the novices were supposed to take care of the feeding of all the [574]
visitors, nonetheless, wealthy and generous men like Tu'untalumi believed in taking along with them a bevy of young wives, with a couple of efficient elderly widow-wives in charge of them, to contribute to the food-getting and food-preparing activities. Of course the supervision of the young wives' morals [837
in the strange environment was often difficult, especially in the hectic at-
mosphere of a big ceremonial, but this worry was compensated for by the fact 593]
that the visitor who came so attended was contributing a number of extra food providers to the labor force of the harassed hosts and thus making a generous gesture, and also by the fact that such a visitor was not dependent upon the hospitality provided by the hosts. Having his own food-producing unit with him, he could live better and stay longer than if he had come alone or only as one of a party of men. In this respect, as in so many others, a Tiwi household head's decision had to be reached by balancing against one another the two competing motives of, on the one hand, the desire to eat well and, on the other, the desire to keep his young wives safe from prowling bachelors. Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest man of the Malauila band, usually decided not only to leave his wives at home but also not even to go himself. But Ki-in-kumi was a gloomy, pessimistic old man. Tu'untalumi usually decided to do the thing in style, travel with a large retinue, have all the comforts of home while in strange districts, and take his chances on the strange bachelors. He clearly believed that a good booming ceremony with lots to eat and himself in the center directing the dancing was well worth the risk of a few of his young wives being seduced off-stage. Men like Ki-in-kumi thought Tu'untalumi an
old fool for not leaving his young wives at home, and Tu'untalumi probably [184]
thought that old Ki-in-kumi might as well be dead, especially since his death would be the occasion for a really magnificent funeral.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

father's name towards him and thus implying their approval of his taking 428
that name. To select one example—there is at present in the Tiklowila 553
horde a man *Pwandjilora* whose father was also a *Pwandjilora* who died about fifteen years ago. His father in turn was also a *Pwandjilora*, who is only remembered by the very old people of the horde.

This succession of names also takes place though to a very much lesser degree in the female line, that is from mother to daughter.

It must not be thought, however, that there is any such thing as 424
private ownership of names by a family. A man but distantly related to 553
Pwandjilora II would be quite at liberty to bestow that name upon one of his children were it not already in use and had a sufficient time elapsed since his death. An example is a famous warrior of the last generation called *Walitoami*. This name has recently been bestowed by one of the Tiklowila upon his son though neither he, the child, nor the mother of the child is closely related to the first *Walitoami*. As a matter of fact the child is the mother's brother's son's daughter's son of *Walitoami I*.

One or two other aspects of this subject may be dismissed briefly 551
as they are more important in a study of kinship or ceremonial, than in a 422
study of names as such.

A man may not in any circumstances use the name of the wife of another man, even the names of his brother's wives, without giving the husband a *casus belli*. A woman is a man's own property and the use of her name is an infringement of his property rights. In the same way a man's own name is his own property and cannot be used with impunity, at least in the presence of the owner of the name. In calling out to a person for instance, he will always be addressed by a kinship term, never by a personal name. This also is the manner by which the news of a death is 551
carried to distant camps and the name of the dead man avoided, "your [196
mother's brother at *Wilraŋgu* of the *Tjilarui* totem and the son of so and so 203]
is dead at *Brega*" being an example of how a relative is informed. The dead man is thenceforward referred to as "he who died recently at *Brega*."

There is another prohibition against the use by a husband of his own 551
wife's name whilst she is in childbirth. For a couple of weeks before the 843
birth and for a couple of weeks afterwards the husband must not look upon his wife, he cannot use any of her names, nor can any others of the tribe mention her either by name or by implication to him. Even such an

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

527 mainland, it will be remembered, are with preference postponed until after night-
535 fall. The women were not permitted to take part in the proceedings, but were,
[562] indeed, kept at some considerable distance off. Youths and male children were allowed to join in the ceremonies without apparent restriction. When we met with men, hunting in the bush, and they had been convinced of our *bona fide* intentions, they would approach us in groups of from two to four, and deliver up their long
[200] spears to us. Several of the young men would, in the meantime, run into the woods as messengers to summon others who were as yet unaware of the presence of the strangers in their haunts.

203 A corrobboree[1] having been decided upon, the signal or invitation to take part
527 in the event is sounded by two or three of the older men, who have previously arranged it among themselves. This initial note is a long-drawn, continuous yell resembling the German diphthong ö! Other members immediately fall in with the same note and are joined, at intervals, by others excitedly rushing up to take their stand alongside of those who started the call. The monosyllabic "ö" is kept continuous by the combined efforts of many voices, each of which individually expires for a moment, after the lungs' capacity for air has been completely exhausted. The note is, however, taken up again immediately after a fresh supply of air has been inhaled. The weirdness of the monotone is suddenly broken by the powerful voice of the "master" of the ceremonies, who brings forth a penetrating, but abrupt, order resembling "wahoi." This is instantly and collectively repeated by all others present. A momentary silence follows and allows the sombre trunks of the surrounding forest to reiterate the final word in ringing echoes.

The leader once more gives the note; this time in a slightly modified form resembling a long-continued "ye," that merges imperceptibly into a "yi." A sudden shrill "wahoi-hoi" brings that note also to a stop. A deadly silence prevails.

527 The primary appellation now being over, the performers congregate themselves into a compact group. In the meanwhile much excited vociferation ensues from
[628] every mouth, young as well as old. At this stage their eyes make a survey of any neighbouring encampment and if, by chance, a likely performer is noticed who has not heeded the appeal and is shirking his duty by non-attendance, he is furiously implored, at times abusively, to join the assemblage of performers. The leader now emerges from the group at a walking pace and is followed, in single file, by all participants, each in his turn falling into regular order as though his place had previously been allotted to him. The course taken by the leader is a winding one; walking, at first, some distance away from the point of starting but returning
527 eventually thereto. The musical accompaniment is started afresh, and though not
533 exactly melodious to the European ear, it is certainly a remarkably clever and original production on the part of the aboriginal. The nearest way we might describe it in words is that it is in the form of a trill, produced by a rapidly repeated

[1] Compare also H. Klaatsch, *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, pp. 589 and 590.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

"workers" (*wanaras*), it would be their duty to cut the burial poles, *tudinis*, make and paint the large ceremonial baskets, *wanatuna*, and the elaborate *pukamuni* spears, *tunkeringa*, as well as to clear the burial ground at Tapararimi, which was east of Impanali, the place where *Purukupali* died. As *Purukupali* had entered the sea and was drowned, there was no grave to cover and keep clean, as there would be at a usual *pukamuni*. 773

The "working party", who cut the poles with stone axes, consisted of the men, *Andjalui* (fresh water), *Wuriuprinili* (fire), *Tukimbini* (honey-eater), *Jidati* (saw-fish), *Timalana* (mosquito), *Taduwala* (shark) and *Pulajerapi* (mullet). Two turtle women, *Garagalani* and *Ringa* made some of the large *pukamuni* baskets, and a honey woman, *Latungkala*, who was not one of the "workers", another basket, which was decorated by the honey-men, *Pututi* and *Kaljupini*.

While the "working party" were busy at their tasks, *Talinini*, the honey-man of Bathurst Island, sent specially carved message sticks, *purunkita* (Fig. 5F, G, H) to the various groups of men and women on Bathurst and Melville Islands, instructing them to assemble at certain places, then move eastward to Tapararimi, performing the *ilania* ceremonies[80] on the way. [211] [532]*

A bark painting, Pl. 3A, B, deals with the assembling of the people for *Purukupali's pukamuni*. 532* 773

The black disc, *d*, at the bottom of the painting, is Bla-wururu, central Bathurst Island, where the leader, the honey-man, *Talinini*, with *Mauwini* and *Taparalili* performed the first *ilania* ceremony. Pintamu, *g*, is the home of *Talinini* and Putawini, *h*, that of *Mauwini*.

The second *ilania* was performed at Rarukumpili, *e* (western Bathurst Island). A fish-man, *Pulangarau*, a participant of this ceremony, lived on an adjacent point of land, *f*. The "workers" from the east coast also performed *ilanias* at Ininu, *j*, central Melville Island,[81] as well as at three localities on the east coast, i.e., Wuriupi, *l*, Muruplanga, *m*, and Tapararimi, *n*.

The central disc, *k*, is Tapararimi, where the creation people, from all parts of the Islands, assembled to perform the final *pukamuni* rituals of *Purukupali*.

The many lines, *a*, *a*, at the top and bottom of the painting, symbolize the routes of the ancestral men as they walked to Tapararimi, and *b*, *b*, paths taken by the women, who always travel to a *pukamuni* ceremony by a different route from that of the men.

[80] The *ilanias* are performed every evening for some weeks before the final *pukamuni* rituals (p. 68).
[81] Another account places this *ilania* at Punubu.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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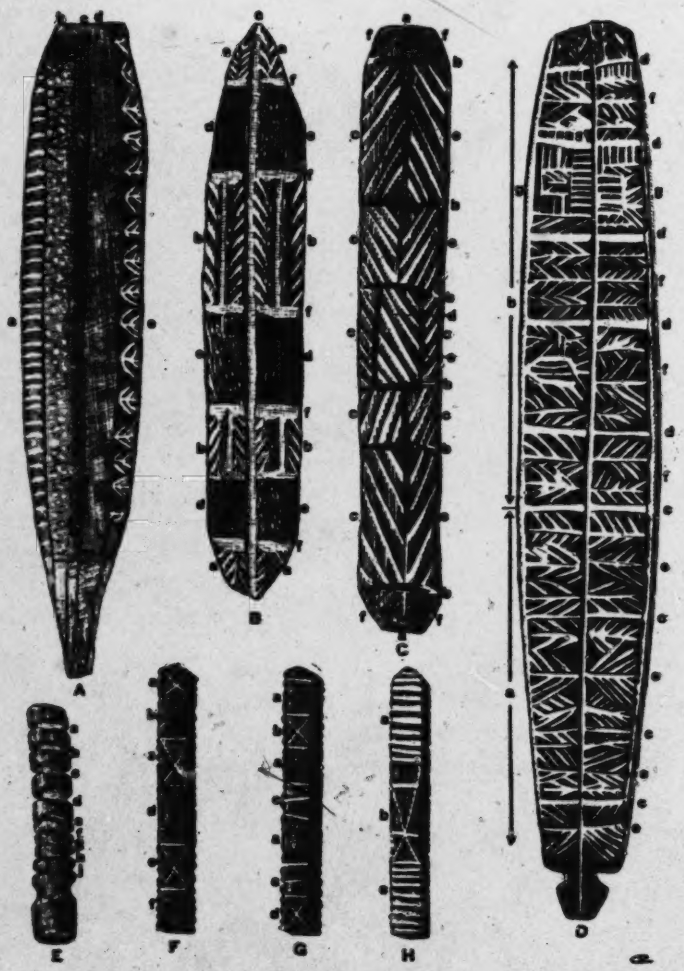

FIG. 5. *The Message Sticks*

A, Numaniraı; B, Punubu; C, Murunapi; D, Pirilou; E, Secular; F, G, H, Pukamuni Ceremonial.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

202 765 *palmatjinis*, and cane armlets, *jairinis*. Then, taking a female *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaguni*, in his hand he seated himself within sight of the camp.

[301] [302] The local aborigines went out to welcome him, but on seeing the message stick and hearing the news, they mourned hysterically, cutting their heads [785] and beating themselves with sticks.

When the mourning died down, the aborigines gave the messenger a meal, [574] after which he returned to his own camp.

Although the general distribution of the totemic *purunkitas* has been dis- [126] continued in recent years, the aborigines who knew them well, made nine [184] examples for me. It would seem that each totemic place had its own particular [794] design, for when I showed the *purunkita* (Fig. 7D) to old *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, neither of whom had seen it previously, they recognized it immediately as a message stick which would have been sent to the *Mudungkala* totemic group of Buchanan Island, at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. However, other *purunkitas*, i.e. (Fig. 5C; Fig. 5F, G, H; and Fig. 6A, E) are still being used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

During the early days of our stay, when the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were about to start, three men, two of them, *Marawani* and *Uramatjina*, being the chief mourners, made a journey to the Bathurst Island people for the purpose of giving them a *purunkita* and telling them the news.

A few days later a Bathurst Island man returned with the message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H, and verbal instructions relating to the forthcoming burial rituals.

Although I did not see the message stick which *Marawani* and his com- [126] panions carried to Bathurst Island, I was able to make a rubbing of another (Fig. 7C), which was sent to the same locality on the death of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife.

Later, old *Tjamalampua* sent another message stick (Fig. 7A, B), to the men of the *Mudungkala* totem of Buchanan Island, asking for European goods and food to pay the "workers" at the final rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*.

Notification of Death

202 The designs on message stick, Fig. 7C, which an aboriginal carried to the ●211 Bathurst Island people, together with the news of the death of *Nulatini*, did ×532 not, in any way, refer to the message that accompanied it, but to topographical details along the motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point on Apsley Straits.

The upper section, *d*, is the aboriginal camp at Snake Bay, and the indentations, *a*, *a*, are the rocks on its shores. The cross-hatched rectangle in the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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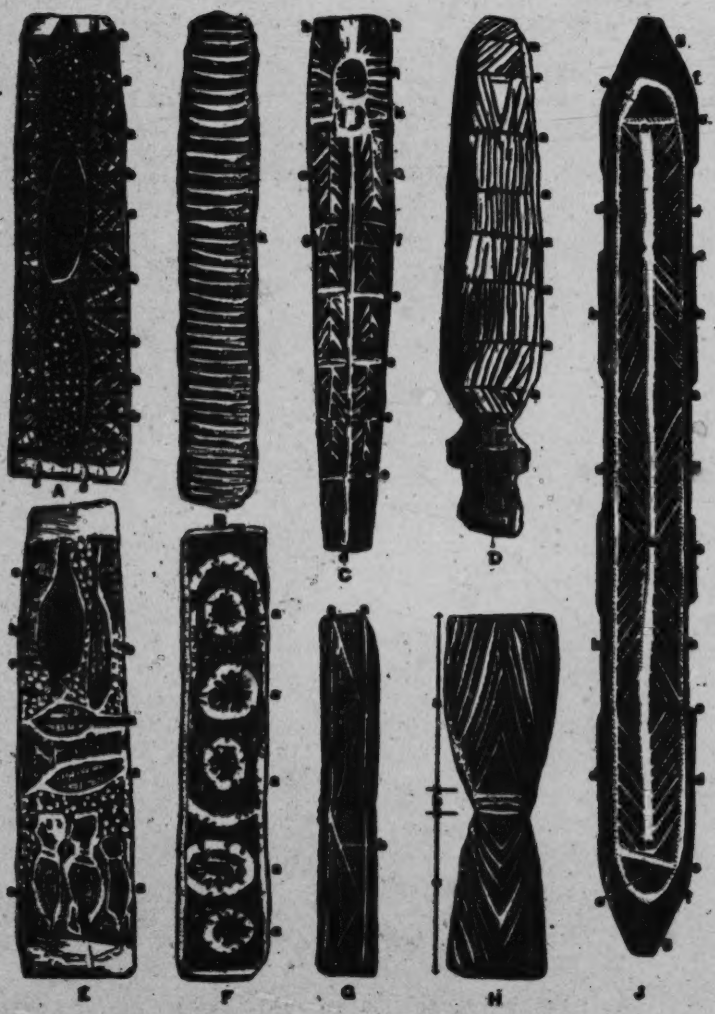

FIG. 6. *The Message Sticks*

A, B, Initiation; B, Ceremonial; C, Wurinpi; D, Secular; E, Kudjatunpi; G, H, Invitation to Secular Ceremony; J, Marumpi.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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centre of the message stick is the freshwater creek, Primbiamili, across which there is a crude bridge of logs (parallel lines *e*, *f*, on either side of the cross-hatched rectangle).

The long rectangle at the top of the message stick is the track between Snake Bay and Primbiamili Creek, and that at the bottom, from Primbiamili Creek to Cockle Point on Apsley Straits. Symbols *h*, *h*, are living stringy-bark trees by the roadside, and *c* is a group of dead trees.

The crossed squares *k*, *k*, indicate trees that had been cut down to clear a motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point. Apsley Strait, indicated by rectangle *g*, was crossed by the messenger in the dug-out canoe, *j*. The triangles at *n*, refer to the houses of the Bathurst Island Mission Station.

Pukamuni Ceremonial Purunkita

The return *purunkita* to that notifying the death of *Waniamperi* is shown on Fig. 5F, G, H. A messenger carried this *purunkita* to the Melville Island aborigines, together with the instructions about the conduct of the *pukamuni* from *Jibunglialuni*, the leader of the Bathurst Island group.

On side F, the crossed square, *a*, refers to *Urumatjina*, *c*, to *Marawani*, and *e*, to *Katopi*, the three chief mourners at the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*. *Katopi* is the son of the dead man.

Square *b* refers to instructions asking the "workers" to build a screen of boughs round the grave so that unauthorized people cannot see it; *d* refers to the cleaning of the grave site, and *f* to a request for the "workers" to dig out the roots and sticks in the ceremonial ground, so that the dancers will not injure their feet.

On side G, the crossed square *d*, is the *milimika* of the Bathurst Island group, and *b*, that of the Melville Island people. Groups of lines, *c*, *c*, refer to the number of "working men" to be appointed, while cross-hatched areas, *a*, *a*, indicate a request to the "workers" to do their tasks well and happily.

On side *H*, the lines, *a*, refer to burial poles to be erected around *Waniamperi's* grave; *b*, to the chief *pukamuni* men at Melville Island, and *c*, to the Bathurst *pukamuni* men whom *Jibunglialuni* will bring with him.

Pukamuni Ceremonial Purunkita

Fig. 6a is a *purunkita* sent by an old man, *Tjamalampua*, to another old man, *Tipumbriaria*, in Bathurst Island, asking him to bring many aborigines to the forthcoming *pukamuni* ceremony at Melville Island. The cross-lines, *a*, indicate the required number of men.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Kudjatumpi

This *purunkita* (Fig. 6b) was sent to the March-fly totemic centre at Kudjatumpi, southern Melville Island. The designs on the message stick were painted, instead of being engraved, because of the difficulty of cutting the circular patterns.

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The white circles and ovals, *a*, *a*, are backwaters and lagoons at the mouth of the freshwater stream at Kudjatumpi and the star-shaped designs, lilies growing on the surface of the water.

Wuriupi

Fig. 6c is an engraved message stick sent to members of the fire totemic group at Wuriupi, eastern Melville Island.

The disc, *a*, indicates the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, travelling across the sky, the radiating lines, *b*, the beams of light at sunrise, *f* and *g*, the mid-day camps of the sun-woman (p. 172). The long line, *d*, is the path of the sun-woman across the firmament.

Pandanus trees in the Milky Way are indicated at *c*, *c*, and similar designs and breaks in the galaxy by the transverse lines, *e*, *e*.

Numanira

The *purunkita* (Fig. 5A) belonged to the totemic red-ochre group at Numanira, west of Karslake Island.

The left-hand band of short transverse bars at *a*, represents the lines of coloured ochres in the sands of the sea-shore; the dots on the next band, *b*, to the right, are the oysters on the rocks at Numanira; band *c* indicates the reefs of red and yellow ochres covered at high tide; *d* is the motor road along the cliff on the mainland opposite Karslake Island, and *e*, the trees on the shore of Karslake Island, opposite Numanira.

Puntubu

Fig. 5B illustrates a *purunkita* which was sent to Puntubu, on the upper reaches of the Tjipripu River, central Melville Island, one of the totem places of the eucalyptus-tree woman, *Aragoutourina*.

The central line, *c*, is the Tjipripu River, which flows into Curtis Haven. On the banks of that river grow many *tulini* palms (symbols *b*, *b*, *b*,) from which the aborigines make their palm-leaf baskets. The roots of the palms, *a*, *a*, are indicated at either end of the message stick, and reefs of black and yellow rocks on the banks of the Tjipripu River at *d*, *d*, and *e*, *e*, *e*,

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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respectively. The junctions of those rocks are indicated by the transverse lines, *f, f, f.*

Muranapi

A message stick to invite the aborigines of Muranapi, southern Melville Island, to a *pukamuni*, is illustrated on Fig. 6j.

The central white line is Muranapi Creek; the groups of sloping lines on either side are the eucalyptus trees on its banks, and the transverse panels, such as *c, c*, pandanus trees on the subsidiary watercourses.

The semi-circles, *e, e*, on either end of the *purunkita*, represent the hills, *g, g*, the high ground, *f, f*, the sandy soil on the shores of Muranapi Creek, and the indentations, *d, d*, etc., on either edge of the *purunkita*, the *tulini* palms which grow on the edge of the fresh water.

Muranapi

Fig. 5c is another message stick sent to Muranapi, this time to the *Mandubuka* (blow-fly) totemic group.

The central lines, *a, a*, at both ends of the *purunkita* represent the salt-water creek, Duniau. On this creek is the totemic place, *d*, a rock about thirty feet long and six feet above the level of high tide. The transverse lines, *b, b*, etc., are freshwater creeks which flow into Duniau.

The sloping cuts within rectangle *d*, symbolize cracks in the totemic rock of *Mandubuka*. The remainder of the sloping cuts, as at *c, c*, etc., represent bloodwood trees and other eucalypts growing on the banks of the freshwater streams. Marks *f, f*, etc., on either end of the *purunkita*, indicate a point of land at the mouth of Duniau Creek.

Pirilou

Fig. 5D illustrates a message stick sent to the catfish totemic group of Pirilou on the Goose Creek swamps, central Melville Island.

The middle line is the Goose Creek, *a* (lower) being the salt-water section, and *b* (upper), the fresh-water. The transverse lines, *c, c*, etc., are subsidiary mangrove creeks, and *d, d*, etc., the freshwater lagoons or backwaters of the Goose Creek swamps. At *e, e*, etc., are mangrove trees on the shore of the salt-water stream, *a*; and *f, f*, etc., living paper-bark, and *g, g*, dead paper-bark trees in the freshwater lagoons.

Imilu and Buchanan Island

A *purunkita* (Fig. 6A, E), partly engraved, partly painted, was taken from Snake Bay first to the aborigines at Imilu, north-western Melville Island,

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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then to a group on Buchanan Island, notifying them of the forthcoming burial rituals.

The three large ovals on Fig. 5A are graves on Melville Island, the short transverse lines, *b*, *b*, the *pukamuni* poles, and the short lines, *c*, *c*, at the bottom of the *purunkita*, the tracks leading to the grave. The cross-hatched panels, *a*, *a*, represent the grass around the grave site.

On the opposite side, Fig. 5E, the designs, *a*, *a*, are *pukamuni* poles, and *b*, *b*, old graves surrounded by poles (short lines, *c*, *c*). The dots represent the mourners at the grave.

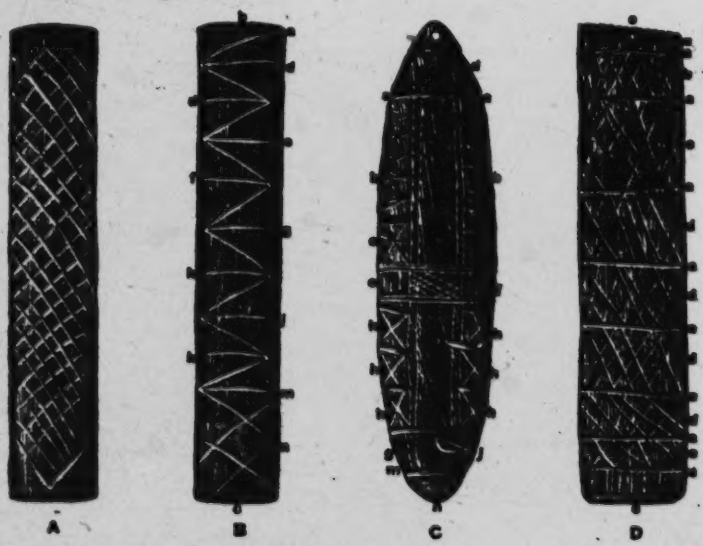

FIG. 7. *The Message Sticks*

A, B, Buchanan Island; C, Notification of Death; D, Buchanan Island.

Buchanan Island

Fig. 7A, B, are two sides of another *purunkita*, which was sent to the *Mudungkali* (eucalyptus tree) totemic group on Buchanan Island (adjacent to the Bathurst Island Mission Station). This *purunkita* asked for a supply of European goods and food so that the "workers" could be paid at the closing rituals of *Wanampari's pukamuni* on Melville Island.

The diamond patterns on Fig. 7A refer to the numbers of men in large the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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202 *Mudungkala* totemic group. On the reverse side (Fig. 7B), the zig-zag line *a*,
●211 is the road between Snake Bay (upper end, *b*), and Cockle Point, in Apsley
×532 Straits (lower end, *c*). At *d*, *d*, is a request for two six-pound bags of sugar; *e*, for tea; *f*, sufficient printed calico for a loin cloth; *g*, three sticks of tobacco; *h*, a tin of tobacco; *j*, a pair of trousers; *k*, a pocket knife, and *m*, a pipe. The crossed lines at *n* indicate the camp of *Tjamalumpua*, the sender of the message stick.

Buchanan Island

The message stick (Fig. 7D) refers to the Jaulama jungle, about a half a mile south of our camp.

This stick was sent by the chief mourner of the Melville Island *pukamuni* group to the members of the ironwood, *Mudungkala*, totemic group of Buchanan Island, and adjacent Bathurst Islanders, notifying them of the oncoming burial rituals. The designs on the stick, however, have no relationship to either the ironwood tree group or the message they would receive. The short vertical lines at *c*, *c*, are living paper-bark trees, and the transverse lines, *a*, *a*, dead paper-bark trees in the Jaulama jungle. At *b*, are the roots of the trees, and at panels *c*, the vines of the edible *roko* yams on the branches of the paper-barks. The four panels, *d*, *d*, etc., are jungle trees, and *e* indicates their roots.

Invitation to Adjoining Tribe

[574] Fig. 6G, H, illustrates a message stick (not associated with a *pukamuni* ceremony) from the Melville Island people, inviting the aborigines on the Coburg Peninsula to pay them a visit and to perform some of their mainland ceremonies.[97]

On the obverse side, Fig. 6G, the parallel lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the shores of the Coburg Peninsula, and the zig-zag line, *b*, a mangrove creek in the same locality.

On the reverse side, 6H, the V-shaped patterns, *a*, indicate the men who have been invited from the Coburg Peninsula, and those in the lower section, *b*, the women. The short transverse lines at *c*, represent the Melville Island men who will act as hosts to the visitors.

Secular

202 Fig. 5E is a secular message stick sent to an aboriginal, *Marawani*, who was
211 on a visit to Darwin, asking him to bring back the following goods; *a*,
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[97] This message stick suggests that, at the present time, members of the mainland tribes and those of the Tiwi, occasionally visit each other.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tobacco, *b*, matches, *c*, a pipe, *d*, a calico loin cloth, *e*, a pair of short trousers, *f*, a shirt, *g*, sugar, *h*, tea, and *j*, flour. 202 211 439

Secular

Fig. 60 is a carved stick whose designs were thought out by the artist as he walked along the sandy beach near our camp. Although not a message stick, the illustration is included in the section as an example of how an aboriginal expresses his mental images through the medium of simple wood carving. 532x

The horizontal lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the waves breaking on the beach, and the groups of short lines, a pattern of shallow gutters which had been formed on the sandy shore by the fresh water seeping from a nearby lagoon.

10. THE BURIAL POLES

The painted and decorated poles of Melville and Bathurst Islands attracted the attention of all the early visitors. Sir Gordon Bremer in 1824, possibly the first European to see the *pukamuni* poles, when writing about a grave he saw on Melville Island, states: "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilised people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed around with trees, 7 feet to 8 feet high, some of which were carved with stone or shell and further ornamented by rings of wood. On the tops of these were placed the waddies (throwing sticks) of the deceased. The grave was raised above the level of the earth, but the raised part was not more than 3 feet long. At the head was placed a piece of a canoe (probably a bark basket) and a spear and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and earth were cleared away from the sides and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."[88] 765 211 [322] [413]

I have quoted Sir Gordon Bremer's description in full because it shows that, even after a hundred and thirty years, the aborigines of Melville Island, 211 178 765

[88] Bremer, 1843. From this description it would appear that Bremer chanced to see a grave not long after the aborigines had completed the final rituals. Had any time elapsed the whole area would have been covered with grass and leaves, for, after the *pukamuni* ceremonies, nobody is interested in either the grave or the poles.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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where they have not suffered from ecclesiastic prohibitions, are still using a
[178] similar form of grave and posts.

Major Campbell (1834, p. 158), writing of a grave he saw on Melville Island in 1826, states: "It (the grave) is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberts, 14–15 feet high, and between these the spears and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground."

Brown (1905, p. 28) found a grave on Luxmore Head, in Apsley Straits surrounded . . . "by wooden slabs, portions of which had been burnt. Aboriginal markings were faintly discernible in places on the wood, some of the posts had the wood cut away from the outside toward the centre, leaving a short spike standing up in the middle of the post."

Klaatsch (1907, p. 257), in referring to the same burial poles at Luxmore Head, writes: "In some examples the slab was so carved that the upper part was only connected with the lower by two thin pillars or, on others, the top was mushroom-shaped.

"It is easy to see that the aborigines used fire for this work of sculpture, scratching the burnt part away with shell."

Basedow,[99] in 1911, came across a grave of an infant, on Bathurst Island, surrounded by five simply decorated posts, which had "been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk."

Basedow persuaded the aborigines to renovate the designs, which did not vary greatly from those in use at the present day.

[114] Spencer,[100] in 1911, made sketches of many of the burial poles, and arranged for the aborigines to redecorate a group which was later displayed in the National Museum, Melbourne. He states (1928, p. 682) that: "It (the pole)
[177] was slowly and laboriously cut with an iron tomahawk, but formerly with a sharp shell, until it has the form decided upon by the artificer."

Dr. Kenneth Fry, who visited Melville Island in 1913, was the first investigator to ascertain the meanings of a number of poles. These, with his permission, are illustrated on Fig. 8. All of these shapes, but two, are those still most commonly used among the hundred or more which I saw on Melville Island.

[115] An old aboriginal, *Tjamalampua*, told me that in *palaneri* times, i.e., a long while ago, before there were any steel axes, the aborigines used stone axes to fell the hollow trees for *pukamuni* poles. Although there were just as many poles around the grave as there are today, they were neither as

[99] Basedow (1913), p. 314, Fig. 4, Pls. 13, 14, 16, 17, 18.
[100] Spencer (1928), p. 682, Figs. 475–7, Pl. X.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

elaborately shaped nor decorated, often being covered with no more than a series of dots.[1] 211 765

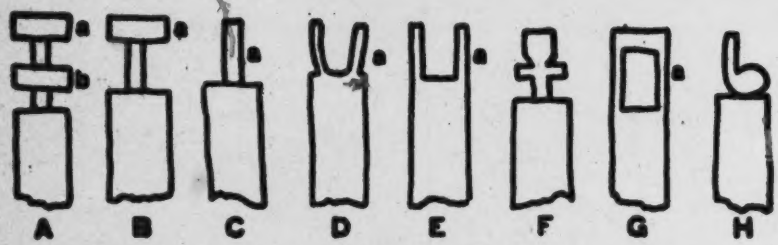

FIG. 8. *The Burial Poles*

Origin of the Pukamuni Poles

At present we have no evidence to show whether the custom of erecting burial poles around the grave in such numbers, not as a memorial, but as a gift to the dead, is confined entirely to the Tiwi tribe, or whether it is used in any other part of the world, and has reached the Tiwi by diffusion. There certainly are no similar burial poles on the Australian continent. 171 765 211 [769]

In north-eastern Arnhem Land, some of the decorated log coffins are as high as seven feet.[2] But the function of those coffins bears no relationship to that of the burial poles of Melville Island, the former being no more than coffins to hold the bones, and the latter, gifts to please the spirit of the dead.

It is possible that, during the long period of isolation from the mainland cultures, the Melville Islanders may have changed coffins of north-eastern Arnhem Land into the burial poles of the Tiwi.

The only examples of burial posts outside of Australia known to me, that are in any way comparable in function to those on Melville Island, are the *malanggan* burial ornaments of New Ireland described by Kramer.[3]

Methods of Manufacture

Although, at the conclusion of the *pukamuni* rituals, the grave is totally neglected and the poles allowed to decay, the "workers", using steel axes[4] 765

[1] Although *Tjamalampua* is not fully correct (see Bremer's and Campbell's statement in the early nineteenth century, pp. 107, 108), it indicates that both the poles and their painted decorations have, with the passing of the years, and the acquisition of steel tools, become more complex.

[2] Mountford, 1956, p. 317. [3] Kramer, 1925.

[4] The evidence of Bremer, Spencer and the aborigines, suggests that before the advent of metal the only cutting tools owned by the aborigines would have been crude stone axes, and the shells of cockles. It is likely that, under these conditions, the poles would 412 174 322

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

staged and this was usually sufficient to incapacitate the offender and make him decide to move—at least for a while—into some other district. The group thus hastily convened to mete out public justice seldom numbered more than sixty or seventy people (seven or eight households) and having been convened *ad hoc* would remain camped together only for the forty-eight hours or less needed to deal with the emergency.

Joint Activities

This discussion of the alternative lines of action open to an outraged household head enables us to specify the relatively rare occasions during the year when the dull, quiet, day-by-day, food-gathering routines of the dispersed household camps were interrupted by events that required many households to gather together in one place and indulge in joint action. Foremost among these occasions were big funerals and the *kolema* ceremonial, both of which were mentioned above. These were the main religious events of the year, full of dancing, singing, wailing, and excitement. The excitement was the psychological result of so many people being together at the same time, a rare experience in the life of any Tiwi. Since the *kolema* ceremonial was an annual event and even the most enthusiastic funeral goer did not attend more than three or four really big funerals in the course of a year, we may reckon that even an old and important man, much concerned with ritual observances, would probably find himself a participant in such crowd activities on not more than some six occasions per year. For less important men and for women and children the number of such occasions was less than six. The *kolema* ceremonial lasted two weeks or more, big funerals, even when they became the occasion for carrying on other public business, did not last more than four or five days each. Hence we may reckon an average of about a week each for the half-dozen times a really big man spent in the company of a sizable crowd of fellow tribesmen, giving a total annual average of about six or seven weeks at most out of every fifty-two—or a little less than 10 percent of the year spent by an old important man in large ceremonial activities or what Durkheim calls the collective life of the tribe.

In addition there were the smaller gatherings, such as the funerals of younger men and most women, and the calling together of a number of households to settle a dispute in the manner we have described above. These were collective occasions also but they brought together a considerably smaller crowd. A really big man's funeral was likely to draw over three hundred people or even as much as one-third of the whole tribe.[4] Not only did many

[4] Tamboo's funeral in May, 1929 (he died in the previous August) drew practically the full band membership (men, women, and children) of the four Bathurst Island bands; almost all the Munupula; many Mandiimbula; and large delegations from the remaining three bands. With such a crowd, an actual head count was difficult, especially of the children, but there must have been over four hundred people present. Needless to say, excitement was intense; more fights occurred, more insults were exchanged, more ancient feuds revived and new ones started, and more food consumed than at any funeral in living memory. At least that was the opinion of Tamboo's chief mourners, but since it was they who threw the party and had to pay for it, they may have been biased.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Not only did many

people come to such a funeral to express their kinship with, and pay their 527
respects to, the deceased, but as mentioned above, many men with disputes to 571
settle or fights to pick let such matters ride until the next big funeral was 619
called and then took advantage of the large crowd to provide the necessary 764
witnesses for the transaction of the outstanding legal business. Gatherings of 627
many households for purely legal affairs, without funerals or *kolema* ceremonial as the main *raison d'etre* for the gathering, were comparatively rare and when they did occur they were usually called by one man, to settle one case only, and hence did not promote the attendance of very many households. Similarly, the funerals of most women and of younger and therefore less important men drew together at most ten or twelve households and a few other individuals, so that the crowd was usually not above one hundred people at the most. A single *ad hoc* legal duel, even when an episode in a long-drawn out and notorious dispute, seldom drew more than this number. Duels always attracted some spectators who came for the excitement, even though not personally involved, provided of course they were camped somewhere in the vicinity.

This second type of collective gathering, of which the smaller funerals and the single duels were the main occasions, might then require the attendance of a household head, accompanied by some or all of his household members, perhaps five or six times a year. These gatherings would each last less than forty-eight hours, and since the people the household head met at them would mostly be people of his own band or of closely adjoining bands, the excitement of seeing unfamiliar faces—people not seen for over a year perhaps—would be absent. We may reckon that attendance at these smaller, more localized gatherings, and the participation in group activity which they entailed, took up two more weeks, all told, out of the yearly round. When these two weeks are added to the six or seven already estimated for the time spent by a busy public man at the large gatherings, we find that even the busiest and most gregarious senior elders spent less than ten weeks out of the fifty-two in collective activity outside their immediate households.

To complete the list of occasions which called for joint activity by the 224
members of several households, we must include the joint kangaroo hunt. This activity was very localized and very spasmodic, occurring only when and where conditions were right and somebody felt sufficiently energetic to organize it. Much of the Tiwi country is a mixture of dense scrub and relatively [137]
open savannah; kangaroo are relatively easy to hunt in the latter but very hard to get near in the denser types of vegetation. The native method of hunting was based on getting as close as possible to the animal before it saw or heard the hunter. If it detected the hunter, it fled, and no Tiwi in his senses ever threw a spear or a throwing stick at a moving kangaroo.[8] Only when the animal was standing still and the hunter was close enough to aim carefully at a vital part was the spear thrown. At certain seasons of the year, particularly 221
after the end of the wet and early in the dry season, many sections of good 224
kangaroo country gave very poor hunting returns because the grass had become

[8] The up-and-down movement of a hopping kangaroo in flight makes it an extraordinarily difficult target even for skilled white hunters armed with shotguns or rifles.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

221 so high and rank that the hunters were unable to get near the kangaroo. In
224 this event, a senior man of the district might decide to convene a grass-
[554] burning posse. To it he invited more or less whom he pleased, so long as he included other household heads of the same band and other senior men from outside it whose ancestry gave them some claim to be invited. At the appointed time the hunters assembled, perhaps ten or fifteen adult men, with younger ones doing the actual hunting and the older ones supervising. The women and children acted as beaters; the grass was set on fire over a big area, and the kangaroos rounded up and killed while dazed by the smoke and the noise. The bag of animals killed in such a concerted hunt sometimes ran higher than one kangaroo per participant, so that every man, woman, and child present was able to gorge himself on kangaroo meat for a day or two. This sudden glut of meat was not, however, the main object of the burning, but a dividend. Even though few kangaroos were caught in the smoke and confusion, the burned-over area would provide good visibility for kangaroo hunting during the rest of the dry season, since the new tender shoots that sprang from the burned-over grass were a favorite food of the kangaroo and served to lure them out of the denser scrub areas and the mangrove swamps where hunting them was always difficult.

224 These occasional joint hunts, like the occasional small fights and the
571 funerals of unimportant people, usually brought together only the members
619 of households who lived relatively close to one another, so that while they are included in the list of events which interrupted household isolation, they did not, as a rule, involve any interaction between members of any wider group than the neighboring households. Perhaps the whole matter of activity beyond the household and the band can be illustrated best by an actual case.
159 We have already mentioned the venerable Tu'untalumi, an old man resident
888 among the Tiklauila, who as late as 1929, and despite the fact that by then the Tiklauila were the band most subject to mission influence, nonetheless had a list of twenty-one wives. In other ways besides his record of polygamy, Tu'untalumi was a pillar of the old culture. Though past seventy and much too old to hunt, he was a most enthusiastic and indefatigable song and dance composer, and in his zest for ceremonial he made a point of attending every big festival and as many smaller ones as he could get to. The whole tribe respected Tu'untalumi as a big man, liked him as a person, admired him for his steadfast support of Tiwi traditions, and most of all accepted him as a sort of leading authority on ritual matters. When dubious or disputed points of ceremonial were submitted to him, his decision, given clearly and firmly and with much citation of precedent and the distant past, was accepted without demur. His presence at a gathering located outside his own district was always a source of gratification to the household which had convened the gathering. The fact that Tu'untalumi had seen fit to attend not only made that household feel important but also provided its members with a technical guide and arbiter for unofficial help in running the rituals. The old man loved going to parties—and he was always a welcome guest—and years of such activity had given him such a sturdy, wiry constitution that despite his near-seventy-five years he could

123 sional patch of grass, which the rushing fire had missed, there was not a living green plant below the four-foot line. Burning the country is an annual occurrence and many are the laws governing
● 221 who may burn and who may subsequently hunt in the newly cleared
224 land. Because the fires are set each year, there is no accumulation of dry tinder to feed the fire and allow it to rage uncontrollably. Only the grass and a few fallen logs catch and these will burn rapidly and fiercely, but for a very short period. Any gap in the vegetation will stop the fire and the heavy dew, falling in the evening, will also put out the flames, leaving perhaps only isolated, smouldering logs to burn through the night. Until the first shoots of new grass push
[421] their way through the charred ground, the individual hunter who set the fire has exclusive rights to the area he set alight. Of course, no one except those who belong to that country may burn without
[671] permission of the owners. As far as possible, these laws are still upheld.

123 We soon came to a branch in the path and Albert indicated that we two girls should continue straight ahead; he would stop behind. In front of us stretched the fresh-water swamp. Out of the almost inky but clear water rose the gnarled paperbark trees, their roots so intertwined they almost formed a floor, albeit a most slippery and irregular one, over the rotten vegetation in the bottom of the swamp. I picked a particularly large rooted tree for my bath
[515] tub, and a short distance away Agnes did the same. If one was careful not to disturb the fine deposit on the bottom but managed to stay on top of the slippery roots, the clear cool water was as sweet and soft as one could wish for. We stayed for about an hour, washing ourselves and our clothes, but finally an impatient call from Albert put an end to this pleasure. Albert had been hunting for a possum, but in this area so close to the camp, they had already been depleted.

123 Instead of returning to camp, Albert decided that now was as good a time as any to cut his *mikungani*, the sticks with which they
411 kill the geese. After another mile or so into the bush, we came to a
322 grove of stout bushes of a kind I had not seen before. They had
[223] long, straight branches of about a half-inch diameter. These Albert

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of bands as part of any political or legal system; they were members of households as part of a domestic system. What held the unit together was the central position and dominance of the father or husband, and hence the life of a household was only as long as his lifetime. When he died, the household broke up and the surviving members joined other households, perhaps in the same district, perhaps in some other band territory. Such change of household was carried out by the individuals concerned, not quite at will, but certainly not with sufficient uniformity for any political or legal label to be put upon it.

Uniformity was derived from the fact that every Tiwi had to live in a household. The universal prohibition on unmarried females was obviously one expression of that requirement. For men, the requirement was less firm, and if a young man wanted to live entirely alone he was free to try—although there is no record of any man having tried it for more than a few weeks at a time. Even if his mother were dead and his father or step-father did not welcome him, he attached himself to some household since, apart from any question of loneliness, this was the only way by which he could eat regularly. For Tiwi households were primarily autonomous food-producing and food-consumption units. A household made its own decisions, camped where it saw fit to camp, moved on when the food quest made it advantageous or necessary to move on. A large household, such as that of Ki-in-kumi or any other big man, was a complete community in itself, with the old man as executive director. He laid down the daily, weekly, and monthly work and travel schedules for the women, the young men, and the children. Most of the time the work went automatically because all the adults and the older children knew their jobs.

Daily Activities

By shortly after dawn each day, the household was up, and after a light breakfast, usually of leftovers from the previous night, everybody left camp to go to work. The women and children (except perhaps the five- to ten-year-old boys, who were rather useless at that age) scattered in every direction from the camp with baskets and/or babies on their backs, to spend the day gathering food, chiefly vegetable foods, grubs, worms, and anything else edible. Since they had spent their lives doing it, the old women knew all about gathering and preparing vegetable foods, and they supervised the younger women. This was one important reason for men marrying widows, and even a man with many young wives was quite likely to remarry an elderly widow or two nonetheless. A husband with only young wives might have a satisfactory sex life, but he still needed a household manager if he wished to eat well. The supervision of the female members of the household was left to the old women and, provided the returns were good, the husband did not attempt to interfere nor to give orders concerning the details of women's work.

After the women had scattered out in a wide circuit from the camp, the husband might hunt, but only if he were not too old. In hunting kanga-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

224 roos,[3] wildfowl, and other game, keen eyesight is essential, hence Tiwi men
[887] did very little hunting once they were past about forty-five, though they hated to admit their hunting days were over. The meat, fish, and game provided for the large household of an old man was obtained by the young men, and this was about the only thing an old man thought his sons or his step-sons were good for. Typically the young man, when he returned at nightfall with
[592 a kangaroo which he had spent most of the day tracking down and spearing, would ignore the old man and dump the carcass at the feet of his mother as
888] if to say, "I brought this back for you, not for that old So and So."

As the women straggled back to camp toward sundown with the results
512 of their day's gathering and the young hunters brought in their bags, cooking
595 began and the main meal of the day (usually the only hot meal) was eaten. The Tiwi themselves had no doubt about the close relationship between plural marriage and good eating. "If I had only one or two wives I would starve,"
[797] the head of a large household once told the missionary who was preaching against plural marriage, "but with my present ten or twelve wives I can send them out in all directions in the morning and at least two or three of them are likely to bring something back with them at the end of the day, and then
262 we can all eat." This was a realistic appraisal of the economic situation and it is to be noted that he put the emphasis on the food obtained by the women
[222] gatherers rather than that supplied by the male hunters. Based on the observations of 1928-29, it would appear that the Tiwi ate pretty well, especially in the larger households. Kangaroo and other marsupials, and some of the larger lizards (for example, the goanna) were very plentiful in the bush, as were fish and turtles and dugong on the coasts and wild geese in many districts. But all these were extras or dividends; the staple everyday foods were the vegetable foods gathered day after day in apparently unending quantities by the women. For most months of the year there was always plenty of *kwoka*,
[252] a porridgelike dish prepared by soaking and mashing the small nuts of a native palm. These nuts grew in such quantity that in every large camp baskets or dishes of *kwoka*, at various stages of preparation, were always available, even for midnight snacks if anybody woke up hungry. *Kwoka* was about as dull and tasteless as Scotch porridge, but equally filling, and naked small boys full of *kwoka* had stomachs distended like balloons. In the wet season the place of *kwoka* was taken by *kolema*, a yam whose ripening and growing season was much shorter than that of the nuts from which *kwoka* was made. It was
[796] on the abundance of the *kolema* yams during January and February that the Tiwi supported the more elaborate of their collective ceremonials.

The abundance of these and other vegetable foods, plus the ample supply of game and fish in many places, meant that under aboriginal conditions the Tiwi lived at a food-consumption level much further above the mere-

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[3] Actually there are no kangaroos on Melville and Bathurst Islands; the chief meat animal is a slightly smaller species of marsupial technically called the wallaby. As the distinction is important only to zoologists, and as many of the so-called kangaroos in American zoos are in fact wallabies, we prefer to use the more familiar word.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

The mobility of people other than household heads was much less. Women and children could move only with the permission, and usually in the company, of their lord and master. Occasionally old and trusted wives might be sent, unsupervised, on a journey by their husbands or their brothers, usually to carry messages and bring back gossip, but young wives were never trusted to be out of sight either of the husband or of elderly female supervisors. Young men were less subject to their fathers' orders and hence were fairly free to come and go as they pleased, but the universal suspicion which all husbands bore toward wandering young men put severe restrictions on their mobility and prevented them attaching themselves to any household or camp in which they did not have some close relative. 562 571 [203]

The fact, then, that a man like Tu'untalumi was (in Tiwi terms) very mobile did not necessarily mean that members of his household shared his degree of mobility. When he took most of his large household with him on his journeys away from home, as he often did, it was always because he was going a considerable distance and was traveling slowly, living off the country as he went. In such cases he liked to have a large retinue to feed him on the way and also to permit him to entertain in fitting style when he arrived. For while it was true that at a funeral or at an initiation the relatives of the deceased or of the novices were supposed to take care of the feeding of all the visitors, nonetheless, wealthy and generous men like Tu'untalumi believed in taking along with them a bevy of young wives, with a couple of efficient elderly widow-wives in charge of them, to contribute to the food-getting and food-preparing activities. Of course the supervision of the young wives' morals in the strange environment was often difficult, especially in the hectic atmosphere of a big ceremonial, but this worry was compensated for by the fact that the visitor who came so attended was contributing a number of extra food providers to the labor force of the harassed hosts and thus making a generous gesture, and also by the fact that such a visitor was not dependent upon the hospitality provided by the hosts. Having his own food-producing unit with him, he could live better and stay longer than if he had come alone or only as one of a party of men. In this respect, as in so many others, a Tiwi household head's decision had to be reached by balancing against one another the two competing motives of, on the one hand, the desire to eat well and, on the other, the desire to keep his young wives safe from prowling bachelors. Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest man of the Malauila band, usually decided not only to leave his wives at home but also not even to go himself. But Ki-in-kumi was a gloomy, pessimistic old man. Tu'untalumi usually decided to do the thing in style, travel with a large retinue, have all the comforts of home while in strange districts, and take his chances on the strange bachelors. He clearly believed that a good booming ceremony with lots to eat and himself in the center directing the dancing was well worth the risk of a few of his young wives being seduced off-stage. Men like Ki-in-kumi thought Tu'untalumi an old fool for not leaving his young wives at home, and Tu'untalumi probably thought that old Ki-in-kumi might as well be dead, especially since his death would be the occasion for a really magnificent funeral. 159 222 462 527 [574] [837 593] [184]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

881 led by the *Mikinatrinas*, carrying the baskets, followed by the *Mikinataras*, the *Mikiatarimas*, and the *Mikingulas*. No *kulama* woman accompanied this party.

As the *kulama* men entered the jungle they separated, each searching for vines which indicated the presence of the yam.[29] Before digging, however, the [824] [758] *kulama* men, softly calling "Oom-oom", gently patted the ground to wake up the yams, for, should any yam get a fright, its spirit, becoming annoyed, would make everyone ill with the *kulama* sickness. When digging the yams, the men were most careful not to break even one of the fine roots (Pl. 44D).

On filling in the holes, the men again made the thunder call, "Oom-oom", [821] which, they said, would cause more rain to fall before the day was over. One aboriginal accidentally broke a *kulama* yam while digging it. Instantly, he was on his feet, and, with the broken yam in his palm, dodged in and out among the trees, to escape the spirit of sickness released by the angry yam. After a few minutes, however, he returned, placed the broken yam carefully in the basket with the rest, and resumed his digging. His companions said that it was fortunate that he had only damaged the yam slightly, otherwise, its spirit would have made not only the careless aboriginal, but all of the *kulama* people ill.

When sufficient yams were collected, the party returned to camp in the same order as they went out, i.e., *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinataras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*. The *Mikinatrinas* carried the yams to the foot of a blood-wood tree, called the *wuringaleta*, cleared the grass from around the base and, taking the yams from the basket, placed them on the ground. They were covered with leaves by the female initiates, the *Mikinatriningas*.

(4) *The Preparation of the Ceremonial Ground*

In the late afternoon, the *kulama* men and the male initiates, excluding the *Marukumuni* and the *W'adjeniatis*, prepared the ceremonial ground, the *miliniika*.

372 The men walked toward an open space in the forest, and with low cries, 881 beat the ground with sticks, while the leader, pulling up a tuft of grass, threw it into the air. At the place where it fell, the men dug a small circle, the *tumarapi* (navel), in which the yams were to be cooked. Then, sitting down, the men pushed the sand and grass outwards with their feet until the *milimika*, about fifteen feet in diameter, was cleared and surrounded by a low mound of earth and grass.

[222] [137] [29] The *kulama* yam (*Dioscorea sativa*, variety *rotunda*) (Pl. 44D), is about the size of a hen's egg and covered with hairs similar to a beard. It is held in the palm of the hand until it is placed carefully in the bark basket.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

322 piece of the former fold are clasped between the fingers and thus used as a cup
415 the part lying opposite to the fingers being held to the lips.

Honey Eating.

222 In my notes on the north-western tribes of the Northern Territory I have
262 described[1] a honey-collecting implement and there, also, referred to somewhat
264 similar observations made by Dr. Wilson[2] and Keppel.[3]

On Bathurst Island I observed still another modification. A young flower-stalk of the fan-palm (*Livistonia humilis*), when about 50 to 70 centimetres long, is cut just above the trunk of the palm and its bottom end chewed until all the fibres are separated and look like the hairs of a brush. The juice, being quite sweet, is swallowed. The brush end is then inserted into the nest of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*), whereby the honey gathers between the fibres. When saturated with honey, the brush end is passed back to the mouth and again sucked and chewed for a considerable time, after which it is once more returned to the honey for a fresh supply, and this is continued to repletion.

Tree Climbing.

481 Both male and female, young and old, are expert tree-climbers when in
[222] pursuit of game, honey of the wild bee, fruits, and seeds. As none of the trees on the islands grow to an abnormally large size, the butt is usually not too great in circumference to allow of the arms being thrown around it, so that the hands may obtain a firm hold on the side distant from the climber. Having obtained this hold while standing on the ground and facing the tree, the native jumps on to the butt, clutching it with the flat surfaces of his feet in a frog-like fashion. The knees in this position stand well outwards. The body hangs, suspended by the arms above and held against the tree by the legs below. The climber now raises his body; his hands quickly follow by a corresponding distance. Holding on with the latter he draws up his legs in a jumping manner once more to clutch the tree between the soles of his feet. This movement being repeated, he rapidly advances upwards.

Hunting and Fighting.

411 *Throwing-sticks and clubs.*—Several types of throwing-sticks and clubs are in use. They must be referred to under this general or collective heading, since it is hard to discriminate between the two implements and to say definitely where the throwing-stick ends and the club begins. They form an interesting group of Australian implements and weapons that allows of a satisfactory system of

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 26, Fig. 19.
[2] *Narrative Voyage Round the World*, 1835, p. 99.
[3] *A Visit to Indian Archipelago*, 1853, vol. 2, p. 168.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 0120 Tiwi 0120

nature of the cause they diverged sharply. The same single-minded concentration which Mariano devoted to the cultivation of white men, Louis devoted to his sexual activities. Whether two men devoting most of their time one to preaching acculturation, the other to seduction, can be said to have a common basic personality, is a question best left to the personality experts; but at least to the superficial observer there was something vaguely similar in the grim and humorless way in which Louis pursued other men's wives and the way in which Mariano carried on his acculturation campaign. 159

Sexual irregularities are difficult data upon which to obtain accurate information in any culture. When, therefore, Louis is described as an habitual and constant seducer, no claim is made that he was actually as successful in this line of endeavor as tribal opinion maintained. All that we can be sure of is that Louis had an exalted reputation of this sort and he had it in a tribe where a number of circumstances combine to make seduction almost as easy and almost as common as eating or drinking. The seduction situation is largely the result of the marriage customs of the Tiwi which have the effect of forcing most men to remain bachelors until well into their thirties while concentrating all wives, old and young, in the hands of the older men. This means that the older a man gets the more wives he accumulates, and it would appear that the more he accumulates the more suspicious he becomes that some of them (probably the younger and more physically attractive ones) are being unfaithful to him. These suspicions are accentuated by (a) the way in which the day-to-day food gathering activities of the women are necessarily carried out—the women are widely dispersed through the bush, often working singly, well out of sight and hearing of each other; (b) the fact that young unmarried men are frequently hunting (or pretending to hunt) alone in the same general area of country as that in which an old man's numerous wives are gathering wild foods; and (c) the character of the vegetation in large sections of the Tiwi country, great stretches of it being just open enough to make it easy for native eyes to see somebody slipping through the trees, but just thick enough to make it difficult for them to be sure of identities at any distance.[8] 182 837 [222] [224] [137]

In such an atmosphere it is rare for any bachelor to live for more than a few months at most without having to face an accusation by some old man that he has been taking liberties with one of the latter's wives, and it is even rarer for an old man with a number of young wives not to have reason to suspect most or all of them of having been unfaithful to him several times at least in the course of a year. But in this setting of daily[7] seduction Louis' reputation was outstanding. In the period with which we are dealing here he had been suspected and publicly accused of adultery with almost every possible woman for miles around. His demeanor when accused by the outraged husbands was characteristic. Whereas other seducers denied the charge and asserted their essential purity, or tried to laugh it off as silly rumor ("Why, I don't even know the woman"), or alibied themselves and accused other men ("I wasn't even hunting in that direction that day, it must have been so-and-so, he was following a kangaroo down that way at the time in question"), or sometimes even 159 [837]

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Figs. 5 and 6. Probing in the sand at the head of turtle tracks sometimes locates a nest of eggs

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

the water and declared, "it was o. k. for *murandanga*," meaning that it was not too stagnant or brackish for my health. By digging up some of the wet sand from the bottom of the well, the water seeped in to fill the void and soon we had our two containers filled. By this time Albert had started the fire and unpacked our canned rations.

One billy was placed on the fire for "tea leaf" and we broke open some corned beef and a loaf of fresh bread thoughtfully provided by the Superintendent's wife. When the billy boiled, a handful of tea and two handfuls of sugar were added and the pot set aside to cool. Big Jack had in the meantime gone over the dunes to look at the sea, and he reported that the wind was still too strong to allow us to continue in comfort and safety. We might as well take it easy for an hour or two and wait for it to calm down, he said. Almost immediately Albert and Agnes were fast asleep, their heads resting on tins of beef. Big Jack, however, took the axe and wandered off into the bush in back of the camp. After an hour it was obvious that the wind had no intention of dying, so we roused ourselves and strolled off down the beach in search of turtle eggs. We saw many tracks of the female turtles where they had lumbered out of the water up to high-water mark, and the mounds of sand kicked up while they dug their deep nests. Using a long, slender stick, Albert probed around these mounds hoping to feel the soft resistance of the rubbery eggs. Time and again he probed in a different nest quite unsuccessfully. Criscrossing one of the tracks leading to a nest were many little ones returning to the water; these eggs had lived to hatch. Finally Albert gave up, remarking, "That Black Joe mob make plenty big feast turtle egg." Late in the afternoon we returned empty handed.

Fortunately Big Jack, hunting along the little, mangrove-lined creek close by, had not had such bad luck. He soon appeared carrying three of the large mangrove crabs, their massive claws tightly closed with bindings of bark strips. The two main logs of the noon fire were still smouldering, and by adding to them we soon had a fast-burning blaze. When a glowing bed of coals was available, the crabs were thrown on top where they were soon steaming away in their own juices. It was a delicious supper—tender, sweet crab-

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 35. Weather-worn poles mark the grave of someone long dead but not forgotten

223 bush. He bin die long time ago." This had been his country while
789 alive and it was still his country, for his spirit remains near the
775 grave and still hunts the wild animals and birds, while the spirits of his wives collect the wild yams, and his little spirit children play in the bush. Bangri will share this food with others who come, and their *mobudities*, should they die and be buried in the country, for as long as his name is remembered, and until his grave-posts rot with the passing of time.

123 But Bangri was not cooperative. The next day the hunters found little game in the bush and the women turned to the laborious
[222 job of digging six-foot holes with a stick to obtain the small yams
224] that are to be found at this season. Again the grass was too thick, the snakes too cheeky, and Albert advised against our going bush.
[152 I decided the more logical explanation was that Albert considered
777] we ourselves had ample food, and besides he was sincerely worried
[223] about his long run of bad luck. But he left with the others that

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 17. "Hunting a possum"

It was soon overtaken by Albert who killed it quickly with a blow from a stick. As he brought it back he said, "Him big mother. See him pickaninni." And he held up a hairless baby barely three inches long, its eyes still closed, but very much alive. "Oh, kill it quick, Albert," I begged. He shook his head, "I can't kill him, I too sorry alonga him." Here we were at an impass, two people too sorry alonga him; one too sorry to kill it, and one too sorry to let it live. Who was right?

Meanwhile, Agnes took the mother possum and pulled the fur from a small area on the belly and then slitting the skin with the sharp end of a broken stick, she withdrew the gall bladder and intestines. "Him make him bad," she explained. We did not stop to cook the animal, but continued our search. This area had all been burned by the previous parties and already little delicate shoots of grass were poking up through the black ground.

During the next hour we wandered slowly through the bush and, although we saw many trees which had been inhabited by possums, they were now empty. One that looked most likely was hollow and Albert hopefully built a fire in the rotten base, then sat back and waited for the smoke to drive the animal out. After half an hour, it was quite obvious that no one was at home.

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Then our luck turned. This time, when Albert gave the "come here" call, it was because he had located a wild honey nest, or "sugar-bag," high in a large stringy-bark eucalyptus. There was little point in cutting this large tree down so Albert prepared to climb. First he cut a small sapling and laid it at a 45-degree angle against a crotch where the massive trunk split in two. Then, grip-

123 ping the axe with his teeth, he ran up the sapling on all fours with
222 as much agility as a monkey. Upon reaching the crotch, he put his
481 arms around the trunk, placed the soles of his feet close together against the bark, and quickly progressed in a sort of leaping motion up to the top of the tree. Once there he casually climbed up, over, and around the various branches, until he reached the object of his climb, the hollow branch with the little hole through which was passing a steady stream of small insects. This branch was quickly cut through and fell crashing to the ground. Soon Albert was down again, investigating this find with Agnes and me. The hole was enlarged and the combs of dark honey exposed, still
[133] crawling with the little black bees. We dug in with our fingers or brushes made by chewing small twigs, quite unmindful of the bees, who obligingly never developed stings in this part of the world.
[262 The honey was dark and very strong, but when mixed with the dry,
237] crumbly, yellow "bee bread" a nice balance of taste was obtained. It took the three of us very little time to finish the sugar-bag and off we went—this time in a homeward direction.

123 The one possum looked very small and Albert again began mut-
224 tering about "someone *mobuditi* make me bad luck." We separated
[777] again and when almost to the creek Agnes suddenly held me back and cautioned silence. Carefully she picked up a stout stick from the ground and then approached what I suddenly noticed was a very fat goana, about two feet long, apparently sound asleep on a nearby tree trunk. One quick blow and the lizard fell to the ground, quite dead. We carried the catch to the landing and quickly had another swim before Albert caught up. We were gathering firewood when Albert arrived and explained his delay by holding up another
123 possum. The second possum was immediately gutted, then both
252 were laid on the fire and turned frequently until all the fur had been burned off and the skin made brittle. The animals were quartered and laid again on the fire until well roasted. The goana received no preliminary treatment before going on the fire. When all were
[264] cooked, they were removed and laid on a "table" of clean, green leaves, and we reached in and tore off pieces of the steaming, juicy
123 meat. It is impossible to describe this meat to someone who has not
262 tasted it. All I can say is that it was tender and tasty and perfectly

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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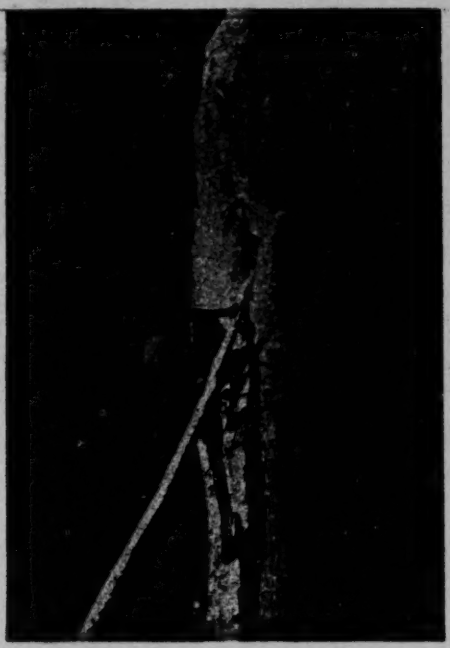

Figs. 18 and 19. With a tomahawk between his teeth, Albert goes after honey.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

123 sional patch of grass, which the rushing fire had missed, there was not a living green plant below the four-foot line. Burning the country is an annual occurrence and many are the laws governing 221 who may burn and who may subsequently hunt in the newly cleared 224 land. Because the fires are set each year, there is no accumulation of dry tinder to feed the fire and allow it to rage uncontrollably. Only the grass and a few fallen logs catch and these will burn rapidly and fiercely, but for a very short period. Any gap in the vegetation will stop the fire and the heavy dew, falling in the evening, will also put out the flames, leaving perhaps only isolated, smouldering logs to burn through the night. Until the first shoots of new grass push [421] their way through the charred ground, the individual hunter who set the fire has exclusive rights to the area he set alight. Of course, no one except those who belong to that country may burn without [671] permission of the owners. As far as possible, these laws are still upheld.

123 We soon came to a branch in the path and Albert indicated that we two girls should continue straight ahead; he would stop behind. In front of us stretched the fresh-water swamp. Out of the almost inky but clear water rose the gnarled paperbark trees, their roots so intertwined they almost formed a floor, albeit a most slippery and irregular one, over the rotten vegetation in the bottom of the swamp. I picked a particularly large rooted tree for my bath [515] tub, and a short distance away Agnes did the same. If one was careful not to disturb the fine deposit on the bottom but managed to stay on top of the slippery roots, the clear cool water was as sweet and soft as one could wish for. We stayed for about an hour, washing ourselves and our clothes, but finally an impatient call from Albert put an end to this pleasure. Albert had been hunting for a possum, but in this area so close to the camp, they had already been depleted.

123 Instead of returning to camp, Albert decided that now was as good a time as any to cut his *milingani*, the sticks with which they 411 kill the geese. After another mile or so into the bush, we came to a 322 grove of stout bushes of a kind I had not seen before. They had [223] long, straight branches of about a half-inch diameter. These Albert

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Fig. 13. Gathering water-lilies in a fresh-water swamp

cut and after he had collected about thirty he selected a nice, smooth ledge of rock in the shade to work further on the sticks. First he stripped the bark, then measuring them against his arm he cut them so that each stick was as long as the distance from his fingertips to his elbow. All this he did with his knife, holding it by the tip of its long blade so that the handle would add its weight to each blow. He carefully smoothed off the two ends so there were no loose splinters. We each took a bundle of these sticks, tied them with strips of pandanus, and returned to the camp. Here they were laid in the water close to the bank and weighted down with a rock. This would make them good and heavy, it was explained.

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During the afternoon, the two men worked on the permanent house which Bill Grimster had ordered. Big Jack had spent the morning cutting posts and had brought in about half a dozen. By late afternoon, when the others returned, they had been set upright in holes dug to individual measure so that they stood firm without bracing.

Once everyone had returned, a fire was built. The men collected their individual bundles of *milingani* and placed the ends of the dripping sticks in the flames. They squatted over the sticks and individually started a chant during which they cupped their hands in the smoke and carrying it to their bodies, slapped their necks, then their arms. "Knar. Knar Gerra doo (slap), Gerra doo (slap)." The chant was nothing more than the imitation of the cries of the geese and the whir of the sticks. They explained that to bring the goose down they had to hit it directly on the neck or wings. "Why

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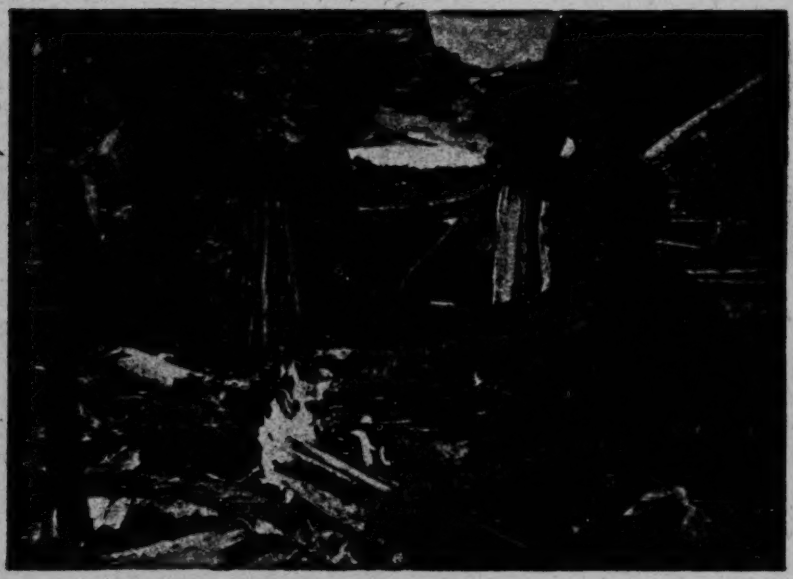

Fig. 14. "Cooking milingani"

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do you cook the sticks?" I asked. "To make them dry so they won't slip in our hands," they replied.

Once the sticks were all well charred on the ends the men took them down to the canoe. For once, I used my status of ethnographer and overruled my role of a woman, and accompanied the men on what was properly men's business. The presence of women or children might bring bad luck. Whether the explanation was simply that women and children are considered to be lacking in the amount of silence or immobility required, or whether the reason was more subtle, I never found out. "This properly men's business," was the only explanation.

We took the canoe a quarter of a mile up stream, where we

disembarked on the edge of a large expanse of wet, grassy marsh. On the bank a few low trees provided cover for the hunters, who spread out about fifty yards apart. We waited. Then in the distance the first flock of six geese appeared, flying low over the marsh. They were not headed for us, but passed over the line of hunters about a hundred yards upstream. We could not see the hunters, but the same six geese continued safely after passing the firing line. Now another small group of geese seemed to be heading in our direction. Albert slowly took his position, his legs apart, the left stretched in front, the right somewhat bent as his body arched backward. One *milingani* he held near the charred end in his right arm which was so far back over his head that the tip of the stick almost touched the ground. As counter balance, his left hand, holding several spares, was pointed forward toward the geese. Just as the geese were to pass over our heads, they swerved and went instead over the man to the right of us. You could hear the whir of the stick as it was thrown with tremendous force up into the air, turning end over end, and then the 'thwack' as it reached its mark. A goose, its neck hanging loosely, spiralled down, to land with a splash close to the hunter's feet.

Now the flocks were more numerous as the dusk grew thicker. Soon a group flew directly overhead and Albert aimed and threw, but the spiralling stick slid off the wing tip of the lead goose and he continued, somewhat shaken but quite unharmed. Again and again Albert threw at the increasing numbers of honking homeward-bound geese, but when the last stick was thrown and it was quite dark, we still had no geese. When we gathered, it was found that out of ten hunters with perhaps three hundred sticks thrown, only two sticks had found their mark. This was not good. Albert was worried. "Maybe someone bin die, make me bad luck."

Later that evening Black Joe started singing a chant. "*Mobuditi*, plenty goose here; give us some." I asked him whom he was singing to and, although names of the dead are most infrequently mentioned for fear that the ghost of that person, its *mobuditi*, will hear it, this was one occasion where the *mobuditi* could do more good than harm. So the *mobuditi* of Bangri was called upon. Bangri, it was explained, had been a big man, "Plenty wives, maybe hundred. This his country; him grave close up along

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 15. Weather-worn poles mark the grave of someone long dead but not forgotten

223 789 775 bush. He bin die long time ago." This had been his country while alive and it was still his country, for his spirit remains near the grave and still hunts the wild animals and birds, while the spirits of his wives collect the wild yams, and his little spirit children play in the bush. Bangri will share this food with others who come, and their *mobudities*, should they die and be buried in the country, for as long as his name is remembered, and until his grave-posts rot with the passing of time.

123 But Bangri was not cooperative. The next day the hunters found little game in the bush and the women turned to the laborious [222 224] job of digging six-foot holes with a stick to obtain the small yams that are to be found at this season. Again the grass was too thick, the snakes too cheeky, and Albert advised against our going bush. [152 777] I decided the more logical explanation was that Albert considered we ourselves had ample food, and besides he was sincerely worried about his long run of bad luck. But he left with the others that [223]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

evening to kill geese. When they returned with only three geese, a long conference was held. I offered all the food I could spare and it was decided that, in return for a few yams and some of the goose, I should make dampers and put jam on them for the children, all of whom were under five and very hungry, and give small pieces of tobacco to the men and women. This was Albert's, Agnes's, and Big Jack's tobacco, and so everyone traded something and all pronounced it a fair deal. I cooked the damper, smothered it with jam and, with Agnes prompting, called, "Kakritjui Kali." "Little ones, come." The five who could walk, ran, then stood shyly by while I handed each a piece; then they ran back to their mothers. Soon they were back and, nudged by their mothers, all murmured "Thank you very much." This was a phrase I never heard, either in the native language or in English, when they were receiving from another native. Giving and receiving were so much a part of their life that among themselves "thank you's" seemed unnecessary.

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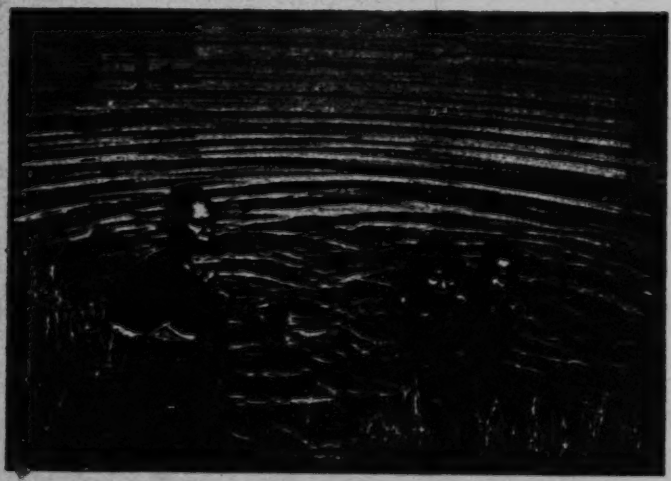

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Fig. 16. Agnes, Filley, and Crissy-boy cooling off in the river

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

equally entertaining as she sang some risqué love songs she had picked up around camp. 123 533

The evening's goose hunt was even more unsuccessful than the earlier hunts. Two of the men separated and went down river and killed three geese, but the others, upstream in the usual place, did not even see any, and there was more talk of *mobudities* by everyone way into the night. 123 223

The following day was the last and, as the Assistant Superintendent was due that evening, feverish work was done by one and all on the long neglected house. Evidently the arrival of Paul scared off the ghosts, for that evening we almost had a goose per person, and my final memory of Minianapi is one of flickering fires in the moonlight and the smell of fresh roasted goose carried on the gentle breezes. 123 648

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Fig. 21. After the return trip the launch's motor gets a much needed overhaul

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of bands as part of any political or legal system; they were members of households as part of a domestic system. What held the unit together was the central position and dominance of the father or husband, and hence the life of a household was only as long as his lifetime. When he died, the household broke up and the surviving members joined other households, perhaps in the same district, perhaps in some other band territory. Such change of household was carried out by the individuals concerned, not quite at will, but certainly not with sufficient uniformity for any political or legal label to be put upon it.

Uniformity was derived from the fact that every Tiwi had to live in a household. The universal prohibition on unmarried females was obviously one expression of that requirement. For men, the requirement was less firm, and if a young man wanted to live entirely alone he was free to try—although there is no record of any man having tried it for more than a few weeks at a time. Even if his mother were dead and his father or step-father did not welcome him, he attached himself to some household since, apart from any question of loneliness, this was the only way by which he could eat regularly. For Tiwi households were primarily autonomous food-producing and food-consumption units. A household made its own decisions, camped where it saw fit to camp, moved on when the food quest made it advantageous or necessary to move on. A large household, such as that of Ki-in-kumi or any other big man, was a complete community in itself, with the old man as executive director. He laid down the daily, weekly, and monthly work and travel schedules for the women, the young men, and the children. Most of the time the work went automatically because all the adults and the older children knew their jobs.

Daily Activities

By shortly after dawn each day, the household was up, and after a light breakfast, usually of leftovers from the previous night, everybody left camp to go to work. The women and children (except perhaps the five- to ten-year-old boys, who were rather useless at that age) scattered in every direction from the camp with baskets and/or babies on their backs, to spend the day gathering food, chiefly vegetable foods, grubs, worms, and anything else edible. Since they had spent their lives doing it, the old women knew all about gathering and preparing vegetable foods, and they supervised the younger women. This was one important reason for men marrying widows, and even a man with many young wives was quite likely to remarry an elderly widow or two nonetheless. A husband with only young wives might have a satisfactory sex life, but he still needed a household manager if he wished to eat well. The supervision of the female members of the household was left to the old women and, provided the returns were good, the husband did not attempt to interfere nor to give orders concerning the details of women's work.

After the women had scattered out in a wide circuit from the camp, the husband might hunt, but only if he were not too old. In hunting kanga-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

224 roos,[3] wildfowl, and other game, keen eyesight is essential, hence Tiwi men
[887 did very little hunting once they were past about forty-five, though they hated to admit their hunting days were over. The meat, fish, and game provided for the large household of an old man was obtained by the young men, and this was about the only thing an old man thought his sons or his step-sons were good for. Typically the young man, when he returned at nightfall with a kangaroo which he had spent most of the day tracking down and spearing,
[592 would ignore the old man and dump the carcass at the feet of his mother as
888 if to say, "I brought this back for you, not for that old So and So."

As the women straggled back to camp toward sundown with the results
512 of their day's gathering and the young hunters brought in their bags, cooking
595 began and the main meal of the day (usually the only hot meal) was eaten. The Tiwi themselves had no doubt about the close relationship between plural marriage and good eating. "If I had only one or two wives I would starve,"
[797] the head of a large household once told the missionary who was preaching against plural marriage, "but with my present ten or twelve wives I can send them out in all directions in the morning and at least two or three of them are likely to bring something back with them at the end of the day, and then
262 we can all eat." This was a realistic appraisal of the economic situation and it is to be noted that he put the emphasis on the food obtained by the women
[222] gatherers rather than that supplied by the male hunters. Based on the observations of 1928-29, it would appear that the Tiwi ate pretty well, especially in the larger households. Kangaroo and other marsupials, and some of the larger lizards (for example, the goanna) were very plentiful in the bush, as were fish and turtles and dugong on the coasts and wild geese in many districts. But all these were extras or dividends; the staple everyday foods were the vegetable foods gathered day after day in apparently unending quantities by the women. For most months of the year there was always plenty of *kwoka*,
[252] a porridgelike dish prepared by soaking and mashing the small nuts of a native palm. These nuts grew in such quantity that in every large camp baskets or dishes of *kwoka*, at various stages of preparation, were always available, even for midnight snacks if anybody woke up hungry. *Kwoka* was about as dull and tasteless as Scotch porridge, but equally filling, and naked small boys full of *kwoka* had stomachs distended like balloons. In the wet season the place of *kwoka* was taken by *kolema*, a yam whose ripening and growing season was much shorter than that of the nuts from which *kwoka* was made. It was
[796] on the abundance of the *kolema* yams during January and February that the Tiwi supported the more elaborate of their collective ceremonials.

The abundance of these and other vegetable foods, plus the ample supply of game and fish in many places, meant that under aboriginal conditions the Tiwi lived at a food-consumption level much further above the near-

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[3] Actually there are no kangaroos on Melville and Bathurst Islands; the chief meat animal is a slightly smaller species of marsupial technically called the wallaby. As the distinction is important only to zoologists, and as many of the so-called kangaroos in American zoos are in fact wallabies, we prefer to use the more familiar word.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Not only did many

people come to such a funeral to express their kinship with, and pay their respects to, the deceased, but as mentioned above, many men with disputes to settle or fights to pick let such matters ride until the next big funeral was called and then took advantage of the large crowd to provide the necessary witnesses for the transaction of the outstanding legal business. Gatherings of many households for purely legal affairs, without funerals or *kolema* ceremonial as the main *raison d'etre* for the gathering, were comparatively rare and when they did occur they were usually called by one man, to settle one case only, and hence did not promote the attendance of very many households. Similarly, the funerals of most women and of younger and therefore less important men drew together at most ten or twelve households and a few other individuals, so that the crowd was usually not above one hundred people at the most. A single *ad hoc* legal duel, even when an episode in a long-drawn out and notorious dispute, seldom drew more than this number. Duels always attracted some spectators who came for the excitement, even though not personally involved, provided of course they were camped somewhere in the vicinity.

This second type of collective gathering, of which the smaller funerals and the single duels were the main occasions, might then require the attendance of a household head, accompanied by some or all of his household members, perhaps five or six times a year. These gatherings would each last less than forty-eight hours, and since the people the household head met at them would mostly be people of his own band or of closely adjoining bands, the excitement of seeing unfamiliar faces—people not seen for over a year perhaps—would be absent. We may reckon that attendance at these smaller, more localized gatherings, and the participation in group activity which they entailed, took up two more weeks, all told, out of the yearly round. When these two weeks are added to the six or seven already estimated for the time spent by a busy public man at the large gatherings, we find that even the busiest and most gregarious senior elders spent less than ten weeks out of the fifty-two in collective activity outside their immediate households.

To complete the list of occasions which called for joint activity by the members of several households, we must include the joint kangaroo hunt. This activity was very localized and very spasmodic, occurring only when and where conditions were right and somebody felt sufficiently energetic to organize it. Much of the Tiwi country is a mixture of dense scrub and relatively open savannah; kangaroo are relatively easy to hunt in the latter but very hard to get near in the denser types of vegetation. The native method of hunting was based on getting as close as possible to the animal before it saw or heard the hunter. If it detected the hunter, it fled, and no Tiwi in his senses ever threw a spear or a throwing stick at a moving kangaroo.[8] Only when the animal was standing still and the hunter was close enough to aim carefully at a vital part was the spear thrown. At certain seasons of the year, particularly after the end of the wet and early in the dry season, many sections of good kangaroo country gave very poor hunting returns because the grass had become

[8] The up-and-down movement of a hopping kangaroo in flight makes it an extraordinarily difficult target even for skilled white hunters armed with shotguns or rifles.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

so high and rank that the hunters were unable to get near the kangaroo. In this event, a senior man of the district might decide to convene a grass-burning posse. To it he invited more or less whom he pleased, so long as he included other household heads of the same band and other senior men from outside it whose ancestry gave them some claim to be invited. At the appointed time the hunters assembled, perhaps ten or fifteen adult men, with younger ones doing the actual hunting and the older ones supervising. The women and children acted as beaters; the grass was set on fire over a big area, and the kangaroos rounded up and killed while dazed by the smoke and the noise. The bag of animals killed in such a concerted hunt sometimes ran higher than one kangaroo per participant, so that every man, woman, and child present was able to gorge himself on kangaroo meat for a day or two. This sudden glut of meat was not, however, the main object of the burning, but a dividend. Even though few kangaroos were caught in the smoke and confusion, the burned-over area would provide good visibility for kangaroo hunting during the rest of the dry season, since the new tender shoots that sprang from the burned-over grass were a favorite food of the kangaroo and served to lure them out of the denser scrub areas and the mangrove swamps where hunting them was always difficult.

These occasional joint hunts, like the occasional small fights and the funerals of unimportant people, usually brought together only the members of households who lived relatively close to one another, so that while they are included in the list of events which interrupted household isolation, they did not, as a rule, involve any interaction between members of any wider group than the neighboring households. Perhaps the whole matter of activity beyond the household and the band can be illustrated best by an actual case. We have already mentioned the venerable Tu'untalumi, an old man resident among the Tiklauila, who as late as 1929, and despite the fact that by then the Tiklauila were the band most subject to mission influence, nonetheless had a list of twenty-one wives. In other ways besides his record of polygamy, Tu'untalumi was a pillar of the old culture. Though past seventy and much too old to hunt, he was a most enthusiastic and indefatigable song and dance composer, and in his zest for ceremonial he made a point of attending every big festival and as many smaller ones as he could get to. The whole tribe respected Tu'untalumi as a big man, liked him as a person, admired him for his steadfast support of Tiwi traditions, and most of all accepted him as a sort of leading authority on ritual matters. When dubious or disputed points of ceremonial were submitted to him, his decision, given clearly and firmly and with much citation of precedent and the distant past, was accepted without demur. His presence at a gathering located outside his own district was always a source of gratification to the household which had convened the gathering. The fact that Tu'untalumi had seen fit to attend not only made that household feel important but also provided its members with a technical guide and arbiter for unofficial help in running the rituals. The old man loved going to parties—and he was always a welcome guest—and years of such activity had given him such a sturdy, wiry constitution that despite his near-seventy-five years he could

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

outdance and out-sing and out-party most of the men fifty years younger than himself.* 159 888

Since Tu'untalumi was a senior Tiwi household head who spent more of his time attending festivals, funerals, fights, and other collective occasions than did most of his contemporaries, it is instructive to examine his movements over a full year. If he had kept an engagement book during 1928-29, it would have looked something like this: 159 887

Early April (end of wet season): Leaves his home base in Tangio where he has spent most of the wet season and visits the Mission station to attend a few small funerals (children who have died at the Mission in the preceding months). During these funerals a series of fights and duels also takes place. Total people present: perhaps fifty or sixty. Time thus spent in helping to wind up public business: five days. Returns home to Tangio and remains there for rest of April. [797]

End of April: Goes to Rangu with a big party of other Tiklauila for a funeral (junior elder). Fairly big funeral, lots of people, lots of disputes. Time away, including leisurely journey to and from Rangu, about two weeks. Gets back home about middle of May. [764 166]

Middle of May—end of June: Lives quietly at home with his household in Tangio.

About July 1st: Goes to Mission for a few days, "visits" with whoever is there. Tries out a new composition of his own (song and dance) on group camped at Mission. Returns home for rest of July. [533 535]

Last week of July: Taking his younger wives and their children with two senior wives in charge of them, sets out for Malau for a big funeral with lots of people and fights. There he performs his new dance; is much consulted on ceremonial matters by the Malauila; gets into a few fights himself but handles them with dignity and honor; remains in Malau two weeks; stops off to visit and attend a small funeral with the Munupula on his way back; has a fight with a Munupula while there; returns to the Mission; stays there a day or two dispensing all the news from Malau and Munupi to those camped there; issues invitations for a grass burning in some sections of Tangio which were not burned in April or May. Goes on home to Tangio where some of his older wives have remained during his absence. Total time away: about three weeks. [166]

End of August: Is joined in Tangio by several other Tiklauila and Rangwila households whom he has invited. Grass burning and joint kangaroo hunting goes on for four or five days. Dancing and partying at night. After five days most of visiting group leave and he and his household remain alone in Tangio until well into October. [224]

* There is no suggestion that Tu'untalumi was in any way an official ritual leader. All old men, by virtue of their years, were to some extent ritual leaders; he had merely worked harder and longer at it than most of them. His tirelessly joyful personality had a good deal to do with his success in the self-established role. In a culture that might be thought likely to make all its men gloomy, anxiety-ridden introverts, he was a warm, happy, dignified old extrovert and he was widely admired. [156]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 595 587 The matter of men traveling to distant camps for ceremonials illuminates again, and from a new angle, the great value of elderly widows in the household. Tu'untalumi, during his visit to Malau in August, was able to split his household efficiently by taking a couple of old wives with him to supervise his young wives on the journey and leaving other old wives at home in Tangio to begin storing up food for the grass-burning project which he intended to stage on his return. It will be noticed in the account of his movements that he began issuing invitations to the grass burning on his way home from Malau, [324 251] showing his confidence that the elderly wives he had left at home would have the preparations well in hand during his absence. A big man with a big household really needed three or four elderly widows because these enabled him to split his work force in various ways as his various political and social obligations required and to be sure of trustworthy supervision of each of the segments. A man without widows in his household, or with only one, could not do this; in fact, it was hard for a man without widows to attend ceremonials at all, or even to receive a large party of visitors to his household. And, as we have already pointed out, since such a man would probably go hungry very often because he would not dare to send his unsupervised young wives into the bush to gather food, there were practically no such men nor such households. Widows were indispensable to a senior Tiwi, both in his public and in his private life.

Making Things

592 887 Throughout this chapter we have been stressing the contrast between the dull routine of life in an isolated Tiwi household during the greater part of the year and the sort of life typical on those relatively rare occasions when something special—a festival, a funeral, a fight, a grass burning, a naming ceremony, some collective phase of men's initiation—required the assembling together of several households for joint activity. Before leaving the daily life of the isolated camp, we should mention one other area of activity—namely, the manufacturing activities of the tribe. The Tiwi did not manufacture much, [32] but spears, throwing sticks, canoes, digging sticks, baskets, bodily ornaments, graveposts, and all the miscellaneous paraphernalia used in ceremonials had to be made in whatever leisure time people could find during the long weeks and months when each of the households lived more or less in isolation from the others. Crude and simple as these artifacts were, their construction required time, and only the older men had the time and the skill based on experience to make the more important of them.

[147] Largely because of their failing eyesight, the older men hunted very little and hence tended to remain in camp all day while the young men were hunting and the women were gathering. There were, of course, some old men who took advantage of this time to do little except doze in the shade, but 182 511 531 most of the household heads spent a fairly active day in camp engaged in making things. Here we find another aspect of Tiwi culture that results from

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

517 887 quently, on the banks of some creek or river in Tiklauila territory, a party wanting to cross would scout around and find a canoe hidden in the woods. Everybody would use it to cross, and the question "Whose canoe is it?" would elicit the reply, "Oh, it's always there and everybody uses it who wishes to cross." But if the question were "Who made it in the first place and put it there?" the answer would be, "Probably Timalarua. He likes making canoes; he makes them all the time." He also liked making spears and posts, though he was not as generous with them as Tu'untalumi. When one of his posts appeared at a funeral, people would point it out, admiringly saying, "Timalarua made that one" and the speaker would trace the lines and designs on it with his finger, using much the same gestures as an art critic in a modern gallery. When a post by Tu'untalumi was identified and admired, however, the admiration was for Tu'untalumi the generous person rather than Tu'untalumi the [554] artist. One was a wonderful craftsman, the other was a wonderful man. But acclaim given to the song and dance performances of the two men was just the reverse: the dances of Timalarua were adequate but not outstanding, those of Tu'untalumi were in a class by themselves.

Comparison of the activities of these two old men illustrates the impossibility of drawing any line, in the simpler cultures at least, between artistic production and technological production. The canoes and the posts manufactured by Timalarua and the posts manufactured and the new dances created by Tu'untalumi were all, so to speak, in the same category, as far as the Tiwi were concerned. The distinction we might make between the canoes as "useful" products and the posts and dances as ceremonial or artistic products never occurred to them. All were objects or products which only successful old men had the required skill and leisure to make. The fact that one old man liked to make canoes and leave them around for other people to use, and another old man liked to compose dances and perform his compositions widely for other people to enjoy, to them merely indicated individual taste and choice; it did not make the first a craftsman and the second an artist. This point has been overlooked in most of the theorizing about primitive art; perhaps a necessary first step in the development of primitive artists is for a society to be able to provide a few men with enough leisure time to be able to cultivate what might perhaps best be called hobbies, since a hobby can equally well be something "useful" to society, like canoe making, or something personally satisfying, like dancing or decorating graveposts.

[411] 531 556 The huge, heavy, painted spears made by these old Tiwi men were mainly used only for display, and even the oldest men were positive that this had always been the tradition. In fact, they seemed a little shocked at the implication that such beautiful and valuable objects could ever have been used for such mundane purposes as hunting or warfare. The cutting and painting of such spears took time and skill—more time than a grave post—and no important man went to the smallest gathering without bearing on his shoulder at least half a dozen of these symbols of his importance. If on his way through the bush he sighted a kangaroo, he dropped his painted spears and stalked [224] the animal with an ordinary spear, or more probably left it to the young man in the party who carried only ordinary ones.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (*b*) "The spirits of my children are dancing on a sand-bank beside the sea."
539 (*c*) "My children's spirits are paddling about in a canoe, looking for fish
881 and turtle eggs."

Another man first chanted a secular song, which he had tried to do earlier, but had forgotten the tune.

[177] (*d*) "I saw a tractor pulling big trees out of the ground to make the new aerodrome."

Then he continued with his *Kararitjui* song.

(*e*) "My little children have gone to the island, but they must come back because they are short of tobacco." After a pause he continued, "They're back because someone has just taken the tobacco out of my hand."

(12) *The Ceremonial Eating of the Kulama Yam*

881 On the third day, at early dawn, everybody went to the swamp to eat some of the prepared yams. The leader quietly plucked a bunch of grass from the edge of the water "to waken the *kulama* yam", for should it get a fright the yam would cause much sickness in the camp.

The fully initiated men, the *Mikingulas*, ate the first few pieces "to tame the yam", after which everyone took some to eat. This ritual ensures for all the participants, good health until the next *kulama*. Some of the prepared yam is left in the water for others to eat should they desire it.

This ritual completed the *kulama* ceremony. Everyone returned to his camp, and, except for the initiates of the lower grades, pursued a normal life. The grass ring and the pieces of antbed were left in place but the *kulama* ground and the *milimika* were deserted (Pl. 45D).

784 There are, however, a number of taboos and restrictions associated with
881 the deserted *kulama* ground and oven. For instance, should anyone make
[778] his camp or light a fire in the deserted *milimika*, the spirit of the *kulama* yam would be offended and blind the culprit.

If anyone were so foolish as to toss a piece of the antbed, from the oven, sand from the *milimika* or a fragment of cooked *kulama* yam into the sea, *Marutji*, the rainbow, would be angry and create heavy seas and storms.

[821] The aborigines of the Cape Fourcroy area were convinced that a recent hurricane, which devastated the whole area, was caused by some foolish person throwing a piece of *kulama* into the sea.

[224] On the other hand, if a *kulama* man takes a piece of antbed from the oven, and throwing it at a tree, hits the mark, his hunting will be successful, until the next *kulama* ceremony. But, if he misses his mark, his hunting will be poor.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

nature of the cause they diverged sharply. The same single-minded concentration which Mariano devoted to the cultivation of white men, Louis devoted to his sexual activities. Whether two men devoting most of their time one to preaching acculturation, the other to seduction, can be said to have a common basic personality, is a question best left to the personality experts; but at least to the superficial observer there was something vaguely similar in the grim and humorless way in which Louis pursued other men's wives and the way in which Mariano carried on his acculturation campaign.

Sexual irregularities are difficult data upon which to obtain accurate information in any culture. When, therefore, Louis is described as an habitual and constant seducer, no claim is made that he was actually as successful in this line of endeavor as tribal opinion maintained. All that we can be sure of is that Louis had an exalted reputation of this sort and he had it in a tribe where a number of circumstances combine to make seduction almost as easy and almost as common as eating or drinking. The seduction situation is largely the result of the marriage customs of the Tiwi which have the effect of forcing most men to remain bachelors until well into their thirties while concentrating all wives, old and young, in the hands of the older men. This means that the older a man gets the more wives he accumulates, and it would appear that the more he accumulates the more suspicious he becomes that some of them (probably the younger and more physically attractive ones) are being unfaithful to him. These suspicions are accentuated by (a) the way in which the day-to-day food gathering activities of the women are necessarily carried out—the women are widely dispersed through the bush, often working singly, well out of sight and hearing of each other; (b) the fact that young unmarried men are frequently hunting (or pretending to hunt) alone in the same general area of country as that in which an old man's numerous wives are gathering wild foods; and (c) the character of the vegetation in large sections of the Tiwi country, great stretches of it being just open enough to make it easy for native eyes to see somebody slipping through the trees, but just thick enough to make it difficult for them to be sure of identities at any distance.[6]

In such an atmosphere it is rare for any bachelor to live for more than a few months at most without having to face an accusation by some old man that he has been taking liberties with one of the latter's wives, and it is even rarer for an old man with a number of young wives not to have reason to suspect most or all of them of having been unfaithful to him several times at least in the course of a year. But in this setting of daily[7] seduction Louis' reputation was outstanding. In the period with which we are dealing here he had been suspected and publicly accused of adultery with almost every possible woman for miles around. His demeanor when accused by the outraged husbands was characteristic. Whereas other seducers denied the charge and asserted their essential purity, or tried to laugh it off as silly rumor ("Why, I don't even know the woman"), or alibied themselves and accused other men ("I wasn't even hunting in that direction that day, it must have been so-and-so, he was following a kangaroo down that way at the time in question"), or sometimes even

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

which is interesting. It means the "Moon People" and is probably the name of the tribe displaced by the Purakapale people in the past. It is Arakitamun-uwi (plural), Arakitamun-ini (masculine), Arakitamun-inga (feminine). 101

Horde Places. Living in isolated groups, these people talk of horde places. A man from the south of Bathurst Island will tell you he is of the Tikaluwila people, in the horde place of Tikalaru, the country. Thus a man is a Tikaluwinala and a woman is a Tikiluwinila of the country of Tikalaru in the tribe of Worunguwi. (Hart writes Tiklauila). 621 361

As it is with this horde so it is with all the groups, three of which are on Bathurst Island; Tikalaru on the south of the Island, Arangu on the north, and Malo on the western shore of the Island. We are not sure of the Melville Island divisions but the following are fairly reliable: Mundiimpu, Anangatera, Yaimpi, being three hordes united as one horde on the southern shore; Turupu and Maruwu, two hordes living as one horde to the north-east of the Island; and Wilarunggu and Munaipu, two hordes living as one local group on the north-west of the Island. (This does not conflict with Hart's list.)

These hordes have indefinite tribal boundaries, yet it is considered a transgression to go too far into them for hunting purposes. One law relating to food gathering is, "He who burns the grass first is considered to own all the food that is caught on that burnt patch; he is a boss as it were and remains such until after the cold weather sets in and the dews bring on a new lot of grass." 423 224

Clans. Although the people are divided into numerous hordes they have only three clans (*aramipi*), but each of these clans has a number of sub-totems, *emuya*.[2] These may be survivals of weaker clans or possibly an example of classificatory totemism. Hart calls the *aramipi*, phratries. The totems are: 614

1. Main totem	*Kudjarli*	Fire
Sub-totems	*Yarinapila*	Red ochre
	Iywati	Honey nest
	Pinkwarui	Stingray
	Ilitui	Tree with red flower
	Woriapila	Sun
2. Main totem	*Tukambani*	Martin
Sub-totems	*Tapitapiwi*	March fly
	Bungaluwila	Stone
	Aringuwila	Stone.
3. Main totem	*Miatui*	Pandanus
Sub-totems	*Murukpungama*	Flying fox
	Mudumbila	Mullet
	Manampowi	Fly
	Andolui	Spring
	Tjilati	Jabaru.

[2] The same name as the gall-bladder and the pulse.

11;Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By Jane C. Goodale

884 In 1912 Sir Baldwin Spencer, a professor of biology at
[114] the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the
[824] ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately
[114] associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony,
[178] however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more thirty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe
[177] that such participation cannot prepare them adequately for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what
161 the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a
131 thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Melville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well
178 supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Economically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied,
[224] and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little
825 physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or
462 digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual
868 division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

000 Tiwi native on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11, (8)]

884 the technique had to be made meaningful to the initiates,
174 the lifesaving qualities of this famine food were explained as health-giving powers. A ceremony accompanied by song and dance was certainly a dramatic and effective means of impressing the initiates in preparation methods. The ritual
[180] served another purpose as well: because traveling is so difficult during the rainy season, each household is isolated from the others. The *Kulama* ritual follows this period, and it is natural to expect a reunion to be an occasion to exchange news, settle differences, and tell stories or sing songs that keep traditions alive.

885 MUCH harder to account for is the Tiwi idea of adulthood. That every adult is solely responsible for his own health and wealth, and that success in life depends entirely on personal behavior and industry, are ideals strangely similar to those that underlie the American way
[171] of life, despite the great gulf between the aboriginal culture and our own. But it is not at all surprising that the Tiwi
177 have a great sympathy for much of Western civilization. Many hold the same views as the *Kulama* singer quoted earlier in this article who saw his children wearing clothes and shoes and going to school to learn to write, for this is
[181] the Tiwi's contemporaneous idea of success in a way of life introduced to them only a few short years ago.

Early in the summer of 1962 I revisited the Tiwi for
[114] two weeks. Although I knew that the Tiwi desired schooling and training in European ways of life and would seize any such opportunity afforded them, I was hardly prepared for the tremendous changes that had taken place during the eight years that had elapsed since my first visit.

Three months after the *Kulama* ceremony of 1954, a
[871] government school was opened. Now all the Tiwi children go to school, and some who have finished the six-year program in the government school have received subsequent training as teaching or nursing assistants. Some others have had "on-the-job" training in various activities connected with a large-scale forestry project that has been started on Melville Island. In fact, all the able-bodied Tiwi men and women are currently employed, and their tasks bear little or no relation to their old life in the bush.

It is perhaps significant—but to me not at all surprising—that I did not hear a single real complaint from the Tiwi regarding their new manner of living. They seem to like it and are anticipating bigger and better things (in the
[224] Western sense) for their children. Hunting has become
[868] a week-end diversion and the children receive little or no real instruction in that traditional skill.

178 SOME aspects of Tiwi life are slow to die, however. Most
784 of the old taboos, the observance of which was considered necessary in the past in order to insure health and wealth, are still observed, although at least one teen-ager expressed doubt that the taboos had any actual effect on the outcome of one's life. Western medicine and public
177 health practices are fast replacing belief in the *Kulama*.
884 During the past eight years only three men have begun the six years of training for *Kulama* initiation, and some of the older men no longer participate in the ceremony. However, as long as even a small number of Tiwi believe in the *Kulama*, the ritual will survive, but I doubt that it will for long.

000 NEAR END of *Kulama* ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.
[P. 16, (B)]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Tjipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families. 161 361 648

It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace. 361 177 [631] [224] [464]

By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives, 123 [132] [825]

123 sional patch of grass, which the rushing fire had missed, there was not a living green plant below the four-foot line. Burning the country is an annual occurrence and many are the laws governing 221 who may burn and who may subsequently hunt in the newly cleared 224 land. Because the fires are set each year, there is no accumulation of dry tinder to feed the fire and allow it to rage uncontrollably. Only the grass and a few fallen logs catch and these will burn rapidly and fiercely, but for a very short period. Any gap in the vegetation will stop the fire and the heavy dew, falling in the evening, will also put out the flames, leaving perhaps only isolated, smouldering logs to burn through the night. Until the first shoots of new grass push [421] their way through the charred ground, the individual hunter who set the fire has exclusive rights to the area he set alight. Of course, no one except those who belong to that country may burn without [671] permission of the owners. As far as possible, these laws are still upheld.

123 We soon came to a branch in the path and Albert indicated that we two girls should continue straight ahead; he would stop behind. In front of us stretched the fresh-water swamp. Out of the almost inky but clear water rose the gnarled paperbark trees, their roots so intertwined they almost formed a floor, albeit a most slippery and irregular one, over the rotten vegetation in the bottom of the swamp. I picked a particularly large rooted tree for my bath [515] tub, and a short distance away Agnes did the same. If one was careful not to disturb the fine deposit on the bottom but managed to stay on top of the slippery roots, the clear cool water was as sweet and soft as one could wish for. We stayed for about an hour, washing ourselves and our clothes, but finally an impatient call from Albert put an end to this pleasure. Albert had been hunting for a possum, but in this area so close to the camp, they had already been depleted.

123 Instead of returning to camp, Albert decided that now was as good a time as any to cut his *milingani*, the sticks with which they 411 kill the geese. After another mile or so into the bush, we came to a 322 grove of stout bushes of a kind I had not seen before. They had [223] long, straight branches of about a half-inch diameter. These Albert

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

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764

Fig. 15. Weather-worn poles mark the grave of someone long dead but not forgotten

223 bush. He bin die long time ago." This had been his country while
789 alive and it was still his country, for his spirit remains near the
grave and still hunts the wild animals and birds, while the spirits
775 of his wives collect the wild yams, and his little spirit children play
in the bush. Bangri will share this food with others who come, and
their *mobudities,* should they die and be buried in the country, for
as long as his name is remembered, and until his grave-posts rot
with the passing of time.

123 But Bangri was not cooperative. The next day the hunters
found little game in the bush and the women turned to the laborious
[222] job of digging six-foot holes with a stick to obtain the small yams
●224] that are to be found at this season. Again the grass was too thick,
the snakes too cheeky, and Albert advised against our going bush.
[152] I decided the more logical explanation was that Albert considered
[777] we ourselves had ample food, and besides he was sincerely worried
[223] about his long run of bad luck. But he left with the others that

123 The following day we finally went hunting. Peter, his wife Dorrie, and daughter Althea, Filicy and her son Crissy-Boy, Albert, Agnes and I all squeezed into the canoe and paddled about two miles upstream to the next landing. Tudiunginarim, "white-paint-place," [177] used to be an old camp of the white buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who at the turn of the century was the first white contact for many of these people. It was very hot and the women took their children 123 into the water, waist deep near the bank, for a swim. It was easy 291 for them in their *nagas*, for when they came out they merely wrapped a dry one around and slid the wet one off underneath very 515 modestly. I, in my shorts and shirt, finally gave in to the temptation 609 and, vowing that if I were to live here longer I would take up the native costume, went in fully dressed. This modesty was a funny thing; they who wore no clothes until contact with white men, were being modest only for my sake, and in return I could do no less. So with dripping clothes, which incidentally felt wonderful in the heat, I set off following Albert and Agnes.

123 The nature of the bush was the same as that in back of Minianapi and indeed the same as that around Snake Bay: the same 224 trees, the same burned earth, the same fan palms and pandanus, and the same flatness. The natives always knew where they were; I never did. We were looking for possums and as these furry marsupials sleep in hollow trees during the day, we investigated every likely tree for evidence that they had recently climbed it. Sometimes the little tears in the rough bark could only be seen silhouetted against the sun; at other times the dry ground around the base of the tree would show very definite tracks. Soon Agnes, who was off somewhere to the left of Albert and me, gave two high-pitched calls. [198] In the hunting language I had already learned, one call meant "I'm here, where are you?" and would be answered by their companions with a similar single call. However, two calls meant "Come; I've found something." So we turned in the direction of the call and soon found Agnes standing by a short, hollow tree. Albert took his axe and cut a long pole which he then thrust up through a hole in the tree's base and wiggled. Out popped a large grey possum which sat on the top of the tree trying to make itself as small as possible. Agnes and Albert threw all manner of sticks and stones at it and finally managed to knock it down, when it scuttled away.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 17. "Hunting a possum"

It was soon overtaken by Albert who killed it quickly with a blow from a stick. As he brought it back he said, "Him big mother. See him pickaninni." And he held up a hairless baby barely three inches long, its eyes still closed, but very much alive. "Oh, kill it quick, Albert," I begged. He shook his head, "I can't kill him, I too sorry alonga him." Here we were at an impass, two people too sorry alonga him; one too sorry to kill it, and one too sorry to let it live. Who was right?

Meanwhile, Agnes took the mother possum and pulled the fur from a small area on the belly and then slitting the skin with the sharp end of a broken stick, she withdrew the gall bladder and intestines. "Him make him bad," she explained. We did not stop to cook the animal, but continued our search. This area had all been burned by the previous parties and already little delicate shoots of grass were poking up through the black ground.

During the next hour we wandered slowly through the bush and, although we saw many trees which had been inhabited by possums, they were now empty. One that looked most likely was hollow and Albert hopefully built a fire in the rotten base, then sat back and waited for the smoke to drive the animal out. After half an hour, it was quite obvious that no one was at home.

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Then our luck turned. This time, when Albert gave the "come here" call, it was because he had located a wild honey nest, or "sugar-bag," high in a large stringy-bark eucalyptus. There was little point in cutting this large tree down so Albert prepared to climb. First he cut a small sapling and laid it at a 45-degree angle against a crotch where the massive trunk split in two. Then, grip-

123 ping the axe with his teeth, he ran up the sapling on all fours with
222 as much agility as a monkey. Upon reaching the crotch, he put his
481 arms around the trunk, placed the soles of his feet close together against the bark, and quickly progressed in a sort of leaping motion up to the top of the tree. Once there he casually climbed up, over, and around the various branches, until he reached the object of his climb, the hollow branch with the little hole through which was passing a steady stream of small insects. This branch was quickly cut through and fell crashing to the ground. Soon Albert was down again, investigating this find with Agnes and me. The hole was enlarged and the combs of dark honey exposed, still
[133] crawling with the little black bees. We dug in with our fingers or brushes made by chewing small twigs, quite unmindful of the bees, who obligingly never developed stings in this part of the world.
[262 The honey was dark and very strong, but when mixed with the dry,
237] crumbly, yellow "bee bread" a nice balance of taste was obtained. It took the three of us very little time to finish the sugar-bag and off we went—this time in a homeward direction.

123 The one possum looked very small and Albert again began mut-
224 tering about "someone *mobuditi* make me bad luck." We separated again and when almost to the creek Agnes suddenly held me back
[777] and cautioned silence. Carefully she picked up a stout stick from the ground and then approached what I suddenly noticed was a very fat goana, about two feet long, apparently sound asleep on a nearby tree trunk. One quick blow and the lizard fell to the ground, quite dead. We carried the catch to the landing and quickly had another swim before Albert caught up. We were gathering firewood when Albert arrived and explained his delay by holding up another
123 possum. The second possum was immediately gutted, then both
252 were laid on the fire and turned frequently until all the fur had been burned off and the skin made brittle. The animals were quartered and laid again on the fire until well roasted. The goana received no preliminary treatment before going on the fire. When all were
[264] cooked, they were removed and laid on a "table" of clean, green leaves, and we reached in and tore off pieces of the steaming, juicy
123 meat. It is impossible to describe this meat to someone who has not
262 tasted it. All I can say is that it was tender and tasty and perfectly

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

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262 cooked, with that delicious charcoal-broiled flavor so much sought after in our more elite dining establishments or in our backyards.

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224 Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goanas, they brought over to show us an extremely large water [431] snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tre- [513] mendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minianapi in time to meet the geese.
123 All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless
231 baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's
484 hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was
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123 For a while we all stretched our legs walking up the sandy bank of the river until mangrove roots stopped our progress.

Once back in the canoe, Albert took over my place in the bow [226] and with his fish-spear poised he kept a watchful eye on the deep green waters. Once he spied a barramundi and cautiously directed Big Jack to paddle towards the large fish, but it glided out of reach.

About a half mile up the river we came upon the shaded glen of casuarinas, another camping spot with its fresh-water well, named Anderaningo. Here instead of Black Joe's mob we found the Superintendent, Bill Grimster, his son Billy, and two natives, Billy-Two and Brownie. Black Joe's mob had arrived the afternoon before and had been ferried the ten miles up river to the next camping spot in the motor launch. Bill Grimster, having been told by Black Joe that he had seen our smoke near Piriu, knew that we had camped there, and he came back down river with an invitation for me to join them for a night of crocodile hunting before they returned to Snake Bay.

225 For many people in this area, hunting the large salt-water crocodile is a profession or a sought-after sport. In both cases it is dangerous, for this particular species of crocodile is intimidated by nothing and frequently will attack men or beasts without provocation. The crocodiles, which often measure twenty feet in length, occupy a prominent place in the myths, legends, and art of the [773] Tiwi, and many are the true-life tales of people who have lost their [538] lives in battling these beasts, which are hunted by the natives for their meat and valuable skins. When one considers the size of the animals and the size of the canoes, it is no wonder that Bill had discouraged any requests of mine to accompany them. So this invitation was a most welcome and pleasant surprise.

123 I transferred to the launch for the up-river camp so that I would be in time to leave on the hunt at dusk. For the first six miles the river wound seemingly aimlessly through the deep, dank, and mysterious mangrove swamps. At times the branches almost met across the water, brightly colored birds flitted from branch to branch and a subdued splash indicated a crocodile disturbed from his after- [776] noon slumber on the muddy bank. Adding to this almost evil atmosphere were strange clacking and sucking noises emanating from

123 met at the water's edge by Black Joe, his wives, Margaret and Filicy, their two children, Dennis and Crissy-Boy, and the rest of his party numbering about twenty. Since it was already growing dark, we made a hasty supper and were soon back in the launch ready for the night's hunt.

I sat in the stern of the 15-foot boat with Bill Sr., while young 123 Billy sat by the motor in the center holding the battery-powered 225 searchlight. Brownie and Billy-Two were in the bow close to the long, heavy, iron-tipped harpoons. As we continued up river, I was carefully instructed as to what I should do. My instructions were to do absolutely nothing, not move, speak, whisper, nor hardly breathe once the signal had been given that a croc was sighted. Soon it was very dark, the stars were blotted out by heavy clouds, and it rained heavily for a short time. After a while, young Billy, who had been swinging the light slowly from bank to bank, said softly, "There!" and held the light steadily on the left bank. Immediately Bill shut off the motor and both he and Brownie took up paddles. Billy-Two meanwhile had eased himself up so that he stood straddling the bow, a foot on each gunwale. The harpoon was poised above his shoulder ready to throw. Extremely slowly and without a sound we approached the two shining red disks, the croc's eyes, held transfixed by the powerful light. When will he ever throw, I silently wondered; but it was not until we were within two or three feet that Billy-Two lunged forward and thrust the harpoon deep into the crocodile's back. Suddenly the silence was broken; Billy-Two wrenched the harpoon shaft loose and laid it in the boat, taking up instead the rapidly-disappearing rope attached to the iron barb. The crocodile sounded and began swimming under the boat. Young Billy gave the light to his father and took up the shot-gun. Brownie helped Billy-Two pull in the rope and suddenly the water broke. The light and shot-gun were aimed and almost simultaneously a shot struck the grotesque head; soon the animal was dead. All hands then heaved and the 14-foot crocodile was laid to rest at our feet.

The night was young, so we continued up river. After a while the moon broke through the clouds and silhouetted the white paperbarks. The river grew quite narrow and wound through a succession of mirror-black pools dotted with water-lilies and criscrossed just

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

under the surface by the massive roots of the paperbarks. It was in 123
just this sort of pool that the largest of the five crocs landed that [225]
night, was harpooned. The huge 18-foot animal dived into the roots
and it took about twenty tense minutes to dislodge and dispatch him.
Aside from the crocodiles the only wild life seen that night was a
small and very frightened little mouse who suddenly appeared on
my lap and then just as suddenly disappeared over the boat's side.

We returned to Minianapi at daybreak and the hot tea and
roast goose seemed a perfect breakfast, or was it supper? It didn't
matter for we were soon sound asleep.

When we finally awoke in mid-afternoon we found the camp
almost deserted. "Everyone go walkabout; kill geese," Albert
informed us as he and Agnes gathered more wood to build up the
smouldering fire. It was very quiet in the small clearing and only
the little black spots of charcoal spaced in irregular intervals on the
ground were evidence that there were more than our mob in resi-
dence. The clearing itself was quite bare because it had been burned
by the first comers, with the double purpose of clearing out the
four-foot grass itself, and any of the various poisonous snakes [136]
which were quite likely to infest it. In back of the clearing was a
thick tangle of low bushes through which ran a little foot-path.
Agnes started down this path carrying a billy can and I offered to
go with her, but Albert said, "No, by um by we go, him long way,
him only get a little bit now." After one gets used to the pronoun [195]
"him" being used to refer to everything animal, vegetable, and
mineral, this phrase is perfectly understandable: the first "him"
referred to the water, the second to Agnes.

So instead of collecting water, I wandered down to the river
bank where Billy-Two, Brownie, and a few of the other men, were
busy skinning the crocodiles. This they did by cutting the skin first
around the head, then down either side of the rows of bumps
running along the spine to the tail. The skin was then carefully [281]
peeled and cut from the body. Once free it was rubbed with salt
which would act as a preservative until such time as the supply boat
would arrive to carry it to Darwin. There the skins would be sold [439]
to the dealer and the proceeds credited to the hunter's account or 452
sent in the form of hard cash to the settlement for distribution. Now
they were folded into bundles and loaded into the launch, and large [262]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

726 received any serious damage, and it seemed to have been a most enjoyable occasion. An islander, who had seen the world from the decks of many luggers, made a remark that was truer than he knew, "When white feller go to war, he takem rifle, he takem

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HUNTING TURTLE, FROM A DUG-OUT CANOE NEAR BATHURST ISLAND.

bomb. Some feller must be killed! White feller silly b——!" It cannot be said that the mission fathers have a dull time at Bathurst Island.

797 There are two sisters of the order at the Mission Station. In addition to teaching the girls, they attend to all household mat-

[p. 18(A)]

123 For a while we all stretched our legs walking up the sandy bank of the river until mangrove roots stopped our progress.

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9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 O120 Tiwi O120

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. Harney and A. P. Elkin[1]

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and 136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog (*wongine*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. 825 According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts 757 of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. Elkin.

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

lores and customs, and if the white people were disappointed by 115
his performance in settlement work, the old men of the tribe were [156]
just as pleased by his attitude to his native heritage.

Agnes, a slim tall girl of twenty, was even shyer than Albert 123
and to cover up this shyness she always smiled or giggled. She was
a cheerful soul to have around. Feeling that the responsibility of 115
the care and feeding of the *murandanga* (female white person) was
a little more than their young shoulders could bear, Albert asked
Big Jack, his older brother, a "big man" in the tribe to come along.
At the last minute a fifth member was added, Tchuwiunga, a tiny [231]
black-and-white puppy of about eight weeks old.

Number one canoe was the largest canoe and was considered 501
the safest. The Malay fishermen, a century or more ago, had taught
the Melville Islanders how to hew a rough canoe from a single 123
log, but the art had never been perfected. This canoe measured
about fifteen feet in length by about three feet in width at the
center. There were small platforms in the bow and stern which

Fig. 3. Setting off in Number one canoe

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

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Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goanas, they brought over to show us an extremely large water snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tremendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minianapi in time to meet the geese. All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was

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13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

797 The sisters frequently take their charges into the bush for a day's "walkabout," and all the children go back to their parents at intervals. Thus their education at the mission does not mean that they lose all the bushcraft that is their natural inheritance.

[23] 241 THEY are busy people at the mission. In addition to the fruits already mentioned, lay brothers grow crops of peanuts and sweet potatoes and attend to the pigs, goats, and cattle that form the live-stock of the settlement. They are their own mechanics and electricians, and the tractor used in the farming operations also charges the six-volt battery which, transformed to 360 volts high tension, is employed in radio communication with the mainland. Boats are built in the workshop by the brothers, and a launch, of 26 feet deck measurement, has been completed and very neatly fitted with bunks, cooking shelf for a primus stove, crockery cupboard, and lockers. When fitted with an engine, this launch will replace the old lugger *St. Francis*, so well known in North Australia, and will afford a more rapid and certain passage to the mainland.

As we walked back to the aerodrome, little black boys drove a long string of white goats through the palm-trees, and the "blackies" waved and called "Um-bung-ie!" (good-bye). Major

[p. 19(A)]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

531 decorate a burial pole; and others, Pl. 2D, Pl. 10C, and Pl. 11A, similar to those he would paint on the ceremonial baskets.

I did not see or hear of figures being made in bark (Mountford, 1956, p. 443, fig. 65C, D); moulded in wax (Elkin and the Berndts, 1950, Pl. 21, Mountford, 1956, Pl. 143) or in the sands of the sea-shore (Mountford, 1956, p. 404, Pl. 91C, D), as is done in north-eastern Arnhem Land. Nevertheless, *[532] the men did carve large burial poles in the form of human beings and smaller full-length figures, associated with the *pukamuni* ceremonies. These figures bore some small resemblance to those recorded from north-eastern Arnhem Land (Berndt, 1948, Figs. A, B, Pls. 1, 2; Mountford, 1956, Pls. 130–40).

3. TECHNIQUES

386 (*a*) COLOURS. The pigments used for the decoration of the burial poles and the production of the bark paintings, were red, yellow and white ochres. As there was no suitable black pigment on the islands, the artists used crushed charcoal in its place.

The source of the best ochres is a pit at Imilu on Cape Van Diemen (Fig. 1). [317] This ochre, called *imilu*, is a bright yellow when collected,[7] but, when heated in the fire, it changes to a clear red. A soft white stone is common along the beaches. The ochres are not ground on a stone, as on the mainland (Mountford, 1956, p. 11), but, being friable, are crushed and mixed in a large cockle shell with water and fixative.

The aborigines often spoke of a superior ochre at Numanira, northern Melville Island (Fig. 1), which could be gathered only at low tide. I did not see any of this ochre in use.

(*b*) FIXATIVES. Three different types of fixative are used to ensure that the painted designs, both on the poles and the baskets, were as permanent as possible. They were: the sticky gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids [314] (*Dendrobium* sp.); the wax and honey of the wild bee, well mixed together; ● [237] and the yolks of the eggs of the sea-going turtle. The fixative was either mixed with the pigments or rubbed on the painting surface.

412 (*c*) BRUSHES. Simple brushes, made of strips of bark of varying widths, square across the bottom, chewed at one end, and held as in Fig. 2A and 2C, were used for the bulk of the work.[8] For making the dots, however, the artists used a

[423] [7] There did not appear to be any restriction on the gathering of this ochre; any aboriginal could go to Imilu and take as much as he wished.

[171] [8] The long flexible brush of the aborigines of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 12, fig. 3), was not used at Melville Island, although the bark brush (Fig. 2B) was often held in a similar manner.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

8. THE CEREMONIAL OBJECTS OF THE TIWI

The ceremonial objects of the *pukamuni* ceremony, like the carved and painted burial poles and elaborate facial and body decorations already described, are totally unlike those used by the mainland aborigines. 301 778 765 [171]

A series of objects obtained on the 1954 expedition is illustrated on Pls. 31, 32.[24]

On Pl. 31, A, D, and G, are chest ornaments called *pukabinda*, which are suspended around the neck with a loop of human hair string. Fig. A is an oval ball of the soft wax of the native bee, into which has been pressed a large number of the red and black seeds of a jungle vine. Fig. D, made of several ovals of lawyer vine, is bound together with strips of the same material. The pendant is made of human hair and white cockatoo feathers. The oval opening is too small to pass over the head, therefore this ornament, and similar examples which I saw, were suspended around the neck with string. Fig. G is a flat disc like Fig. D, with lengths of lawyer vine bound together. This disc was coated with wax, and further decorated with red and black jungle seeds. [237]

Pl. 31E and F are ornaments, *pəlnatjinas*, decorated with red and black seeds, which are pushed up the arm over the elbow.[25] Both have been made in the same manner as Fig. D, G.

Pl. 31B is a goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, worn around the neck or tied around the upper arm. *Wurarbuti* (frontispiece) is wearing a *tokwianga*.

These ornaments are made by embedding ends of the downy feathers of the pied goose in a ball of wax. So much work was entailed in making a *tokwianga* that the aborigines were loth to part with them. The *tokwianga* is worn on all ceremonial occasions. [237]

Pl. 31C is a false beard, *baludi*, which was worn at the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni* (see frontispiece), and the *kulama* rituals. The *baludi* may be pure decoration, or it may replace the beard, which up until comparatively recently was plucked out at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals. [302]

Fig. H illustrates three cane arm rings, *jairinis*, made from plaited lawyer vine. These were worn on the upper and lower arms of the *pukamuni* men and women, and occasionally by other performers, as decoration. At the end of the burial ceremony the performers take these rings from their arms and leave them on the grave as a present for the spirit of the dead.

[24] Spencer, 1928, Pl. XII, Figs. 450–4, illustrates a number of *pukamuni* ornaments he collected in 1921.

[25] Several of the men illustrated on Pl. 26a, are wearing these arm ornaments.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

301 bordered with red. Each of the intervening spaces is again sub-divided into two
531 squares at the centre (and a "half-square" at the sides) by three vertical, white lines bordered with red. The squares and "half-squares" are shaded diagonally with from four to six lines passing downwards and away from the central line in the topmost group, and upwards and away from the centre in the two lower groups of
[171] squares. The combined effect resembles the windmill or "wanningi" pattern common throughout Australia. The shading is all in white on one side, but red and white in alternate squares on the opposite side.

301 In another type of this arm decoration, which is also made of bark, the upper
322 united portion is shorter than in the previous case (*vide* Plate VII, Figs. 1 and 3). The top edge is concave and only one oblong window is cut beneath it. The sides have been united by hem-stitching and by the insertion of a few wooden pins which answer the same purpose as rivets. The edges are thickly plastered with beeswax. As in the previous case, the stitches (and the plaster also) are continued only along one side of the loop. A fairly stout rod of wood projects vertically from either end of the top concave edge. Shorter rods project laterally from either top corner of the loop. To the end of each of these rods a plume of white is attached with beeswax. Cockatoo feathers have been chosen and they are
[237 531] fastened by their distal ends so that the fluffy portions are exposed. A number of twisted strands of fur and vegetable fibre pass from the extremity of one horizontal rod diagonally upwards to the base of the vertical rod above, along it to the top, thence horizontally across to the top of the other vertical rod, whence it is continued the same way down the other side to the extremity of the opposite horizontal rod. Beeswax retains these strands in position at the rod-tops, while more strands, wound horizontally from the base of one vertical rod to the other, and also round the base of each, make the former strands secure there. The painted design in this
301 case consists of one large cruciform figure on either side of the looped portion, the
531 arms being modified at the base in a manner suggestive of a snake design. One arm of the cross is white, the other yellow, both being bordered with red. The intervening spaces are shaded red and yellow, the constituent lines being parallel and straight up-and-down in the upper segment and crossed in the lower.

532 *Corrobboree-mask.*—An interesting object is what I take to be a corrobboree-mask (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 5). As I did not see it in use and did not receive the specimen until it was too late to make inquiries, I cannot, with certainty, describe it as such. The object represents an oval structure, 15 centimetres long and 8 wide, which encloses two connected circular rims resembling a solid pair of spectacles. The internal framework is made of split cane, bound together with vegetable strands. The oval portion is covered with human hair string, wound around it and knotted along the outer edge after the modern "button-hole-stitch" fashion. The rims are broad and covered with beeswax. A circle of the red beans of *Abrus precatorius*, embedded in the wax, surrounds the "eye-holes" on the front side. At one of the lateral extremities, a band of five human hair strings emerges from a cylindrical mass of beeswax and is surrounded, at 6 centimetres distance,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Notes on The

by a similar mass, whence two strings only continue for 40 odd centimetres. 532
The whole length of the band, therefore, amounts to approximately 50 centimetres. Its object is, no doubt, to fasten the mask in position over the face during corroboree ceremonies.

Domestic Utensils.

Food carriers.—The most common form of "mika" or carrier for food and 322
other articles is one made of a single piece of bark of the "stringy bark" eucalypt 415
(*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 3, 4, 5, and 6). An oblong piece of such bark, say 1 metre long by 40 centimetres broad, is freshly cut and folded transversely at its centre. The edges on either side are pared down, then laid flat, one over the other, and sewn or laced together with plain "run-on" stitches, 2 centimetres apart. A row of slanting and overlapping stitches often skirts the open edge at a short distance down; occasionally, too, part of the edge is cross-hemstitched and plastered with beeswax. The object of this procedure is to prevent the bark from tearing by virtue of its fibrous structure. The open mouth of the carrier is nearly circular or oval; in the latter case the long axis of the oval runs at right angles to the base-edge of the implement. These carriers are of various sizes; the largest that came under observation measured 63 centimetres in height and 43 in width at the base. Ordinarily they are unpainted, but on special occasions elaborate designs, consisting 415
of circles, oblong and other figures, with cross-hatched shading, are drawn on the 531
outer surface in red, yellow, white, and black. The designs are best studied by reference to the reproductions (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 5 and 6). Occasionally tassel-shaped appendages are noticed at one of the convex outer surfaces of the mouth of the carrier. These consist of a flattish, egg-shaped mass of beeswax (studded on the surface with the red beans of *Abrus precatorius*), which is suspended by two twisted fur strings (*vide* Plate VIII, Fig. 6).

Water carriers.—Water is taken to camp from a soakage or spring in simple [312]
structures made out of the bark of the paper-bark tree (*Melaleuca sp.*). An oblong 322
piece of this bark is bent upon itself longitudinally, both its ends folded several 415
times and kept together by binding with cane or by spiking with short pointed wooden pegs (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 1 and 2).

Drinking vessels.—Several natural objects are used for drinking vessels. 415
Among the most common are the discarded tests of molluscs. The species *Melo-* [237]
dindesus and *Fusus priini* were found in use at several native wells (*vide* Plate XIV, Figs. 1 and 2).

But when no such shells are available a piece of bark is torn or cut from a 322
tree (usually from a *Melaleuca*) and folded so as to form a water-tight cup (*vide* 415
Plate XIV, Figs. 3 and 4). This piece of bark, which measures about 20 centimetres by 20, is folded longitudinally at about its middle (*vide* Fig. 3, D). Both ends are then bent upon themselves at right angles to this plane and at about one quarter the whole length from either end. The overturned ends and the inner

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on The

They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some of the designs being very pleasing to the eye. Some spears, moreover, have human 471
hair strings wound round the shaft, immediately below the head, for a distance of [531]
10 centimetres or more, and this is kept in place with beeswax.

Canoes.

Elsewhere I have referred to the marked absence among the northern 501
Australian tribes of anything but the most primitive crafts and such innovated forms as have resulted from the contact with the white and yellow races. They are, therefore, not to be considered as truly indigenous canoes. On Bathurst Island, however, conditions are different; due, perhaps, in the first place, to its insularity (as well as the numerous estuaries and rivers that cross [133]
the land), and, secondly, to the proximity of Melville Island, which is separated from it by only a narrow stretch of calm water known as Apsley Strait. The latter is barely a mile in width at its narrowest points. Numerous canoes are in use within this Strait, and occasionally, when wind and water are favourable, they venture a short distance out to sea. One type is principally in use, namely, a large bark-canoe measuring about 560 centimetres in length (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). It is made of a single sheet of bark, usually from suitable, straight, clear 396
trunks of the woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*) or the stringy-bark (*E. tetradonta*) 501
(*vide* Plate XII, Fig. 1). It is cut from the tree by chopping transversely at the respective distances from the ground, then slitting it once vertically for the whole length and removing it by forcing the edge of the instrument under the bark and finally levering it off with pointed saplings. The outer side of this oblong piece of bark, which is rough, will become the inside surface of the canoe. At a distance of from 65 to 70 centimetres from either end, transverse cuts are made on the inside to a depth of half the thickness of the bark, and such thickness is removed from the whole of the surface lying away from the centre at either incision. Each end is thus reduced by half its original strength and material thereby becoming more pliable. The cutting is done with the sharp edge of a [237 412]
bivalve shell, usually a *Cyrena*. The subtilised ends of the sheet may, or may not, be held over a glowing fire to render them more pliant still. The sheet is folded lengthwise along its middle, and one or both ends kept together by vertical stakes, stuck in the ground and tied together at the top. The bottom corner of the fold is cut away in a very gentle upward slope. The two pieces of the fold are next held firmly together and cut in a more decisive upward direction from a point some 30 to 50 centimetres from the bottom edge end. The two freshly cut edges are neatly sewn with close, overcast stitches, and the same is done along the top horizontal edge for a distance of some 15 or 20 centimetres from the end. From the intervening space between the sewn parts at the top and bottom, an angular or curved segment is cut out in imitation of a fish-tail and its edges laced together in a like manner (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). The thread used for these "run-on" stitches is in the form of strips from the split sheets of the

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

396 501 [237 412] climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*).[1] Holes are previously pierced through the bark with an awl, made out of the leg-bone of a wallaby.

The stitches are made more secure and watertight by plastering them with [237 314] wax from the comb of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*) or with one of the several resins so extensively used by all natives. The inside corners are caulked with plastic clay and fibre, or resin. Two stays or struts of fairly stout timber, cut to the required length and inserted at the points where the bark was reduced to half its thickness, keep the sides of the canoe apart. From these points, therefore, the sides of the canoe converge to the bow at one end and to the stern at the other; while in between they are more or less parallel. The canoe, if there be any difference at all, is wider aft (74 cm.) than it is nearer the bow (55 cm.); the "fish-tail" incision, too, is acute and deep at the bow and more rounded and shallow at the stern (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). Along the top, inner, edge of either side of the canoe, a straight strengthening pole is lashed with distant, unequally-spaced and grouped "run on" stitches of cane-strips. These structures lend considerable rigidity to the gunwale of the canoe; they do not extend throughout the whole length, but, being straight, are more or less parallel one to another, and do not enclose the stern or bow. Major Campbell,[2] in referring to the bark canoes seen by him while at Fort Dundas, states that "the gunwales are strengthened by two small saplings (such as grow in marshy places) fastened together at each end of the canoe." This method is more like that in use on the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria to-day and was not observed on the islands by me. Long shoots of vines and strips of cane are wound crosswise from side to side of the canoe, and at the same time take in the strengthening-poles along the gunwale. Additional circumferential winding binds the separate cords into one thick rope. Four of such ties are spanned at equal distances, from one side to the other, along the straight edges of the canoe. They not only preserve its shape, but afford a ready means by which the craft may be carried.

501 [531] The canoe is not decorated in any way, but smears of various colours are noticed both at the bow and the stern, resulting from the handling by fingers previously occupied in decorative work with ochre. When not in use the canoes are "housed" on a level piece of ground, under the overhanging branches of a shady banyan or guttapercha tree. They are laid in normal upright position (not inverted), and are kept so by short supports of timber stemmed against the sides. The bark thus dries in the required shape and does not become lop-sided.

Each canoe has its recognized place. Where a dense growth of mangroves [487] skirts the foreshore, a regular approach to the water is kept clear by cutting away the trees. The paddles are laid within the canoes.

Quite a large number of natives may be carried in a canoe, if the occasion

[1] Compare narrative of Mr. Carron in MacGillivray's *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* 1852, vol. ii, pp. 125 and 126; also P. P. King: *Narrative Survey Intertropical Western Coasts of Australia*, London, 1827, vol. i, p. 90.

[2] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 156.

123 ping the axe with his teeth, he ran up the sapling on all fours with
222 as much agility as a monkey. Upon reaching the crotch, he put his
481 arms around the trunk, placed the soles of his feet close together against the bark, and quickly progressed in a sort of leaping motion up to the top of the tree. Once there he casually climbed up, over, and around the various branches, until he reached the object of his climb, the hollow branch with the little hole through which was passing a steady stream of small insects. This branch was quickly cut through and fell crashing to the ground. Soon Albert was down again, investigating this find with Agnes and me. The hole was enlarged and the combs of dark honey exposed, still crawling with the little black bees. We dug in with our fingers or
[133] brushes made by chewing small twigs, quite unmindful of the bees, who obligingly never developed stings in this part of the world.
[262 The honey was dark and very strong, but when mixed with the dry,
237] crumbly, yellow "bee bread" a nice balance of taste was obtained. It took the three of us very little time to finish the sugar-bag and off we went—this time in a homeward direction.

123 The one possum looked very small and Albert again began mut-
224 tering about "someone *mobuditi* make me bad luck." We separated
[777] again and when almost to the creek Agnes suddenly held me back and cautioned silence. Carefully she picked up a stout stick from the ground and then approached what I suddenly noticed was a very fat goana, about two feet long, apparently sound asleep on a nearby tree trunk. One quick blow and the lizard fell to the ground, quite dead. We carried the catch to the landing and quickly had another swim before Albert caught up. We were gathering firewood when Albert arrived and explained his delay by holding up another
123 possum. The second possum was immediately gutted, then both
252 were laid on the fire and turned frequently until all the fur had been burned off and the skin made brittle. The animals were quartered and laid again on the fire until well roasted. The goana received no preliminary treatment before going on the fire. When all were
[264] cooked, they were removed and laid on a "table" of clean, green leaves, and we reached in and tore off pieces of the steaming, juicy
123 meat. It is impossible to describe this meat to someone who has not
262 tasted it. All I can say is that it was tender and tasty and perfectly

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to marry the boy's sisters, an easily met requirement since girls were "married" so much earlier than their brothers. Very senior and successful men did not bother as a rule with initiation sponsorship because it took too much of their valuable time. Hence in practice, most boys at the *Marukumarni* age were taken in hand by a group of men around 40 years of age who were at least betrothed to, if not already married to, the boys' sisters. Such men justified or rationalized their actions by stating that, as the husbands of the boy's sisters, they wanted their little brother-in-law to be made into a man in proper form. In fact, they were usually given the job by the boy's father, who, having bestowed daughters upon them, regarded it as a legitimate request to make of them. It was the duty of male cross-cousins to initiate their wives' little brothers, but in true Tiwi style the father had to request them to do it, and they counted it in their tallies of what they owed him and what he owed them.

Though the father instigated and stage managed the whole affair, he and his household were always thunderstruck when the cross-cousins—armed to the teeth and painted like a war party—arrived at his camp one evening and proceeded to carry off forcibly the yelling 14-year-old.[6] He had to be dragged literally from the bosom of his family, with his mother screaming and trying to hide him and the father pretending to resist the invaders of his household. From then on, until the final stage (*Mikingula*) at age 24-26, the boy was completely under the authority of the men who carried him off. During these approximately ten to twelve years, he spent much of the time alone with them in the bush where the group lived a monastic existence, as a small band of isolates, speaking to no one (especially not to females) and obtaining their own food. During these phases the tutors guarded the boy as if he were literally a prisoner and taught him all the things—chiefly ritual matters—that grown men should know. At intervals the youth was allowed to go home, on week-end leaves so to speak, but when at home he had to observe all the silences, the modest demeanor, the taboos and the austerities of the isolated life. In monastic language, he was under a strict rule of obedience to his tutors.

Breaking in on the long years of austerity, spent either in seclusion in the bush or in *pukimani* at home, were periodic collective ceremonies when the youth was ritually advanced from one stage of initiation to the next.[7] These were public ceremonies, witnessed by large crowds, and the more important of such transition ceremonies took place in January and February when the *kolema* yams were ripe. At these ceremonies the youths were handled in batches or classes, all the boys of one grade being ritually advanced to the next grade, and the top grade or final class being formally graduated as fully initiated men. The crucial grade—when the pubic hairs were forcibly pulled out and he was at last allowed to talk back a little to his tutors—was usually reached by a youth somewhere between his eighteenth and twentieth years, but

[6] See Hart 1955 for some further details of the tearing away of the boy from the bosom of his family.

[7] A full list of initiation grade names and their duration in years is given in Hart 1931.

797 The sisters frequently take their charges into the bush for a day's "walkabout," and all the children go back to their parents at intervals. Thus their education at the mission does not mean that they lose all the bushcraft that is their natural inheritance.

[23] [241] THEY are busy people at the mission. In addition to the fruits already mentioned, lay brothers grow crops of peanuts and sweet potatoes and attend to the pigs, goats, and cattle that form the live-stock of the settlement. They are their own mechanics and electricians, and the tractor used in the farming operations also charges the six-volt battery which, transformed to 360 volts high tension, is employed in radio communication with the mainland. Boats are built in the workshop by the brothers, and a launch, of 26 feet deck measurement, has been completed and very neatly fitted with bunks, cooking shelf for a primus stove, crockery cupboard, and lockers. When fitted with an engine, this launch will replace the old lugger *St. Francis*, so well known in North Australia, and will afford a more rapid and certain passage to the mainland.

As we walked back to the aerodrome, little black boys drove a long string of white goats through the palm-trees, and the "blackies" waved and called "Um-bung-ie!" (good-bye). Major

[p. 19(A)]

171 boomerang, is unknown to the islanders. Ceremonial customs,
[411] language, origin, and burial rites all differ from those of the mainland tribes, and constitute an interesting study for anthropologists. They are the only aborigines who erect memorials on
764 the graves of the departed, and, in the forest beside the aerodrome, you may see a typical grave surrounded with queerly-
[322 carved ironwood totem-poles. The poles, some eight feet in
532] height, are carved in varying patterns. They had been painted in highly decorative designs with red, yellow, and white ochre, with black bands of charcoal to give sharp and artistic contrast. Each kindred totem to that of the deceased must place a pole at the grave. Failure to erect a pole is supposed to signify that no sorrow is felt for the death, and punishment will follow. Something unpleasant always *does* happen to those who neglect this duty.

797 AFTER these necessary digressions, let us return to my visit to the mission station. We followed the fathers over the stile, up an avenue of palms, and on through the garden, where
[245] pineapples and bananas grow, and there are rows of immense and beautifully shady mango-trees. Sturdy, fuzzy-headed aborigines strode in front (one of them had just come in with
[262] a couple of kangaroos for the larder), and the boys trooped along behind us. The quarters of the fathers are very much those of bachelors, perfectly bare, with guns in the corners and a few native weapons and curios hanging on the walls.

Here two lubras brought us morning tea, and here I learnt much of the foregoing matters. The fathers themselves are entertaining men of the world, and their white cricket shirts and khaki slacks gave no indication of their calling. The boys gathered at the foot of the steps leading up to the quarters,
797 and every now and then black-bearded Father McGrath would
522 banter them in their own language. Like all the native peoples

[p.15 (B)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca.1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

411 grass, in the foreground, so that the whirling club slithers on in an unforeseen and most unpleasant manner. It may rise as high as a man's head, or it may strike him on the shins.

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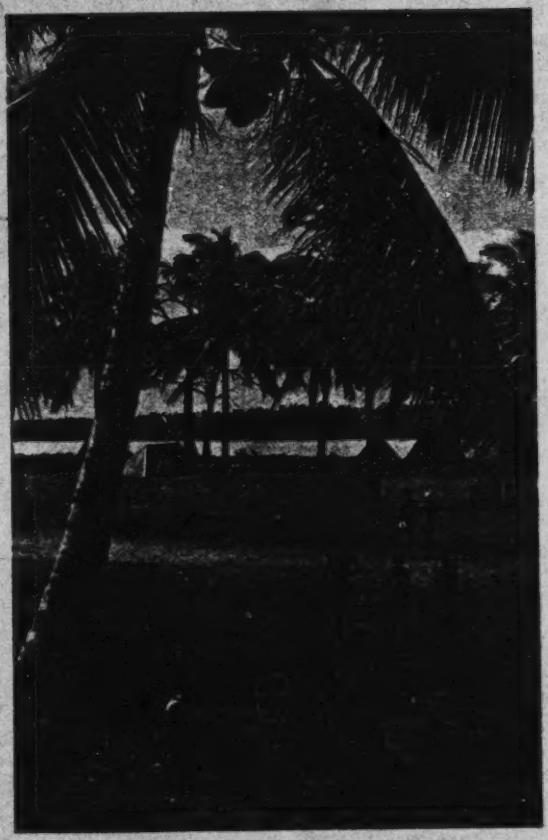

NATIVE "HOUSES" UNDER THE COCO-NUT PALMS AT BATHURST ISLAND MISSION.

726 Sometimes, as in the days of chivalry when English and French knights rode out before the main battle, eight men will advance to fight eight men of the other side, one pair at a time, each warrior throwing his spears and clubs in turn. [198] Sentries are then posted to one side, before and behind the combatants. As a warrior with a stock of pidgin English put it, "That feller, him look out front side. That feller, him look out back side."

At times warriors arrive by canoe to fight a duel on the beach close to the mission station. These are frequently more serious combats, and then men who are camped under the palms chase the duellists off; but these always land later farther down, and fight it out in the long run. Just before my visit, there had been fought the only naval battle in the history of the islands. The encounter took place in the mouth of Apsley Strait to the accompaniment of excited yells as canoes overturned when warriors stepped unwarily in dodging the flying spears. Nobody

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 The matter of men traveling to distant camps for ceremonials illumi-
595 nates again, and from a new angle, the great value of elderly widows in the
587 household. Tu'untalumi, during his visit to Malau in August, was able to split his household efficiently by taking a couple of old wives with him to supervise his young wives on the journey and leaving other old wives at home in Tangio to begin storing up food for the grass-burning project which he intended to stage on his return. It will be noticed in the account of his movements that he began issuing invitations to the grass burning on his way home from Malau, [224] showing his confidence that the elderly wives he had left at home would 251 have the preparations well in hand during his absence. A big man with a big household really needed three or four elderly widows because these enabled him to split his work force in various ways as his various political and social obligations required and to be sure of trustworthy supervision of each of the segments. A man without widows in his household, or with only one, could not do this; in fact, it was hard for a man without widows to attend ceremonials at all, or even to receive a large party of visitors to his household. And, as we have already pointed out, since such a man would probably go hungry very often because he would not dare to send his unsupervised young wives into the bush to gather food, there were practically no such men nor such households. Widows were indispensable to a senior Tiwi, both in his public and in his private life.

Making Things

592 Throughout this chapter we have been stressing the contrast between
887 the dull routine of life in an isolated Tiwi household during the greater part of the year and the sort of life typical on those relatively rare occasions when something special—a festival, a funeral, a fight, a grass burning, a naming ceremony, some collective phase of men's initiation—required the assembling together of several households for joint activity. Before leaving the daily life of the isolated camp, we should mention one other area of activity—namely, the manufacturing activities of the tribe. The Tiwi did not manufacture much, [32] but spears, throwing sticks, canoes, digging sticks, baskets, bodily ornaments, graveposts, and all the miscellaneous paraphernalia used in ceremonials had to be made in whatever leisure time people could find during the long weeks and months when each of the households lived more or less in isolation from the others. Crude and simple as these artifacts were, their construction required time, and only the older men had the time and the skill based on experience to make the more important of them.

[147] Largely because of their failing eyesight, the older men hunted very little and hence tended to remain in camp all day while the young men were hunting and the women were gathering. There were, of course, some old men who took advantage of this time to do little except doze in the shade, but 182 most of the household heads spent a fairly active day in camp engaged in 511 making things. Here we find another aspect of Tiwi culture that results from 531

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

224 roos,[8] wildfowl, and other game, keen eyesight is essential, hence Tiwi men
[887 did very little hunting once they were past about forty-five, though they hated to admit their hunting days were over. The meat, fish, and game provided for the large household of an old man was obtained by the young men, and this was about the only thing an old man thought his sons or his step-sons were good for. Typically the young man, when he returned at nightfall with
[592 a kangaroo which he had spent most of the day tracking down and spearing,
888 would ignore the old man and dump the carcass at the feet of his mother as if to say, "I brought this back for you, not for that old So and So."

As the women straggled back to camp toward sundown with the results
512 of their day's gathering and the young hunters brought in their bags, cooking
595 began and the main meal of the day (usually the only hot meal) was eaten. The Tiwi themselves had no doubt about the close relationship between plural marriage and good eating. "If I had only one or two wives I would starve,"
[797] the head of a large household once told the missionary who was preaching against plural marriage, "but with my present ten or twelve wives I can send them out in all directions in the morning and at least two or three of them are likely to bring something back with them at the end of the day, and then
262 we can all eat." This was a realistic appraisal of the economic situation and it is to be noted that he put the emphasis on the food obtained by the women
[222] gatherers rather than that supplied by the male hunters. Based on the observations of 1928-29, it would appear that the Tiwi ate pretty well, especially in the larger households. Kangaroo and other marsupials, and some of the larger lizards (for example, the goanna) were very plentiful in the bush, as were fish and turtles and dugong on the coasts and wild geese in many districts. But all these were extras or dividends; the staple everyday foods were the vegetable foods gathered day after day in apparently unending quantities by the women. For most months of the year there was always plenty of *kwoka*,
[252] a porridgelike dish prepared by soaking and mashing the small nuts of a native palm. These nuts grew in such quantity that in every large camp baskets or dishes of *kwoka*, at various stages of preparation, were always available, even for midnight snacks if anybody woke up hungry. *Kwoka* was about as dull and tasteless as Scotch porridge, but equally filling, and naked small boys full of *kwoka* had stomachs distended like balloons. In the wet season the place of *kwoka* was taken by *kolema*, a yam whose ripening and growing season was much shorter than that of the nuts from which *kwoka* was made. It was
[796] on the abundance of the *kolema* yams during January and February that the Tiwi supported the more elaborate of their collective ceremonials.

The abundance of these and other vegetable foods, plus the ample supply of game and fish in many places, meant that under aboriginal conditions the Tiwi lived at a food-consumption level much further above the near-

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[8] Actually there are no kangaroos on Melville and Bathurst Islands; the chief meat animal is a slightly smaller species of marsupial technically called the wallaby. As the distinction is important only to zoologists, and as many of the so-called kangaroos in American zoos are in fact wallabies, we prefer to use the more familiar word.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The White-Cockatoo woman, Milapukala, at Milapuru

A white-cockatoo woman, *Milapukala*, made a large freshwater lagoon at Milapuru, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. At the same time she created opossums, wallabies, carpet snakes, many kinds of lizards, hives of wild honey and many other foods so that she, and later the aborigines, would have plenty to eat. 773

The central black oval on Pl. 16c, is the lagoon, the totem place of the white cockatoo-woman, the short radiating lines between this and the white oval being groups of rushes on the edge of the water. 532 778

The large white oval represents the backwaters of Milapuru, and the outer black oval, the red soil of the surrounding uplands. The radiating lines between these ovals are pandanus trees growing along the shores.

The Pandanus-tree woman, Miatrina, at Primadua

At the command of *Tukimbini*, the *Miatrina* women and their children travelled to Primadua, southern Bathurst Island to establish a totemic centre. [773]

On Pl. 18B, the bark hut of the *Miatrina* women is shown as a black oval in the centre of the painting. This hut is now a submerged rock, called Purupatimu. The dark-coloured band, *a*, *a*, a red sandbar encircling Purupatimu, was once the grass and leaves which the mythical women pushed back when they were cleaning the ground for their camp.

The small white discs (the breasts of the *Miatrina* woman), are now black, submerged rocks; the series of vertical panels (once the children), sandbars in the shallow water; and the two meandering lines, *b*, *b*, (where the children played), salt-water creeks at Primadua. Mungunu, an adjacent locality, is associated with both the *Miatrina* woman and a white cockatoo-woman, *Inkuka*.

The Yam people, Tililindigia and Ubuna, at Primadua

This simple painting, Pl. 18D, about which I gathered but little information, deals with the totem place of two poisonous yams,[48] *Tililindigia* and *Ubuna* at Primadua.

The white oval, the totem place of the yam people, is now a hill at Primadua; the diagonals, outlined in white, are the large *ubuna* yams, and the dark-coloured diagonals, the smaller *tililindigia* yams. The dots represent trees of the Taulama jungle at the base of which trees the aborigines find these yams.

[48] In their raw state these yams are highly poisonous. If, however, they are husked, pounded out flat and soaked in water for several days, the yams are edible. [252]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

chanting *kulama* songs. Later, the decorated initiate, now called a *Marukumuni*, is taken to the camp of the man who captured him. It is the duty of this man, now his guardian, to provide the initiate with food. However, he must not be given snakes, for such food would cause his joints to swell and become painful. 881

The guardian takes the food he has collected to the *Marukumuni*'s wife who feeds her husband over a period of four days in the same manner as a *pukamuni* man is fed (Pl. 24A). Neither she, nor any of the food he eats must touch the initiate's body. The food left over from the meal is wrapped in paper-bark and burnt. After four days this taboo is lifted and the *Marukumuni* is free to hunt for and eat all foods, except snake.

(2) *The Eating of the Cycad Fruit*

About August, when the fruit of the cycad (*Cycas media*) is ripe, the *Marukumuni* is decorated with a new design (Pl. 42B). At the same time the leader of the *kulama* ceremony instructs the women of the camp to collect and prepare a considerable quantity of the cycad fruit. As the fruit in its raw state is highly poisonous, it has to be shelled, pounded out flat, and soaked in running water for three days before it is edible. When the fruit is ready for eating, the women, putting it in a number of bark baskets, stand them on either side of a log (Pl. 43D). [302] [252]

Then, while the women walk around the baskets, chanting the songs of the *kulama*, two *Mikingulas* wash the design (Pl. 42B), from the *Marukumuni's* body, and decorate him with a new one (Pl. 42C). This, he must renew continuously until he hears the first sounds of thunder (about mid-November). [533] [302]

As soon as these decorations are completed a member of each family picks up a basket, takes it to their camp, and all have a meal.

The *Marukumuni* initiate, however, is fed by his wife from a separate store of cycad fruit.

At the same time as the *kulama* leader sent the women of the camp to collect and prepare the cycad fruit for the *Marukumuni* rituals, he instructed the women of the *Kilipaniatinga* grade to do the same. However, when the other women of the camp placed their baskets of prepared food beside the log, the *Kilipaniatinga* women poured their cycad fruit on a nearby pad of grass, pushed four sticks into the ground around the heap and seated themselves on the outside.

The ceremonial activity then centred around the men and women of the *Kilipaniati* grade of initiation, who, from the previous *kulama* until then, 301 881

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the previous singer's dead father. 881 765

(*e*) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[33] when I think of you, my uncle." [533] Some of the women cried when the song was finished. [539]

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants. 252 881

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate it (Pl. 442), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, goodbye",[34] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purutjikini*, did at the first *kulama*. 881 [533] [539]

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women. 535 881 [534]

(*a*) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird).

(*b*) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 301), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(*c*) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*tokwiangu*) in his mouth to symbolize the prey of the crocodile.

(*d*) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(*e*) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(*f*) The buffalo,

(*g*) The shark (Pl. 300).

[33] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *imunka* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions. [826]

[34] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the *wuringalua* tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten. [774] [824]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(8) *Cutting up the Yams*

881 After the yams had been in the oven for about one and a half hours, the
252 men gathered around the oven, felt it, and, after a short discussion began to scrape the warm sand away from the paper-bark covering. As they did so, they pressed handfuls of the warm sand against their elbows, chest, shoulders and knees, believing that this sand made their joints strong and supple (Pl. 45c).

881 When the paper-bark, carefully removed strip by strip, exposed the cooked yams, the women, who had been quietly standing on the outside of the *milimika* murmured reverently, "Ah, *kulama*, ah, *kulama*." Taking the hot yams from the oven each man held them against his chest, and his
[827] head. This they said would give them added strength and vitality. The women although they did not participate in this ritual, sent their children into the *milimika* to have the yams pressed against their bodies so that they would grow to healthy and strong adults.

[177] As the men peeled the yams, exposing the soft, yellow flesh, they sang
[533] about preparing and eating various kinds of food belonging to the white man,[55] "cutting bread for a meal, carving steak from a bullock and roasting it on the coals, cooking the tongue of a bullock, eating corn beef", and so on. When all the yams were peeled they were left on a sheet of bark while
[412] everyone had a meal and a sleep. In the late afternoon the *kulama* men started
[177] to slice the yams (cockle shells, *irakapi*, were used before the advent of steel). As they did so, the men mashed up some of the sliced *kulama* between the palms of the hands, mixed this with red ochre, and each rubbed it on his hair, face, whiskers and body. This, they believed, aided by the earlier rituals, would ensure them good health until the next *kulama*.

(9) *Initiation of the Kilipaniatis and Mikinatrinas*

The sliced yams were put in the basket, and stood in the centre of the *milimika*. A *kulama* man walked into the forest, and collected a length of flexible vine. Returning to the *milimika* he bent the vine round the necks of the male *Marukumunis* and the female *Marukumuningas* in such a way that it could not be removed. These initiates were then *Kilipaniatis* and *Kilipaniatingas* respectively. This neck ornament, which had a number of cords
[301] hanging from it, is called a *mariguani* (Pl. 42c). After these initiates had been further decorated with bark armlets, *tjunguti*[56] (Pl. 42D and C), and cane

[55] No doubt, in times past, they sang about abundant supplies of their own favourite foods.

[56] Spencer, 1928, illustrates the bark armlets, *tjunguti*, on Pl. XI and the belt, *ahrimi*, on Pl. IX, No. 1.

884 tive, community ceremony, its benefits accrued only to individual participants, and then only to those who had followed the complex procedures correctly. Thus it was vitally important to every Tiwi individual, male or female, to receive instruction in the *Kulama* ritual before being considered a fully adult member of the tribe. The instruction period lasted six years, during which the initiates, among other requirements, had to participate actively in six *Kulama* rituals. Following this training, the individuals were considered responsible adults by other members of the tribe, but only through continued participation in the ritual could that condition be maintained.

[178] TODAY the ritual is still performed by those who believe in it, and it will probably continue until the last initiated Tiwi dies, or until the underlying meaning is totally lost and is replaced by ideas of how to be successful that have their origins in Western thought.

[262] The ceremony itself takes three days to complete and centers on the preparation of a toxic variety of yam, the [252] *Kulama*. To make this yam edible, it must first be soaked. It is then baked, mashed, and again soaked for a time in fresh water. Even after the poisons have been removed by this elaborate process, an extremely bitter taste remains. The Tiwi say they never eat the yam except at the conclusion of the *Kulama* ceremony. Those who believe in the [178] ritual say the yam has tremendous power for causing good or evil, and thus one must handle the yam carefully during the preparation, speak to it softly, sing to it at times, and always treat it with respect. The individual absorbs the power of the yam by touching it, by rubbing the body with it, and finally by eating it. All these steps are ritualized. [462] Special digging sticks are made, and, contrary to the usual practice of having the women gather plants, only men

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 13(B)..Qualify]

[P. 12, (C)]

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YAMS TO BE USED in *Kalama* ceremony are retrieved from a fresh-water pool in which they had been soaked overnight.

884
533
[177]

For instance, The composer of the following song had just returned from Brisbane, where he and a group of eight other aborigines had performed dances in honor of Queen Elizabeth's 1954 visit to Australia:

[539]

"The Queen was talking in England,
'I would like to see a blackfellow dance.'
When I was in Brisbane, the Queen said,
'I would like to meet a black boy!'
And I went up.
King Philip, he had a good look at me.
He was watching a lot as I danced.
I was singing into a loud-speaker."

[173]

Some songs are historic in nature, retelling an event that must be kept alive according to the traditions of the tribe. One such composition recalls the Japanese attack on Darwin during World War II:

[539]

"An enemy plane flies low over Melville Island.
The men on the ground, at the word 'Standby,'
Shoot it down with a cannon."

The children of the singer are often song subjects. This first example describes how the children behaved in one of their father's dreams.

[539]

"My children have gone to the other side
of the island.
But they must come back as they are hard up
for tobacco.
My children have now come back.
I know this for they have taken the tobacco
which I have held in my hand."

or

"My children will wear clothes and shoes.
They will go to school and learn to write."

All the songs have the same chanting tune, which is associated with the *Kalama* ceremony, and the composer must fit his words to the set meter of the chant. In many cases this requires using archaic words that are no longer a

[P. 14, (A)]

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Young girl and boy accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

Fr. 15 (A)

baked by placing them atop pieces of anthill heated to a glow by wood fire, then covering the yams with hot earth.

MAN LIGHTS FIRE beneath chunks of anthill. When the pieces are red-hot, burning wood below them will be brushed away.

11-October 2-6 (1964, 1969) 1963 CEIO Third CEIO

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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HOT EARTH over baked *Kulama* yams is removed. Yams that are to be eaten at end of ritual must be resoaked in water.

[824]

SOME COOKED YAMS are cut, peeled, and mashed. Water and paint are then added. Yams are always handled with respect.

[951]
[858]

MEN RUB MASH on bodies to insure health, then do so to the uninitiated young, whose health is paternal responsibility.

[P. 16, (A)]

the water and declared, "it was o. k. for *murandanga*," meaning that it was not too stagnant or brackish for my health. By digging up some of the wet sand from the bottom of the well, the water seeped in to fill the void and soon we had our two containers filled. By this time Albert had started the fire and unpacked our canned rations. 123

One billy was placed on the fire for "tea leaf" and we broke open some corned beef and a loaf of fresh bread thoughtfully provided by the Superintendent's wife. When the billy boiled, a handful of tea and two handfuls of sugar were added and the pot set aside to cool. Big Jack had in the meantime gone over the dunes to look at the sea, and he reported that the wind was still too strong to allow us to continue in comfort and safety. We might as well take it easy for an hour or two and wait for it to calm down, he said. Almost immediately Albert and Agnes were fast asleep, their heads resting on tins of beef. Big Jack, however, took the axe and wandered off into the bush in back of the camp. After an hour it was obvious that the wind had no intention of dying, so we roused ourselves and strolled off down the beach in search of turtle eggs. We saw many tracks of the female turtles where they had lumbered out of the water up to high-water mark, and the mounds of sand kicked up while they dug their deep nests. Using a long, slender stick, Albert probed around these mounds hoping to feel the soft resistance of the rubbery eggs. Time and again he probed in a different nest quite unsuccessfully. Criscrossing one of the tracks leading to a nest were many little ones returning to the water; these eggs had lived to hatch. Finally Albert gave up, remarking, "That Black Joe mob make plenty big feast turtle egg." Late in the afternoon we returned empty handed. 123 222

Fortunately Big Jack, hunting along the little, mangrove-lined creek close by, had not had such bad luck. He soon appeared carrying three of the large mangrove crabs, their massive claws tightly closed with bindings of bark strips. The two main logs of the noon fire were still smouldering, and by adding to them we soon had a fast-burning blaze. When a glowing bed of coals was available, the crabs were thrown on top where they were soon steaming away in their own juices. It was a delicious supper—tender, sweet crab- 123 [252]

123 meat, lukewarm tea, and the remains of the fresh bread smothered in jam for dessert.

The sky by this time was growing dark for thick, heavily laden clouds were fast building up. With what light remained from the setting sun we shifted camp to a small hollow in the dunes, free from the prickly seed pods and protected from the wind. Soon it was quite dark and the wind seemed to blow more strongly. Albert, afraid for the safety of the canoe, decided to remove it to the quiet waters of the little creek where Big Jack had found the crabs. Big Jack accompanied him and while they were gone Agnes prepared to make some "damper." She built the fire up again so that the
123 ground would become very hot. While it was burning down she
●252 took the bag of flour, opened it, and made a small depression in
372 the contents. Into this hole she poured baking powder, salt, and
484 water from the billy. (Quite often the first two ingredients are omitted.) With both hands still in the bag she worked the mixture into a large lump of dough which she removed and flattened on the outside of the flour bag. By this time the fire had again burned down, and the burning coals were brushed aside and a hole scooped out in the hot sand. The damper, about the size of a large frying pan, was laid in the hole and covered over with more hot sand. "Tomorrow, we make quick breakfast and no stop for lunch," she explained. In about an hour, during which the damper had been turned once, it was removed and the sand brushed from the rough, tough surface. It was then carefully wrapped in a piece of calico and put away in safety.

It was only then that we realized that the men had not returned.
123 Agnes became quite worried, and I must confess I did also. We walked down to the water's edge and called out, but could hear no reply over the roar of the waves, and because of the inky blackness we could see only a few yards. After about ten minutes we returned to the camp and in a brief time both men appeared. Agnes immediately demanded to know why, if they were so close, they didn't answer our calls? Albert insisted that he had replied, so after a while Agnes changed her question to why had it taken them
[481] so long? "Water bin come in long way," Albert replied, "I swim out; take long time find him canoe." When one considers that,

123 ping the axe with his teeth, he ran up the sapling on all fours with
222 as much agility as a monkey. Upon reaching the crotch, he put his
481 arms around the trunk, placed the soles of his feet close together against the bark, and quickly progressed in a sort of leaping motion up to the top of the tree. Once there he casually climbed up, over, and around the various branches, until he reached the object of his climb, the hollow branch with the little hole through which was passing a steady stream of small insects. This branch was quickly cut through and fell crashing to the ground. Soon Albert was down again, investigating this find with Agnes and me. The hole was enlarged and the combs of dark honey exposed, still crawling with the little black bees. We dug in with our fingers or
[133] brushes made by chewing small twigs, quite unmindful of the bees, who obligingly never developed stings in this part of the world.
[262 The honey was dark and very strong, but when mixed with the dry,
237] crumbly, yellow "bee bread" a nice balance of taste was obtained. It took the three of us very little time to finish the sugar-bag and off we went—this time in a homeward direction.

123 The one possum looked very small and Albert again began mut-
224 tering about "someone *mobuditi* make me bad luck." We separated again and when almost to the creek Agnes suddenly held me back
[777] and cautioned silence. Carefully she picked up a stout stick from the ground and then approached what I suddenly noticed was a very fat goana, about two feet long, apparently sound asleep on a nearby tree trunk. One quick blow and the lizard fell to the ground, quite dead. We carried the catch to the landing and quickly had another swim before Albert caught up. We were gathering firewood when Albert arrived and explained his delay by holding up another
123 possum. The second possum was immediately gutted, then both
●252 were laid on the fire and turned frequently until all the fur had been burned off and the skin made brittle. The animals were quartered and laid again on the fire until well roasted. The goana received no preliminary treatment before going on the fire. When all were
[264] cooked, they were removed and laid on a "table" of clean, green leaves, and we reached in and tore off pieces of the steaming, juicy
123 meat. It is impossible to describe this meat to someone who has not
262 tasted it. All I can say is that it was tender and tasty and perfectly

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

224 roos,[3] wildfowl, and other game, keen eyesight is essential, hence Tiwi men
[887 did very little hunting once they were past about forty-five, though they hated to admit their hunting days were over. The meat, fish, and game provided for the large household of an old man was obtained by the young men, and this was about the only thing an old man thought his sons or his step-sons were good for. Typically the young man, when he returned at nightfall with
[592 a kangaroo which he had spent most of the day tracking down and spearing,
888] would ignore the old man and dump the carcass at the feet of his mother as if to say, "I brought this back for you, not for that old So and So."

As the women straggled back to camp toward sundown with the results
512 of their day's gathering and the young hunters brought in their bags, cooking
595 began and the main meal of the day (usually the only hot meal) was eaten. The Tiwi themselves had no doubt about the close relationship between plural marriage and good eating. "If I had only one or two wives I would starve,"
[797] the head of a large household once told the missionary who was preaching against plural marriage, "but with my present ten or twelve wives I can send them out in all directions in the morning and at least two or three of them are likely to bring something back with them at the end of the day, and then
262 we can all eat." This was a realistic appraisal of the economic situation and it is to be noted that he put the emphasis on the food obtained by the women
[222] gatherers rather than that supplied by the male hunters. Based on the observations of 1928-29, it would appear that the Tiwi ate pretty well, especially in the larger households. Kangaroo and other marsupials, and some of the larger lizards (for example, the goanna) were very plentiful in the bush, as were fish and turtles and dugong on the coasts and wild geese in many districts. But all these were extras or dividends; the staple everyday foods were the vegetable foods gathered day after day in apparently unending quantities by the women. For most months of the year there was always plenty of *kwoka*,
[252] a porridgelike dish prepared by soaking and mashing the small nuts of a native palm. These nuts grew in such quantity that in every large camp baskets or dishes of *kwoka*, at various stages of preparation, were always available, even for midnight snacks if anybody woke up hungry. *Kwoka* was about as dull and tasteless as Scotch porridge, but equally filling, and naked small boys full of *kwoka* had stomachs distended like balloons. In the wet season the place of *kwoka* was taken by *kolema*, a yam whose ripening and growing season was much shorter than that of the nuts from which *kwoka* was made. It was
[796] on the abundance of the *kolema* yams during January and February that the Tiwi supported the more elaborate of their collective ceremonials.

The abundance of these and other vegetable foods, plus the ample supply of game and fish in many places, meant that under aboriginal conditions the Tiwi lived at a food-consumption level much further above the near-

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[3] Actually there are no kangaroos on Melville and Bathurst Islands; the chief meat animal is a slightly smaller species of marsupial technically called the wallaby. As the distinction is important only to zoologists, and as many of the so-called kangaroos in American zoos are in fact wallabies, we prefer to use the more familiar word.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

starvation level than was the case with many of the mainland tribes.[8] Even to talk about the Tiwi in near-starvation terms seems quite incongruous, for there was an abundance of native food available the whole year around and their only problem was to collect or catch it. We regard the development of their large multiple-wife household as essentially their own evolutionary solution to the problem of finding the most efficient unit of food production. Abundant food was there in the bush in its raw state; the most efficient way to extract it was by a work unit represented by such households as those of Ki-in-kumi, or Tu'untalumi, with the old remarried widows directing the young women and the hunting and fish spearing being done by the younger males.

Even the smallest households nearly always contained at least one old female veteran of the food quest who knew the bush like the palm of her hand and could wrestle some food out of the most inhospitable district. The only households that ever went hungry—and they only overnight or at worst for twenty-four hours or so—were the small households of only one or two wives, especially if both wives were young and inexperienced or young and flighty or both. Such households were uneconomic and were rare. On the other hand, the apparently absurd households such as those in which two young men shared their respective elderly mothers as wives, made good economic sense. Any attempt by two such young men to substitute two young wives or even four young wives for the two old ladies would have drastically reduced the standard of living of the household. When young wives arrived in Tiwi households they were not regarded as replacements for the old crones but joined as reinforcements and apprentices to the skilled workers—the veterans. The sexual aspects of marriage were necessarily subordinated to the housekeeping or food-production aspects, which is why in the previous section we spoke of every young man laying the foundation of his household by marrying an elderly widow usually long before there was any young wife in sight.

Since the bigger the household the more food it produced for its own consumption, there was a tendency for the smaller and therefore hungrier households to hang around the fringes of the bigger ones. Though every household was autonomous and could camp and collect food anywhere in the band territory in which it roamed, it was rare to find all the households in a band distributed evenly over the available territory. In Malau, Enquirio's household and that of Merapanui were usually to be found camped together, since the two men were full brothers and not in competition with each other. Also camped with or near them on any given occasion would be a few other small households. Such a combined group as this would, all told, amount to between forty and fifty people camping at the same spot and remaining together for weeks at a time. Under mainland conditions in most areas, a gathering of forty people for ten days at a time in the same locality was unheard of, except on

[8] As was pointed out earlier, the best-watered and most fertile areas of the mainland were the areas attractive to white settlement, and the tribes who inhabited such areas (for example, Victoria or coastal Queensland) were wiped out quickly. Most of the mainland tribes who survived long enough to be studied by modern anthropologists were tribes whose habitats were unfavorable both for native and for white occupation.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

a, *o* (the black areas), indicate stony hills near her camp in the upper world; and the dots on the background, the stars, *tapalingas*, which live in the upper world with the lightning woman. 532x 821 776

The Cat-fish Woman, Pirilouka at Pirilou

Pirilou, on the upper Goose Creek swamps, is the totemic place of a mythical cat-fish woman, *Pirilouka*. She was sent by *Tukimbini* to create both the totemic country and the food necessary for the natives to live on it, i.e., geese, brolgas, ducks, freshwater goannas, turtles, waterlily bulbs, red and white fruited *Eugenia* trees, and the various kinds of yams that prefer the damp soil. 778 776 [862]

On Pl. 10C, the darker crossed circles are the black, and the lighter, the white rocks at Pirilou. Panels, such as *a*, symbolize the trunks of the paper-bark trees growing in the swamp; *b*, the many waterlilies on its surface, and the white vertical lines on the background, streams of fresh water in the swamp-lands. 532x 778

The Fish-woman, Wuringa, at Arangu

Tukimbini sent the fish-woman, *Wuringa*, to establish a camp at Arangu, in Curtis Haven, northern Melville Island. Later, *Wuringa's* camp was transformed into a group of flat rocks which are uncovered only at low tide. 773 [778]

Wuringa created the aboriginal foods of the area, turtles, crabs, fish of all kinds, yams, cabbage palms and hives of wild honey.

Two bark paintings illustrate Arangu and its surroundings, Pl. 11C and Pl. 11D. 532x 778

On Pl. 11C, *a*, is a long submerged reef at Arangu; *d*, *d*, *d*, smaller submerged rocks; *b*, *c*, long sand-bars, while at *e*, *e*, are jelly fish. The remainder of the ovals are oysters on the rocks at Arangu.

On Pl. 11D, *a*, is the totemic place, Arangu; *b*, represents the soft friable boulders near by; *c*, a large rock on the coast; *d*, wave breaking over it; *h*, white sand on the beach, and *j*, the sand and gravel on the sea bottom.

Symbol *e*, indicates black trepang; *f*, *f*, white trepang; *r*, an especially large trepang; *n*, a jelly fish, and *m*, a bed of oysters. At *k*, are many pearl shells, and at *s*, *s*, conch shells. A deep channel in Curtis Haven is indicated at *p*, a yellow rock under the water, at *o*, and the seaweed growing on the rocks at Arangu, by the lighter-coloured dots on the background.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

lines as flying foxes (the totem of *Nulatini's* father),[66] their arms moving 765
alternately up and down and their little fingers pointed skyward (Pl. 30c). [535]

The dance finished, the assembled men accompanied by *Pulanimbuwi* and *Tupiatira*, with their arms around each other's necks, mourned hysterically for the dead, while the women danced the *amburu* on the outside of the group. Several times, in his grief, *Tupiatira* collapsed to the ground only to be lifted to his feet again by the still mourning husband.

The sounds of mourning continued for some time, gradually becoming less until *Nangrinini* gave the honey and mosquito calls, and the ceremony was over.

(*b*) *The Ilania*

At one end of the *milimika*, which was situated at the camp of the dead woman, was a pole on which *Pulanimbuwi* had tied a piece of printed calico as a flag.

The *ilania* opened when seven of the "workers" giving the honey and mosquito calls, emerged from the forest, and, running toward the *milimika*, cast sticks and pandanus leaves, as spears, at the *pukamuni* men who awaited them. There was general fighting and much laughter before the "workers" were ejected.

In the centre of the *milimika*, as food for the "workers" a woman had placed nine large cooked crabs which the "workers" distributed among themselves. After this was done, the men performed the rite of *wandiatapinda* by either walking through or jumping over the fire which had been lit in the *milimika*. *Nulatini's* husband did not take part in this ritual but, with a flat fighting stick in either hand, wandered about the ceremonial ground, singing the *amburu*. [262]

Following these rituals, the aborigines chanted a number of songs and 533
carried out the following dances, those of the flying fox being totemically 765
related to the dead woman's father.

(i) The flying foxes and the sea-eagle.
(ii) The crocodile.
(iii) The shark and the stingray.
(iv) The flag songs.

(i) *The flying-fox and sea-eagle songs*

"The flying foxes are out late, eating the blossoms of the stringy-bark and eucalyptus trees." [539]

[66] As mentioned earlier, the totem of the dead person is never referred to in the *pukamuni* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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The yellow bands encircling the face and eyes, and stretching from the forehead to the base of the nose, all symbolise the dreaded *Marugi*; the white cross-hatching represents the thunderstorms of *Pukadringa*.

The Salmon, Kumuninu

Pl. 28r, the *pukamani* decorations on the face of an aboriginal, are the same as those used by the mythical salmon-man, *Kumuninu*, who, at the first *pukamani* ceremony, fought with *Tudawale*, the shark-man (Pl. 28c). The present-day fish still carries the marks of that encounter on his head.

The March-fly, Kudjatumpi

Pl. 28o is the facial pattern of an aboriginal belonging to the March-fly totem of Kudjatumpi, southern Melville Island (p. 58).

The black discs symbolise dark-coloured stones which formed on the footprints of *Kudjatumpi*, the small white and yellow dots, an edible plum, *murumbatana*, and the white lines, the limbs of the tree on which the fruit grows.

The red lines in the design represent the strata of red rocks at Kudjatumpi, which were created when the woman squeezed the milk from her breast and allowed it to run down the face of the cliff. All these things happened at Kudjatumpi after the March-fly woman had returned from the *pukamani* of *Purukupali*.

The Boobook Owl, Purujiikini

The design on Pl. 28n was used in one of the *ilanias*. The white ears refer to *Purujiikini* the boobook owl, and the lines on the face to its feather patterns.

The Barn Owl, Pintoma

Pl. 28j is the facial decorations of *Wurarbui*, the *alowia* of the *pukamani* ceremony of *Waniampari*. He is wearing the false beard, *baludi*, and the head-dress of cockatoo feathers, *primitiki*. The design on his face, particularly the rings around his eyes, symbolise *Pintoma*, the barn-owl woman, who assisted her husband, *Purujiikini*, the boobook owl-man, at the first *kulama* ceremony (see dance of *Pintoma*, Pl. 29a and frontispiece).

The Ningaui Men

The facial design on Pl. 28 o resembles that used by the *Ningaui* men when they performed the second *kulama* ceremony on Turituria Island (p. 124). The yellow dots are the cockles in the mangrove swamps on Western Bathurst Island, one of the foods of the present-day *Ningauis*.

[262]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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88 had worn continuously their curious ornaments, *mariguani* (Pl. 42D),[81]
[301] around their necks as well as many cane and bark ornaments on their arms. During the whole of that period (about five months) they renewed their body paint continuously. They were not allowed, however, to scratch their heads with their hands, but must use for that purpose a special pointed stick, *murubunga* (Pl. 32F).

The rituals began when one of the *Mikingulas*, coming up behind the male
[302] *Kilipaniati*, cut the *mariguani* from the neck of the initiate, poured water over him to remove his body paint, and decorated him with the design of a *Wadjeniati* (Pl. 42H). Similarly, the husband of the female initiate cut her neck ornament, washed her and redecorated her as a *Wadjeniatinga*. After eating their store of cycad fruit, these new initiates resumed the normal life of the tribe.

About mid-November, thunder and other signs of the oncoming wet season are signals for the *Marukumuni* to discard the design he has been wearing since the ceremonial eating of the cycad fruit. As soon as this hap-
[301] pens the men paint another design on his body (Pl. 42D), put new cockatoo
[302] feathers in his hair, and many cane armlets on his arms. The initiate wears these decorations, continuously renewing his body paint, until the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, which takes place at the beginning of the *kulama* ceremony about four months later.

3. THE KULAMA CEREMONY

(1) *Collecting and Eating the Edible Yams*

Toward the end of January, when the wet season was approaching its climax, the *kulama* leader instructed the women to go into the jungle, locate a number
●[262] of the young plants of two species of edible yams, a long one, *jurugani*, and a short one, *karawani* and show them to him so that he would know when they would be ready to eat.

When some weeks later, the leader estimated that the yams were fit for digging and the tall, annual grass was about to shed its seed, he called the people together and told them that the *kulama* rituals would start in a few days.[88]

[81] Spencer, 1928, Pl. ix, No. 4, illustrates a *mariguani*.

[88] From the time of this announcement until the finish of the *kulama* ceremony, no
[834] fully initiated man, must sleep with his wife. If he does, he will be attacked by *tsini*, the mysterious *kulama* sickness, and die. I did not find out the characteristics of the *kulama* sickness.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

not only in physique but also in intelligence. I should be surprised to 153
find in any other Australian tribe a man with the intelligence and adaptability of my own head boy Mariano.

The flora and fauna of the two islands is very similar to that of the 133
rest of the Northern Territory. The country is mostly flat with a low range of rocky hills between Cape Gambier and Cape Keith on Melville Island, and a still lower range in the centre of Bathurst. The timber 137
consists of the usual Australian trees; gums, stringy-bark, woolly-butt, bloodwood and ironwood cover most of the two islands, broken here and there by patches of open grassland and in other places by dense patches of jungle where snakes and "devils" thrive and the natives seldom enter. Wallabies are extraordinarily plentiful, but there are no kangaroos. 136
Buffaloes are found on Melville in small numbers. These are the wild descendants of the domestic Indian buffaloes imported for agricultural purposes by the early settlers at Fort Dundas. At one time they had increased and multiplied to such effect that thousands were shot every year without any appreciable effect upon their numbers. At the present time, however, probably owing to many of the cows being killed, there are probably not more than a thousand on the island. The natives are seldom able to kill a buffalo though they realise the fact that it is good to eat.

Not only are wallabies plentiful, but there is also an abundant supply 262
of the other native articles of food, fish, crocodile, birds of all kinds, wild honey, yams and other native vegetables. As a result of this abundance 161
of foods, it would seem that the two islands had a greater density of population than is to be found in almost any other part of Australia.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The people inhabiting Melville and Bathurst Islands are subdivided 621
into a number of local groups. These local groups are the important sections of the population since they act as land-owning groups, war-making groups, have a solidarity of their own which is far stronger than any tribal solidarity that may exist and even to some extent regulate marriage.

Before considering these hordes in detail, however, something must 184
be said about the tribal name. All the hordes practise the same customs, 619
speak the same language and inter-marry. The boundaries of the people speaking this language are of course strictly defined by the sea. In other words, the people of Melville and Bathurst have a solidarity of their own,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

322 piece of the former fold are clasped between the fingers and thus used as a cup
415 the part lying opposite to the fingers being held to the lips.

Honey Eating.

222 In my notes on the north-western tribes of the Northern Territory I have
262 described[1] a honey-collecting implement and there, also, referred to somewhat
264 similar observations made by Dr. Wilson[2] and Keppel.[3]

On Bathurst Island I observed still another modification. A young flower-stalk of the fan-palm (*Livistonia humilis*), when about 50 to 70 centimetres long, is cut just above the trunk of the palm and its bottom end chewed until all the fibres are separated and look like the hairs of a brush. The juice, being quite sweet, is swallowed. The brush end is then inserted into the nest of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*), whereby the honey gathers between the fibres. When saturated with honey, the brush end is passed back to the mouth and again sucked and chewed for a considerable time, after which it is once more returned to the honey for a fresh supply, and this is continued to repletion.

Tree Climbing.

481 Both male and female, young and old, are expert tree-climbers when in
[222] pursuit of game, honey of the wild bee, fruits, and seeds. As none of the trees on the islands grow to an abnormally large size, the butt is usually not too great in circumference to allow of the arms being thrown around it, so that the hands may obtain a firm hold on the side distant from the climber. Having obtained this hold while standing on the ground and facing the tree, the native jumps on to the butt, clutching it with the flat surfaces of his feet in a frog-like fashion. The knees in this position stand well outwards. The body hangs, suspended by the arms above and held against the tree by the legs below. The climber now raises his body; his hands quickly follow by a corresponding distance. Holding on with the latter he draws up his legs in a jumping manner once more to clutch the tree between the soles of his feet. This movement being repeated, he rapidly advances upwards.

Hunting and Fighting.

411 *Throwing-sticks and clubs.*—Several types of throwing-sticks and clubs are in use. They must be referred to under this general or collective heading, since it is hard to discriminate between the two implements and to say definitely where the throwing-stick ends and the club begins. They form an interesting group of Australian implements and weapons that allows of a satisfactory system of

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 96, Fig. 19.
[2] *Narrative Voyage Round the World*, 1835, p. 99.
[3] *A Visit to Indian Archipelago*, 1853, vol. 2, p. 163.

884 tive, community ceremony, its benefits accrued only to individual participants, and then only to those who had followed the complex procedures correctly. Thus it was vitally important to every Tiwi individual, male or female, to receive instruction in the *Kulama* ritual before being considered a fully adult member of the tribe. The instruction period lasted six years, during which the initiates, among other requirements, had to participate actively in six *Kulama* rituals. Following this training, the individuals were considered responsible adults by other members of the tribe, but only through continued participation in the ritual could that condition be maintained.

[178] TODAY the ritual is still performed by those who believe in it, and it will probably continue until the last initiated Tiwi dies, or until the underlying meaning is totally lost and is replaced by ideas of how to be successful that have their origins in Western thought.

[262] [252] The ceremony itself takes three days to complete and centers on the preparation of a toxic variety of yam, the *Kulama*. To make this yam edible, it must first be soaked. It is then baked, mashed, and again soaked for a time in fresh water. Even after the poisons have been removed by this elaborate process, an extremely bitter taste remains. The Tiwi say they never eat the yam except at the conclusion of the *Kulama* ceremony. Those who believe in the [178] ritual say the yam has tremendous power for causing good or evil, and thus one must handle the yam carefully during the preparation, speak to it softly, sing to it at times, and always treat it with respect. The individual absorbs the power of the yam by touching it, by rubbing the body with it, and finally by eating it. All these steps are ritualized. [462] Special digging sticks are made, and, contrary to the usual practice of having the women gather plants, only men

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 13(B)...]

[P. 12, (C)]

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YOUNG GIRL AND BOY accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

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part of Tiwi speech. Poetic license in pronunciation and syllabification often occurs. The Tiwi have high regard for the linguistic ability needed to become a good Tiwi composer and singer, and instruction in the art of song composition and delivery is given to the initiates. Each initiate must perform in the *Kulama* before he can be considered a "graduate." According to my Tiwi informants, this requirement is the hardest of all, and it is also the reason for there being no set age for initiation. The old people are said to watch the young, and when the observers consider them mature enough, they swoop down upon their choices "like chicken hawks, without warning"—as the Tiwi say—and start the initiates along the path to adulthood.

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As far as I know, the *Kulama* ceremony has no parallel elsewhere in Australia. And there are many interesting questions that come to mind concerning the origin of the *Kulama* as it exists today. For instance, why is instruction in the preparation of a poisonous yam that is not part of the daily diet considered so important for initiation into adulthood? What is the origin of the idea that a yam has power over good and evil, and health and sickness? Why is such prominence accorded a yam in what is principally a hunting and gathering society?

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Any answers to these questions must be highly speculative, for the origin of the ceremony and its development lie in the unrecorded history of the Tiwi. However, I believe the following statements may well be valid.

Instruction in the natural resources of the land was considered vital to becoming an adult. Because the *Kulama* yam is poisonous and is not widely distributed, it was never part of the regular diet, but it could be used in economic emergencies if properly prepared. Instruction in its preparation was therefore extremely important as a potential survival measure. However, since the Tiwi live in a favorable environment, it is highly probable that such emergencies were very rare, so it was considered expedient to hold annual instruction periods. Because knowledge of

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A [SEE P. 15(A) FOR OTHER PART OF CAPTION AND PICTURE -- ANALYST]

under the surface by the massive roots of the paperbarks. It was in 123
just this sort of pool that the largest of the five crocs landed that [225]
night, was harpooned. The huge 18-foot animal dived into the roots
and it took about twenty tense minutes to dislodge and dispatch him.
Aside from the crocodiles the only wild life seen that night was a
small and very frightened little mouse who suddenly appeared on
my lap and then just as suddenly disappeared over the boat's side.

We returned to Minianapi at daybreak and the hot tea and
roast goose seemed a perfect breakfast, or was it supper? It didn't
matter for we were soon sound asleep.

When we finally awoke in mid-afternoon we found the camp
almost deserted. "Everyone go walkabout; kill geese," Albert
informed us as he and Agnes gathered more wood to build up the
smouldering fire. It was very quiet in the small clearing and only
the little black spots of charcoal spaced in irregular intervals on the
ground were evidence that there were more than our mob in resi-
dence. The clearing itself was quite bare because it had been burned
by the first comers, with the double purpose of clearing out the
four-foot grass itself, and any of the various poisonous snakes [136]
which were quite likely to infest it. In back of the clearing was a
thick tangle of low bushes through which ran a little foot-path.
Agnes started down this path carrying a billy can and I offered to
go with her, but Albert said, "No, by um by we go, him long way,
him only get a little bit now." After one gets used to the pronoun [195]
"him" being used to refer to everything animal, vegetable, and
mineral, this phrase is perfectly understandable: the first "him"
referred to the water, the second to Agnes.

So instead of collecting water, I wandered down to the river
bank where Billy-Two, Brownie, and a few of the other men, were
busy skinning the crocodiles. This they did by cutting the skin first
around the head, then down either side of the rows of bumps
running along the spine to the tail. The skin was then carefully [281]
peeled and cut from the body. Once free it was rubbed with salt
which would act as a preservative until such time as the supply boat
would arrive to carry it to Darwin. There the skins would be sold [439]
to the dealer and the proceeds credited to the hunter's account or 452
sent in the form of hard cash to the settlement for distribution. Now
they were folded into bundles and loaded into the launch, and large [262]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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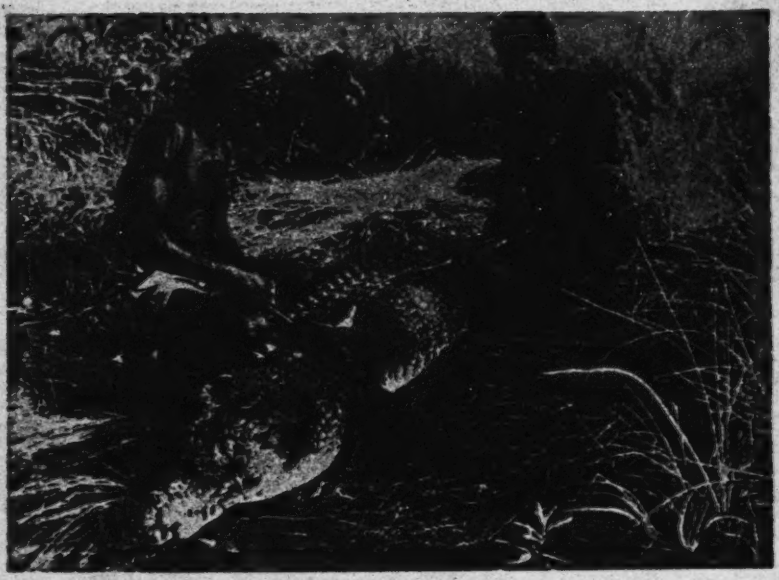

Fig. 10. Skinning a large crocodile

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pieces of the white meat were carried into the camp to be roasted for dinner. What was not to be consumed that night was thrown into the water, for meat spoils quickly in this sticky climate.

Darkness came early, and with it came the return of the goose hunters and the departure of the launch with the Grimsters and their crocodile team. Once more they would spend the night hunting crocodiles, this time downstream on their way back to the settlement. Soon many little fires broke up the darkness of the clearing and the smell of fresh roasting meat wafted over to where Albert, Agnes, Jack, and I were opening cans of corned beef. "Tomorrow we go bush," Albert remarked and I heartily assented.

Young Brook, a lean young man, and his wife, Alice,

123 ping the axe with his teeth, he ran up the sapling on all fours with
222 as much agility as a monkey. Upon reaching the crotch, he put his
481 arms around the trunk, placed the soles of his feet close together against the bark, and quickly progressed in a sort of leaping motion up to the top of the tree. Once there he casually climbed up, over, and around the various branches, until he reached the object of his climb, the hollow branch with the little hole through which was passing a steady stream of small insects. This branch was quickly cut through and fell crashing to the ground. Soon Albert was down again, investigating this find with Agnes and me. The hole was enlarged and the combs of dark honey exposed, still crawling with the little black bees. We dug in with our fingers or [133] brushes made by chewing small twigs, quite unmindful of the bees, who obligingly never developed stings in this part of the world. [262 The honey was dark and very strong, but when mixed with the dry, 237] crumbly, yellow "bee bread" a nice balance of taste was obtained. It took the three of us very little time to finish the sugar-bag and off we went—this time in a homeward direction.

123 The one possum looked very small and Albert again began mut-
224 tering about "someone *mobuditi* make me bad luck." We separated
[777] again and when almost to the creek Agnes suddenly held me back and cautioned silence. Carefully she picked up a stout stick from the ground and then approached what I suddenly noticed was a very fat goana, about two feet long, apparently sound asleep on a nearby tree trunk. One quick blow and the lizard fell to the ground, quite dead. We carried the catch to the landing and quickly had another swim before Albert caught up. We were gathering firewood when Albert arrived and explained his delay by holding up another
123 possum. The second possum was immediately gutted, then both
252 were laid on the fire and turned frequently until all the fur had been burned off and the skin made brittle. The animals were quartered and laid again on the fire until well roasted. The goana received no preliminary treatment before going on the fire. When all were [264] cooked, they were removed and laid on a "table" of clean, green leaves, and we reached in and tore off pieces of the steaming, juicy
123 meat. It is impossible to describe this meat to someone who has not
262 tasted it. All I can say is that it was tender and tasty and perfectly

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

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cooked, with that delicious charcoal-broiled flavor so much sought after in our more elite dining establishments or in our backyards.

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Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goanas, they brought over to show us an extremely large water snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tremendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minianapi in time to meet the geese. All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was

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171 boomerang, is unknown to the islanders. Ceremonial customs,
[411] language, origin, and burial rites all differ from those of the mainland tribes, and constitute an interesting study for anthropologists. They are the only aborigines who erect memorials on
764 the graves of the departed, and, in the forest beside the aerodrome, you may see a typical grave surrounded with queerly-
[322 carved ironwood totem-poles. The poles, some eight feet in
532] height, are carved in varying patterns. They had been painted in highly decorative designs with red, yellow, and white ochre, with black bands of charcoal to give sharp and artistic contrast. Each kindred totem to that of the deceased must place a pole at the grave. Failure to erect a pole is supposed to signify that no sorrow is felt for the death, and punishment will follow. Something unpleasant always *does* happen to those who neglect this duty.

797 AFTER these necessary digressions, let us return to my visit to the mission station. We followed the fathers over the stile, up an avenue of palms, and on through the garden, where
[245] pineapples and bananas grow, and there are rows of immense and beautifully shady mango-trees. Sturdy, fuzzy-headed aborigines strode in front (one of them had just come in with
● [262] a couple of kangaroos for the larder), and the boys trooped along behind us. The quarters of the fathers are very much those of bachelors, perfectly bare, with guns in the corners and a few native weapons and curios hanging on the walls.

Here two lubras brought us morning tea, and here I learnt much of the foregoing matters. The fathers themselves are entertaining men of the world, and their white cricket shirts and khaki slacks gave no indication of their calling. The boys gathered at the foot of the steps leading up to the quarters,
797 and every now and then black-bearded Father McGrath would
522 banter them in their own language. Like all the native peoples

[p. 15 (B)]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

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[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 26, Fig. 19.
[2] *Narrative Voyage Round the World*, 1835, p. 99.
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262 meat. It is impossible to describe this meat to someone who has not tasted it. All I can say is that it was tender and tasty and perfectly

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

once erected on the grave; the names of dead people immediately became *pukimani* on their deaths and could not be used, and the same was true of all the names bestowed by a dead man on the children of his household and all the other words in the language that sounded similar to the name of the dead man.[4] All ceremonials and rituals were *pukimani* as were the main performers and the armlets, neck ornaments, and other ceremonial objects. People in a *pukimani* state had to observe all sorts of avoidances of and abstentions from everyday actions, particularly with regard to food and sex. Close relatives of dead people could not touch food but had to be fed by nonmourners. That pillar of rigid orthodoxy, Tu'untalumi, was virtually never able to feed himself but was in a *pukimani* state almost the whole year round and needed one of his wives to feed him. (Another advantage of a large household.) Certain spots in the bush or on the banks of streams were *pukimani* places; the dimly seen outline of the Australian coast was *pukimani* as was the ocean near Cape Keith where the Tiwi ancestors had first created the Tiwi world; and finally, the violation of a *pukimani* restriction rendered the violator *pukimani*.

Pukimani as thus applied to people, places, things, names, words, restrictions, and avoidances, meant both sacred and taboo, and was clearly one of that widespread class of words and concepts that is almost standard among the simpler societies. The only noteworthy thing about its Tiwi form is that *pukimani* was a state which people did not actively seek to enter but which happened to people regardless of their wishes. Furthermore, when a man found himself in a state of *pukimani*, his behavior was automatically prescribed for him and for the duration of his *pukimani* condition he observed his avoidances and his abstentions just as automatically as he dropped them when his *pukimani* period expired. When he became *pukimani*, he punctiliously fulfilled the requirements because if he did not, he was likely to be unsuccessful in his enterprises. Big men simply did not dare to be casual about the requirements lest their reputations suffer and they lose face and influence. Less successful men were occasionally explained as probably being secret violators. "His wives and daughters all seem to die young; he must have broken some *pukimani* restrictions sometime" was a reason often given for somebody's failure to be as successful as he might have been. It was noticeable in such explanations of nonsuccess that the failure, or in our terms the bad luck, was attributed to the violation of the taboos, never to the active displeasure of the spirits. The spirits simply did not figure in the picture.

Apart from the big ceremonial occasions, a Tiwi did not have much concern with religion in his everyday life except through some aspect of the *pukimani* system. It was only through *pukimani* that the sacred world impinged upon him at all for most of the year. Since *pukimani* was a condition that could not be actively sought but "just happened" to a person every so often by such common events as the death of a relative, his wife giving birth, or his

[4] When a man named Tibuki died in 1928, a crisis occurred at the Mission where the natives were supposed to make their requests in pidgin English. How could they now ask for tobacco, since that word was now *pukimani*?

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 11. Even the youngest respect the teeth of the crocodile

approached our fire. "You savey goose?" he asked me. "Oh yes," I said, "we eat him along America." He handed me a large juicy leg which I gave to Albert to divide, then squatted down at the edge of the fire's glow. I handed my tin of tobacco to Alice and she filled her husband's pipe. Picking up a burning branch from the fire, she knocked a hot coal into the bowl of the pipe and began smoking. Soon she handed it to Young Brook. Suddenly our attention was directed to the opposite side of the clearing where Dennis, the four-year old daughter of Black Joe was crying hysterically. Tuki, a tall powerful man of fifty-five, was doing his best to calm her and disentangle himself from her clinging arms so that he could leave. Tuki and his wife, Fat Alice, were a childless couple and

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13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

755 death was an early patient. The new witch-doctor applied his lips to her chest and appeared to suck out a dirty, rusty rag, a piece of wire, and a few pebbles, together with some blood (which he probably produced by biting his tongue).

The woman died; but all the people uttered loud exclamations of wonderment at the cleverness of the doctor, and a collection, [272] chiefly of sticks of tobacco, was made to mark their approval of such distinguished surgical attainments. Similarly, when some youngsters had become entangled with a school of jelly fish while bathing in the Strait, one baby at least being quite unconscious, the old fellow performed his ritual, and collected, when the patients had all revived after treatment with ammonia by the mission fathers. Such are some of the trials and problems that have to be faced in dealing with the islanders.

622 And now we encountered Mariano. "This chap calls himself king," I was informed; "but nobody recognises his authority." Mariano was a fine, upstanding man, and he carried a bundle of many-pronged and gaily-painted spears. "Me king!" said Mariano to me as we came up. "Hullo, King!" said I, and Mariano proudly inflated his chest at this highly proper recognition of his royal status. But, if Mariano is not king, he is at 721 least a person of some importance. They had been holding a 727 war on the islands for the previous six months or so, and arrangements for the next battle were being held up pending Mariano's decision about a corroboree at which his presence was essential. At the moment he could not make up his mind to leave the mission station, so war and corroboree were both in abeyance.

WARS are of frequent occurrence on the islands. The current combat was in connexion with the possession of a very young lubra; but, since there had been only two casualties (one man had lost an eye, and another warrior had had a leg broken) in the six months, in all probability she will have died of old age before the matter is settled, unless, of course, the warriors tire of this as a present and come to some arrangement. Any old excuse is good enough to start a war. If nothing better offers, they get one up "Married v. Single." Father Gaell approves of the wars.

As he says, they are the only form of manly recreation that the islanders have. It is seldom that anyone is hurt, and the battles are rather in the nature of a somewhat dangerous cricket-match with fast leg-theory permitted and encouraged. A cleared space in the forest is necessary for a battle, and consequently the mission aerodrome is a favourite site for the usually bloodless encounters. When battle is raging there, it is necessary to give the excited small boys of the mission school a holiday. They join in, too, and have great fun throwing stones at their elders.

726 Each engagement of a war is conducted with due regard to ceremony. The opposing factions line up with the width of the chosen battlefield between them. Messengers from each side march out and meet half-way between the two forces and, formal arrangements being made, return majestically each to his own side. Then each army makes a fire, round which the warriors race with spears upheld, getting closer and closer in their frantic circlings. They leap through the flames, burning the hair from their legs, and finally the circle becomes so close that the excited warriors, regardless of hot coals, tramp the fire out. With a yell of defiance, spears are cast in the air as high as the warriors can throw them.

[p. 16(B)]

under the surface by the massive roots of the paperbarks. It was in 123
just this sort of pool that the largest of the five crocs landed that [225]
night, was harpooned. The huge 18-foot animal dived into the roots
and it took about twenty tense minutes to dislodge and dispatch him.
Aside from the crocodiles the only wild life seen that night was a
small and very frightened little mouse who suddenly appeared on
my lap and then just as suddenly disappeared over the boat's side.

We returned to Minianapi at daybreak and the hot tea and
roast goose seemed a perfect breakfast, or was it supper? It didn't
matter for we were soon sound asleep.

When we finally awoke in mid-afternoon we found the camp
almost deserted. "Everyone go walkabout; kill geese," Albert
informed us as he and Agnes gathered more wood to build up the
smouldering fire. It was very quiet in the small clearing and only
the little black spots of charcoal spaced in irregular intervals on the
ground were evidence that there were more than our mob in resi-
dence. The clearing itself was quite bare because it had been burned
by the first comers, with the double purpose of clearing out the
four-foot grass itself, and any of the various poisonous snakes [136]
which were quite likely to infest it. In back of the clearing was a
thick tangle of low bushes through which ran a little foot-path.
Agnes started down this path carrying a billy can and I offered to
go with her, but Albert said, "No, by um by we go, him long way,
him only get a little bit now." After one gets used to the pronoun [195]
"him" being used to refer to everything animal, vegetable, and
mineral, this phrase is perfectly understandable: the first "him"
referred to the water, the second to Agnes.

So instead of collecting water, I wandered down to the river
bank where Billy-Two, Brownie, and a few of the other men, were
busy skinning the crocodiles. This they did by cutting the skin first
around the head, then down either side of the rows of bumps
running along the spine to the tail. The skin was then carefully [281]
peeled and cut from the body. Once free it was rubbed with salt
which would act as a preservative until such time as the supply boat
would arrive to carry it to Darwin. There the skins would be sold [439
to the dealer and the proceeds credited to the hunter's account or 452]
sent in the form of hard cash to the settlement for distribution. Now
they were folded into bundles and loaded into the launch, and large [262]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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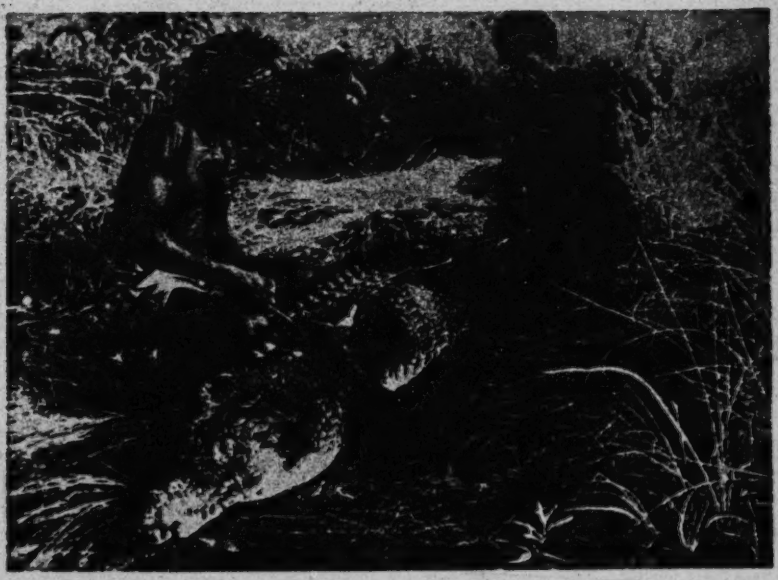

Fig. 10. Skinning a large crocodile

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[262]

pieces of the white meat were carried into the camp to be roasted for dinner. What was not to be consumed that night was thrown into the water, for meat spoils quickly in this sticky climate.

Darkness came early, and with it came the return of the goose hunters and the departure of the launch with the Grimsters and their crocodile team. Once more they would spend the night hunting crocodiles, this time downstream on their way back to the settlement. Soon many little fires broke up the darkness of the clearing and the smell of fresh roasting meat wafted over to where Albert, Agnes, Jack, and I were opening cans of corned beef. "Tomorrow we go bush," Albert remarked and I heartily assented.

Young Brook, a lean young man, and his wife, Alice,

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Pl. 10A pictures Mundinju, the place where the two sisters, *Wilinduals* and *Numanirakals* camped before the former made her home at Wilindu, and the latter at Numanira. 532x 778

The central black disc is Mundinju; the smaller black discs, throughout the painting, are holes in the cliffs from which seep streams of fresh water. The long, radiating panels are bands of red and yellow ochres in the cliffs, the groups of parallel lines, gutters formed in the cliffs, where *Wilinduals* urinated; and the groups of chevron designs, ferns growing among the rocks.

The Red-ochre Woman, Numanirakala, at Numanira

Numanira, created by *Numanirakala*, is a partly submerged reef a short distance from Wulrungku (Karslake Island), north-western Melville Island. 778

At low tide, the aborigines collect one of the best ochres in the country from this locality, even better than that from Imilu (Fig. 1), for, although Imilu ochres are brightest when used dry, those from Numanira are best when mixed with water. [317]

The central design on Pl. 12B indicates the flat rocks of the submerged totemic place at Numanira, while similar designs, above and below, are other rocks near by. The darker-coloured segments in these three designs indicate the red ochre, and the lighter segments the mud on the sea bottom. The white circles represent sea-weed, the darker, small rocks under the water, and the dots, the corals growing on those rocks. 532x 778

The central black disc of Pl. 12D is Numanira; the surrounding white circle, the sand on the sea floor, and the narrow darker line on the periphery, the red ochre, for which the island is noted.

The radiating black panels symbolize clams, the lighter panels, oysters, both of which are plentiful on the rocks of the island. The outer circle is the mud, and the dots are bunches of weed on the sea-bottom.

The Spider-woman, Baraka, at Rungani

During *pulameri* times, the spider-woman, *Baraka*, who lived at Rungani, made a bark basket for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*. She first stripped a sheet of bark from a eucalyptus tree, heated it over the fire to make it flexible, then, bending it double, sewed the edges together with split lawyer vine. 773 285

From that day until now, the women of Melville and Bathurst Islands have made their baskets in the same manner. After the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, *Tukindini* instructed his wife, *Baraka*, to establish a totemic place at Rungani, northern Melville Island. [462] 773

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly
412 limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe
[177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of
[415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the
[285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[66]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[66] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female
[114] ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This
[173] information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[6] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

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[6] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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291 observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission,
[797] automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for
177 the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst
[201] of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their oppo-
572 nents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark
834 aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We
174 think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were
291 needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at
535 dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households
511 enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

433 1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were econom-
595 ically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to
182 produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

[556] 5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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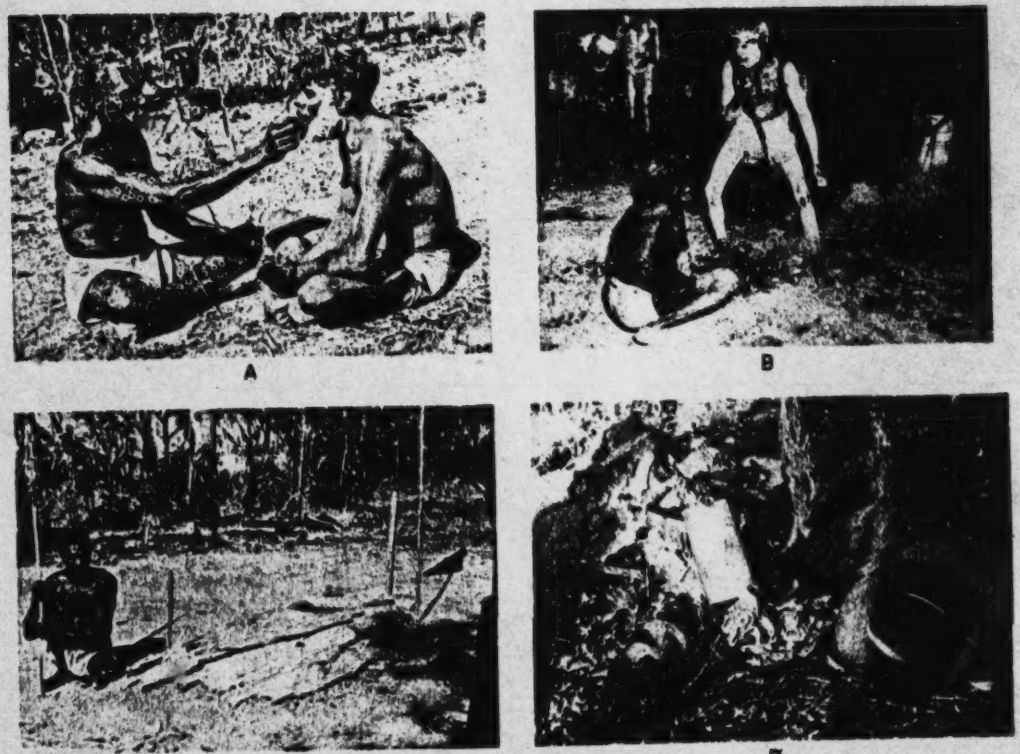

PLATE 24. *The Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Feeding Pukamuni Man; B, Rite of Wandiatapinda; C, The Grave; D, Belongings of Dead Man, Waniamperi.

Cp. 72 A)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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PLATE 25. *The Pukumani Rituals*

A, Young Girls and Men Dancing; B, Feeding Pukumani Workers; C, Women and Boys Dancing; D, Ceremonial Fight at Ilanla.

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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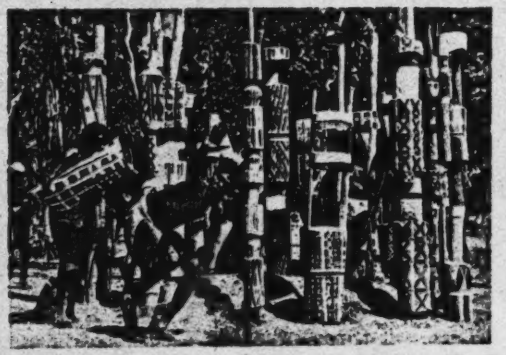

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PLATE 26. *The Final Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Erecting Poles on Grave; B, Arranging Gifts for Workers; C, The Basket Dance; D, Urumatjina's Dance.

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[p. 72 c]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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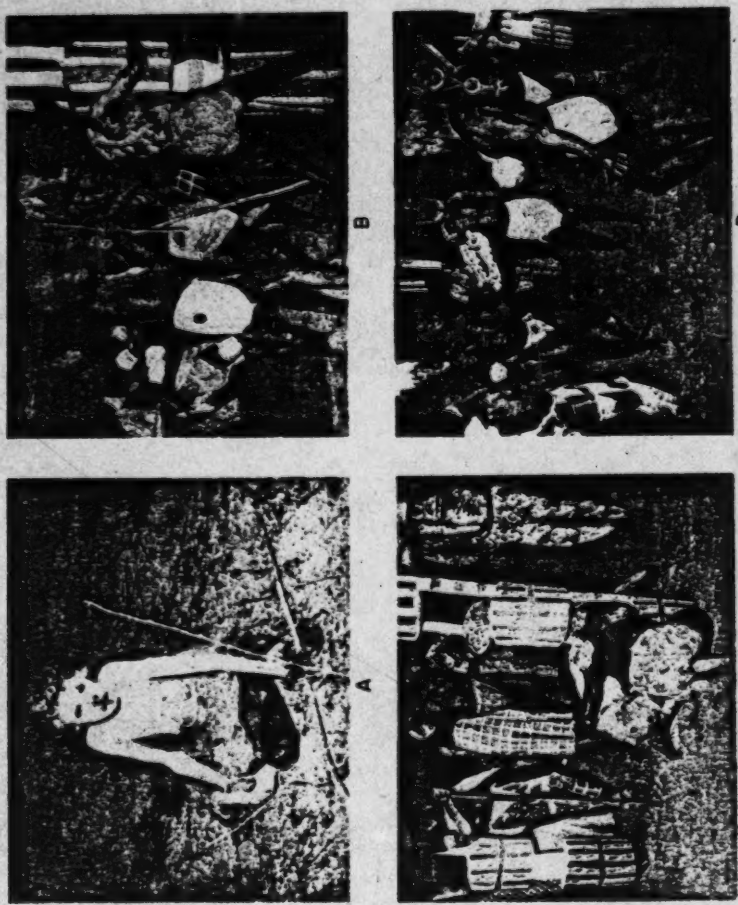

PLATE 37. *The Final Pukamani Rituals*
A, Chief Woman Mourner; B, Scene at Burial Poles; C, Mourning at Burial Poles; D, Presentation of Gifts.

[p. 72 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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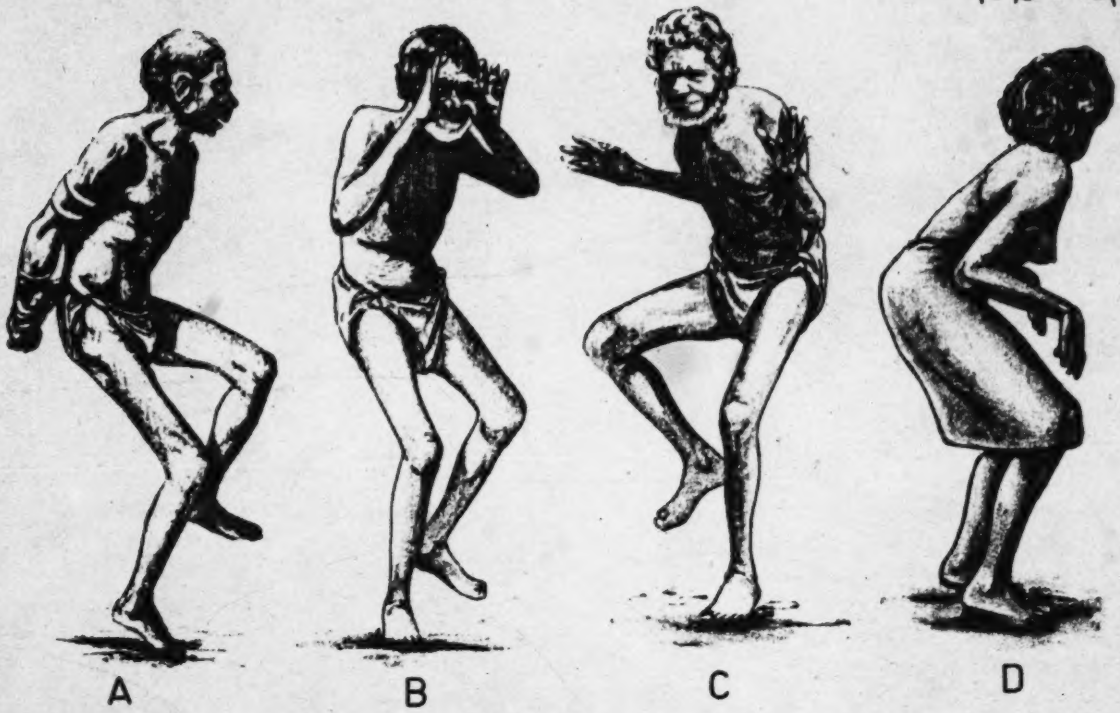

PLATE 29. *Totemic Dances*
A, Jabiru, Tjalati; B, Owl, Pintoma; C, Lizard, Kilpuruni; D, Frog, Kwouk-kwouk.

[p. 88 A]

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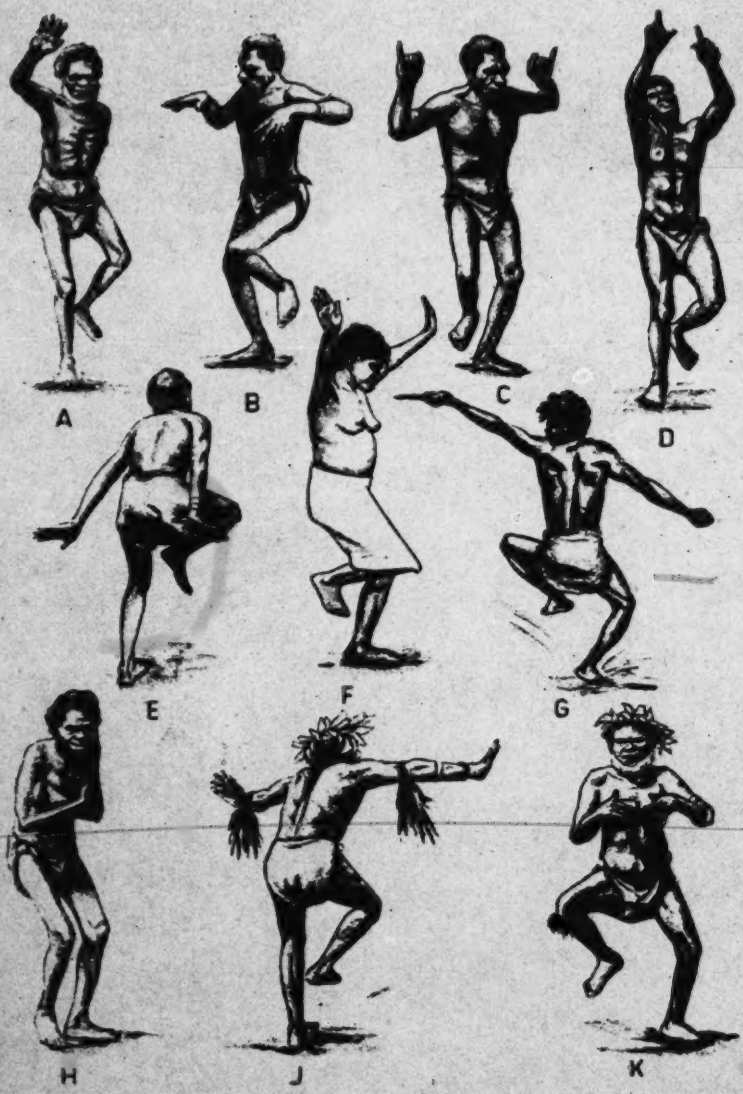

PLATE 30. *Totemic Dances*
A, Moon; B, Rain; C, Flying Fox; D, Wild Honey; E, Crocodile; F, Amburu; G, Shark; H, Skinny Fish; J, Sea-eagle; K, Ningaui.

[p. 88 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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etc., old and young crocodiles; *a*, *a*, etc., turtles; *f*, *f*, etc., octopi, and *d*, *d*, etc., crabs. Panel 17 is a creek in the mangrove swamps, in which the aborigines anchor their canoes, *c*, *c*, etc. In this creek are octopi, *f*, *f*, etc.

Panels 18–26 illustrate the sea-shore and the waves. The series of vertical parallel lines in each panel are the incoming lines of waves; the ovals, such as *k*, are the shells on the sandy bottom, and the curving panels, similar to *m*, the waves breaking on the beach.

The pole shapes of Pl. 37*b*, which the aborigines looked upon as a young woman, are: *a*, her hat; *b*, her neck, and *s*, her ribs. Sections *c*, *c*, *c*, are large rocks on the sea-shore.

The meaning of the designs painted on the same pole are: the chevrons on the top of the pole at *a* are spider webs in the jungle; the bands, *b*, rocks of different colours on the beach; diamonds on *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, the check designs on the printed calico of the young woman's skirt; *d*, *d*, *d*, her belts of different colours, and *e*, is the coloured cloth she used as a head band.

[291]

In general, the pole shapes of Pl. 32*a*, represent a tree. The projections, *g*, are the branches; the two upper cylindrical sections, *m*, *m*, the holes; the opening, *h*, is a hollow and the lower sections, the trunk.

The painted designs in the rectangles covering the pole each have similar meanings. The intersecting diagonal lines (see inset), *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, symbolize the pattern on the back, and the groups of vertical parallel lines, *a*, *a*, those on the side of a reef fish, called *prunaia*. The long white lines, *e*, *e*, are stripes, and *d*, *d*, *d*, *d*, dots on the bodies of the *Maludaiamini* caterpillars which later were transformed into the men of the Milky Way. The dotted triangles, *b*, *b*, represent the shell pattern on the back of the hawkbill turtle, *Gorugalani*.

In the pole shapes of Pl. 36c, the upper projection, *a*, is a cycad palm; *c*, *c*, are the breasts of women, and *e*, *e*, *e*, edible yams.

The painted rectangles on sections *d* and *f* refer, almost exclusively, to different kinds of food, although some common objects, such as throwing sticks, baskets and spears are represented. I did not find out the meanings of the designs on the lowest section.

The pole shapes, illustrated on Pl. 36a, b, are: *a*, the bow of a wooden canoe, and the oval designs at *c*, the paint on its sides.

On section *b*, of Pl. 36a, the painted diamond pattern *g*, is the body of a goanna, the triangle, *h*, its tail, and the dots are its eggs.

The intersecting lines on the other side of the same section (Pl. 36a), symbolize the ribs of a goanna, and the cross-hatched diamonds, the marks on its skin.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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and Pl. 34F, a small son. As before, the shape of the pole had one set of meanings, and the designs painted on them another.

The two projections, *a*, on Pl. 34E, represent the fork, and the central white section, *d*, is the bole of a eucalyptus tree. The sections above and below *d*, are large rocks on the beach.

The central transverse painted bands, *b*, *b*, are women's leather trade belts, the vertical panels, *c*, etc., in the upper section, crocodile's intestines, and the cross-hatched panels, *g*, etc., crocodile's backbone. On the lower section, *f*, etc., are turtle intestines, and the cross-hatched panels, *e*, etc., chevron body scars.

The significance of the shapes of Pl. 34A, reading from the top are: the white top, *k*, a European hat; *s*, its rim; the openings, *c*, *c*, windows, and *p*, *r*, tree trunks.

The white vertical panels, *a*, indicate a turtle's vertebrae, and the adjacent cross-hatched panels, *b*, its intestines. White bands, *e*, *e*, are *pukamuni* cane arm ornaments (*jairinis*, Pl. 31H), and cross-hatched bands, *d*, *d*, chevron body scars.

Transverse band *f*, is a leather belt; panels, *h*, are turtle's intestines; cross-
[291] hatched areas, *g*, etc., body scars. On *r*, the lowest section, band *m*, is a leather trade belt; the vertical panels, *o*, are turtle intestines, and the cross-hatched panels, *n*, body scars.

The four projections, *a* (Pl. 34F), are branches of trees; *g*, is a hill; *h*, an edible yam, and *j*, a large rock on the coast.

The long white rectangles, *b*, etc., are small freshwater creeks, and the diagonal marks on *c*, body scars; yellow band *d*, is a male *Marasji* (p. 154). The chevron panels, *e*, etc., are female *Marasjis*, and the white rectangles, *f*, etc., thunderclouds associated with this dangerous mythical creature.

The meanings of the painted designs on 37C are: sections *a*, *a*, arm ornaments, *pakmatjinas* (Pl. 31E, F), and *b*, the false beard, *baludi*, made of goose feathers (Pl. 31C), both of which are worn at the *pukamuni* ceremonies. Designs *c* and *d*, symbolize a stingray, *pakimadju*, and *e*, its body markings.

(c) *Miscellaneous*

Pl. 34C, D, pictures the crocodile-man, *Jirakupai*, who once lived in a lagoon near Cape Fourcroy (myth, p. 27).

The forearms of the crocodile are at *a*, the V-shaped design, *b*, representing its lower jaw. The head is at *c*, the chest at *d*, the neck at *e*, the nose (crossed lines) at *f*, the spinal crest at *g*, and the scale pattern on its back at *h*, *h*.

On Pl. 37E the upper projections *a*, *a*, symbolize the limbs of a tree. The

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PLATE 38. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*
A, B, C, Carved and Painted Pole on Old Grave; D, Poles on Old Grave.

[p. 120 F]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. Camp fires are, as usual, 372 much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Balers made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

314 Fig. 1. Forest scene on Bathurst Island. From the stringy-barked eucalyptus on the left side
396 of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe.
137 Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
501 Fig. 2. Various types of paddles in use on Bathurst Island. About $\frac{1}{16}$ natural size.

PLATE XIII.

764 Figs. 1 and 2. Distant and near view of a native grave, surrounded by five carved and painted posts, Bathurst Island. Note the cleared space and the position of grave, viz.: at the junction between open woodland and thicket. A tall Bathurst Islander in seen in Fig. 2.

PLATE XIV.

415 Fig. 1. A melon-shell (*Melo dimdema*) used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Fig. 2. A *Fusus priesi* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e. Painted and carved posts of native grave shown in previous plate.
764 $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XV.

415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cyrena ewingtonensis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
317 Fig. 2. Lumps of yellow ochre (on the left), white pipe-clay (in the centre), and red ochre (on
396 the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus australis*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
301 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (?). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in
532 imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).
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5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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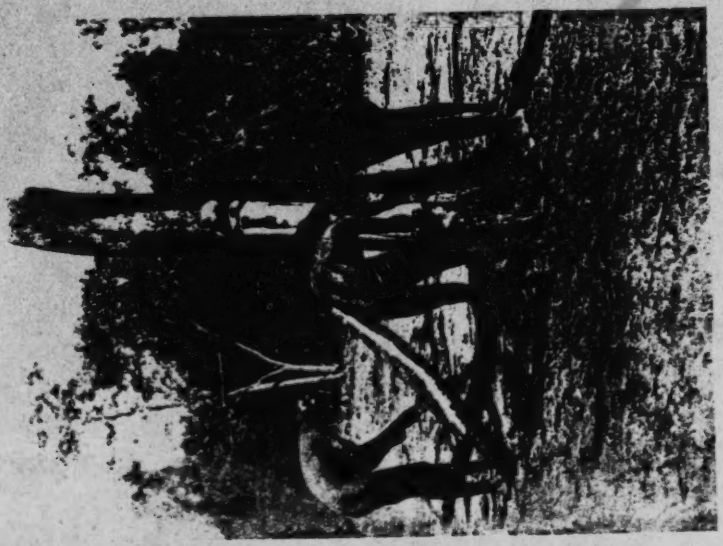

FIG. 2.

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 10]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 322 - ANALYST]

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SHARK DANCE is among traditional, imitative figures that are performed during ritual preparation of toxic *Kalama* yams.

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ceived additional instruction in spear-fishing and birding, while girls were taught more intensively to locate and identify edible plants. The children, as a result, were generally independent economically in their early teens, by which time the girls were already married. Young males contributed to their parents' larder and to other households, but did not marry and acquire households until they were more than thirty years old. Even now, this late marriage age obtains in theory, but not always in practice.

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885 THUS, to the Tiwi, economic independence and/or marriage did not alone signify adulthood. The Tiwi adult was intellectually, rather than physiologically, a mature individual who was expected to join actively in the non-economic affairs of the community. An adult was also expected to be almost entirely responsible for his own health, wealth, and future prospects. This included attaining success in hunting and in war and, for the men, in wife-collecting. If an adult became ill or was injured or, as a Tiwi would say, was unlucky in the pursuit of life's benefits, he alone was responsible for not behaving as an adult should.

884 The annual *Kalama* ceremony, held by each community in April at the end of the rainy season, was a most important event to insure individual success. Although a collec-

[P. 11, (C)]

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 12(C)]

11,Goodale E-5 (1954,1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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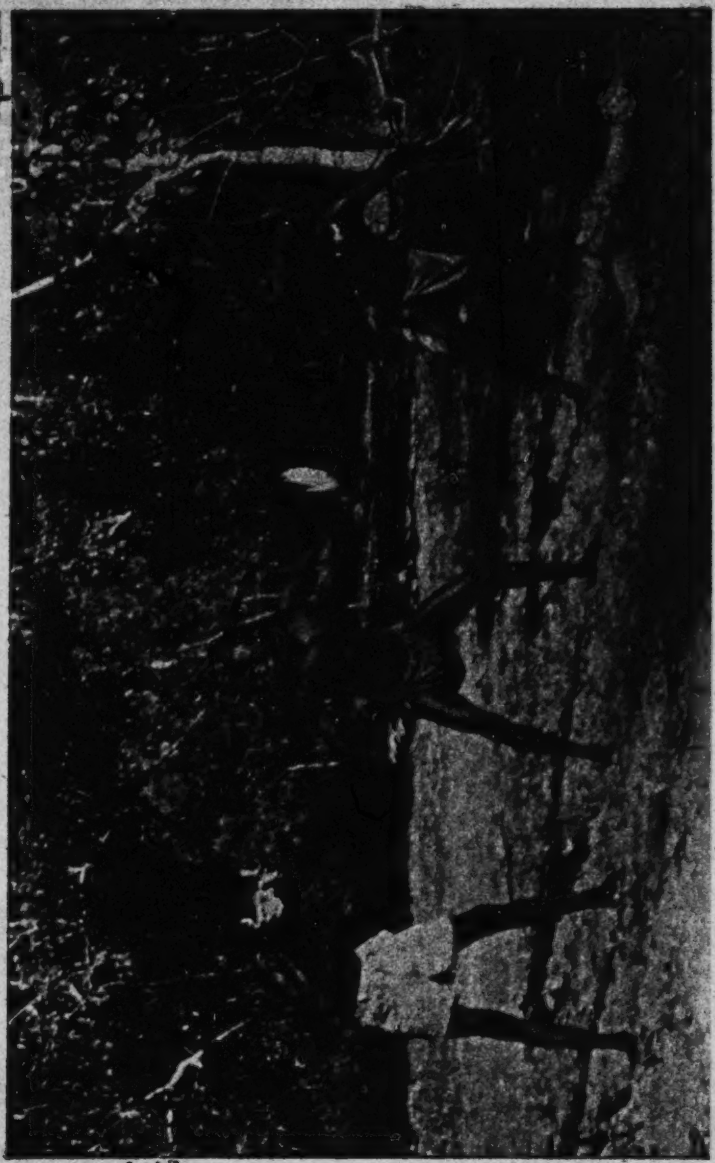

BEFORE DIGGING YAMS, the ritual participants dip hands into white paint and pat it around eyes to insure acute vision.

[P. 12, (A)]

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11/Goodale 5-5 (1954,1960) 1968 OCEO Tiwi OCEO

FATHER PAINTS GIRL to show how it would be done if she were to be initiated. Although no children of group were considered ready, ceremony was held to maintain benefits thought to accrue to the Tiwi who had undergone initiation.

[P. 15, (8)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 .X20 Tiwi CH20

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HOT EARTH over baked *Kulama* yams is removed. Yams that are to be eaten at end of ritual must be resoaked in water.

[824]

SOME COOKED YAMS are cut, peeled, and mashed. Water and paint are then added. Yams are always handled with respect.

[951]
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MEN RUB MASH on bodies to insure health, then do so to the uninitiated young, whose health is paternal responsibility.

[P. 16, (A)]

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Near end of Kulama ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.

[colors appearing in original:

Body - light purple with white.

Hair and beard - left: yellow, center stripe: red, right: white.

Red across nose and upper cheek. -- Analyst.]

[p. 19]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 2. Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend, Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Figs. 5 and 6. Probing in the sand at the head of turtle tracks sometimes locates a nest of eggs

[P.10]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 7. Agnes (left) and a friend admire a large mangrove crab

together with sharks, these waters contain the large and dangerous salt-water crocodile and all manner of poisonous jellyfish, one realizes that to swim around in a high sea in the pitch dark requires considerable courage. 123

Soon after we had crawled under the mosquito netting and between the blankets rain began to fall in a gentle and persistent way, but still not hard enough to prevent our falling asleep with little conversation.

It was hardly light the next morning when Agnes stood up and rewrapped her *naga*, a strip of calico, about her waist, then took up the billys and went to the well to draw water for the morning tea. Although the rain had been steady during the night, the well-built fire still had some life in it and after a few minutes of concentrated blowing, Albert had it rejuvenated. While the billy boiled, Big Jack shook as much of the wet sand as was possible from the blankets and rolled them into tight bundles. Then he set off to retrieve the canoe. By the time he reappeared, the tea was ready and it helped to wash down the leathery cold strips of damper sweetened with jam. [291] [372]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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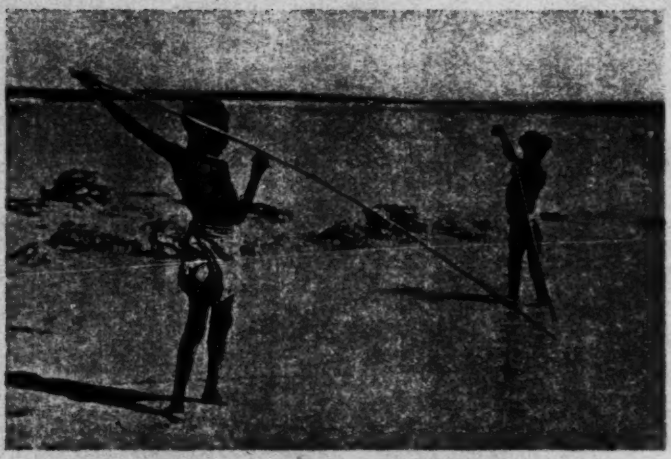

Fig. 9. Two young hunters practicing with fish-spears

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the impenetrable jungle, which were attributed to the *Ningawi*, the
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weird and mysterious "little people" of the mangrove. Rounding a curve in the river, we surprised a flock of whistle ducks sitting on an exposed mudbank. Young Billy tried to shoot one for supper but missed, and soon they were well out of range. On a rare piece of solid ground we saw the long tail and massive hips of a startled
[136]
wallaby as he hopped to safety. However, a successful throw of the fish-spear brought us a large barramundi, and the .22 rifle provided both a possum and a fruit bat, or flying fox, for supper.

All of a sudden the mangroves disappeared and our view was no longer restricted to the river bank; rather we gazed through
[137]
thick, gnarled white paperbarks on the water's edge to wide expanses of marshy grasslands. A few flocks of black and white geese, which had returned to the swamps early in the evening, were startled by the sound of the motor and rose honking in fright.

About five, we reached Minianapi, a landing place about fifteen yards wide, where solid ground reached the river bank. We were

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 10. Skinning a large crocodile

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pieces of the white meat were carried into the camp to be roasted for dinner. What was not to be consumed that night was thrown into the water, for meat spoils quickly in this sticky climate.

Darkness came early, and with it came the return of the goose hunters and the departure of the launch with the Grimsters and their crocodile team. Once more they would spend the night hunting crocodiles, this time downstream on their way back to the settlement. Soon many little fires broke up the darkness of the clearing and the smell of fresh roasting meat wafted over to where Albert, Agnes, Jack, and I were opening cans of corned beef. "Tomorrow we go bush," Albert remarked and I heartily assented.

Young Brook, a lean young man, and his wife, Alice,

12;Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 11. Even the youngest respect the teeth of the crocodile

approached our fire. "You savey goose?" he asked me. "Oh yes," I said, "we eat him along America." He handed me a large juicy leg which I gave to Albert to divide, then squatted down at the edge of the fire's glow. I handed my tin of tobacco to Alice and she filled her husband's pipe. Picking up a burning branch from the fire, she knocked a hot coal into the bowl of the pipe and began smoking. Soon she handed it to Young Brook. Suddenly our attention was directed to the opposite side of the clearing where Dennis, the four-year old daughter of Black Joe was crying hysterically. Tuki, a tall powerful man of fifty-five, was doing his best to calm her and disentangle himself from her clinging arms so that he could leave. Tuki and his wife, Fat Alice, were a childless couple and

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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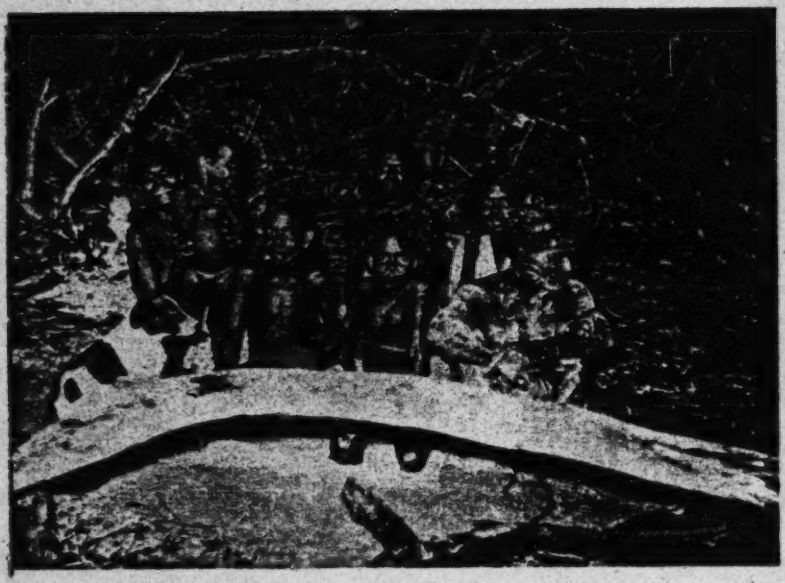

Fig. 12. A Tiwi family camped for the night

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Black Joe, Fat Alice's brother, had given them his eldest daughter in adoption. However, Dennis spent as much time with her proper parents as with her foster parents and it was quite evident that her affection was at least equally divided. Albert went over and managed to bring the screaming, kicking child back to our camp and asked me to give her some of the hard candy which I had brought with me. It was some time, however, before her attention was sufficiently distracted to allow Tuki and the other men to slip away into the canoe to hunt crocodiles for another night. Agnes commented to me, "Let him cry? That white man rule no good. By and by they go silly."

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We strolled back to Black Joe's camp with Dennis, and listened to a discussion concerning the superiority of crocodile hunting over

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 13. Gathering water-lilies in a fresh-crater swamp

cut and after he had collected about thirty he selected a nice, smooth ledge of rock in the shade to work further on the sticks. First he stripped the bark, then measuring them against his arm he cut them so that each stick was as long as the distance from his fingertips to his elbow. All this he did with his knife, holding it by the tip of its long blade so that the handle would add its weight to each blow. He carefully smoothed off the two ends so there were no loose splinters. We each took a bundle of these sticks, tied them with strips of pandanus, and returned to the camp. Here they were laid in the water close to the bank and weighted down with a rock. This would make them good and heavy, it was explained.

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During the afternoon, the two men worked on the permanent house which Bill Grimster had ordered. Big Jack had spent the morning cutting posts and had brought in about half a dozen. By late afternoon, when the others returned, they had been set upright in holes dug to individual measure so that they stood firm without bracing.

Once everyone had returned, a fire was built. The men collected their individual bundles of *milingani* and placed the ends of the dripping sticks in the flames. They squatted over the sticks and individually started a chant during which they cupped their hands in the smoke and carrying it to their bodies, slapped their necks, then their arms. "Knar. Knar Gerra doo (slap), Gerra doo (slap)." The chant was nothing more than the imitation of the cries of the geese and the whir of the sticks. They explained that to bring the goose down they had to hit it directly on the neck or wings. "Why

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tlwi OI20

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Fig. 14. "Cooking milingsul"

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do you cook the sticks?" I asked. "To make them dry so they won't slip in our hands," they replied.

Once the sticks were all well charred on the ends the men took them down to the canoe. For once, I used my status of ethnographer and overruled my role of a woman, and accompanied the men on what was properly men's business. The presence of women or children might bring bad luck. Whether the explanation was simply that women and children are considered to be lacking in the amount of silence or immobility required, or whether the reason was more subtle, I never found out. "This properly men's business," was the only explanation.

We took the canoe a quarter of a mile up stream, where we

123 The following day we finally went hunting. Peter, his wife Dorrie, and daughter Althea, Filicy and her son Crissy-Boy, Albert, Agnes and I all squeezed into the canoe and paddled about two miles upstream to the next landing. Tudiunginarim, "white-paint-place," [177] used to be an old camp of the white buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who at the turn of the century was the first white contact for many of these people. It was very hot and the women took their children 123 into the water, waist deep near the bank, for a swim. It was easy ● 291 for them in their *nagas*, for when they came out they merely wrapped a dry one around and slid the wet one off underneath very 515 modestly. I, in my shorts and shirt, finally gave in to the temptation 609 and, vowing that if I were to live here longer I would take up the native costume, went in fully dressed. This modesty was a funny thing; they who wore no clothes until contact with white men, were being modest only for my sake, and in return I could do no less. So with dripping clothes, which incidentally felt wonderful in the heat, I set off following Albert and Agnes.

123 The nature of the bush was the same as that in back of Minianapi and indeed the same as that around Snake Bay: the same 224 trees, the same burned earth, the same fan palms and pandanus, and the same flatness. The natives always knew where they were; I never did. We were looking for possums and as these furry marsupials sleep in hollow trees during the day, we investigated every likely tree for evidence that they had recently climbed it. Sometimes the little tears in the rough bark could only be seen silhouetted against the sun; at other times the dry ground around the base of the tree would show very definite tracks. Soon Agnes, who was off somewhere to the left of Albert and me, gave two high-pitched calls. [198] In the hunting language I had already learned, one call meant "I'm here, where are you?" and would be answered by their companions with a similar single call. However, two calls meant "Come; I've found something." So we turned in the direction of the call and soon found Agnes standing by a short, hollow tree. Albert took his axe and cut a long pole which he then thrust up through a hole in the tree's base and wiggled. Out popped a large grey possum which sat on the top of the tree trying to make itself as small as possible. Agnes and Albert threw all manner of sticks and stones at it and finally managed to knock it down, when it scuttled away.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

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262 cooked, with that delicious charcoal-broiled flavor so much sought after in our more elite dining establishments or in our backyards.

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224 Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goanas, they brought over to show us an extremely large water [431] snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tre- [513] mendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minianapi in time to meet the geese. 123 All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's 231 hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we 484 reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was

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13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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BATHURST ISLAND NATIVES PRACTISING A CORROBOREE DANCE.

[p. 12]

797 telephone, with which they keep in touch with the Presbytery in Darwin, not only were the good fathers there to greet us, but the children of the mission school had also been given a holiday to celebrate the occasion. Small boys and half-grown lads were there in force and soon crowded round the 'plane. The bearded men against the fence kept in the background, while women and girls peered over the stile that leads into the garden. Men and boys wore only the little naga, women and girls a short sarong [291] —and they are all the better for this lack of clothing.

KINDLY and shrewd old Father Gsell, who founded the mission rather more than a quarter of a century ago, has his own ideas with regard to the black man. He does not ruin his health by dressing him (or her) up in mission clothing, and he sees that the blacks who come into the mission do not become mere spongers and hangers-on. When a black asks for flour or anything else that he requires, Father Gsell replies, "What have you to give for it?" He may have a spear, for which the good father has no use, but he will take it, or anything that the black can offer in payment. If the black's reply is "Nothing," Father Gsell will say "Well, you are a big, strong man; you can dig the garden."

It does not matter that the garden has been dug before. The thing is to keep the blacks from becoming cadgers. Treated so, they retain their self-respect and do not degenerate into useless loafers hanging round the mission station, just for what they can get without any effort. The mission fathers, of course, do all they can for the sick and injured—that is an entirely different matter. Every missionary who has been long on any field in North Australia must recognise that it is impossible to do anything with a full-grown black to alter his outlook in any way, and the methods of the Sacred Heart Mission must appeal to all unbigoted members of any church as admirable commonsense.

It is only with the very young that the missionaries can hope for any success in the inculcating of Christian ideals, and it is towards the little boys and girls that the good fathers look for
797 the reward of their self-sacrificing labours. They are able to get them, too, without pandering to the laziness of their parents.
562 The natives, who are always fond of children, are quite willing
567 to have their little boys well fed and well looked after; but,
439 when it comes to the girls, self-interest enters into the question. Little girls can be sold to the Japanese of the pearling fleets,
[855] and the Japanese are liberal in the matter of prices.

FATHER Gsell must therefore buy the girls in competition with the Japanese. It has been said that this is countenancing a shameful and revolting slave-trade, and that to buy the girls is definitely wrong in principle. What would the worthy critics do? Are they content to see this dreadful traffic continued, or have they any practical alternative to offer? Father Gsell is trying at least to save as many girls as possible from the horrible fate in store for them. The regular patrol of North Australian waters by the forces of the Government may eventually put an end to the practice, but what of all these little girls in the meantime? As they grow up, the Christian boys and girls marry one another, and, as the Christians have one wife only, they are unwilling to sell or to hire her out to the Japanese. This, like all the dealings of the Sacred Heart Mission with the islanders, is based on practical common sense.

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

726 received any serious damage, and it seemed to have been a most enjoyable occasion. An islander, who had seen the world from the decks of many luggers, made a remark that was truer than he knew, "When white feller go to war, he takem rifle, he takem

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HUNTING TURTLE, FROM A DUG-OUT CANOE NEAR BATHURST ISLAND.

bomb. Some feller *must* be killed! White feller silly b——!" It cannot be said that the mission fathers have a dull time at Bathurst Island.

797 There are two sisters of the order at the Mission Station. In addition to teaching the girls, they attend to all household mat-

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[FACING P. 3]
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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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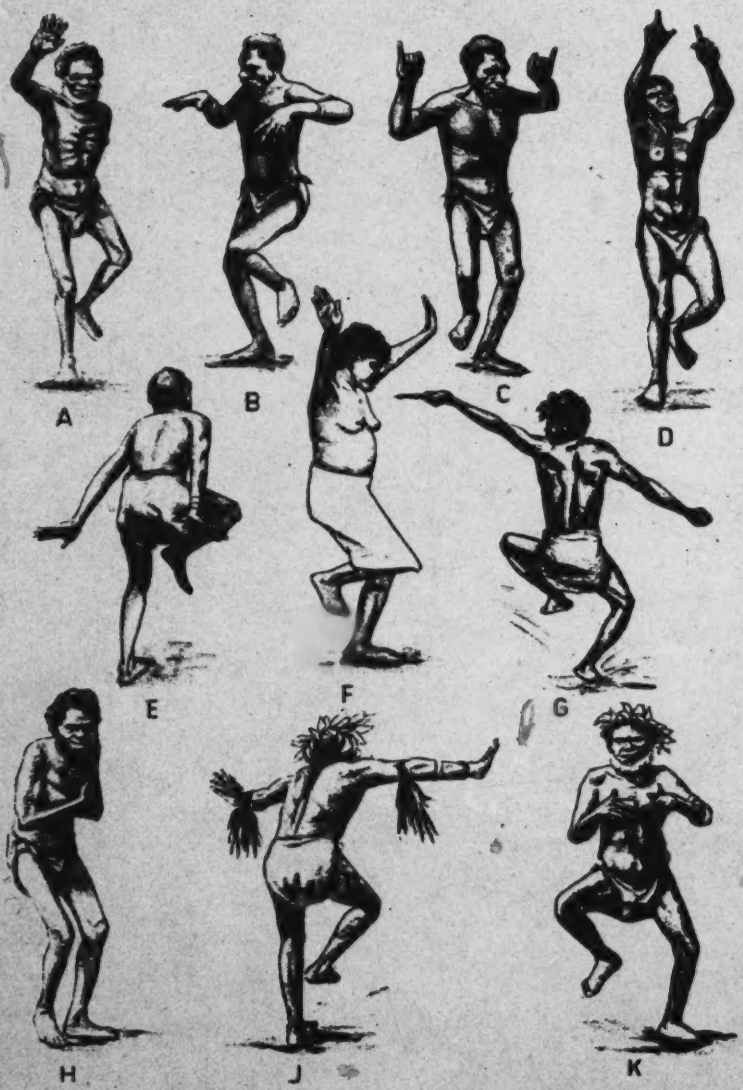

PLATE 30. *Totemic Dances*

A, Moon; B, Rain; C, Flying Fox; D, Wild Honey; E, Crocodile; F, Amburu; G, Shark; H, Skinny Fish; J, Sea-eagle; K, Ningaui.

[p. 88 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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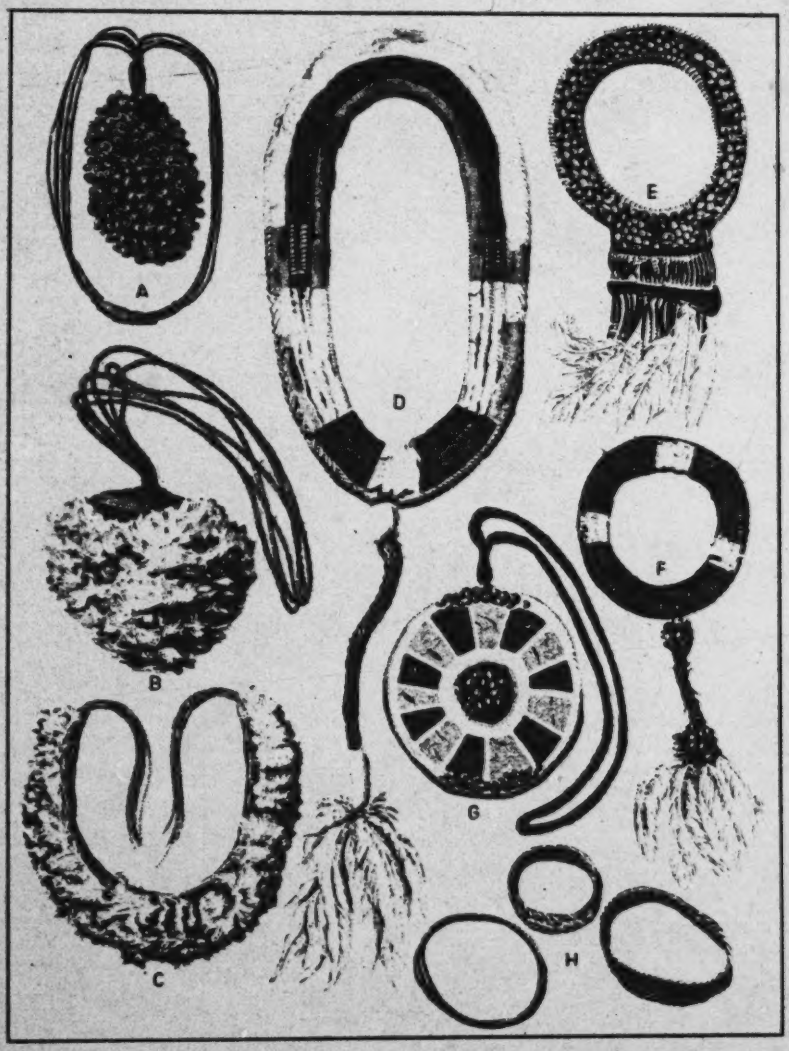

PLATE 31. *Ceremonial Decorations*
A, D, G, Chest Ornaments, Pukabinda; B, Goose-feather Ball, Tokwianga; C, False Beard, Baludi; E, F, Arm Ornaments, Palmatjinas; H, Cane Arm Bands, Jairinis.

[p. 88 C]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

8. THE CEREMONIAL OBJECTS OF THE TIWI

The ceremonial objects of the *pukamuni* ceremony, like the carved and painted burial poles and elaborate facial and body decorations already described, are totally unlike those used by the mainland aborigines. 301 778 765

A series of objects obtained on the 1954 expedition is illustrated on Pls. 31, 32.[94] [171]

On Pl. 31, A, D, and G, are chest ornaments called *pukabinda*, which are suspended around the neck with a loop of human hair string. Fig. A is an oval ball of the soft wax of the native bee, into which has been pressed a large number of the red and black seeds of a jungle vine. Fig. D, made of several ovals of lawyer vine, is bound together with strips of the same material. The pendant is made of human hair and white cockatoo feathers. The oval opening is too small to pass over the head, therefore this ornament, and similar examples which I saw, were suspended around the neck with string. Fig. G is a flat disc like Fig. D, with lengths of lawyer vine bound together. This disc was coated with wax, and further decorated with red and black jungle seeds. [237]

Pl. 31E and F are ornaments, *palmatjinas*, decorated with red and black seeds, which are pushed up the arm over the elbow.[95] Both have been made in the same manner as Fig. D, G.

Pl. 31B is a goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, worn around the neck or tied around the upper arm. *Wurarbuti* (frontispiece) is wearing a *tokwianga*.

These ornaments are made by embedding ends of the downy feathers of the pied goose in a ball of wax. So much work was entailed in making a *tokwianga* that the aborigines were loth to part with them. The *tokwianga* is worn on all ceremonial occasions. [237]

Pl. 31C is a false beard, *baludi*, which was worn at the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni* (see frontispiece), and the *kulama* rituals. The *baludi* may be pure decoration, or it may replace the beard, which up until comparatively recently was plucked out at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals. [302]

Fig. H illustrates three cane arm rings, *jairinis*, made from plaited lawyer vine. These were worn on the upper and lower arms of the *pukamuni* men and women, and occasionally by other performers, as decoration. At the end of the burial ceremony the performers take these rings from their arms and leave them on the grave as a present for the spirit of the dead.

[94] Spencer, 1928, Pl. XII, Figs. 450–4, illustrates a number of *pukamuni* ornaments he collected in 1911.

[95] Several of the men illustrated on Pl. 26B, are wearing these arm ornaments.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 778 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals.

[411] [531] Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear, *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

[114] [322] [412] At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *miluansa*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *murugunu*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

[302] [413] Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *porsas*, used for printing lines of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porsa* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porsa*. The *porsa* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[96]

[515] [413] Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 765 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkisa*, are used by the Tiwi for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkisas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

[301] [302] As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, his chest ornaments,

[96] The lines of dots on *Wurarkuti* (frontispiece) were made with a *porsa*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

202 765 *palmatjinis*, and cane armlets, *jairinis*. Then, taking a female *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaguni*, in his hand he seated himself within sight of the camp.

[301] [302] The local aborigines went out to welcome him, but on seeing the message stick and hearing the news, they mourned hysterically, cutting their heads [785] and beating themselves with sticks.

When the mourning died down, the aborigines gave the messenger a meal, [574] after which he returned to his own camp.

Although the general distribution of the totemic *purunkitas* has been dis- [126] continued in recent years, the aborigines who knew them well, made nine [184] examples for me. It would seem that each totemic place had its own particular [794] design, for when I showed the *purunkita* (Fig. 7D) to old *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, neither of whom had seen it previously, they recognized it immediately as a message stick which would have been sent to the *Mudungkala* totemic group of Buchanan Island, at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. However, other *purunkitas*, i.e. (Fig. 5C; Fig. 5F, G, H; and Fig. 6A, E) are still being used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

During the early days of our stay, when the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were about to start, three men, two of them, *Marawani* and *Uramatjina*, being the chief mourners, made a journey to the Bathurst Island people for the purpose of giving them a *purunkita* and telling them the news.

A few days later a Bathurst Island man returned with the message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H, and verbal instructions relating to the forthcoming burial rituals.

Although I did not see the message stick which *Marawani* and his com- [126] panions carried to Bathurst Island, I was able to make a rubbing of another (Fig. 7C), which was sent to the same locality on the death of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife.

Later, old *Tjamalampua* sent another message stick (Fig. 7A, B), to the men of the *Mudungkala* totem of Buchanan Island, asking for European goods and food to pay the "workers" at the final rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*.

Notification of Death

202 The designs on message stick, Fig. 7C, which an aboriginal carried to the 211 Bathurst Island people, together with the news of the death of *Nulatini*, did ×532 not, in any way, refer to the message that accompanied it, but to topographical details along the motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point on Apsley Straits.

The upper section, *d*, is the aboriginal camp at Snake Bay, and the indentations, *c*, *e*, are the rocks on its shores. The cross-hatched rectangle in the

Z: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The designs on sections *d* and *f* also relate to the goanna. The small white discs on *d* are goanna holes; the cross-hatched diamonds, its skin patterns, and the dots, its eggs. The triangles on *f* are the ribs, and the dots, the fat of the same creature. White and red bands on *e*, symbolize waves breaking on the beach. 532x 765

The shapes of Pl. 36D are: *a* is white cloud; the rectangular opening *e*, a door, and the thinner section *f*, a post of a house. Section *d* is a large boulder, and *g*, *h*, the trunks of a fan palm.

The painted, cross-hatched bands, *b*, on section *e*, indicate goanna fat; the alternate bands, *c*, *c*, etc., are rocks on the shore, and the central white disc on *d* is the light from an electric torch. The vertical lines radiating from this disc are aboriginal paths; the horizontal bands are adjacent mangrove creeks, and the cross-hatched rectangles, discarded fish-bones on its banks.

The circles at *g* are rocks in the sea, and the white lines represent rope used for catching turtles. The dots on the background symbolize turtle eggs in the sand. The vertical bands on *h* are mangrove creeks, and the cross-hatched areas, body scars on the backs and arms of old men and women.[9]

The two projections at *a* on Pl. 36F, are the front flippers of a turtle, the opening, *c*, is a window, and *d*, a door. The lower section is a European house.

The cross-hatching at *e*, *e*, represents the marks on the handles of throwing sticks (Pl. 32D); the transverse bands, *f*, and the vertical bands, *g*, *g*, aboriginal tracks in the forest, and the dots, stars in the sky.

The upper projections at *a* (Pl. 37D), are the branches of trees, the rectangular opening below is a doorway, the two cylindrical sections, *h*, *h*, are rocks on the coast, and the design, *j*, is a stingray.

The painted designs refer almost exclusively to the decorations used at a *pukamuni* ceremony. The chevron bands at *b* and *c* on the upper projections, *a*, are coloured cane, and plain, feathered *pukamuni* arm ornaments respectively (Pl. 31E, F). Painted designs at *f*, *f*, are arm ornaments similar to those at *b*, *c*. The plain band, *g*, however, represents chest ornaments (Pl. 31D, G). The circles at *d*, *d*, are *pukamuni* cane armlets, and the cross-hatched rectangles and panels *h*, *h*, *h*, the chevron body scars of the performers. [301]

(*b*) *The Pukamuni of Makapini*

As in the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*, the poles of *Makapini* were looked upon as a family; Pl. 34B, the mother; Pl. 34A, an adolescent daughter,

[9] Until recently, both men and women were decorated with elaborate series of chevron scars on the arms, legs and back (Pl. 29A). This practice has been discontinued. [304]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[301]

[301]

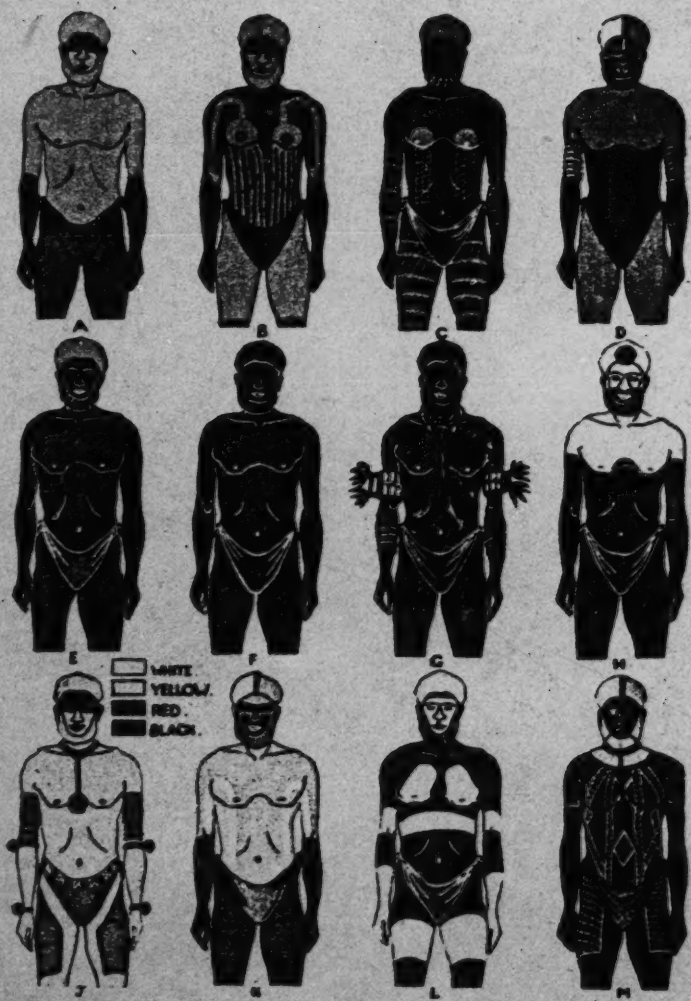

PLATE 42. *Body Decorations of the Kulama Initiation*
A, B, C, D, E, F, Marukumuni; G, Kilipaniati; H, Wadjeniati; J, K, Mikinatrina; L, Kulama Design; M, Mikinatarima, Mikintara and Mikingula.

[p. 120 J]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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881

Grades of Kulama initiates		*Period of initiation*
Mikinatrina Mikinatrininga	Male Female	2 years
Mikintara Mikintaringa	Male Female	From one kulama until the next
Mikiatarima Mikiatarimingа	Male Female	From one kulama until the next
Mikingula Mikingulinga	Male Female	Fully initiated for life

2. THE PRELIMINARY RITUALS OF THE KULAMA

881 (1) *The Capture of the Marukumuni Initiate*

According to my informants, any tribesman chosen for initiation, must be a mature man, usually married and with children. In fact, all the men pointed out to me as being suitable candidates were thirty years of age or older.[18]

The first time there is a gathering of people after a *kulama* ceremony, such as at a burial, or an *ilania*,[19] the fully initiated *kulama* men, the *Mikingulas*, ask the permission of the leader of the *kulama*, the *Naripikilitipi*, to capture any man or woman, who is suitable for the first stage of initiation, that of the *Marukumuni*.[20] In preparation for this, the *Mikingulas* have already mixed a quantity of yellow ochre.

At a given signal, one of the *Mikingulas*, who has been standing unobtrusively near, suddenly throws his arms around the chosen initiate. The captive struggles to release himself, protesting against being initiated into the *kulama*. But a number of the *Mikingulas* rush to their companion's aid, lay the struggling initiate on the ground, paint a design, in yellow, on his upper arms and body (Pl. 42A), and put the red tail feathers of a black cockatoo in his hair. Meanwhile, other initiated men are walking around the group

[302]
[301]

[18] The age of initiation has been raised since Spencer and Fry saw the *kulama* in the early days of the century. Spencer (1928, p. 665) refers to young boys, while Reuben Cooper, whom I knew in 1920 as a young man about twenty, would have only been about thirteen years of age when Fry saw him as a *Kilipanini*.

[178]
[114]

[19] A preliminary ceremony for the burial rituals.

[20] I do not know who captures the female initiate, the *Marukumuninga*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

chanting *kulama* songs. Later, the decorated initiate, now called a *Marukumuni*, is taken to the camp of the man who captured him. It is the duty of this man, now his guardian, to provide the initiate with food. However, he must not be given snakes, for such food would cause his joints to swell and become painful. 881

The guardian takes the food he has collected to the *Marukumuni*'s wife who feeds her husband over a period of four days in the same manner as a *pukumuni* man is fed (Pl. 24A). Neither she, nor any of the food he eats must touch the initiate's body. The food left over from the meal is wrapped in paper-bark and burnt. After four days this taboo is lifted and the *Marukumuni* is free to hunt for and eat all foods, except snake.

(2) *The Eating of the Cycad Fruit*

About August, when the fruit of the cycad (*Cycas media*) is ripe, the *Marukumuni* is decorated with a new design (Pl. 42B). At the same time the leader of the *kulama* ceremony instructs the women of the camp to collect and prepare a considerable quantity of the cycad fruit. As the fruit in its raw state is highly poisonous, it has to be shelled, pounded out flat, and soaked in running water for three days before it is edible. When the fruit is ready for eating, the women, putting it in a number of bark baskets, stand them on either side of a log (Pl. 43D). [302] [252]

Then, while the women walk around the baskets, chanting the songs of the *kulama*, two *Mikingulas* wash the design (Pl. 42B), from the *Marukumuni's* body, and decorate him with a new one (Pl. 42C). This, he must renew continuously until he hears the first sounds of thunder (about mid-November). [533] [302]

As soon as these decorations are completed a member of each family picks up a basket, takes it to their camp, and all have a meal.

The *Marukumuni* initiate, however, is fed by his wife from a separate store of cycad fruit.

At the same time as the *kulama* leader sent the women of the camp to collect and prepare the cycad fruit for the *Marukumuni* rituals, he instructed the women of the *Kilipaniatinga* grade to do the same. However, when the other women of the camp placed their baskets of prepared food beside the log, the *Kilipaniatinga* women poured their cycad fruit on a nearby pad of grass, pushed four sticks into the ground around the heap and seated themselves on the outside.

The ceremonial activity then centred around the men and women of the *Kilipaniati* grade of initiation, who, from the previous *kulama* until then, 301 881

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

[88] had worn continuously their curious ornaments, *mariguani* (Pl. 42D),[81]
[301] around their necks as well as many cane and bark ornaments on their arms. During the whole of that period (about five months) they renewed their body paint continuously. They were not allowed, however, to scratch their heads with their hands, but must use for that purpose a special pointed stick, *murukunga* (Pl. 32F).

The rituals began when one of the *Mikingulas*, coming up behind the male
[302] *Kilipaniati*, cut the *mariguani* from the neck of the initiate, poured water over him to remove his body paint, and decorated him with the design of a *Wadjeniati* (Pl. 42H). Similarly, the husband of the female initiate cut her neck ornament, washed her and redecorated her as a *Wadjeniatinga*. After eating their store of cycad fruit, these new initiates resumed the normal life of the tribe.

About mid-November, thunder and other signs of the oncoming wet season are signals for the *Marukumuni* to discard the design he has been wearing since the ceremonial eating of the cycad fruit. As soon as this hap-
[301] pens the men paint another design on his body (Pl. 42D), put new cockatoo
[302] feathers in his hair, and many cane armlets on his arms. The initiate wears these decorations, continuously renewing his body paint, until the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, which takes place at the beginning of the *kulama* ceremony about four months later.

3. THE KULAMA CEREMONY

(1) *Collecting and Eating the Edible Yams*

Toward the end of January, when the wet season was approaching its climax, the *kulama* leader instructed the women to go into the jungle, locate a number
[262] of the young plants of two species of edible yams, a long one, *jurugani*, and a short one, *karawani* and show them to him so that he would know when they would be ready to eat.

When some weeks later, the leader estimated that the yams were fit for digging and the tall, annual grass was about to shed its seed, he called the people together and told them that the *kulama* rituals would start in a few days.[82]

[81] Spencer, 1928, Pl. ix, No. 4, illustrates a *mariguani*.

[82] From the time of this announcement until the finish of the *kulama* ceremony, no
[834] fully initiated man, must sleep with his wife. If he does, he will be attacked by *taini*, the mysterious *kulama* sickness, and die. I did not find out the characteristics of the *kulama* sickness.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(8) *Cutting up the Yams*

881 After the yams had been in the oven for about one and a half hours, the
252 men gathered around the oven, felt it, and, after a short discussion began to scrape the warm sand away from the paper-bark covering. As they did so, they pressed handfuls of the warm sand against their elbows, chest, shoulders and knees, believing that this sand made their joints strong and supple (Pl. 45c).

When the paper-bark, carefully removed strip by strip, exposed the
881 cooked yams, the women, who had been quietly standing on the outside of the *milimika* murmured reverently, "Ah, *kulama*, ah, *kulama*." Taking the hot yams from the oven each man held them against his chest, and his
[827] head. This they said would give them added strength and vitality. The women although they did not participate in this ritual, sent their children into the *milimika* to have the yams pressed against their bodies so that they would grow to healthy and strong adults.

As the men peeled the yams, exposing the soft, yellow flesh, they sang
[177] about preparing and eating various kinds of food belonging to the white
[533] man,[88] "cutting bread for a meal, carving steak from a bullock and roasting it on the coals, cooking the tongue of a bullock, eating corn beef", and so on. When all the yams were peeled they were left on a sheet of bark whilst
[412] everyone had a meal and a sleep. In the late afternoon the *kulama* men started
[177] to slice the yams (cockle shells, *irakapi*, were used before the advent of steel). As they did so, the men mashed up some of the sliced *kulama* between the palms of the hands, mixed this with red ochre, and each rubbed it on his hair, face, whiskers and body. This, they believed, aided by the earlier rituals, would ensure them good health until the next *kulama*.

(9) *Initiation of the Kilipaniatis and Mikinatrinas*

The sliced yams were put in the basket, and stood in the centre of the *milimika*. A *kulama* man walked into the forest, and collected a length of flexible vine. Returning to the *milimika* he bent the vine round the necks of the male *Marukumunis* and the female *Marukumuningas* in such a way that it could not be removed. These initiates were then *Kilipaniatis* and *Kilipan-*
[301] *iatingas* respectively. This neck ornament, which had a number of cords hanging from it, is called a *mariguani* (Pl. 42c). After these initiates had been further decorated with bark armlets, *tjunguti*[89] (Pl. 42D and G), and cane

[88] No doubt, in times past, they sang about abundant supplies of their own favourite foods.

[89] Spencer, 1928, illustrates the bark armlets, *tjunguti*, on Pl. XI and the belt, *akirini*, on Pl. IX, No. 1.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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arm rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), they seated themselves outside the *milimika*, but took no part in the subsequent rituals. 881 [301]

Other fully initiated men led initiates of the *Wadjeniasi* grade to the *wuringulus* tree, where the yams had been stored on the second morning, told them to sit down and erected a low screen of boughs in front so that the initiates could not be seen from the *milimika*.

The *Mikingulas* first painted the bodies of the *Wadjeniasi* initiates with yellow paint, then decorated them with many cane rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), on their upper arms, hair-string belts, *ularimi*, around their waists and goose-feather balls, *tokwiangas* (Pl. 31B), on their necks, arms and wrists (see Pl. 42J). This ritual admitted them to the grade of *Mikinatrina* and *Mikinatrinings* respectively. 881 302 [301]

After the *Wadjeniasi* initiates were decorated, the senior grades of the *kulama* painted their faces, bodies, hair and beards with elaborate designs in red, yellow, black and white. In one design, peculiar to the *kulama*, the aborigines covered one side of their faces with red paint, and the other side with black,[87] the two colours being separated with a line of yellow (Pl. 42M). The men painted a complex design, usually in red and white on their hair and beards.[88] Some of the men also decorated their children.

The leader of the *kulama* then assembled everyone to see the *Mikinatrina* initiates perform their first dance, which they had been quietly practising for some time. 535 881

At a given signal, each *Mikinatrina* stood up in turn and, gaily decorated with body paint and coloured ceremonial ornaments, and holding a flat fighting club, *jurunila*, in either hand, performed his first dance. As each initiate danced, the assembled people applauded, slapping their buttocks in approbation of both the dancing and the appearance of the initiates. [201]

When the *Mikinatrinas* had finished their dance, the female initiates, the *Mikinatrinings*, similarly decorated, but without the clubs, individually performed their dances. Still painted and wearing their decorations, the male and female *Mikinatrinas* seated themselves outside of the *milimika* beside the newly created *Kilipaniatis*.

After the initiates had finished their dances, several of the *Mikingulas* entered the *milimika* and chanted another series of secular songs. [533]

[87] Spencer, 1928, p. 674, who saw a *kulama* ceremony during 1911, refers to this curious form of facial decoration.

[88] The method of colouring the hair with intricate designs is of some interest. The aboriginal, loading his fingers and thumb with wet ground-up ochre, pinched the hair, instead of rubbing the colour into it. By this means, the operator was able to keep sharp well-defined edges to the design, an effect that could not be achieved in any other way.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Personal Decoration.

Plaited armlets of vegetable fibre are worn on both arms, by both sexes, young and old. They are made of a number of central spiral turns of fibre, around which a single outer layer of flexible vegetable ribbon is plaited from either side and through the centre. The armlet is usually painted over with yellow ochre and is worn above the elbow. 301 [531]

Corrobboree-armlets are constructed in the shape of a flat ring of plaited vegetable fibre, from 10 to 20 centimetres in outside diameter (*vide* Plate XV, Figs. 4 and 6). The ring, which is from 2 to 3 centimetres wide and from a ½ to ¾ centimetre thick, is neatly coloured on the outside with ochre in a regular fashion. From a point on the circumference depends a bundle of from seven to fifteen twisted strings of animal or human hair, 30 centimetres long, which ends in a flat oval mass of beeswax, studded on the outside with red seeds of the "gequirity" or so-called "Northern Territory bean" (*Abrus praecatorius*). A similar mass of beeswax and beans surrounds the point of attachment of this tassel.

Special corrobboree arm-decorations[1] are constructed on rather more elaborate lines. A piece of bark (*Eucalyptus sp.*), about 66 centimetres long and 10 broad, is bent once upon itself into a simple loop and the open end kept together by stitching the edges for a distance of some 12 centimetres down (*vide* Plate VII, Figs. 2 and 4). The united end is fenestrated; one oblong space (measuring 6 by 2 centimetres) is cut out some 3 centimetres from the top, and beneath this, at a similar distance from its lower edge, two squares, whose sides are equivalent in length to the smaller side of the oblong. The top end of the united portion, and the top and bottom edges of the oblong and squares, are hemmed with an overlapping crossstitch. One side edge only of the loop is hemmed with a simple backward and forward "run-on" stitch. The lateral edges of the windows and the septum between the lower squares are fixed by transverse winding. The material used for hemming and winding is a light cane obtained from a creeping plant. It is evident that the different methods of stitching have to do with the fibrous structure of the bark; the cross-thread would tend to keep the stitches from pulling out along the fibres, as would be the case in straight up-and-down stitching. Additional complexity is given the ornament by eight thin sticks (about 15 centimetres long) which are pointed at both ends. One of these is stuck vertically into the bark at either end of the top edge. Two others pierce the bark at right angles, immediately below the lower outer corner of each square window; one of them being just below that corner of each of the squares, respectively. At either end of these transverse pieces, another stick is fixed vertically by binding with vegetable string, at about 3 centimetres from the ends. The ornament is coloured on the outside with red and white earth-paints. The ground colour of the upper half is red; the hem stitches and the affixed sticks are white. The lower half, or looped portion, bears four white transverse bands 301 322 301 531

[1] Apparently also used during mourning ceremonies.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

301 bordered with red. Each of the intervening spaces is again sub-divided into two
531 squares at the centre (and a "half-square" at the sides) by three vertical, white lines bordered with red. The squares and "half-squares" are shaded diagonally with from four to six lines passing downwards and away from the central line in the topmost group, and upwards and away from the centre in the two lower groups of
[171] squares. The combined effect resembles the windmill or "wanningi" pattern common throughout Australia. The shading is all in white on one side, but red and white in alternate squares on the opposite side.

301 In another type of this arm decoration, which is also made of bark, the upper
322 united portion is shorter than in the previous case (*vide* Plate VII, Figs. 1 and 3). The top edge is concave and only one oblong window is cut beneath it. The sides have been united by hem-stitching and by the insertion of a few wooden pins which answer the same purpose as rivets. The edges are thickly plastered with beeswax. As in the previous case, the stitches (and the plaster also) are continued only along one side of the loop. A fairly stout rod of wood projects vertically from either end of the top concave edge. Shorter rods project laterally from either top corner of the loop. To the end of each of these rods a plume of
[237 white is attached with beeswax. Cockatoo feathers have been chosen and they are
531] fastened by their distal ends so that the fluffy portions are exposed. A number of twisted strands of fur and vegetable fibre pass from the extremity of one horizontal rod diagonally upwards to the base of the vertical rod above, along it to the top, thence horizontally across to the top of the other vertical rod, whence it is continued the same way down the other side to the extremity of the opposite horizontal rod. Beeswax retains these strands in position at the rod-tops, while more strands, wound horizontally from the base of one vertical rod to the other, and also round the base of each, make the former strands secure there. The painted design in this
301 case consists of one large cruciform figure on either side of the looped portion, the
531 arms being modified at the base in a manner suggestive of a snake design. One arm of the cross is white, the other yellow, both being bordered with red. The intervening spaces are shaded red and yellow, the constituent lines being parallel and straight up-and-down in the upper segment and crossed in the lower.

532 *Corrobboree-mask.*—An interesting object is what I take to be a corrobboree-mask (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 5). As I did not see it in use and did not receive the specimen until it was too late to make inquiries, I cannot, with certainty, describe it as such. The object represents an oval structure, 15 centimetres long and 8 wide, which encloses two connected circular rims resembling a solid pair of spectacles. The internal framework is made of split cane, bound together with vegetable strands. The oval portion is covered with human hair string, wound around it and knotted along the outer edge after the modern "button-hole-stitch" fashion. The rims are broad and covered with beeswax. A circle of the red beans of *Abrus precatorius*, embedded in the wax, surrounds the "eye-holes" on the front side. At one of the lateral extremities, a band of five human hair strings emerges from a cylindrical mass of beeswax and is surrounded, at 6 centimetres distance,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

The first plate reproduced contains a group composed of five imprints of the left hand of a native (Plate XIX, Fig. 1). The fingers are wide apart; the wrists of the two lowest hands seem very narrow in proportion, but that is due to the fact that they did not lie in close contact with the surface when the pigment was squirted against it. 531

In the lower corner on the right of the reproduction stands a single-masted sailing craft, intended to represent a small European pearling or fishing-boat. The former class of boats have long been in the habit of passing through Apsley Strait on account of the shelter afforded and the chances of procuring fresh water close to the shores of either island. 532

Plate XIX, Fig. 2, is the lower continuation of the proceeding. The sailing craft just described is noticed on the right. Below it is the picture of a frog. Special features of this design are firstly the two circular lateral prominences on the head representing the large eyes and, secondly, the inaccuracy in regard to the number of toes. The smear on the left hind leg, resembling a caudal appendage, is accidental.

The fourth design (Plate XX) is that of a double-masted pearling-lugger[1] in full sail. The proportion and neatness of execution of these designs of sailing crafts are excellent indeed. The hulk and sails of the latter figure are drawn in white pipe-clay and its masts in red ochre.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate VII.

Figs. 1 and 3. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with fur strings and cockatoo feathers. ¼ natural size. 301 531

Figs. 2 and 4. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with pointed sticks. ¼ natural size.

Plate VIII.

Figs. 1 and 2. Water-carriers, made of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). ¼ natural size. 415

Figs. 3, 4, 5 and 6. Food-carriers, made of bark; Figs. 5 and 6 with ochre drawings. ⅛ natural size. 531

Plate IX.

Figs. 1, 2, 3 and 4. Throwing-sticks and clubs. ¼ natural size. 411

Fig. 5. A collection of spears from Bathurst Island. $\frac{1}{12}$ natural size. 531

by filling the mouth with charcoal powder if the device is to be black, if red with red ochre powder, damping the wall where the mark is to be left, and placing the palm of the hand against it, with fingers stretched out; the charcoal or ochre powder is then blown against the back of the hand; when it is withdrawn, it leaves the space occupied by the hand and fingers clean while the surrounding portions of the wall are all black or red, as the case may be." (Central Australian Natives.)

[1] *Vide* figure in *Report Government Geologist and Staff*, 1905, Adelaide, By authority, p. 14.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait, Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{16}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Balers made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

314 396 137 Fig. 1. Forest scene on Bathurst Island. From the stringy-barked eucalyptus on the left side of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe. Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
501 Fig. 2. Various types of paddles in use on Bathurst Island. About $\frac{1}{16}$ natural size.

PLATE XIII.

764 Figs. 1 and 2. Distant and near view of a native grave, surrounded by five carved and painted posts, Bathurst Island. Note the cleared space and the position of grave, viz.: at the junction between open woodland and thicket. A tall Bathurst Islander in seen in Fig. 2.

PLATE XIV.

415 Fig. 1. A melon-shell (*Melo diadema*) used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Fig. 2. A *Fusus priceæ* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 764 Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e. Painted and carved posts of native grave shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XV.

415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cypræa eximiaeformis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
317 386 Fig. 2. Lumps of yellow ochre (on the left), white pipe-clay (in the centre), and red ochre (on the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus australis*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
301 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (?). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 532 764 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate VII.

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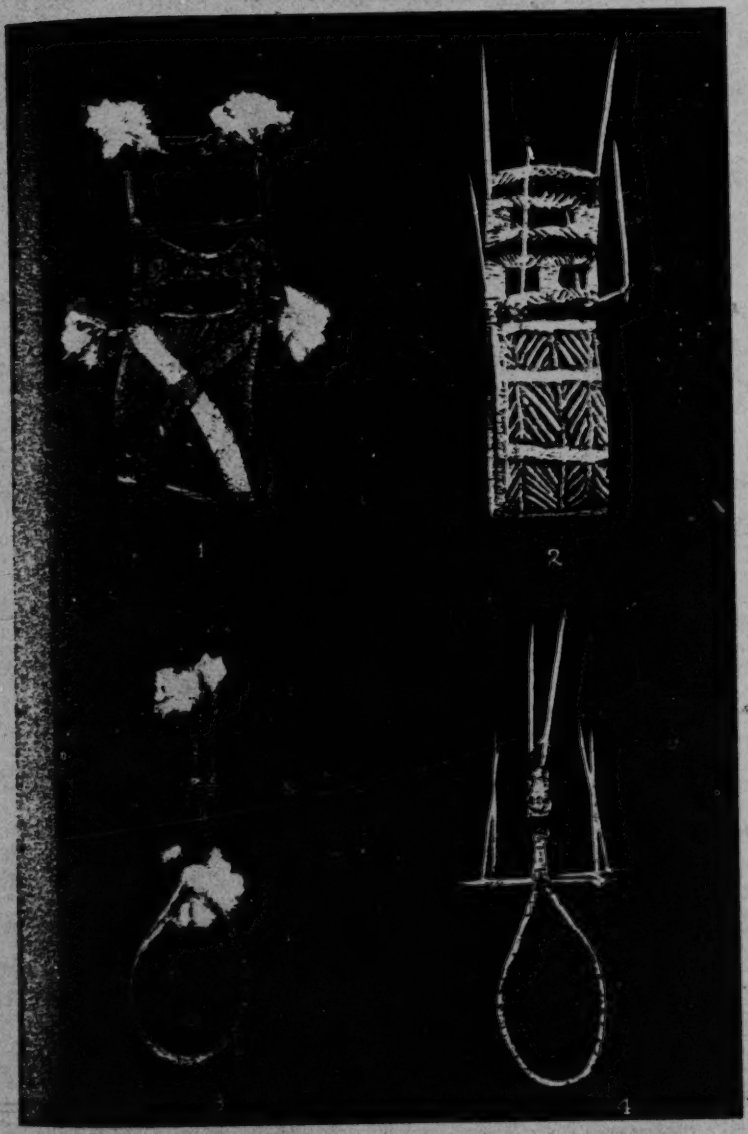


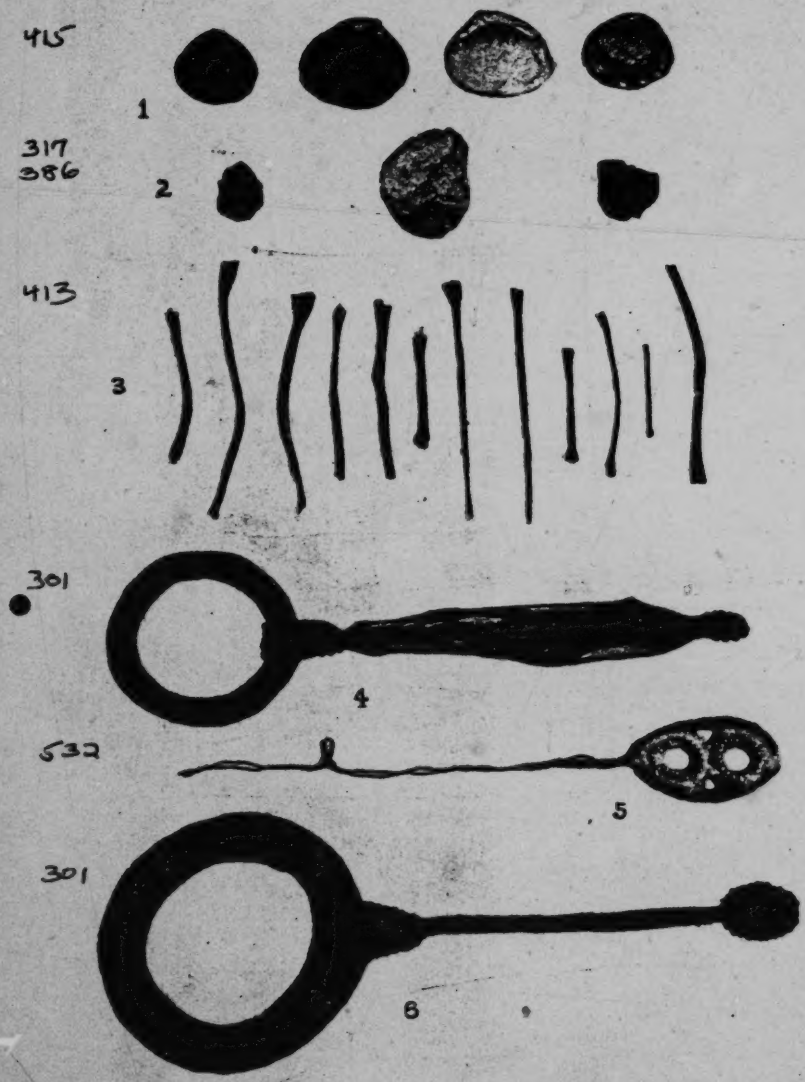
NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 1]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 371 - ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XV.



NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 9]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE P. 322 — ANALYST]

6 :Fry D-5 (1913) 1950 OI20 Tiwi OI20

J

A Bathurst Island Initiation Rite.

Sir:

000 Not many white men can have had the experience of being tried by a native court. The following story may therefore be of interest.

114 I had visited a native camp in northern Bathurst Island in March 1913, and had made the acquaintance of an adolescent native boy called Cooper. He was smeared from head to foot with red ochre and wore a collar made of a thin piece of wood bent round his neck with the ends tied together with hair string behind with a strand of string about six inches long hanging down his back terminating in a blob of gum.

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[301]

[302]

[p. 167-A]

881 He was in the *kolloponiati* stage of initiation grade and was forbidden in the camp. One [301] day in great secrecy he showed me some bark arm bracelets known as *tuguti*. A [114] month later I was on a Malay lugger in the same region and some natives came out to the lugger in canoes. They told me that Cooper was to take the ceremony for his next degree that afternoon. I persuaded the master of the lugger to put me ashore on Papiau beach, opposite old Fort Dundas. 123 The natives were unwilling to take me with them at first, but finally consented. We walked inland for about four miles and met the main group, all painted for the ceremony. Cooper was said to be out in the mangroves, but came in shortly after about midday. He then went out again for a sugar bag. Having learned a few words of the language I attempted conversation. After a time I attempted to ask something about Cooper's *tuguti*. Immediately the cheerful group about me hushed and everyone seemed very concerned. They had gained the impression that I had stolen the *tuguti*. I tried to explain that I had only looked at them. About twenty of the men seated themselves in a circle and proceeded to discuss the problem. I overheard a few recognizable words at times, *ardjidit waitamanna*, no good white men, *paltoa*, dead, *yergobai*, alligator. I was sitting meanwhile with my back to a pandanus facing a salt water inlet. An emissary from the circle visited me from time to time and questioned me anxiously about what I had done with the *tuguti*. One humourist came over several times, tapped me on the shoulder, and grinningly pointed to the water, saying *yergobai*. Suddenly the discussion stopped, everybody stood up, and cordial relations were resumed as if nothing had happened.

881 Cooper returned about 4 p.m. He washed and was smeared all over with red ochre [343] except the upper part of the face. Mean-

[P. 167-B]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 0120 Tiwi 0120

726 One man will then take a step or two forward, hold up a hand, and stamp vigorously, and all the warriors of his side will copy his actions. "Let 'em all come!" is the attitude adopted. If the enemy does not start hostilities at once, they throw their spears down and jump about like wallabies to show their contempt for the sluggard's marksmanship. They are, however, careful not to get too far away from their own weapons, on which they pounce immediately the first spear is hurled by their opponents. The air is soon thick with flying spears and war-clubs, and the exchange goes on until some unlucky warrior is really hurt, when the engagement ceases.

727 BOTH sides gather round, howling their dismay, until repairs
[781] to the injured have been effected. A red-dyed ball of goose-down, which is hung from the neck by a string woven of human hair, is held before the mouth as a charm to divert the missiles, but the warriors owe their immunity from death or serious injury to their own remarkable eyesight and to the dexterity with which they evade, or turn to one side, the hurtling weapons of the enemy. The war-clubs used by the islanders are far more
411 difficult to dodge than the spears, which come straight at you.

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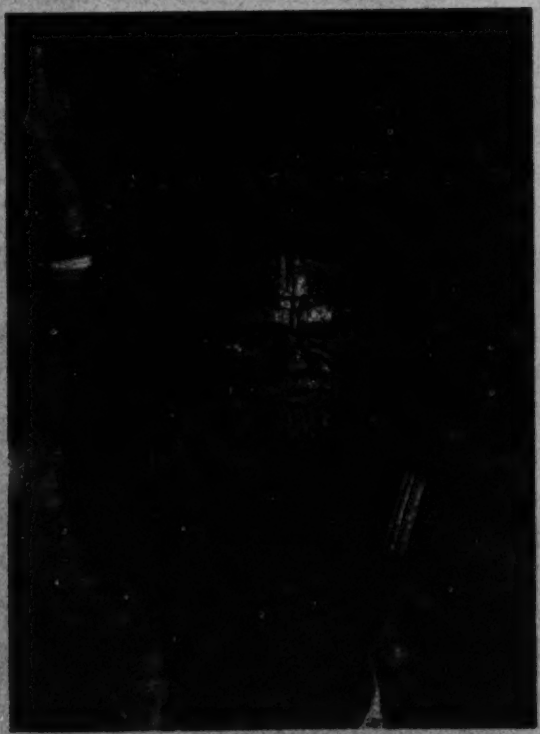

A BATHURST ISLANDER BRANDISHES HIS CLUB.

The war-club is merely a short, bent stick with a knob at one end; but, spinning in the air like a boomerang, it can be thrown for amazing distances by the islanders, considerably over a hundred yards, and not far off two hundred. This weapon is not thrown straight at an opponent, but at a mass, or a tuft of

[P. 17(A)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Top to bottom: Timalarua, the canoe maker; Tiwi spears; mourning ceremony around graveposts.

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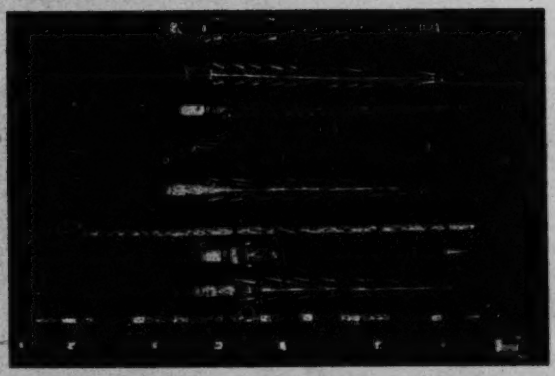

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[p. xi]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

matter might end there. Or the old man might let matters rest until the time of the next big gathering of people at a funeral or at the *kolema* rituals, and then revive the issue under such public circumstances that the accused young man could not slip away unpunished. If he followed this second course, the old man went to the gathering covered from head to foot in white paint, the Tiwi uniform for anybody who came in anger and intended to pick a fight with somebody. The decision between these two lines of action lay, of course, with the old man, and while that decision was to some extent determined by how vindictive and revengeful he felt, nonetheless it was also influenced by how this dispute was related to all the other feuds, disputes, deals, marriage exchanges, and so forth, in which both parties were already involved. Like a good lawyer in our own culture, the old man had to consider, before he took the matter to court, who the young man was and who his friends and relatives were, and had to ask himself whether in seeking vengeance for the blow to his pride he might not be doing himself more political harm than the injury was worth.

In arriving at his decision, the old man was influenced to some extent also by another variable, the attitude of the young man. If the alleged offense occurred only once and the young man denied it and thereafter kept his distance, the accuser would probably let the matter drop. Offenders were very rarely caught *in flagrante*, and the evidence of seduction was almost always circumstantial or hearsay. In every case there was some element of doubt as to whether the right young male was being accused or whether the whole story had not been invented by some of the old wives out of sheer spite toward a young wife. The old man had to take such factors into consideration, not out of any abstract sense of justice, but because, naturally, he didn't like to be made a fool of, either by young men or his own spiteful old wives. But he was most suspicious and unbelieving of his own flighty young wives, and sometimes the accused young man was defiant and persistent in his attentions to the same young wife, or wives. In effect, such a young man was daring the old husband to do his worst. Such continued defiance of the seniority system could not be permitted; it became a case not of simple seduction but of subversive activity, since it was a threat to the whole social structure of the tribe, centered as that was around the marriage of old men to young women. When confronted by such action, a Tiwi elder said (as people of other cultures might), "What would happen if everybody did that? We'd have complete anarchy and free love." Hence an old husband, so defied, was almost duty bound not just to seek satisfaction for the private injury done to himself, but to defend the public weal by hauling the offender before the bar of public opinion and denouncing him before as large a crowd as possible, as a public enemy. If the situation became so flagrant that he could not wait until the next big funeral or the next *kolema* gathering, he began calling in surrounding camps or going himself, dressed in white paint, to summon them to assist him in meting out public justice to the violator of the system. When a sufficient number of upholders of the right (that is, senior heads of households) had been collected together, the usual one-sided duel (see below, Chapter 4) was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 relatives, soon caught up with them. Several cases of such elopements occurred
583 during the period of fieldwork, including the case of one young couple (Peanut and Jumbo's wife) who made repeated attempts to elope over a period of several years. But despite the relaxation of standards that white contact had
[524] brought, as long as they remained on the islands these violators of the system were soon forced back into conformity by outraged public opinion and its punitive sanctions. Unless he fled to the mainland with his girl, the young bachelor who stole an old man's young wife had to restore her sooner or later to her rightful husband. Under pre-white conditions they could not flee to the mainland; if they tried, they both probably drowned on the way or at least were never heard of again.

Thus the isolation of the Tiwi made the rule of the gerontocracy much
182 more absolute, and the enforcement of it much more effective than was possible
691 for any of the mainland tribes where violators of the rules could skip across the border. Tiwi bachelors had to be satisfied, by and large, with casual and temporary liaisons and even in these, because of the constant suspicion of the old husbands and the constant spying and scandalmongering of the old wives, they had to be prepared to be often caught and, when caught, to be punished.
[578] Thus we come to another of the main emphases in Tiwi culture—the enormous frequency of disputes, fights, duels, and war parties arising directly or indirectly out of cases of seduction. If we may call this area of life the legal area, then over 90 percent of legal affairs were matters in which women were in some way involved.

THE DUEL The Tiwi formula for handling seduction was very
627 straightforward and clear-cut in its formal outline. Since senior men had young
684 wives and young men had not, seduction was necessarily viewed as an offense by a young man against a senior man. Hence the charge was always laid by the senior and the younger man was always the defendant.[1] At night in camp the accuser hurled his charges at the offender. We described earlier the alternatives available at this stage to both parties. Two of those alternatives were for the old man to press the matter to a public "trial," either the next day, if the camp was already a large one, or else on the next occasion when both men were present in a big gathering.

The basic shape of all Tiwi trials was standardized in the form that we have been calling the duel. Everybody present—men, women, children, and dogs—formed a rough circle in an open space, sitting or standing according to their degree of excitement at the moment. At one end stood the accuser,
[302 the old man, covered from head to foot in white paint, with his ceremonial
411] spears in one hand and a bundle of the more useful hunting spears in the

[1] Under pre-white conditions this had to be so. After the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, some young men through Mission manipulation get a young wife at an age that would have been impossible earlier. This resulted in an occasional case around the Mission where a *young* husband charged a man older than himself with seducing his wife. The resulting duel, with an older man as defendant, was regarded by the Tiwi as both embarrassing and ludicrous, perhaps analogous to the average American's attitude toward female professional wrestlers. (See Hart 1954 for a case of this sort, the duel of Bob v. Louis.)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

other. At the opposite end stood the defendant, with little or no paint on him, perhaps holding a hunting spear or two in his hand (a sign of insolence), perhaps holding only throwing sticks (less defiant, since the stick was an inferior weapon more appropriate to young men), or perhaps entirely weaponless (a sign of proper humility and the deference to his seniors that all bachelors ought to show in such situations). The accuser, with many gestures, particularly with much stamping of the feet and chewing of the beard, told the young man in detail precisely what he and all right-minded members of the community thought of him. This angry, loud harangue went into minute detail, not only about the actual offense, but the whole life career of the defendant, and paid particular attention to occasions in the past when the old man even remotely, or some of his relatives, even more remotely, had performed kindnesses toward either the young man or some of his relatives. It is difficult to summarize briefly one of these harangues, but the general formula, subject to much variation by each individual accuser, appeared to be the building up of as much contrast as possible between the criminal or antisocial character of the young man's actions and the fact that he was a member of a network of interpersonal relationships in which mutual aid and reciprocal obligations were essential. The Tiwi orators, of course, did not put the matter in such abstract terms. They listed the long catalogue of people who had done things for the young man since his birth, and for his ancestors and relatives, until the catalogue took in practically the whole tribe—past, present, and future. And what had he done to repay his obligations to all these people? "Why, the miserable, ungrateful wretch spends his time hanging around my camp, etc., etc. And not only my camp, but last year it was widely believed that he was indulging in similar actions around the camp of my esteemed fellow-elder, So and So." We do not think that we are overintellectualizing the content of these harangues if we say that they involved the old man's reminding the young man of his debt to society, and his attempting to convey the idea that social life needed mutual aid and trust between all its members.

After twenty minutes or so of this sociological abuse and blame pinning, the old man threw aside his ceremonial spears and began to throw his hunting spears at the defendant. This active phase of the duel conformed to a stereotyped pattern which in some respects resembled baseball. The old man stood about ten feet farther away from the young man than the pitcher stands from the plate. The young man had to avoid being hit by the spears. To do this he was permitted to jump from side to side or into the air, or to duck, but he was expected always to land on approximately the same spot as he had been standing on when the first spear was thrown. Thus there was no marked strike zone, but an implied one. If the accused jumped well away from the strike zone, he was jeered by the crowd. If the old man was wild, he was jeered too, but more respectfully. Under such rules a modern baseball hitter, having no bat in his hand to worry about, would almost never be hit by a pitched ball, and the Tiwi young men were similarly never likely to be hit by an old man's spears. The main danger was the spear that pitched in the dirt. Although clearly outside the strike zone and hence an indication that the old man was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

628 of nondelivery of bestowed daughters, or other types of broken promises. Some of these cases had been going on for years, and settlement of them at the level of the individual duel had failed. The aggrieved individuals in the two Bathurst Island bands therefore pooled their grievances, persuaded many of their relatives and friends who were not aggrieved to join them, and a large party of men of all ages set off for the Mandiimbula territory.

This party, comprising about thirty fighting men all heavily armed and [302] all wearing the white paint indicative of anger and hostile intent, was a "war" party, and its coming to their territory was recognized as such by the Mandiimbula. On arrival at the place where the latter, duly warned of its approach, had gathered, the war party announced its presence. Both sides then exchanged a few insults and agreed to meet formally the next day in an open space where there was plenty of room. After a night mostly spent by both sides in individual visiting and renewing old acquaintances, the two armies met next morning in battle array, with the thirty Tiklauila-Rangwila warriors drawn up at one end of the clearing, and about sixty local warriors at the other end. Immediately the familiar patterns of the duel imposed themselves. 537 A senior individual on one side began a harangue directed at an individual 628 on the other. When he ran out of breath, another individual began his complaint. Since each accused Mandiimbula replied individually to the charges made against him, the whole proceeding remained at the level of mutual charges and replies between pairs of individuals. Angry old men on both sides often seemed to be trying to find a basis that would justify or provoke a general attack by one group upon the other, but always failed to find it because of the particularity of the charges. The rules of Tiwi procedure compelled the accuser to specify the sources of his charges and his anger, and these always [619] turned out to be directed not at the Mandiimbula band, but at one, or at most two or three, individual members of that band. And when another old man took the center of attention, his anger would be directed at quite different 628 individuals. Hence when spears began to be thrown, they were thrown by individuals at individuals for reasons based on individual disputes. Unlike the seduction duels, however, these duels occurred mostly between two senior men, and the danger of a direct hit was much reduced because of the poor marksmanship of both parties. On the other hand, the danger of somebody getting hurt was increased because a fight between two old men was likely to spread as other old men were drawn into it to support one or the other side—in which case, a wild melee occurred with badly thrown spears flying in all directions. This was probably a good thing, because soon somebody was bound to be hit, thus ending the fight. Not infrequently the person hit was some innocent noncombatant or one of the screaming old women who weaved through the [147] fighting men, yelling obscenities at everybody, and whose reflexes for dodging spears were not as fast as those of the men.

As soon as somebody was wounded, even a seemingly irrelevant crone, fighting stopped immediately until the implications of this new incident could be assessed by both sides. For the crone was never really irrelevant; she was somebody's mother and somebody else's wife and somebody else's sister and

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to marry the boy's sisters, an easily met requirement since girls were "married" so much earlier than their brothers. Very senior and successful men did not bother as a rule with initiation sponsorship because it took too much of their valuable time. Hence in practice, most boys at the *Marukumarni* age were taken in hand by a group of men around 40 years of age who were at least betrothed to, if not already married to, the boys' sisters. Such men justified or rationalized their actions by stating that, as the husbands of the boy's sisters, they wanted their little brother-in-law to be made into a man in proper form. In fact, they were usually given the job by the boy's father, who, having bestowed daughters upon them, regarded it as a legitimate request to make of them. It was the duty of male cross-cousins to initiate their wives' little brothers, but in true Tiwi style the father had to request them to do it, and they counted it in their tallies of what they owed him and what he owed them.

Though the father instigated and stage managed the whole affair, he and his household were always thunderstruck when the cross-cousins—armed to the teeth and painted like a war party—arrived at his camp one evening and proceeded to carry off forcibly the yelling 14-year-old.[6] He had to be dragged literally from the bosom of his family, with his mother screaming and trying to hide him and the father pretending to resist the invaders of his household. From then on, until the final stage (*Mikingula*) at age 24-26, the boy was completely under the authority of the men who carried him off. During these approximately ten to twelve years, he spent much of the time alone with them in the bush where the group lived a monastic existence, as a small band of isolates, speaking to no one (especially not to females) and obtaining their own food. During these phases the tutors guarded the boy as if he were literally a prisoner and taught him all the things—chiefly ritual matters—that grown men should know. At intervals the youth was allowed to go home, on week-end leaves so to speak, but when at home he had to observe all the silences, the modest demeanor, the taboos and the austerities of the isolated life. In monastic language, he was under a strict rule of obedience to his tutors.

Breaking in on the long years of austerity, spent either in seclusion in the bush or in *pukimani* at home, were periodic collective ceremonies when the youth was ritually advanced from one stage of initiation to the next.[7] These were public ceremonies, witnessed by large crowds, and the more important of such transition ceremonies took place in January and February when the *kolema* yams were ripe. At these ceremonies the youths were handled in batches or classes, all the boys of one grade being ritually advanced to the next grade, and the top grade or final class being formally graduated as fully initiated men. The crucial grade—when the pubic hairs were forcibly pulled out and he was at last allowed to talk back a little to his tutors—was usually reached by a youth somewhere between his eighteenth and twentieth years, but

[6] See Hart 1955 for some further details of the tearing away of the boy from the bosom of his family.

[7] A full list of initiation grade names and their duration in years is given in Hart 1951.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he still had six years to go after that, not finishing the final grade of *Mikingula* until somewhere past the age of 24 or 25.

In contrast with the mainland initiation ceremonies, we think the most interesting point about Tiwi initiation resides not in the formal ceremonies but in the removal from the food-production units, for long periods of the year, of all the young males between the ages of 14 and 25. It is true that they did not spend *all* their time in seclusion and that after the age of twenty they remained mostly in their household camps, where they contributed to the household food production. Nonetheless, it remains clear that only a very well-off tribe could afford to allow so much time off from food production to all its young hunters. Tiwi fathers, it would seem, in arranging for the initiation of their sons to begin just when they were becoming productive hunters, were willing to sacrifice that productivity for less tangible advantages. The youths, secluded and guarded in the bush while getting an education, were not only out of the work force but were also out of the predatory-bachelor force. A Tiwi elder made sacrifices to "send his sons to college" but he breathed easier to know that the sons of the other elders were all there too.

All males without exception had to go through the full initiation cycle, and from the time of their first forcible seizure at the age of 14-15 to their final graduation at 24-26, they were in a state of *pukimani* and their personal names were strictly taboo to everybody in the tribe. Each youth was referred to only by his grade name, *Marukumarni* for the first year, *Mikingula* for the last four years, and so on. And here we return finally to a point which was mentioned much earlier—namely, the complete unimportance in tribal eyes of all males below the age of twenty-five. Until they had completed the final stage of initiation, Tiwi males were still boys; they did not even have names. Occasionally, when collecting genealogies and coming upon a reference to a young man, the innocent anthropologist would ask, "Is he married?" In tones of the deepest contempt the informant would reply, "That kid, how could he be married? He's still *Mikingula*." Though *Mikingula* was the stage typically reached by a man at about 20-21 and lasted for the next four years, to the Tiwi it was still a stage in the life of a boy. Not until he had finished as *Mikingula* could he step out into the world and life of men. How he spent the years immediately after finishing initiation decided how soon some senior man would think sufficiently highly of him to aid him in acquiring his first ancient widow.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[FACING p. 3]
[FRONTISPIECE]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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302

A

B

C

D

PLATE I. *Artists of the Tiwi*
A, Pulumbuwi; B, Inbidjumeri; C, Tjamalumpua; D, Mokumerinin.

[p. 20 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

412 short, cylindrical stick, about three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter. This was dipped in the colour and transferred to the painting surface with the brush held as in Fig. 2B.

FIG. 2. *Methods of Holding Brushes*

4. THE ARTISTS

531 As with other aboriginal groups with whom I have worked in Central and
[463] Northern Australia, there is no special artist class; all aboriginal men and
[302] women of the Tiwi, would, on occasions, be required to paint designs on the bodies of one or another of their relatives, or on objects, particularly those associated with the *pukamani* ceremony.

Some men, however, were looked upon as being more skilled than others in some particular field, i.e., cutting and decorating the burial poles, or the ceremonial spears, painting the large bark baskets, or the bodies of men and women who take part in the *pukamani* or *kulama* ceremonies.

On Pl. 1 are four men who were regarded as good craftsmen and artists.

Pulaninbawi (Pl. 1A), hard-working and meticulous in all he did, produced the unusual *pukamani* pole (Pl. 35); two other poles as human figures (Pl. 37A, B; 37E, F), and a number of bark paintings; Pl. 13B, D, and Pl. 14C, D, being typical.

Inbidjarmeri (Pl. 1B), being fully employed by the Superintendent of the nearby settlement, was unable to make bark paintings for me. He was most expert in carving and painting the beautiful, multi-barked ceremonial spears. Pl. 32B is his work. He was also in great demand for decorating the performers for the *pukamani* and *kulama* ceremonies. Pl. 28E and Pl. 28B are examples of his craftsmanship in this field.

115 *Tjamalampua* (Pl. 1C) and *Malumerinia* (Pl. 1D) are two men to whom I

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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764

A B C

D E

PLATE 23. *The Pukamuni Rituals*

A, Pulanimbuwi decorated for Burial Rituals; B, Pulanimbuwi mourning; C, Rite of Wandiatapinda; D, Final Scene at Grave; E, Pulanimbuwi being washed.

[p. 44 b]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

natural features. At *v*, *v*, etc. (right), are her piles of yellow ochre; at *g* (left), her baskets of red ochre, and at *aa*, *aa* (upper right), the cockle shells in which she mixed the colours. These deposits of ochres are still used by aborigines to decorate themselves.

Other natural features created by *Kudjatumpi* are: *u* (lower right), Bonkaitji Creek, on the banks of which she placed many trees as homes for the opossums; *ff* (centre) a reef under the water, made from the stones which the mythical woman threw away whilst digging for yams, and the dots on the background, the forests of trees growing on the highlands at Bonkaitji. A hill, *dd* (upper right), is the place where the March-fly woman stood when she created the watercourses, Bailai-intara, *cc*, and Pimaitji, *bb*. The latter is a tributary of Bonkaidji creek.

Pl. 18c, one side of a female *pukamuni* basket (indicated by the square openings), pictures the totemic place of the March-fly woman, at the Kudjatumpi lagoon.

The line of rectangles, *b*, *b*, and *d*, *d*, *d*, represents the water in the lagoon; *a*, *a*, *a*, the patches of sand on the bottom; and *c*, *c*, etc., are white cliffs on the adjacent sea-coast. The vertical lines, *f*, and the horizontal lines, *e*, indicate the water running from the Kudjatumpi lagoon over the beach, into the sea.

DISCUSSION

Although this research on the creation period and its related phases must be regarded as incomplete, the data gathered does provide a general picture of the beliefs of the Tiwi in their totemic heroes, and the relationship of those beliefs to the topography of their land. Not being able to visit any of the totemic places, their position on the map (Fig. 1), must also be regarded as approximate.

It is to be hoped that, before the Tiwi lose their culture, some ethnologist, with ample time, will both fully investigate their remarkable culture and visit each of their totemic localities to collect, in detail, the mythical story of the area and its associated natural features.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing. 768 [428] [783] [825]

(2) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulanimbuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers". 764

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[53] from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs. 302 751 775

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[54] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground 764

[53] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[54] After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditis* fear the light. 123 775

For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 and dug the grave, which was about six feet long and five feet six inches deep. But when, in the middle of the afternoon, four men appeared, carrying the body, in a fully extended position, and placed it beside the unfinished grave, a number of women, painted all over in white, sat beside the corpse and cried heart-brokenly until the grave was finished. There was a chorus of wailing [302] from both men and women when one of the "workers" painted *Pulanimbuwi's* body entirely in white (Pl. 23A), as additional camouflage to confuse [751] his wife's *mopaditi*.

The ceremonials associated with the burial started when first the husband, then a near relati[illegible]dancing astride the corpse, called out loudly, "*Yook, yook*". This ritual, called *wuramu*, was first introduced by the pelican-man at *Purukupali's* ceremony. At the present time it is performed by close relatives [775] of the dead, its object being to scare the *mopaditi* into the grave where it will not be a menace to the living.

After this ritual, two other men entered the grave and, standing, one either end, took the dead body from those above. Amid the sounds of wailing women and the clapping of men's hands on their buttocks, the corpse was gently laid on a bed of transverse logs on the bottom. Other "workers" cut green branches and placed them across the top of the grave.

The husband, carrying a lighted firestick, then entered the grave, burnt the hair on his legs and left immediately. The aborigines believe that the [775] *mopaditi*, smelling the burnt hair of her husband, and thinking he was beside her, stayed quietly in the grave.

The bushes were thrown into the grave, logs, about five feet long,[55] laid on top, and the hole was filled in, leaving a small mound which was covered with sheets of paper-bark (Pl. 24C). Short sticks were driven into the ground at the head and foot of the grave, on one of which the husband hung the meagre belongings of his wife.

764 Both men and women then performed a series of dances, the men danced 535 the flying fox, shark and crocodile, while both the elder and younger women moved in a line toward the grave, holding large green leaves in their hands, palm upward, symbolizing the dead woman when a small child, being carried by her mother.

A woman, holding her breasts, impersonated *Nulatini's* mother feeding her, while a near male relative mimed the mother carrying *Nulatini* as an infant.

764 At the conclusion, *Pulanimbuwi* seated himself at the head of the grave,

[825] [55] The aborigines explained that the logs kept the dogs from unearthing the body, but as, at the present time, the body is over five feet underground, this does not appear to be the reason. It may be that, when tombs were more primitive and graves not so deep, these precautions were necessary.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

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A

B

C

D

PLATE 27. *The Final Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Chief Woman Mourner; B, Scene at Burial Poles; C, Mourning at Burial Poles; D, Presentation of Gifts.

[0 7 2]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 (2) *The Ilanias of Nulatini*

[123] We were able to see the opening mourning rituals, *iramparimi*[66] of *Nulatini* and six of her *ilanias*.

[128] Rather than deal with all of these ceremonies in detail, I will describe the *iramparimi* rituals and a typical *ilania*, in which the aborigines carried out all phases of the rituals, with the exception of the appointment of the "workers". Although the rite of *pumuti*, *wandiatapinda*, or feeding the "workers", did not take place at every *ilania*, they will be included in this description.

(a) *The Opening Mourning Ritual, Iramparimi of Nulatini*

Ten days after the burial of *Nulatini*, the aborigines of Melville Island performed the ritual of *iramparimi*. The function of that ceremony was to express [775] grief over *Nulatini's* death, and to tell her spirit that, as she did not now belong to the same realm as themselves, she must leave her grave and return to her totemic country.

The ceremony was held about thirty yards from the camp of the dead woman. Most of the aborigines were present, but two men, *Pulanimbuwi*, the husband, and *Tupiatira*, *Nulatini's* nearest relative, took the leading parts.

The rituals opened in the late afternoon with *Pulanimbuwi*, painted in [302] white, elaborately decorated and carrying a long stick, walking slowly to- [533] ward the assembled people, singing the *amburu*, the women's song of mourning (Pl. 23A).

Every now and again, the husband stopped, leaned on his stick and looked round (apparently for his wife's *mopaditi*), before continuing on his way to the place of ceremony.

Coming out of the forest in an almost opposite direction was *Tupiatira*, also painted in white, waving green branches in his hands. About fifty yards from the old camp of *Nulatini*, *Tupiatira* called her name loudly, and, after listening for a while, announced that, as she had not answered, she must be dead.

As *Tupiatira* walked forward he continued to call, while *Pulanimbuwi*, now accompanied by his sister, *Kundi*, came in from the opposite direction, both singing the *amburu*. When the men were only a few yards apart the aborigines formed themselves into two lines, facing each other.

At a signal and a loud "*Book, book*" from *Pulanimbuwi*, an old man, [535] *Malumerinita*, accompanied by six to eight of the men, danced between the

[66] The *iramparimi* of *W'aniamperi* was performed before our arrival.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

The two forms of fire-jumping (described earlier, p. 73) were also used in these rituals. 765

The *ilanis* closed with the performance of the rite of *pawuni*, then the usual honey and mosquito calls.

5. THE FINAL PUKAMUNI RITUALS

(1) *The Pukamuni of Waniamperi*

For the sake of simplicity I will describe, under this heading, the rituals carried out during the last two days of the closing phases of the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*. These rituals took place about three months after burial and about a month after the performance of the first *ilanis* and the receiving of the message stick (Fig. 5F, G, H) from the Bathurst Island aborigines. [202]

During these final ceremonies, the aborigines divided themselves into two groups; the Melville Island men and women, under the leadership of *Wurarbui*, and the Bathurst Island men and women, with a few of the Melville Island aborigines linked with them totemically, under their leader, *Jibunglinhuni*. [616]

The "workers" had cleared two dancing grounds: one, Fig. 4A, about fifty yards south of *Waniamperi's* grave, belonging to the Melville Island aborigines, and the other, Fig. 4B, about thirty yards east, to the people from Bathurst Island.

There were seven decorated burial poles on *milimika*, A, and three on B (Fig. 4). The three poles, although cut and painted by the local men, had been given, with their permission, to the Bathurst Island group who were responsible for the payment of them. [432]

The final rituals extended over two days. After both groups had performed *ilanis* in the middle of the first morning, they spent about six hours decorating each other with elaborate facial and body designs, one of which, that of *Wurarbui*, is illustrated on the frontispiece. Other facial designs are illustrated on Pl. 28. In the late afternoon all the participants, men and women, moved to the two *milimikas* near the grave (Fig. 4A, B), where they performed a series of dances until dark. The aborigines camped nearby, most of them within a hundred yards of the grave. The next morning the final rituals started. [302]

These *pukamuni* rituals can be divided into five distinct phases—

(*a*) The opening rituals.

(*b*) The songs and dances.

F

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The leader started a song describing a fight in which the dead man, *Wandampori*, had taken part. To this refrain, the performers mimed the action of men struggling together, beating each other with throwing sticks, or casting spears. 765 [539] [535]

In the middle of this performance, *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, rushed into the forest beating himself with a throwing stick, followed by his step-mother, *Dominao*, who forcibly disarmed him. At the conclusion of the dance, and when quiet was restored, *Nilitumo* carried out the same jabiru dance we had seen at the Bathurst Island *ilania* a few days previously (Pl. 29A). At the conclusion of the jabiru dance the Bathurst Islanders retired to paint themselves for the final rituals. In general, the "workers" painted the leading *pukamuni* men, some husbands painted their wives, their children and themselves. [535]

In the late afternoon, the assembled men, women and children, their faces and bodies painted with the most elaborate designs, and decorated with colourful *pukamuni* ornaments (frontispiece), made their way along the road, calling continuously in the high-pitched mosquito call until within a hundred yards of the grave. At that point the two groups separated. Each group lit a fire and carried out, first the rite of *wandiatapinda*, followed by a basket dance (later to be performed at the grave side (Pl. 26C), then went to their respective *milimikas* (Fig. 4A, B). [302]

Pausing only to assemble at those places, both groups of people rushed across the open space and threw themselves on the bushes covering the grave, wailing heart-brokenly. *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, who fell on the belongings of his father at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tried to cut his head with a knife, but was restrained, as before, by his step-mother, *Dominao*, who led him back to the Bathurst Island *milimika*. This was a signal for everyone to return to their respective *milimikas* and perform the first of a series of dances.

In the Bathurst Island circle, *Nangrinini* danced a canoe dance, paddling and bailing a miniature bark canoe as he pushed it along the ground. [535]

As the Melville Island group were chanting their songs, five men sneaked up to the grave, one of their number peered among the bushes, crawled back to his crouching companions and whispered something to them. At this they all called out loudly, ran back into their *milimika* and carried out a vigorous, almost hysterical dance. [535]

The same performance was repeated, but on the second occasion *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, ran to the grave, speared it in several places,

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 their bodies (p. 138). Again, a man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, symbolised the pouring out of the cooked *kulama* yam on a sheet of bark and patted it to the *kulama* call of "*Brr, brr, brr*". This action completed the dance.

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

431 While other dances, which I did not see, were being performed in the two
765 *milimikas*, the *pukamuni* men and their wives unpacked the gifts for the "workers", and spread them out on the ground (Pl. 26a). There was much good-natured discussion about their equitable distribution before the presents were finally separated into lots and placed one on the top of each pole.

177 *Wurarbuti*, resplendent in his body paint and coloured *pukamuni* orna-
533 ments, mounted one of the larger poles and chanted songs telling how he
765 became possessed of the great wealth which enabled him to buy the presents
[302] for the "workers".

[539] "I am a big Government man," he boasted, "so I was able to get plenty of money."

"I stole the money from the Government to pay for the presents and the police locked me up."

[535] While *Wurarbuti* chanted this song, *Marawani* and the women danced with their hands crossed as if in handcuffs.

As the song continued, *Marawani* ran after *Pulanimbuwi*, dragged him into the *milimika*, and struggled with him in imitation of a policeman making an arrest.

Other songs were chanted ridiculing a Government clerk at Darwin, while one of them "wrote" out an order, passed the "money" to a *pukamuni* man through a window (an opening in a pole) and then demanded, in a loud domineering voice, his thumb-print on a scrap of paper as a receipt.

177 *Wurarbuti*, still seated on the top of a pole, started to distribute the
431 presents, imitating, as he did so, the actions and broken English which the
765 same clerk used when dealing with aborigines.

"You a worker," said *Wurarbuti*. "Have you a wife? How many children? You work for me, make proper good pole, I pay you."

The "worker" on accepting his payment, put his thumb-print on a scrap of paper (initialled—with a twig—by another *pukamuni* man), and walked away satisfied[81] with his square of printed calico, pipes and tobacco. As each "worker" received his gift the *pukamuni* men performed a dance.

[81] This is not always so. Sometimes a "worker" becomes so annoyed over inadequate payment that he will not allow his pole to be carried to the grave, preferring to let it rot in the forest. On several occasions we saw a pole which had been left in the forest because its maker was dissatisfied with the payment.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

(*e*) *The Final Mourning Rituals*

765 As soon as the poles were in place the "workers" pulled away the bushes covering the grave. This was a signal for the closing phases of the final rituals. Everyone, men and women, from both Melville and Bathurst Islands, rushed forward and threw themselves on top of one another at the base of the burial poles, until the ground, and even the grave itself, was covered with a mass of human beings, each mourning heartbrokenly.

After a period of mourning, *Jibunglialumi* and *Wurarkuti* rose to their [302] feet, cut off the beards they had grown for the occasion,[84] and washed the painted decorations from their bodies, while the mourners, assembling close [535] to the poles, impersonated, in almost hysterical dance and song, the shark, the rain-woman, the jabiru, and many other mythical heroes of creation times.

Nangrinini, assisted by his wife, first performed the basket dance (Pl. 26c),[85] then once more the dance of the bark canoe. *Pulanimbuwi*, who danced beside him, acted the part of *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), the sea-eagle, swooping down on its prey.

The return of the ceremonial leaders to the grave was the signal for another exhibition of mass hysteria. Weeping women, beating themselves with sticks, threw themselves on the top of the grave, while men, leaning over the burial poles, mourned continuously in high-pitched wails.

Gradually the sounds of lamentation became less. One by one the mourners left, until there remained only the crouching body of *Waniamperi's* widow, painted entirely in black, a little wizened woman, whose span of life was almost spent.

(3) *The Final Pukamuni of Makapini*

(*a*) *The Opening Rituals*

A little before sunset, the Melville Island men and women assembled to [302] decorate themselves for the final rituals, while *Kisapipatu* (Pl. 27A), a sister of the dead woman, *Makapini*, carrying a long stick, and painted entirely in white, wandered among the *pukamuni* people, crying the *amburu* song.

The body decorations finished, which neither took as long, nor were as [184] elaborate as at the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*, the performers assembled about twenty yards from the three burial poles (Pl. 34A, B, F), which the "workers" had hidden from view by a screen of boughs.

[177] [84] Before the days of the white man, the Tiwi men did not cut their beards at the final *pukamuni*, but plucked them out in handfuls. Spencer, 1928, p. 673, Fig. 467, both illustrates and records having seen this curious ritual in the *kulama* ceremony.

[85] Mountford, 1956, p. 434.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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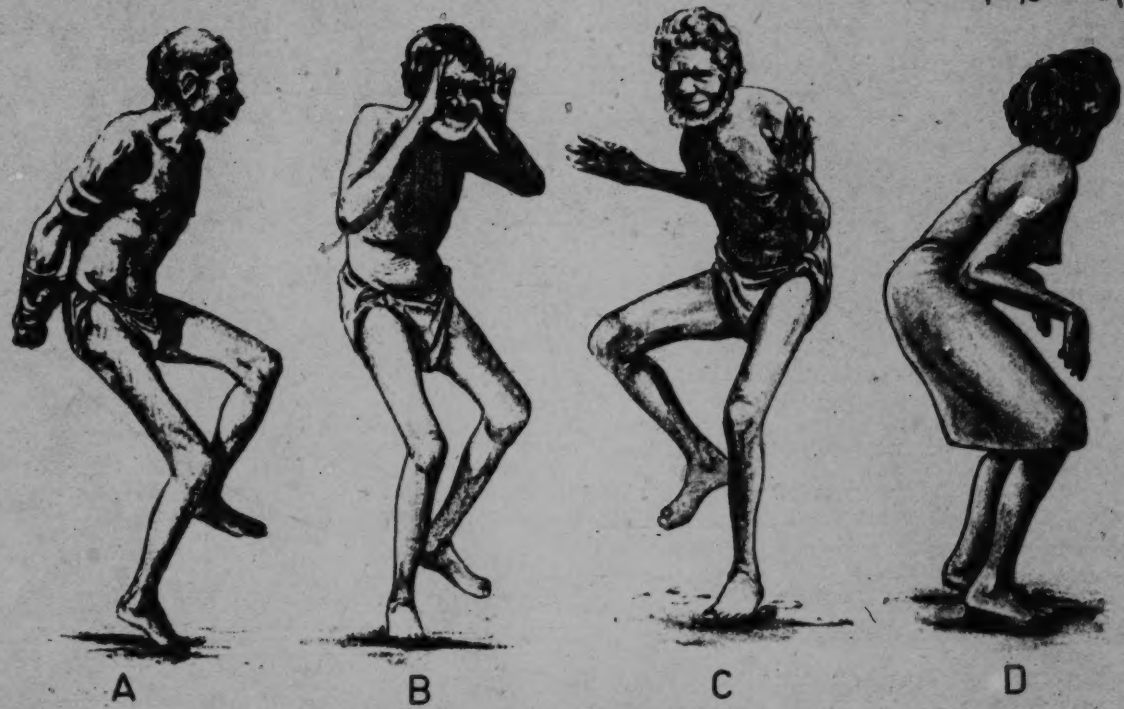

PLATE 29. *Totemic Dances*
A, Jabiru, Tjalati; B, Owl, Pintoma; C, Lizard, Kilpuruni; D, Frog, Kwouk-kwouk.

[p. 88 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(d) The Final Mourning Rituals

By this time the chief woman mourner, painted entirely in red, had arrived. 765
On reaching the ceremonial ground, she charged against a pole, then leaned [302]
over it, crying heartbrokenly. Another woman, *Dominee*, in paroxysms of grief, threw herself on the ground at the base of another pole, while still another woman, dancing the *ambaru* before the third pole, told the *mopaditi* [533]
of the dead woman, in a song "to keep away from me". [775]

The ceremony finished, like that of *Waniempari's pukamuni*, with concerted wailing around the poles.

(3) *The Pukamuni of Inbidjarmari's Infant*

This simplified *pukamuni* was held for a premature child of *Inbidjarmari*. 766
The child died, about a month previously, at the Darwin hospital. The complete rituals, though curtailed, having occupied only two hours, followed the normal pattern with two exceptions. The *pukamuni* group did not employ any "workers" to cut the burial poles, and, as the body had not been brought to Melville Island, the ceremonies were held at the grave of a young child, of the same parents, who had died about two years previously.

A distant relative, appointed by the father of a "worker" had burnt the grass, cleared a space adjacent to the grave as a dancing ground and draped a turtle rope around the old poles in which had been twisted the wing feathers of geese.[68] For these duties he was given two loin cloths.

There were no dances at the first *ilania* which took place about three hundred yards from the burial site, only prolonged honey and mosquito calls.

The *pukamuni* group then moved to within a hundred yards of the grave where, after more honey and mosquito calls, they lit the *wandiatapinda* fire, and walked through its smoke and flames.

At the commencement of the final rituals, most of the group halted behind a rope, stretched between two trees, over which the "worker" had hung bagging and blankets;[69] but others rushed forward, spears in hand, and, as in the two previous *pukamunis*, stabbed at the base of the poles surrounding the grave to drive away the *mopaditis*.

After this, everyone moved to the grave-side of the screen, the men carry- 535
ing out a series of dances while the women, beating themselves with sticks, 765
leaned on the *pukamuni* poles and mourned. 533

While some of the *pukamuni* men chanted a song about the red-fruited *eugenia*, *binania*, *Muramajua*, walking around the *milimika*, imitated a

[68] I did not find out the significance of this custom.
[69] This took the place of the screen of boughs used in the normal rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

533 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending
535 over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milimilia* to the
766 rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first
[177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[90]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten-
[114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and
[775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[91] the fundamental idea
[517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognise them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the
[775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[92]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon
[126] drawings[93] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[90] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.
[91] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women
[832] were attracted to them.
[92] Mountford, 1956, p. 457, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.
[93] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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PLATE 28. *Ceremonial Facial Decorations*

A, Wadjeniati Initiate; B, Water-snake, Tuluma; C, Shark, Tuduwala; D, Fish, Mungumini; E, Thunder-man, Pakadringa; F, Salmon, Kumunintu; G, March-fly, Kudjatumpi; H, Boobook-owl, Purutjikini; J, Barn-owl, Pintoma; O, Ningasi. K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, U, Unidentified.

[Analyst's note: the plate in the original text is in full color]

[FACING p. 92]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

All the facial designs, about which I was able to find out the meanings (except Pl. 28B), dealt with some totemic creature, or myth. This was in direct contrast to the designs painted on the *tudini* burial poles, where few, if any, were associated with the myths or the totemic places. 302 778 [531]

A Wadjeniati Initiate

Pl. 28A is the facial design of a *Wadjeniati* initiate in the *kulama* ceremony (p. 130). The white dots represent a white edible plum, *murumbatana*, the red dots, a small red fruit, *kupalitju*, and the lines, the limbs of the trees on which the fruit grew. The white around the eyes and on the forehead is symbolical of *Purujikini*, the boobook owl-man (*Ninox novae-zealandiae*), the leader of the second *kulama* ceremony. [881]

The Poisonous Water Snake, Tuluma

Pl. 28B, a facial *pukamuni* design, symbolizes the markings on the skin of a poisonous water snake, *tuluma*. Although I neglected to ask the aborigines whether there was any myth associated with this facial decoration, it is likely that the design refers to an incident in creation times.

The Shark, Tuduwala

At *Purukupali's pukamuni*, the shark-man, *Tuduwala*, represented on Pl. 28C, painted his face so that he would appear as ferocious as possible. The radiating lines round his eyes were supposed to have added greatly to his savage appearance. After the *pukamuni*, *Tuduwala* fought with *Kumuninu*, the salmon man, because the latter, although he had a large number of hair-belts, refused to give any to *Tuduwala*. [773]

Although the shark-man escaped injury in that encounter, he wounded the fish-man a number of times with his throwing sticks, wounds which can still be seen, as parallel lines, on the head of the salmon (see Pl. 28F).

The Fish, Mungumini

Pl. 28D is a facial design, called *Mungumini*, worn at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* by a fish of the same name. The markings on the face are supposed to be similar to those on the head of the present-day fish.

The Thunder-man, Pakadringa

Pl. 28E, a *pukamuni* facial design, refers to the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, and the dangerous *Marajji* (p. 154), both of whom are closely associated in the myths.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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The yellow bands encircling the face and eyes, and stretching from the forehead to the base of the nose, all symbolize the dreaded *Marapi*; the white cross-hatching represents the thunderstorms of *Pakadringa*.

The Salmon, Kumunina

Pl. 28r, the *pukamani* decorations on the face of an aboriginal, are the same as those used by the mythical salmon-man, *Kumunina*, who, at the first *pukamani* ceremony, fought with *Tudawala*, the shark-man (Pl. 28c). The present-day fish still carries the marks of that encounter on his head.

The March-fly, Kudjatumpi

Pl. 28o is the facial pattern of an aboriginal belonging to the March-fly totem of Kudjatumpi, southern Melville Island (p. 58).

The black discs symbolize dark-coloured stones which formed on the footprints of *Kudjatumpi*, the small white and yellow dots, an edible plum, *murumbatana*, and the white lines, the limbs of the tree on which the fruit grows.

The red lines in the design represent the strata of red rocks at Kudjatumpi, which were created when the woman squeezed the milk from her breast and allowed it to run down the face of the cliff. All these things happened at Kudjatumpi after the March-fly woman had returned from the *pukamani* of *Purukupali*.

The Boobook Owl, Purujikini

The design on Pl. 28n was used in one of the *ilanias*. The white ears refer to *Purujikini* the boobook owl, and the lines on the face to its feather patterns.

The Barn Owl, Pintoma

Pl. 28j is the facial decorations of *Wurarbui*, the *alowuia* of the *pukamani* ceremony of *Waniamperi*. He is wearing the false beard, *kaludi*, and the head-dress of cockatoo feathers, *primitiki*. The design on his face, particularly the rings around his eyes, symbolize *Pintoma*, the barn-owl woman, who assisted her husband, *Purujikini*, the boobook owl-man, at the first *kulama* ceremony (see dance of *Pintoma*, Pl. 29z and frontispiece).

The Ningaui Men

The facial design on Pl. 28 o resembles that used by the *Ningaui* men when they performed the second *kulama* ceremony on Turiturina Island (p. 124). The yellow dots are the cockles in the mangrove swamps on Western Bathurst Island, one of the foods of the present-day *Ningauis*.

[262]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Unidentified

The designs on Pl. 28r are the same as those painted on the face of the chief mourner, *Katopi*, at *Waniamperi's* final *pukamuni*. I did not ask about their meanings. 302 778

Although I did not learn the meanings of the facial designs on the remaining faces on Pl. 28, it is reasonable to suppose they all referred to some mythological story, probably associated with the totem of the aboriginal who wore them.

7. THE PUKAMUNI DANCES

A number of the dances we saw at the *ilanias* and final *pukamuni* rituals belonged exclusively to certain Tiwi totemic groups. They were so constant in form that, in no time, we could recognise the dance and the totem to which it belonged. [794] 765 535

Many of these dances are more strenuous than any belonging to the mainland; some of them, indeed, so strenuous, i.e., the crocodile (Pl. 30z), the shark (Pl. 30a), or the sea-eagle (Pl. 30j), that they seldom lasted more than a minute. [171]

Although I recorded only fourteen of these totemic dances (illustrated on Pls. 29 and 30), I feel sure that these represent but a small proportion of those performed by the Tiwi. For instance, none of the totemic dances belonging to the dead person would have been performed at the burial rituals we witnessed.

Pl. 29A is the dance of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, which was performed with such skill and abandon by *Nilituma* at the Bathurst Island *ilania* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* ceremony.

Pl. 29B is the dance of the boobook owl, *Purutjikini*, who with his wife, the barn-owl, *Pintoma*, organized the second *kulama* ceremony on Turiturina Island, western Bathurst Island. The dancer is indicating the large eyes of the boobook owl.

Pl. 29C is the dance of the blanket-lizard, *Kilpuruni*, who was punished by *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, because the former seduced *Jurumu's* wife. The dancer walked around the ceremonial ground with an awkward gait, in imitation of the blanket-lizard's curious method of locomotion.

Pl. 29D pictures the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, who is the mother of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadinga*, the woman of the monsoon rain, *Tomituka*, and the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. The frog dance was performed many times at the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi*, the frog being the totem of his father.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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8. THE CEREMONIAL OBJECTS OF THE TIWI

The ceremonial objects of the *pukamuni* ceremony, like the carved and painted burial poles and elaborate facial and body decorations already described, are totally unlike those used by the mainland aborigines. 301 778 765

A series of objects obtained on the 1954 expedition is illustrated on Pls. 31, 32.[94] [171]

On Pl. 31, A, D, and G, are chest ornaments called *pukabinda*, which are suspended around the neck with a loop of human hair string. Fig. A is an oval ball of the soft wax of the native bee, into which has been pressed a large number of the red and black seeds of a jungle vine. Fig. D, made of several ovals of lawyer vine, is bound together with strips of the same material. The pendant is made of human hair and white cockatoo feathers. The oval opening is too small to pass over the head, therefore this ornament, and similar examples which I saw, were suspended around the neck with string. Fig. G is a flat disc like Fig. D, with lengths of lawyer vine bound together. This disc was coated with wax, and further decorated with red and black jungle seeds. [237]

Pl. 31E and F are ornaments, *palmatjinas*, decorated with red and black seeds, which are pushed up the arm over the elbow.[95] Both have been made in the same manner as Fig. D, G.

Pl. 31B is a goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, worn around the neck or tied around the upper arm. *Wurarbuti* (frontispiece) is wearing a *tokwianga*.

These ornaments are made by embedding ends of the downy feathers of the pied goose in a ball of wax. So much work was entailed in making a *tokwianga* that the aborigines were loth to part with them. The *tokwianga* is worn on all ceremonial occasions. [237]

Pl. 31C is a false beard, *baludi*, which was worn at the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni* (see frontispiece), and the *kulama* rituals. The *baludi* may be pure decoration, or it may replace the beard, which up until comparatively recently was plucked out at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals. [302]

Fig. H illustrates three cane arm rings, *jairinis*, made from plaited lawyer vine. These were worn on the upper and lower arms of the *pukamuni* men and women, and occasionally by other performers, as decoration. At the end of the burial ceremony the performers take these rings from their arms and leave them on the grave as a present for the spirit of the dead.

[94] Spencer, 1928, Pl. XII, Figs. 450–4, illustrates a number of *pukamuni* ornaments he collected in 1911.

[95] Several of the men illustrated on Pl. 26B, are wearing these arm ornaments.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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765 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama*
778 rituals.

Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known
[411] respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear,
[531] *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines
[114] told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville
[322] Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making
[412] of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *miluanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *murugunа*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines
[302] of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin
[413] paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[94]

Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati*
[515] *kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed
[413] to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkita*, are used by the Tiwi
765 for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkitas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in
[301] white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, his chest ornaments,
[302]

[94] The lines of dots on *Wurarbui* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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202 765 *pakmajinis*, and cane armlets, *jairinis*. Then, taking a female *pukamuni* spear, *tunbagani*, in his hand he seated himself within sight of the camp.

[301] [302] The local aborigines went out to welcome him, but on seeing the message stick and hearing the news, they mourned hysterically, cutting their heads [785] and beating themselves with sticks.

When the mourning died down, the aborigines gave the messenger a meal, [574] after which he returned to his own camp.

Although the general distribution of the totemic *purunkitas* has been dis- [126] continued in recent years, the aborigines who knew them well, made nine [184] examples for me. It would seem that each totemic place had its own particular [794] design, for when I showed the *purunkita* (Fig. 7D) to old *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, neither of whom had seen it previously, they recognized it immediately as a message stick which would have been sent to the *Mudungkala* totemic group of Buchanan Island, at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. However, other *purunkitas*, i.e. (Fig. 5C; Fig. 5F, G, H; and Fig. 6A, E) are still being used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

During the early days of our stay, when the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were about to start, three men, two of them, *Marawani* and *Uramatjina*, being the chief mourners, made a journey to the Bathurst Island people for the purpose of giving them a *purunkita* and telling them the news.

A few days later a Bathurst Island man returned with the message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H, and verbal instructions relating to the forthcoming burial rituals.

Although I did not see the message stick which *Marawani* and his com- [126] panions carried to Bathurst Island, I was able to make a rubbing of another (Fig. 7C), which was sent to the same locality on the death of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife.

Later, old *Tjamalampua* sent another message stick (Fig. 7A, B), to the men of the *Mudungkala* totem of Buchanan Island, asking for European goods and food to pay the "workers" at the final rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*.

Notification of Death

202 211 ×532 The designs on message stick, Fig. 7C, which an aboriginal carried to the Bathurst Island people, together with the news of the death of *Nulatini*, did not, in any way, refer to the message that accompanied it, but to topographical details along the motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point on Apsley Straits.

The upper section, *d*, is the aboriginal camp at Snake Bay, and the indentations, *a*, *a*, are the rocks on its shores. The cross-hatched rectangle in the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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×532
765

A B C

[291]
[142]
[302]
[516]

D

PLATE 38. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*
A, B, C, Carved and Painted Pole on Old Grave; D, Poles on Old Grave.

[p. 120 F]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[301]

[301]

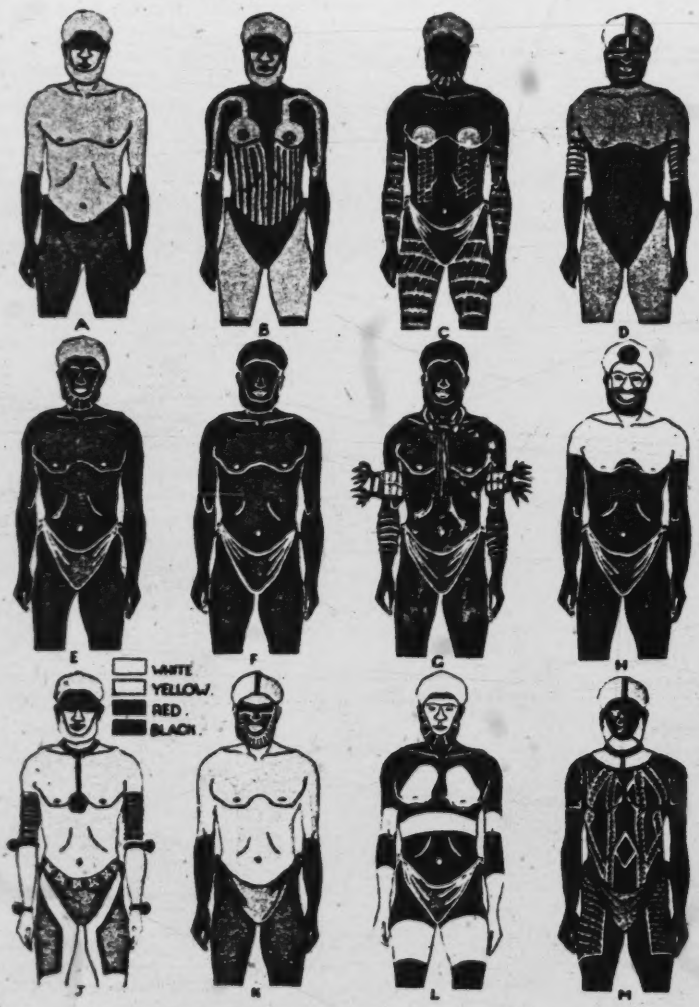

PLATE 42. *Body Decorations of the Kulama Initiation*
A, B, C, D, E, F, Marukumuni; G, Kilipaniati; H, Wadjeniati; J, K, Mikinatrina; L, Kulama Design; M, Mikinatarima, Mikintara and Mikingula.

[p. 120 J]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Grades of Kulama initiates		*Period of initiation*
Mikinatrina Mikinarrininga	Male Female	2 years
Mikintara Mikintaringa	Male Female	From one kulama until the next
Mikiatarima Mikiatariminga	Male Female	From one kulama until the next
Mikingula Mikingulinga	Male Female	Fully initiated for life

2. THE PRELIMINARY RITUALS OF THE KULAMA

881 (1) *The Capture of the Marukumuni Initiate*

According to my informants, any tribesman chosen for initiation, must be a mature man, usually married and with children. In fact, all the men pointed out to me as being suitable candidates were thirty years of age or older.[18]

The first time there is a gathering of people after a *kulama* ceremony, such as at a burial, or an *ilania*,[19] the fully initiated *kulama* men, the *Mikingulas*, ask the permission of the leader of the *kulama*, the *Naripikilitipi*, to capture any man or woman, who is suitable for the first stage of initiation, that of the *Marukumuni*.[20] In preparation for this, the *Mikingulas* have already mixed a quantity of yellow ochre.

At a given signal, one of the *Mikingulas*, who has been standing unobtrusively near, suddenly throws his arms around the chosen initiate. The captive struggles to release himself, protesting against being initiated into the *kulama*. But a number of the *Mikingulas* rush to their companion's aid, lay the struggling initiate on the ground, paint a design, in yellow, on his upper arms and body (Pl. 42A), and put the red tail feathers of a black cockatoo in his hair. Meanwhile, other initiated men are walking around the group

[302]
[301]

[18] The age of initiation has been raised since Spencer and Fry saw the *kulama* in the early days of the century. Spencer (1928, p. 665) refers to young boys, while Reuben Cooper, whom I knew in 1920 as a young man about twenty, would have only been about thirteen years of age when Fry saw him as a *Kilipaniati*.

[178]
[114]

[19] A preliminary ceremony for the burial rituals.

[20] I do not know who captures the female initiate, the *Marakumuninga*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

881
[516]
[137]

[142]
[302]

A

B

C

D

PLATE 44. *The Kulama Ceremony*

A, Chanting Kulama Songs; B, Placing Kulama Yams in Oven; C, Ritual before collecting Kulama Yam; D, The Kulama Yam.

[p. 128 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

chanting *kulama* songs. Later, the decorated initiate, now called a *Marukumuni*, is taken to the camp of the man who captured him. It is the duty of this man, now his guardian, to provide the initiate with food. However, he must not be given snakes, for such food would cause his joints to swell and become painful. 881

The guardian takes the food he has collected to the *Marukumuni*'s wife who feeds her husband over a period of four days in the same manner as a *pukamuni* man is fed (Pl. 24A). Neither she, nor any of the food he eats must touch the initiate's body. The food left over from the meal is wrapped in paper-bark and burnt. After four days this taboo is lifted and the *Marukumuni* is free to hunt for and eat all foods, except snake.

(2) *The Eating of the Cycad Fruit*

About August, when the fruit of the cycad (*Cycas media*) is ripe, the *Marukumuni* is decorated with a new design (Pl. 42B). At the same time the leader of the *kulama* ceremony instructs the women of the camp to collect and prepare a considerable quantity of the cycad fruit. As the fruit in its raw state is highly poisonous, it has to be shelled, pounded out flat, and soaked in running water for three days before it is edible. When the fruit is ready for eating, the women, putting it in a number of bark baskets, stand them on either side of a log (Pl. 43D). [302] [252]

Then, while the women walk around the baskets, chanting the songs of the *kulama*, two *Mikingulas* wash the design (Pl. 42B), from the *Marukumuni's* body, and decorate him with a new one (Pl. 42C). This, he must renew continuously until he hears the first sounds of thunder (about mid-November). [533] [302]

As soon as these decorations are completed a member of each family picks up a basket, takes it to their camp, and all have a meal.

The *Marukumuni* initiate, however, is fed by his wife from a separate store of cycad fruit.

At the same time as the *kulama* leader sent the women of the camp to collect and prepare the cycad fruit for the *Marukumuni* rituals, he instructed the women of the *Kilipaniatinga* grade to do the same. However, when the other women of the camp placed their baskets of prepared food beside the log, the *Kilipaniatinga* women poured their cycad fruit on a nearby pad of grass, pushed four sticks into the ground around the heap and seated themselves on the outside.

The ceremonial activity then centred around the men and women of the *Kilipaniati* grade of initiation, who, from the previous *kulama* until then, 301 881

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

88 had worn continuously their curious ornaments, *mariguani* (Pl. 42C),[81]
[301] around their necks as well as many cane and bark ornaments on their arms. During the whole of that period (about five months) they renewed their body paint continuously. They were not allowed, however, to scratch their heads with their hands, but must use for that purpose a special pointed stick, *murubunga* (Pl. 32F).

The rituals began when one of the *Mikingulas*, coming up behind the male
[302] *Kilipaniati*, cut the *mariguani* from the neck of the initiate, poured water over him to remove his body paint, and decorated him with the design of a *Wadjeniati* (Pl. 42H). Similarly, the husband of the female initiate cut her neck ornament, washed her and redecorated her as a *Wadjeniatinga*. After eating their store of cycad fruit, these new initiates resumed the normal life of the tribe.

About mid-November, thunder and other signs of the oncoming wet season are signals for the *Marukumuni* to discard the design he has been wearing since the ceremonial eating of the cycad fruit. As soon as this hap-
[301] pens the men paint another design on his body (Pl. 42D), put new cockatoo
[302] feathers in his hair, and many cane armlets on his arms. The initiate wears these decorations, continuously renewing his body paint, until the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, which takes place at the beginning of the *kulama* ceremony about four months later.

3. THE KULAMA CEREMONY

(1) *Collecting and Eating the Edible Yams*

Toward the end of January, when the wet season was approaching its climax, the *kulama* leader instructed the women to go into the jungle, locate a number
[262] of the young plants of two species of edible yams, a long one, *juruguni*, and a short one, *karawani* and show them to him so that he would know when they would be ready to eat.

When some weeks later, the leader estimated that the yams were fit for digging and the tall, annual grass was about to shed its seed, he called the people together and told them that the *kulama* rituals would start in a few days.[82]

[81] Spencer, 1928, Pl. IX, No. 4, illustrates a *mariguani*.

[82] From the time of this announcement until the finish of the *kulama* ceremony, no
[834] fully initiated man, must sleep with his wife. If he does, he will be attacked by *taini*, the mysterious *kulama* sickness, and die. I did not find out the characteristics of the *kulama* sickness.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, 881
dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp, and prepared them for cooking.

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42E).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place 302
where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42E), 881
and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh", threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[83] It is [821]
believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunderstorms and so prolonging the wet season.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikingulas*, the *Mikiatarinas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts, 881
went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* [386]
sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a [824]
line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[84]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the [775]
portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always [824]
present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the *kulama* people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates then sat down to a meal of the edible yams.

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a *pukamuni* man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any [753]
part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them [626]
ill.

[83] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[84] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 463, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated men.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Dry sticks, about three feet in length, were pushed upright into the ground around the *tumarapi* (oven), kindling wood was laid between them, other pieces of dried wood piled cross-wise between the uprights until there was a stack about three feet high (Pl. 45A). 881 [372]

(5) *Placing the Uncooked Yams in Water*

About sunset, the *kulama* men went to the bloodwood tree, the *wuringalua*, where the *Mikinatrinas* had stored the yams in the morning and, on pulling bushes away, revealed some of the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates squatting, holding in their arms a basket of the uncooked *kulama* yams. The *Marukumuni* initiates took the yams to the water, everyone assisting in laying them on a pad of grass in the bed of the stream (Pl. 46a).

Immediately this task was completed, the *kulama* men pushed the *Marukumuni* initiates over,[30] and, holding them by the legs and arms dragged them backward and forward through the now muddy water to wash off their body paint. They were then taken back to camp, seated beside the *milimika* and painted with a different pattern (Pl. 42F). Neither the *Marukumuni* nor the *Wadjeniati* initiates took any further part in the rituals of that day. When, after dark, the *kulama* men entered the *milimika* to chant another series of songs, the camp fires were allowed to burn brightly, because the aborigines said that the yams, being in the water, were now "quiet" so that there was no fear of *taini*, the spirit of *kulama* sickness. [302]

The chanting men walked counter-clockwise around the *milimika* because *Purutjikini* did so at the first *kulama*. To have walked in the opposite direction, even then, would have made the spirit of the *kulama* yam angry. 881

The following are literal translations of a selection of the songs. 533

(*a*) "I had a quarrel with Tom Crow, the Superintendent of Snake Bay Settlement." 539 [177]

(*b*) "My mother-in-law is good to me, she did not take away my promised wife."

(*c*) "The fruit of the *binamia* (*Eugenia* sp.) ripens and falls to the ground."

(*d*) "The little *Pitipituis* (spirit children) are dancing on the beach."

[30] Spencer, 1928, p. 664, describing a similar ritual, states, "Several old men seized the *Wajinyeri* (my *Wadjeniati*), and plunged into the water with him. As many as could get near him gripped him by the legs and arms, and yelling, splashing and churning up the mud, . . . dragged him backward and forward several times, . . . As soon as the *Wajinyeri* were released, the men turned their attention to the *Marukumuni* boys. . . ." Although my informants did not say so it is likely that the *Wadjeniati* initiates were also pushed into the water to remove their body paint in readiness for the second design of a *Mikinatrina* (Pl. 42J). [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

arm rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), they seated themselves outside the *milimika*, but took no part in the subsequent rituals. 881 [301]

Other fully initiated men led initiates of the *Wadjeniati* grade to the *wuringalata* tree, where the yams had been stored on the second morning, told them to sit down and erected a low screen of boughs in front so that the initiates could not be seen from the *milimika*.

The *Mikingulas* first painted the bodies of the *Wadjeniati* initiates with yellow paint, then decorated them with many cane rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), on their upper arms, hair-string belts, *ularini*, around their waists and goose-feather balls, *tokwiangas* (Pl. 31B), on their necks, arms and wrists (see Pl. 42J). This ritual admitted them to the grade of *Mikinastrina* and *Mikinastringa* respectively. 881 302 [301]

After the *Wadjeniati* initiates were decorated, the senior grades of the *kulama* painted their faces, bodies, hair and beards with elaborate designs in red, yellow, black and white. In one design, peculiar to the *kulama*, the aborigines covered one side of their faces with red paint, and the other side with black,[87] the two colours being separated with a line of yellow (Pl. 42M). The men painted a complex design, usually in red and white on their hair and beards.[88] Some of the men also decorated their children.

The leader of the *kulama* then assembled everyone to see the *Mikinastrina* initiates perform their first dance, which they had been quietly practising for some time. 535 881

At a given signal, each *Mikinastrina* stood up in turn and, gaily decorated with body paint and coloured ceremonial ornaments, and holding a flat fighting club, *juruwila*, in either hand, performed his first dance. As each initiate danced, the assembled people applauded, slapping their buttocks in approbation of both the dancing and the appearance of the initiates. [201]

When the *Mikinastrinas* had finished their dance, the female initiates, the *Mikinastringas*, similarly decorated, but without the clubs, individually performed their dances. Still painted and wearing their decorations, the male and female *Mikinastrinas* seated themselves outside of the *milimika* beside the newly created *Kilipaniatis*.

After the initiates had finished their dances, several of the *Mikingulas* entered the *milimika* and chanted another series of secular songs. [533]

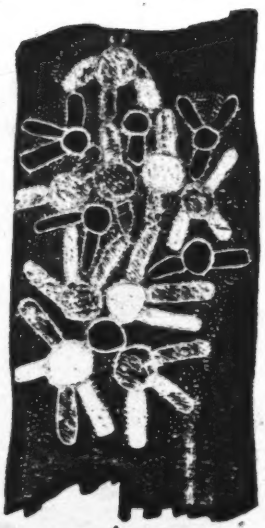
[87] Spencer, 1928, p. 674, who saw a *kulama* ceremony during 1911, refers to this curious form of facial decoration.

[88] The method of colouring the hair with intricate designs is of some interest. The aboriginal, loading his fingers and thumb with wet ground-up ochre, pinched the hair, instead of rubbing the colour into it. By this means, the operator was able to keep sharp well-defined edges to the design, an effect that could not be achieved in any other way.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

x532
133
137



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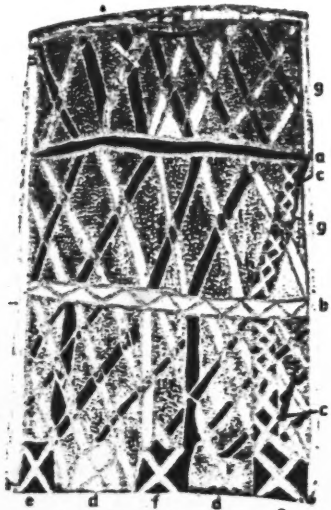
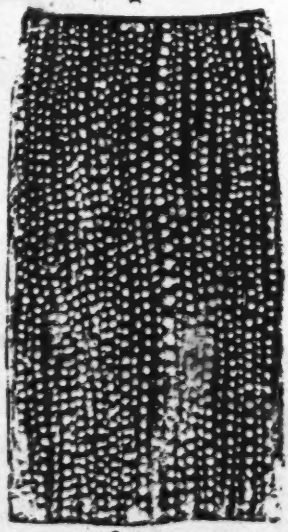


B

[136]
[302]



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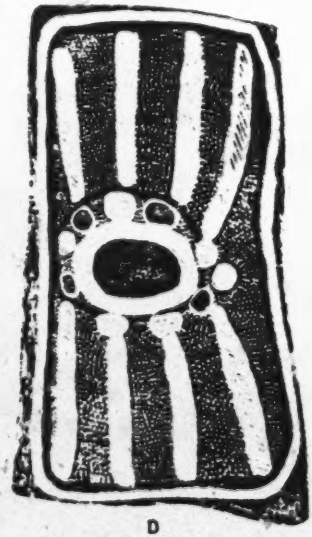


D

PLATE 50. *Secular Bark Paintings*

A, Sea-floor; B, Mangrove Swamp; C, Fish-man, Kurunga; D, Topography, Bathurst Island.

Cp. 160 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

X 532 137 branches in full blossom. The dots at the base of the painting indicate eucalyptus blossoms lying on the ground.

A Forest, Curtis Haven

Pl. 53A illustrates the topography at Curtis Haven.

Transverse panel *a*, is a stringy-bark tree,[53] *b*, *c*, are two woolly-butts and *m*, is an ironwood. The short white panels at *f*, *f*, are cycad palms; the lines of circles at *g*, *g*, *g*, low hills, and the short white panels between them, cabbage palms. The cross-hatching indicates the grass on the hillsides.

5. MISCELLANEOUS AND UNIDENTIFIED

X 532 304 *Body Scars*

Pl. 58A refers to the chevron scars on the bodies of the older men and women; it has no other meaning.

The four white vertical lines indicate the scars on their legs; the many transverse lines, those across the abdomens, and the lines of dark and light-coloured chevron designs, the scars on the abdomens, backs, upper arms, and thighs.[54]

The Salmon-man

X 532 302 At the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, a salmon-man painted himself and his many wives with a series of large spots like those on the basket; when at the completion of the ceremony, those people became fish, they still retained the coloured spots on their bodies. The dots on Pl. 50C are symbolical of those on the body of the mythical salmon-man.

Design for a Pukamuni Pole

X 532 136 Pl. 54D is a similar design to one which the artist once painted on a *pukamuni* pole he made for the dead man, *Kulatina*. The designs,[55] which are not linked with any myth or secular story, were, according to the artist, formed in his mind by the sound of the waves breaking on a nearby coast.

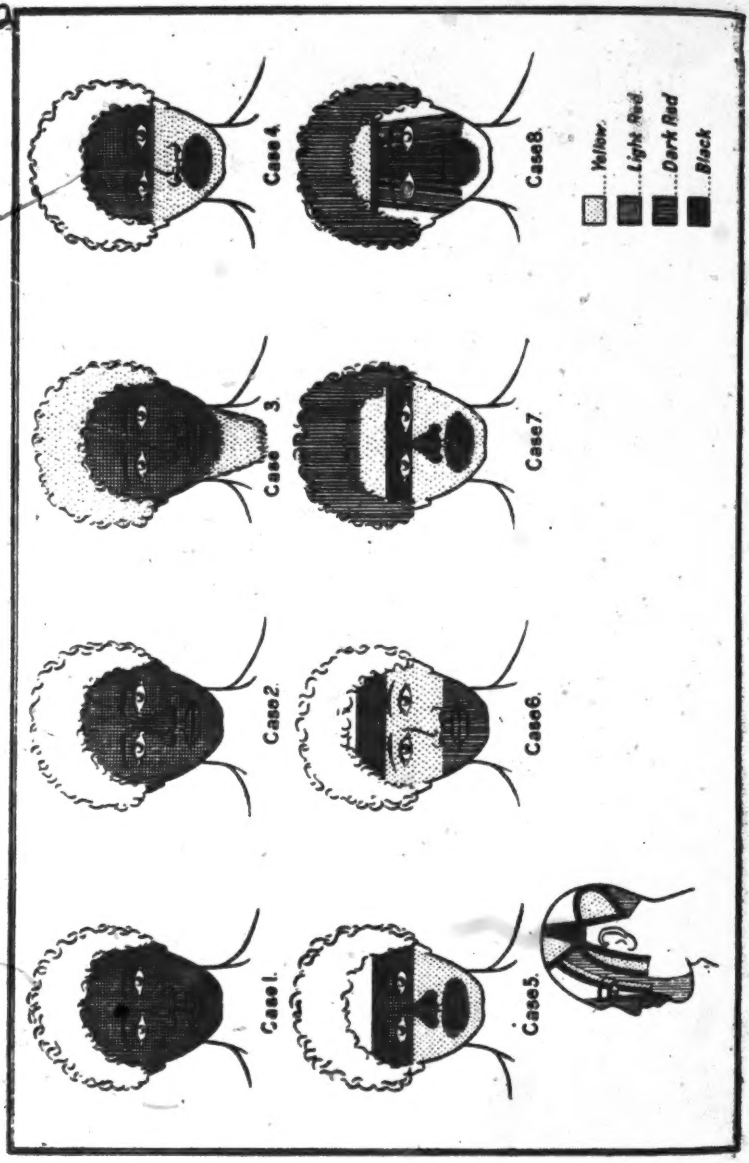
The four groups of crossed lines, *g*, *g*, etc., represent trepang, the lighter coloured being the white and the darker, the black species. The smaller

[53] These are species of eucalypts.

[54] The older generation of Melville and Bathurst Islanders were decorated with these scars. The custom has been discontinued in recent years. Spencer, 1928, Fig. 439, illustrates examples.

[55] Spencer, 1928, Fig. 475, illustrates poles decorated with a design similar to bark paintings, Pl. 54D.

302


Case 1.
Case 2.
Case 3.
Case 4.
Case 5.
Case 6.
Case 7.
Case 8.
Yellow.
Light Red.
Dark Red
Black

[p. 292]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

BEFORE the advent of the buffalo-hunters, few white men had visited the islands since the 648
early days of the naval settlement at Fort Dundas, established by Sir Gordon [175]
Bremer in 1824, but abandoned four years later. Malays and Japanese pearlers
have been in the habit of taking in water from either of the islands and have
frequently come into disastrous conflict with the natives. It is perhaps also on 164
account of their isolation from civilization that I found the blacks comparatively
free from any serious disease. Apart from the various minor ailments such as
traumatic lesions and their after-effects, cataracts and keratitis, a few congenital
deformities and such like, only a few cases of tertiary syphilis came under my
notice.

A young gin was suffering from a disease of the hip, apparently chronic, but
she was too timid to permit me to make an examination. They are on the whole 142
a healthy, sturdy people of moderate stature, with a good muscular development
and a square, big thorax. The characteristics are Australoid and yet they present [144]
certain insular peculiarities.

The Head.

The forehead is low, with a marked supraorbital development; the face
somewhat depressed and the lower jaw strong. The eyes are sunken and the nose
is small. The wavy black hair of some of the males was worked up into numerous [302]
small, cylindrical, pendant masses with clay and ochre.[1] This, so far as I could [765]
ascertain, designated mourning. Others had besmeared their hair with ochre. The
hairs on the upper lip are pulled out. The growth of the beard of the men varies,
but is, on an average, good.

The natives of either island do not practise the knocking out of one or two 304
incisors as they do on the mainland. Major Campbell,[2] however, reports having 171
observed the custom on Melville Island.

The face is painted symmetrically with differently coloured ochres, charcoal, 302
and pipeclay, in various degrees of complexity (Fig. 1). A few of the simpler designs
might be described briefly:—*Case* (1): The whole surface of the face blackened
with charcoal. *Case* (2): The nose red and the rest of the face charcoal-black.
Case (3): Face (including the shaven upper lip and upper part of chin) charcoal-

[1] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* London, 1852, vol. ii, p. 13: "The characteristic mode of dressing the hair among the Torres Strait Islanders is to have it twisted up into long pipe-like ringlets, and wigs in imitation of this are also worn"; and again, "at Cape York I have at times for a week together seen all the men and lads with the hair twisted into little strands well daubed over with red ochre and turtle fat."

Also P. P. King, *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114: "The [184]
men were more muscular and better formed than any we have before seen, they were daubed over with a yellow pigment which was the colour of the neighbouring cliff (Luxmore Head on Melville Island); their hair was long and curly and appeared to be clotted with a whitish paint."

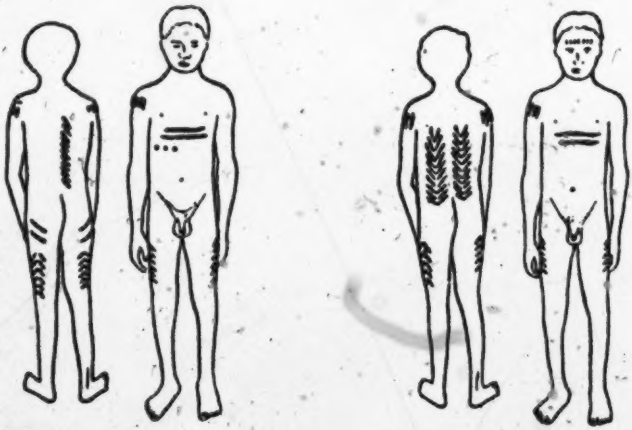
[2] *Journ. Geogr. Society*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 153. *Cf.* also H. Klaatsch: *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 591.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

302 black; ears, red; hair and beard on lower part of chin, yellow. *Case* (4): Lower half of face from below the eyes to the chin, yellow, excepting the lips and the immediate surrounding, which are red; the upper half of face divided vertically in a median line, the left segment being black and the right red. *Case* (5): A broad, horizontal band of black extends across the forehead and the eyes; beneath this, the whole face is yellow, excepting (as in the previous case) the nose and lips, which are red. *Case* (6): A broad horizontal band of black across the forehead; beneath this, the whole surface from the eyes to the level of the nostrils, yellow; the remaining portion including the lips and chin, red. *Case* (7): The crown of the head and hair, red, the forehead yellow; a black horizontal band across the eyes, below which the whole surface is yellow, excepting the nose and lips (as in previous cases), which are red. More complicated patterns are better understood by referring to the sketches.

Body Scars.

304 [101] A type of cosmetic body-scars is prevalent on the island, which is unique and different from the system found on the mainland. The production of this permanent ornamentation is, as elsewhere, dependent on the formation of an elevated cicatrix. This is done by cutting the skin and artifically inducing a prolific granulation by



A B

FIG. 2.

keeping the edges of the wound apart with foreign matter, such as ochre and ashes. [171] On the mainland we find such cicatrices in the form of horizontally or vertically disposed parallel ridges on various parts of the body. Although to a small extent such are also found on Bathurst Island, the characteristic pattern there is one made in direct imitation of an object of nature, namely, the frond of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*). The former simple type of cicatrices, consisting of two to five,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

or more, parallel ridges, is found first, as vertically disposed ridges, about 10 centimetres in length, on the outer surface of the upper arm, in the region of the deltoid muscle (*vide* Fig. 2, A and B); secondly, as two or three horizontal ridges, about 20 centimetres long, upon the chest and abdomen, either in the epigastrium or immediately below the nipples, or in the umbilical region; thirdly, as two or three ridges, horizontally disposed or slightly inclined from back to front, on the buttocks and outer surface of the thighs (*vide* Fig. 2, A). 304

Occasionally a horizontal row of short vertical scars is cut upon the forehead immediately above the eyes (*vide* Fig. 2, B); and also an asymmetrical vertical group on the chest or back consisting of a number of parallel scars which slant outwards and downwards from the sternum or spine, respectively (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

The palm-leaf pattern is composed of a series of V-shaped figures, whose angles rest one within the other and point downwards (or upwards as the case may be) and are so disposed as to lie one immediately above or below the other in a vertical line; the enclosing sides standing out as parallel and inclined ridges. The constituent V's are often slightly larger in the centre of the group than at either

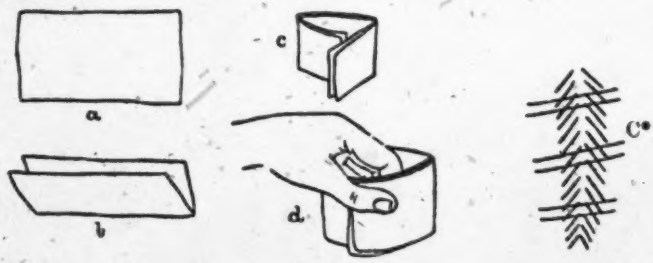


FIG. 3.

end. There is little doubt that the incentive to this design was given by the leaf of the "*Zamia*" (*Cycas media*). The designs, being of different dimensions and of different lengths according to their situation, were observed on the back (on both or either side of the spine) and on the upper and outer surfaces of the arm and thigh (*vide* Plate XVI). The number of the completed palm leaves, in any one particular part of the body, varies. The usual number is from one to three on the arms and thighs, and from two to five, or more, on the back. The design was not noticed on the chest or abdomen. Occasionally a design on the thigh might be seen modified by additional pairs of horizontal scars[1] (*vide* Fig. 3, C*).

[1] I also observed the same "palm-leaf" scars on the chest, back, and arms of Melville Island natives. These natives also paint their faces with ochre; one conspicuous method in use is to paint the hair yellow, the nose red, and to daub the chest yellow over the region of the sternum. [302]

Professor H. Klaatsch also noticed some of the scars on the Melville Island natives and stated that "they are totally different from the ornamentations on the mainland. They seem to imitate leaves arranged on a branch; but I make the suggestion that they are connected with the arrangements of the barbs on spears." *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 586. [101] [184]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. 372 Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

8 :Fry D-5 (1913) 1950 OI20 Tiwi OI20

A Bathurst Island Initiation Rite.

Sir:

000 Not many white men can have had the experience of being tried by a native court. The following story may therefore be of interest.

114 I had visited a native camp in northern Bathurst Island in March 1913, and had made the acquaintance of an adolescent native boy called Cooper. He was smeared 881 from head to foot with red ochre and wore a [301] collar made of a thin piece of wood bent ●[302] round his neck with the ends tied together with hair string behind with a strand of string about six inches long hanging down his back terminating in a blob of gum.

[p. 167-A]

Il: Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 OI20 Tiwi OI20

142
308
S84

[colors appearing in original:
Hair - left: white, center stripe: red, right: yellow.
Face - left: unpainted, center stripe and dots: yellow, right: red. -- Analyst.]

[Cover]

Il: Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 O120 Tiwi O120

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ARTICLES

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ADULTHOOD — *Jane C. Goodale* 10
BEAUTY AND SCIENCE — *Meredith L. Jones* 18
ECOLOGY OF THE HEIGHTS — *Lawrence W. Swan* 22
BENEFICENT CANNIBALISM — *Edwin Way Teale* 30
THE SUN
FAMILIAR SHORE BIRDS IN JAPAN — *Dean Amadon* 48
ROOT GROWTH CLAIMS SOIL FROM SEA — *Virgil N. Argo* 52

DEPARTMENTS

REVIEWS — *William R. Furrand* 3
SKY REPORTER — *Simone Dare Gessner* 56
TRAVEL: FAR AND NEAR — *Tim Spierings* 60
ABOUT THE AUTHORS 64
NATURE AND THE CAMERA — *David Linton* 65

COVER: A man in the group of Tiwi natives living on Melville Island, in the Timor Sea, paints his face while participating in the Tiwi's annual, three-day *Kulama* ceremony, which is named after a toxic yam. The Tiwi who still adhere to tradition believe that great powers for good or evil dwell in *Kulama* yams, and that one must participate in their ritual preparation if one is to benefit from these powers. For those young Tiwi men and women who undergo the six years of instruction in the ritual, it represents a formal initiation into adulthood. Dr. Jane C. Goodale discusses this ceremony in the article that begins on page 10.

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[Title Page]

11;Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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891
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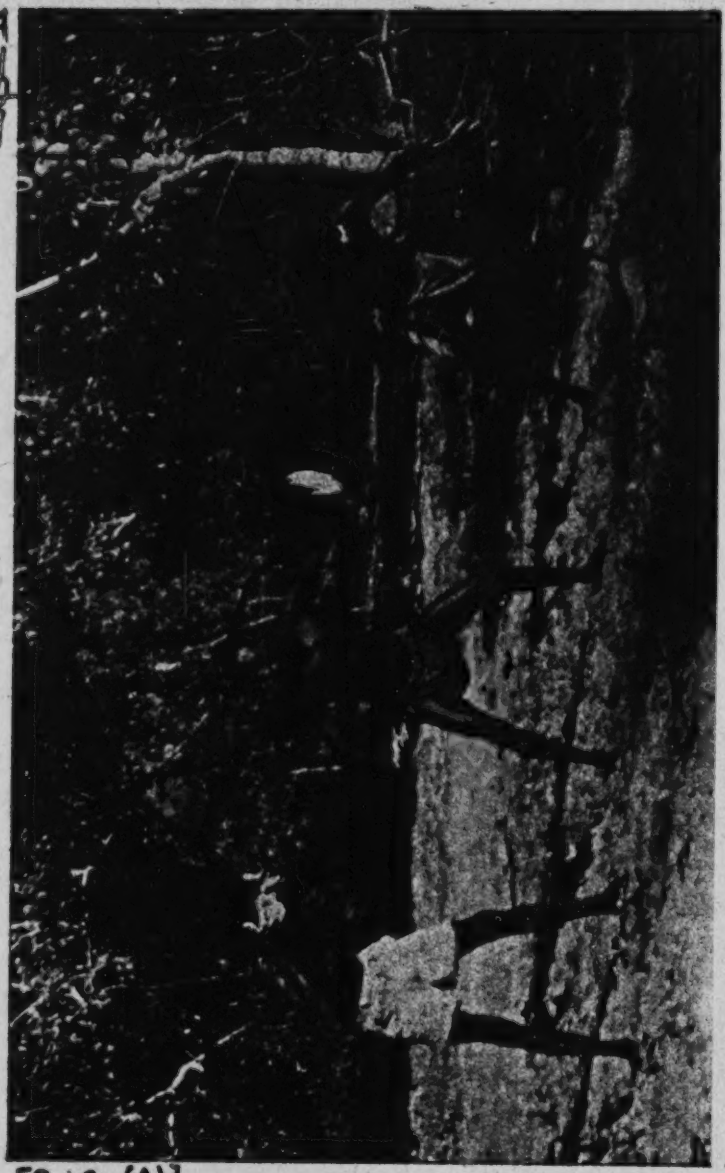

BEFORE DIGGING YAMS, the ritual participants dip hands into white paint and pat it around eyes to insure acute vision.

[P. 12, (A)]

11;Goodale E-5 (1954,1962) 1963 OI20 Tiwi OI20

000

BEFORE BEGINNING YAMS, the ritual participants dip hands into white paint and pat it around eyes to insure acute vision.

884
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CEREMONIAL WING is prepared by clearing ground of grass, sticks, and stones. Participants will sing and dance there.

[P. 12, (B)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954,1962) 1963 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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RUBBING PAINT into the hair is supposed to prevent illness, and daubing it on the arms and legs wards off broken bones.

[P. 13, (A)]

884 are allowed to dig the yam. A special dance area, or cere-
[462] monial ring, is cleared on the ground and a special cook-
[535] ing fire is built in its center. On each of the three ceremonial
[305] days the participants paint themselves in specified ways
with ocher. During the evening of each day, while the yams
884 are soaking or cooking, the male participants, singly or
533 together, walk slowly counterclockwise around the cere-
[534] monial fire, beating sticks together as an accompaniment
to specially composed songs. At times the wives, who re-
[535] main outside the ring, sing with the men, or they may join
their husbands in traditional dances that imitate various
aspects of the natural world around them.

The songs are a vital part of the ritual. They must be newly composed for the occasion and may relate to any event or abstract idea the composer chooses. The songs
[154] often deal with injustices the singer has experienced in the past year, about which he wishes to register an "official" complaint:

[539]

> "There was a funeral,
> You went first, I came after.
> Old people came in first.
> I was late because I had a *Kulama*.
> Why didn't you wait for me?"
>
> or
>
> "When Dory have baby girl
> The old man said, 'That's for you.'
> Dory, my mother-in-law, she burns me.
> Dory doesn't know the old people way.
> I would like to kill her."

Others may be in the nature of news reports, in which the listeners are informed of anything interesting that may have happened to the singer during the preceding year.
CE20 For instance, the composer of the following song had just

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P.14, (A)--Analyst]
[P.13, (B)]

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11:Goodale E-6 (1954, 1967) 1963 CE30 Tiwi CE30

[p. 15, (8)]

FATHER PAINTS GIRL to show how it would be done if she were to be initiated. Although no children of group were considered ready, ceremony was held to maintain benefits thought to accrue to the Tiwi who had undergone initiation.

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Near end of Kulama ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.

[colors appearing in original:

Body - light purple with white.

Hair and beard - left: yellow, center stripe: red, right: white.

Red across nose and upper cheek. -- Analyst.]

[p. 19]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

142
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[P.2]
[P.1 not processed]

123
[325
132]

[142
302
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[484]

Fig. 2. Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend, Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these

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123
[626]
[837]
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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 7. Agnes (left) and a friend admire a large mangrove crab

together with sharks, these waters contain the large and dangerous salt-water crocodile and all manner of poisonous jellyfish, one realizes that to swim around in a high sea in the pitch dark requires considerable courage. 123

Soon after we had crawled under the mosquito netting and between the blankets rain began to fall in a gentle and persistent way, but still not hard enough to prevent our falling asleep with little conversation.

It was hardly light the next morning when Agnes stood up and rewrapped her *naga*, a strip of calico, about her waist, then took up the billys and went to the well to draw water for the morning tea. Although the rain had been steady during the night, the well-built fire still had some life in it and after a few minutes of concentrated blowing, Albert had it rejuvenated. While the billy boiled, Big Jack shook as much of the wet sand as was possible from the blankets and rolled them into tight bundles. Then he set off to retrieve the canoe. By the time he reappeared, the tea was ready and it helped to wash down the leathery cold strips of damper sweetened with jam. [291] [372]

13:Barclay 3-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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BATHURST ISLAND NATIVES PRACTISING A CORROBOREE DANCE.

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 0120 Tiwi 0120

[p. 13(c)]

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BATHURST ISLAND ABORIGINAL MOTHER AND CHILD.

crocodile, nothing that breathes so utterly immobile; but there are few beasts that can spring more quickly into deadly activity when the occasion warrants a display of strength and agility.

The Vernons do not appear to be the sort of emergency landing-ground that one would choose if it could possibly be avoided. Apart from the crocodiles, the terrain does not promise too safe a landing.

Sea and sky alike were palest blue, and, in the farthest distance, the vast and faintly-wrinkled expanse of ocean mingled softly with the sky in a pearly sea-haze. One could not say where the one began and the other ended, and, partly obscured in the haze, far-distant luggers, with all sail set, headed for Darwin. Beneath the 'plane, rounded boiling swirls, long straight lines of white foam, and darker turbulent streaks in the pale-blue surface of the sea clearly defined the spring-tide currents. Down beneath us, too, shoals and deeps showed emerald or blue, and the long, pale-brown lines of reef that run

797 The couples marry young without any thought for the future.
They just marry as, and when, they feel inclined, and the mission
582 fathers provide the new home. Under the palms beside the
342 Strait are many of the queer little iron humpies provided, just a roof, as it were, sloping on each side from the ridge-pole to the ground. The whole can be picked up and moved to a fresh position when fleas become too numerous and the surroundings otherwise unpleasant. These humpies scarcely seem attractive to white folk, but the islanders like them, and they are at least a great improvement on the dog-kennels of old iron that the blacks persist in erecting for themselves on the beach at Darwin.

797 Proper houses are provided in the Kahlin compound there, but
the blacks despise them; and, although the miserable humpies on
342 the beach are demolished from time to time by the authorities, they are all up again by next evening. The good fathers know what the islanders prefer, and they have given the married couples the kind of accommodation in which they feel most happy. The humpies may be hot and stuffy, but they are dry inside when it rains.

142 The island blacks, in many respects, differ considerably from
the tribes of the mainland. They are excessively hirsute, and,
144 on attaining maturity, the men grow long beards, many being of truly patriarchal proportions. The upper lip is kept bare, which practice seems to emphasize the magnificence of the beard. Shocks of hair, sometimes standing six inches high, add to a wildly impressive appearance. They are tall and muscular, and, as they stride along, they seem the very acme of physical development, a living advertisement for the natural, open-air existence.

302 The hairs, by the way, are plucked from the upper lip one by
one, and this painful proceeding is undertaken in the calmest manner, certainly with less fuss and facial distortion than the average white man makes during his morning shave.

171 The use of the woomera for throwing spears, and of the
411

[p. 15 (A)]

726 One man will then take a step or two forward, hold up a hand, and stamp vigorously, and all the warriors of his side will copy his actions. "Let 'em all come!" is the attitude adopted. If the enemy does not start hostilities at once, they throw their spears down and jump about like wallabies to show their contempt for the sluggard's markmanship. They are, however, careful not to get too far away from their own weapons, on which they pounce immediately the first spear is hurled by their opponents. The air is soon thick with flying spears and war-clubs, and the exchange goes on until some unlucky warrior is really hurt, when the engagement ceases.

727 BOTH sides gather round, howling their dismay, until repairs to the injured have been effected. A red-dyed ball of goose-
[781] down, which is hung from the neck by a string woven of human hair, is held before the mouth as a charm to divert the missiles, but the warriors owe their immunity from death or serious injury to their own remarkable eyesight and to the dexterity with which they evade, or turn to one side, the hurtling weapons of the enemy. The war-clubs used by the islanders are far more
411 difficult to dodge than the spears, which come straight at you.

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A BATHURST ISLANDER BRANDISHES HIS CLUB.

The war-club is merely a short, bent stick with a knob at one end; but, spinning in the air like a boomerang, it can be thrown for amazing distances by the islanders, considerably over a hundred yards, and not far off two hundred. This weapon is not thrown straight at an opponent, but at a stone, or a tuft of

[p. 17(A)]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint from his body (Pl. 23E). 764

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly, while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial, and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real. [304] [785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn, everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual, originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's pukamuni*, was supposed to to confuse the *mopaditi* of *Nulatini* that, should she leave the grave, she would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey, then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over. [775]

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopaditi* to warm herself and to cook her food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanimbuwi*, who should have departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23 D). [775]

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark, was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as instructed by *Jibunglialumi* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp could not see it. 765

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines, believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being, not the result of natural causes. 761

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, having been responsible for the death,[56] had changed himself into a [825] [754]

[56] This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Hurney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the mature-man, *Papinjuwari*, to an enemy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The designs on sections *d* and *f* also relate to the goanna. The small white discs on *d* are goanna holes; the cross-hatched diamonds, its skin patterns, and the dots, its eggs. The triangles on *f* are the ribs, and the dots, the fat of the same creature. White and red bands on *e*, symbolize waves breaking on the beach. 532x 765

The shapes of Pl. 36D are: *a* is white cloud; the rectangular opening *e*, a door, and the thinner section *f*, a post of a house. Section *d* is a large boulder, and *g*, *h*, the trunks of a fan palm.

The painted, cross-hatched bands, *b*, on section *e*, indicate goanna fat; the alternate bands, *c*, *c*, etc., are rocks on the shore, and the central white disc on *d* is the light from an electric torch. The vertical lines radiating from this disc are aboriginal paths; the horizontal bands are adjacent mangrove creeks, and the cross-hatched rectangles, discarded fish-bones on its banks.

The circles at *g* are rocks in the sea, and the white lines represent rope used for catching turtles. The dots on the background symbolize turtle eggs in the sand. The vertical bands on *h* are mangrove creeks, and the cross-hatched areas, body scars on the backs and arms of old men and women.[9]

The two projections at *a* on Pl. 36F, are the front flippers of a turtle, the opening, *c*, is a window, and *d*, a door. The lower section is a European house.

The cross-hatching at *e*, *e*, represents the marks on the handles of throwing sticks (Pl. 32D); the transverse bands, *f*, and the vertical bands, *g*, *g*, aboriginal tracks in the forest, and the dots, stars in the sky.

The upper projections at *a* (Pl. 37D), are the branches of trees, the rectangular opening below is a doorway, the two cylindrical sections, *h*, *h*, are rocks on the coast, and the design, *j*, is a stingray.

The painted designs refer almost exclusively to the decorations used at a *pukamuni* ceremony. The chevron bands at *b* and *c* on the upper projections, *a*, are coloured cane, and plain, feathered *pukamuni* arm ornaments respectively (Pl. 31E, F). Painted designs at *f*, *f*, are arm ornaments similar to those at *b*, *c*. The plain band, *g*, however, represents chest ornaments (Pl. 31D, G). The circles at *d*, *d*, are *pukamuni* cane armlets, and the cross-hatched rectangles and panels *h*, *h*, *h*, the chevron body scars of the performers. [301]

(*b*) *The Pukamuni of Makapini*

As in the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*, the poles of *Makapini* were looked upon as a family; Pl. 34B, the mother; Pl. 34A, an adolescent daughter,

[9] Until recently, both men and women were decorated with elaborate series of chevron scars on the arms, legs and back (Pl. 29A). This practice has been discontinued. [304]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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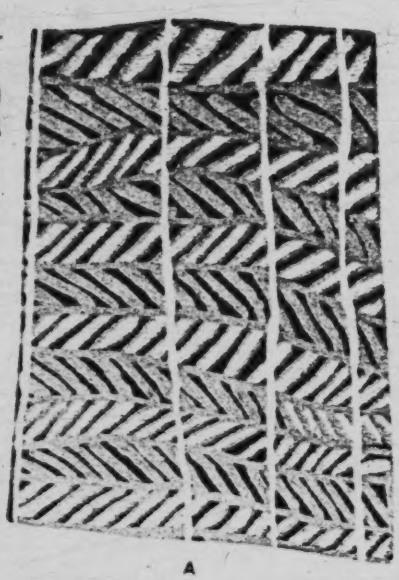
[821]



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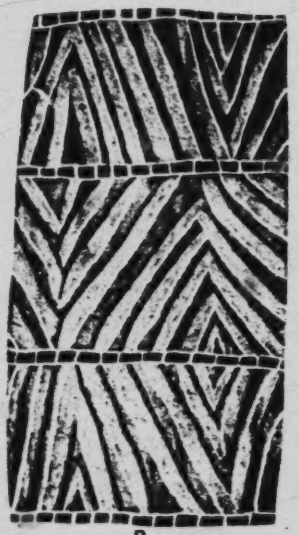
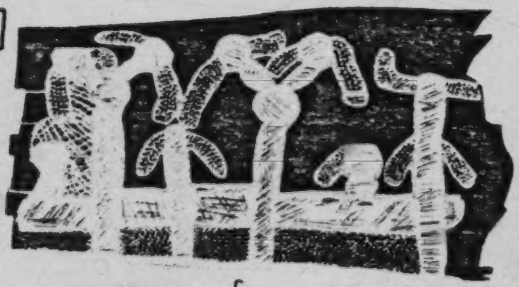


B

[137]



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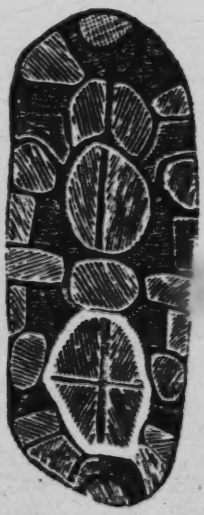

D

PLATE 58. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Chevron Body Scars; B, Wet-season Sky; C, Honey-bearing Trees; D, Unidentified.

[p. 160 J]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

X 532 137

branches in full blossom. The dots at the base of the painting indicate eucalyptus blossoms lying on the ground.

A Forest, Curtis Haven

Pl. 53A illustrates the topography at Curtis Haven.

Transverse panel *a*, is a stringy-bark tree,[83] *b*, *c*, are two woolly-butts and *m*, is an ironwood. The short white panels at *f*, *f*, are cycad palms; the lines of circles at *g*, *g*, *g*, low hills, and the short white panels between them, cabbage palms. The cross-hatching indicates the grass on the hillsides.

5. MISCELLANEOUS AND UNIDENTIFIED

X 532 304

Body Scars

Pl. 58A refers to the chevron scars on the bodies of the older men and women; it has no other meaning.

The four white vertical lines indicate the scars on their legs; the many transverse lines, those across the abdomens, and the lines of dark and light-coloured chevron designs, the scars on the abdomens, backs, upper arms, and thighs.[84]

The Salmon-man

X 532 302

At the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, a salmon-man painted himself and his many wives with a series of large spots like those on the basket; when at the completion of the ceremony, those people became fish, they still retained the coloured spots on their bodies. The dots on Pl. 55C are symbolical of those on the body of the mythical salmon-man.

Design for a Pukamuni Pole

X 532 136

Pl. 54D is a similar design to one which the artist once painted on a *pukamuni* pole he made for the dead man, *Kuhitina*. The designs,[85] which are not linked with any myth or secular story, were, according to the artist, formed in his mind by the sound of the waves breaking on a nearby coast.

The four groups of crossed lines, *g*, *g*, etc., represent trepang, the lighter coloured being the white and the darker, the black species. The smaller

[83] These are species of eucalypts.

[84] The older generation of Melville and Bathurst Islanders were decorated with these scars. The custom has been discontinued in recent years. Spencer, 1928, Fig. 439, illustrates examples.

[85] Spencer, 1928, Fig. 475, illustrates poles decorated with a design similar to bark paintings, Pl. 54D.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

BEFORE the advent of the buffalo-hunters, few white men had visited the islands since the 648
early days of the naval settlement at Fort Dundas, established by Sir Gordon [175]
Bremer in 1824, but abandoned four years later. Malays and Japanese pearlers have been in the habit of taking in water from either of the islands and have frequently come into disastrous conflict with the natives. It is perhaps also on 164
account of their isolation from civilization that I found the blacks comparatively free from any serious disease. Apart from the various minor ailments such as traumatic lesions and their after-effects, cataracts and keratitis, a few congenital deformities and such like, only a few cases of tertiary syphilis came under my notice.

A young gin was suffering from a disease of the hip, apparently chronic, but she was too timid to permit me to make an examination. They are on the whole 142
a healthy, sturdy people of moderate stature, with a good muscular development and a square, big thorax. The characteristics are Australoid and yet they present [144]
certain insular peculiarities.

The Head.

The forehead is low, with a marked supraorbital development; the face somewhat depressed and the lower jaw strong. The eyes are sunken and the nose is small. The wavy black hair of some of the males was worked up into numerous [302]
small, cylindrical, pendant masses with clay and ochre.[1] This, so far as I could [765]
ascertain, designated mourning. Others had besmeared their hair with ochre. The hairs on the upper lip are pulled out. The growth of the beard of the men varies, but is, on an average, good.

The natives of either island do not practise the knocking out of one or two 304
incisors as they do on the mainland. Major Campbell,[2] however, reports having 171
observed the custom on Melville Island.

The face is painted symmetrically with differently coloured ochres, charcoal, 302
and pipeclay, in various degrees of complexity (Fig. 1). A few of the simpler designs might be described briefly:—*Case* (1): The whole surface of the face blackened with charcoal. *Case* (2): The nose red and the rest of the face charcoal-black. *Case* (3): Face (including the shaven upper lip and upper part of chin) charcoal-

[1] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* London, 1852, vol. ii, p. 13: "The characteristic mode of dressing the hair among the Torres Strait Islanders is to have it twisted up into long pipe-like ringlets, and wigs in imitation of this are also worn"; and again, "at Cape York I have at times for a week together seen all the men and lads with the hair twisted into little strands well daubed over with red ochre and turtle fat."

Also P. P. King, *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114: "The [184]
men were more muscular and better formed than any we have before seen, they were daubed over with a yellow pigment which was the colour of the neighbouring cliff (Luxmore Head on Melville Island); their hair was long and curly and appeared to be clotted with a whitish paint."

[2] *Journ. Geogr. Society*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 153. *Cf.* also H. Klaatsch: *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 591.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

By Herbert Basedow, M.D., M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., etc.

With Plates VII–XX.

Local Correspondent of the Royal Anthropological Institute, London, and Honorary Fellow of the Anthropological Society, Göttingen; late Chief Medical Inspector and Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Introduction.

In August of last year (1911), I visited Bathurst Island to inspect the natives on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. Accompanied by one of my inspectors (Mr. J. H. Kelly) and a crew consisting of a Chinaman, a Manilaman, and three natives of the Larrekiya Tribe,[1] I left Port Darwin at eleven o'clock in the evening and entered Apsley Strait early the next morning. We spent nine days in the examination of the island, entering the numerous salt-water arms and rivers, effecting a landing wherever possible and traversing the island on foot. Landing was, in most places, difficult on account of the thick growth of mangroves that fringes the island on the east. It had been my intention to circumnavigate the island, but a heavy monsoonal gale prevented us from even making the attempt in the small motor-craft at our disposal. I therefore decided to return *viâ* Apsley Strait and inspect part of Melville Island.

The plates included in this paper are all reproductions of my original photographs and coloured drawings.

Condition of Natives.

I estimate the population of the island to be about 500. Their isolation and, no doubt in a measure also, their reputation as being cannibalistic and treacherous in their habits, have guarded their primitive condition to the present day.[2] Before

[1] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. of S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 1.

[2] Compare the statement:—

"Melville Island, about 30 miles north of Port Darwin, is inhabited by a tribe of which very little is known. They do not circumcize, and speak a different language from those on the mainland. They are represented as a very strong and powerful race.

"Before the arrival of the Hon. B. T. Finniss at Escape Cliffs in 1864, the Melville Island natives occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras, in which they invariably succeeded; but they have not done so since. This tribe is of a very hostile nature, and on several occasions have attacked Europeans visiting the island. Their canoes and weapons are similar to those on the mainland." P. Foelsche: "Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia," *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 17.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

302 black; ears, red; hair and beard on lower part of chin, yellow. *Case* (4): Lower half of face from below the eyes to the chin, yellow, excepting the lips and the immediate surrounding, which are red; the upper half of face divided vertically in a median line, the left segment being black and the right red. *Case* (5): A broad, horizontal band of black extends across the forehead and the eyes; beneath this, the whole face is yellow, excepting (as in the previous case) the nose and lips, which are red. *Case* (6): A broad horizontal band of black across the forehead; beneath this, the whole surface from the eyes to the level of the nostrils, yellow; the remaining portion including the lips and chin, red. *Case* (7): The crown of the head and hair, red, the forehead yellow; a black horizontal band across the eyes, below which the whole surface is yellow, excepting the nose and lips (as in previous cases), which are red. More complicated patterns are better understood by referring to the sketches.

Body Scars.

304 [101] A type of cosmetic body-scars is prevalent on the island, which is unique and different from the system found on the mainland. The production of this permanent ornamentation is, as elsewhere, dependent on the formation of an elevated cicatrix. This is done by cutting the skin and artifically inducing a prolific granulation by

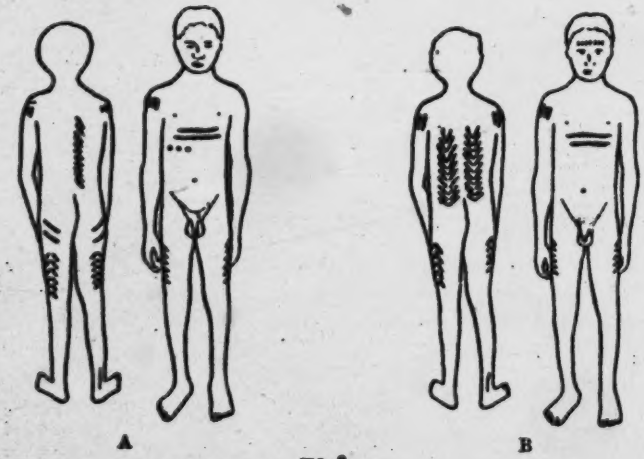

FIG. 2.

keeping the edges of the wound apart with foreign matter, such as ochre and ashes. [171] On the mainland we find such cicatrices in the form of horizontally or vertically disposed parallel ridges on various parts of the body. Although to a small extent such are also found on Bathurst Island, the characteristic pattern there is one made in direct imitation of an object of nature, namely, the frond of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*). The former simple type of cicatrices, consisting of two to five,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

or more, parallel ridges, is found first, as vertically disposed ridges, about 10 centimetres in length, on the outer surface of the upper arm, in the region of the deltoid muscle (*vide* Fig. 2, A and B); secondly, as two or three horizontal ridges, about 20 centimetres long, upon the chest and abdomen, either in the epigastrium or immediately below the nipples, or in the umbilical region; thirdly, as two or three ridges, horizontally disposed or slightly inclined from back to front, on the buttocks and outer surface of the thighs (*vide* Fig. 2, A). 304

Occasionally a horizontal row of short vertical scars is cut upon the forehead immediately above the eyes (*vide* Fig. 2, B); and also an asymmetrical vertical group on the chest or back consisting of a number of parallel scars which slant outwards and downwards from the sternum or spine, respectively (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

The palm-leaf pattern is composed of a series of V-shaped figures, whose angles rest one within the other and point downwards (or upwards as the case may be) and are so disposed as to lie one immediately above or below the other in a vertical line; the enclosing sides standing out as parallel and inclined ridges. The constituent V's are often slightly larger in the centre of the group than at either

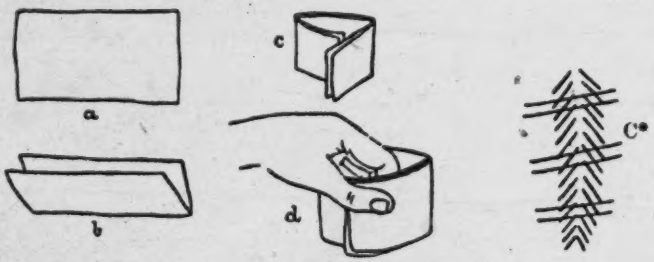

FIG. 3.

end. There is little doubt that the incentive to this design was given by the leaf of the "*Zamia*" (*Cycas media*). The designs, being of different dimensions and of different lengths according to their situation, were observed on the back (on both or either side of the spine) and on the upper and outer surfaces of the arm and thigh (*vide* Plate XVI). The number of the completed palm leaves, in any one particular part of the body, varies. The usual number is from one to three on the arms and thighs, and from two to five, or more, on the back. The design was not noticed on the chest or abdomen. Occasionally a design on the thigh might be seen modified by additional pairs of horizontal scars[1] (*vide* Fig. 3, C*).

[1] I also observed the same "palm-leaf" scars on the chest, back, and arms of Melville Island natives. These natives also paint their faces with ochre; one conspicuous method in use is to paint the hair yellow, the nose red, and to daub the chest yellow over the region of the sternum. [302]

Professor H. Klaatsch also noticed some of the scars on the Melville Island natives and stated that "they are totally different from the ornamentations on the mainland. They seem to imitate leaves arranged on a branch; but I make the suggestion that they are connected with the arrangements of the barbs on spears." *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 566. [101] [184]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. 372 Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca.1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. Harney and A. P. Elkin[1]

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and 136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog (*wongine*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. 825 According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts 757 of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] [1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. Elkin.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

by a similar mass, whence two strings only continue for 40 odd centimetres. 532
The whole length of the band, therefore, amounts to approximately 50 centimetres. Its object is, no doubt, to fasten the mask in position over the face during corroboree ceremonies.

Domestic Utensils.

Food carriers.—The most common form of "mika" or carrier for food and 322
other articles is one made of a single piece of bark of the "stringy bark" eucalypt 415
(*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 3, 4, 5, and 6). An oblong piece of such bark, say 1 metre long by 40 centimetres broad, is freshly cut and folded transversely at its centre. The edges on either side are pared down, then laid flat, one over the other, and sewn or laced together with plain "run-on" stitches, 2 centimetres apart. A row of slanting and overlapping stitches often skirts the open edge at a short distance down; occasionally, too, part of the edge is cross-hemstitched and plastered with beeswax. The object of this procedure is to prevent the bark from tearing by virtue of its fibrous structure. The open mouth of the carrier is nearly circular or oval; in the latter case the long axis of the oval runs at right angles to the base-edge of the implement. These carriers are of various sizes; the largest that came under observation measured 63 centimetres in height and 43 in width at the base. Ordinarily they are unpainted, but on special occasions elaborate designs, consisting 415
of circles, oblong and other figures, with cross-hatched shading, are drawn on the 531
outer surface in red, yellow, white, and black. The designs are best studied by reference to the reproductions (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 5 and 6). Occasionally tassel-shaped appendages are noticed at one of the convex outer surfaces of the mouth of the carrier. These consist of a flattish, egg-shaped mass of beeswax (studded on the surface with the red beans of *Abrus praecatorius*), which is suspended by two twisted fur strings (*vide* Plate VIII, Fig. 6).

Water carriers.—Water is taken to camp from a soakage or spring in simple [312]
structures made out of the bark of the paper-bark tree (*Melaleuca sp.*). An oblong 322
piece of this bark is bent upon itself longitudinally, both its ends folded several 415
times and kept together by binding with cane or by spiking with short pointed wooden pegs (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 1 and 2).

Drinking vessels.—Several natural objects are used for drinking vessels. 415
Among the most common are the discarded tests of mollusca. The species *Melo-* [237]
diadema and *Fusus pricei* were found in use at several native wells (*vide* Plate XIV, Figs. 1 and 2).

But when no such shells are available a piece of bark is torn or cut from a 322
tree (usually from a *Melaleuca*) and folded so as to form a water-tight cup (*vide* 415
Plate XIV, Figs. 3 and 4). This piece of bark, which measures about 30 centimetres by 20, is folded longitudinally at about its middle (*vide* Fig. 3, D). Both ends are then bent upon themselves at right angles to this plane and at about one quarter the whole length from either end. The overturned ends and the inner

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

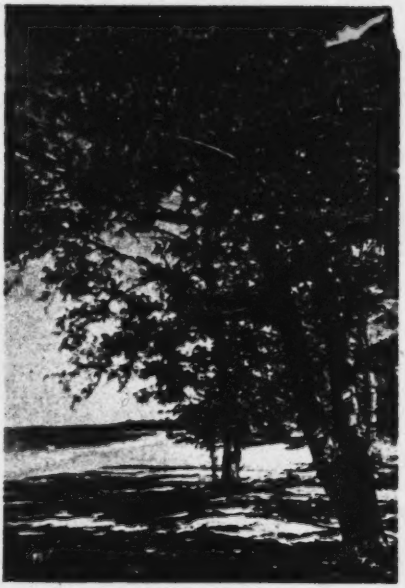

Fig. 4. A casuarina grove

123 clutched Tchuwiunga more tightly
501 and I hugged my KLM bag while the two men worked to head the canoe into the largest waves while trying at the same time to head in
[137] towards the shore. This meant taking a good many not so large waves broadside and we got very wet. Facing sternwards, I could not see the waves, so if a particularly
[823] large one (Agnes called them "female waves!") approached, I would be given a few seconds warning and would duck the breaking spray which would cover the boat and its occupants. The only miserable one was the puppy who presented a very puzzled and hurt expression as he peered out from under the folds of Agnes's *naga*. For the rest of us the cold spray was a welcome relief from the burning sun.

Once in close to the shore, our skilful paddlers brought the canoe safely onto the beach, riding in on one of the breakers. We unloaded everything, although we intended to stop only for lunch, for the canoe would soon be swamped by the sea if left alone. After unloading, Albert swam the canoe out beyond the breakers where he anchored it with a large rock.

Then we climbed the low dunes close to the shore and came
123 to a grove of casuarinas. These provided much appreciated shade but a very uncomfortable carpet of spiny seed pods. Taking up our two billy cans, Agnes led me to the back of the grove where she
[312] showed me a small well. There were many footprints around the sandy hole which were identified as belonging to Black Joe's mob, the natives who had preceded us. They had, however, not depleted the well for in the bottom was a small puddle, and since this was at the very end of the six months dry season, it was considered fortunate that there was any water at all. Agnes carefully tasted

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

531 decorate a burial pole; and others, Pl. 2D, Pl. 10C, and Pl. 11A, similar to those he would paint on the ceremonial baskets.

I did not see or hear of figures being made in bark (Mountford, 1956, p. 443, fig. 65C, D); moulded in wax (Elkin and the Berndts, 1950, Pl. 21, Mountford, 1956, Pl. 143) or in the sands of the sea-shore (Mountford, 1956, p. 404, Pl. 91C, D), as is done in north-eastern Arnhem Land. Nevertheless, [532] the men did carve large burial poles in the form of human beings and smaller full-length figures, associated with the *pukamuni* ceremonies. These figures bore some small resemblance to those recorded from north-eastern Arnhem Land (Berndt, 1948, Figs. A, B, Pls. 1, 2; Mountford, 1956, Pls. 130–40).

3. TECHNIQUES

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(*b*) FIXATIVES. Three different types of fixative are used to ensure that the painted designs, both on the poles and the baskets, were as permanent as [314] possible. They were: the sticky gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids (*Dendrobium* sp.); the wax and honey of the wild bee, well mixed together; [237] and the yolks of the eggs of the sea-going turtle. The fixative was either mixed with the pigments or rubbed on the painting surface.

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5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

396 501 [237 412] climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*).[1] Holes are previously pierced through the bark with an awl, made out of the leg-bone of a wallaby.

The stitches are made more secure and watertight by plastering them with [237 314] wax from the comb of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*) or with one of the several resins so extensively used by all natives. The inside corners are caulked with plastic clay and fibre, or resin. Two stays or struts of fairly stout timber, cut to the required length and inserted at the points where the bark was reduced to half its thickness, keep the sides of the canoe apart. From these points, therefore, the sides of the canoe converge to the bow at one end and to the stern at the other; while in between they are more or less parallel. The canoe, if there be any difference at all, is wider aft (74 cm.) than it is nearer the bow (55 cm.); the "fish-tail" incision, too, is acute and deep at the bow and more rounded and shallow at the stern (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). Along the top, inner, edge of either side of the canoe, a straight strengthening pole is lashed with distant, unequally-spaced and grouped "run on" stitches of cane-strips. These structures lend considerable rigidity to the gunwale of the canoe; they do not extend throughout the whole length, but, being straight, are more or less parallel one to another, and do not enclose the stern or bow. Major Campbell,[2] in referring to the bark canoes seen by him while at Fort Dundas, states that "the gunwales are strengthened by two small saplings (such as grow in marshy places) fastened together at each end of the canoe." This method is more like that in use on the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria to-day and was not observed on the islands by me. Long shoots of vines and strips of cane are wound crosswise from side to side of the canoe, and at the same time take in the strengthening-poles along the gunwale. Additional circumferential winding binds the separate cords into one thick rope. Four of such ties are spanned at equal distances, from one side to the other, along the straight edges of the canoe. They not only preserve its shape, but afford a ready means by which the craft may be carried.

501 The canoe is not decorated in any way, but smears of various colours are [531] noticed both at the bow and the stern, resulting from the handling by fingers previously occupied in decorative work with ochre. When not in use the canoes are "housed" on a level piece of ground, under the overhanging branches of a shady banyan or guttapercha tree. They are laid in normal upright position (not inverted), and are kept so by short supports of timber stemmed against the sides. The bark thus dries in the required shape and does not become lop-sided.

Each canoe has its recognized place. Where a dense growth of mangroves [487] skirts the foreshore, a regular approach to the water is kept clear by cutting away the trees. The paddles are laid within the canoes.

Quite a large number of natives may be carried in a canoe, if the occasion

[1] Compare narrative of Mr. Carron in MacGillivray's *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* 1852, vol. ii, pp. 125 and 126; also P. P. King: *Narrative Survey Intertropical Western Coasts of Australia*, London, 1827, vol. i, p. 90.

[2] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 156.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Balers made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

314 396 137 Fig. 1. Forest scene on Bathurst Island. From the stringy-barked eucalyptus on the left side of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe. Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
501 Fig. 2. Various types of paddles in use on Bathurst Island. About $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.

PLATE XIII.

764 Figs. 1 and 2. Distant and near view of a native grave, surrounded by five carved and painted posts, Bathurst Island. Note the cleared space and the position of grave, viz.: at the junction between open woodland and thicket. A tall Bathurst Islander in seen in Fig. 2.

PLATE XIV.

415 Fig. 1. A melon-shell (*Melo diadema*) used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Fig. 2. A *Fusus pirei* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 764 Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e. Painted and carved posts of native grave shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XV.

415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cyrena assingtonensis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
317 386 Fig. 2. Lumps of yellow ochre (on the left), white pipe-clay (in the centre), and red ochre (on the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
301 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (?). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 532 764 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XII.

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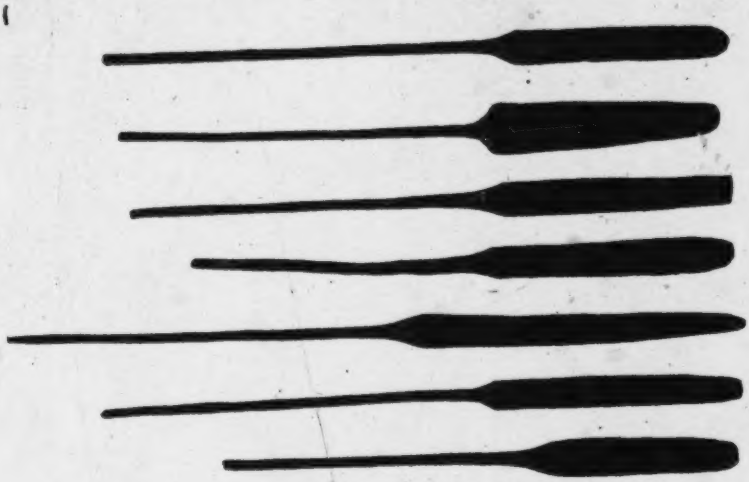

FIG. 2.

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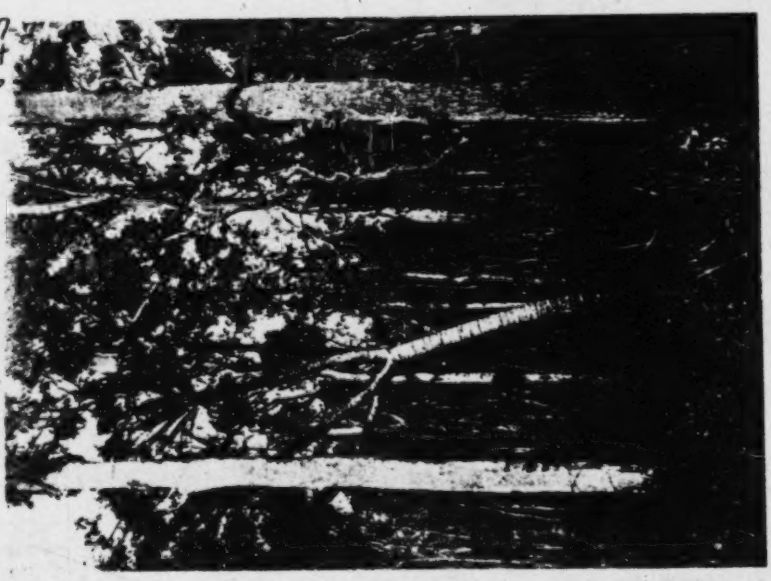

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 6]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p 322 - ANALYST]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Pl. 10A pictures Mundinju, the place where the two sisters, *Wilindula* and *Numanirakala* camped before the former made her home at Wilindu, and the latter at Numanira. 532x 778

The central black disc is Mundinju; the smaller black discs, throughout the painting, are holes in the cliffs from which seep streams of fresh water. The long, radiating panels are bands of red and yellow ochres in the cliffs, the groups of parallel lines, gutters formed in the cliffs, where *Wilindula* urinated; and the groups of chevron designs, ferns growing among the rocks.

The Red-ochre Woman, Numanirakala, at Numanira

Numanira, created by *Numanirakala*, is a partly submerged reef a short distance from Wulrungku (Karslake Island), north-western Melville Island. 778

At low tide, the aborigines collect one of the best ochres in the country from this locality, even better than that from Imilu (Fig. 1), for, although Imilu ochres are brightest when used dry, those from Numanira are best when mixed with water. [317]

The central design on Pl. 12B indicates the flat rocks of the submerged totemic place at Numanira, while similar designs, above and below, are other rocks near by. The darker-coloured segments in these three designs indicate the red ochre, and the lighter segments the mud on the sea bottom. The white circles represent sea-weed, the darker, small rocks under the water, and the dots, the corals growing on those rocks. 532x 778

The central black disc of Pl. 12D is Numanira; the surrounding white circle, the sand on the sea floor, and the narrow darker line on the periphery, the red ochre, for which the island is noted.

The radiating black panels symbolize clams, the lighter panels, oysters, both of which are plentiful on the rocks of the island. The outer circle is the mud, and the dots are bunches of weed on the sea-bottom.

The Spider-woman, Baraka, at Rungani

During *pulameri* times, the spider-woman, *Baraka*, who lived at Rungani, made a bark basket for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*. She first stripped a sheet of bark from a eucalyptus tree, heated it over the fire to make it flexible, then, bending it double, sewed the edges together with split lawyer vine. From that day until now, the women of Melville and Bathurst Islands have made their baskets in the same manner. After the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* instructed his wife, *Baraka*, to establish a totemic place at Rungani, northern Melville Island. 773 285 [462] 773

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Balers made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

314 Fig. 1. Forest scene on Bathurst Island. From the stringy-barked eucalyptus on the left side
396 of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe.
137 Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
501 Fig. 2. Various types of paddles in use on Bathurst Island. About $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.

PLATE XIII.

764 Figs. 1 and 2. Distant and near view of a native grave, surrounded by five carved and painted posts, Bathurst Island. Note the cleared space and the position of grave, viz.: at the junction between open woodland and thicket. A tall Bathurst Islander in seen in Fig. 2.

PLATE XIV.

415 Fig. 1. A melon-shell (*Melo diadema*) used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Fig. 2. A *Fusus priesi* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e. Painted and carved posts of native grave shown in previous plate.
764 $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XV.

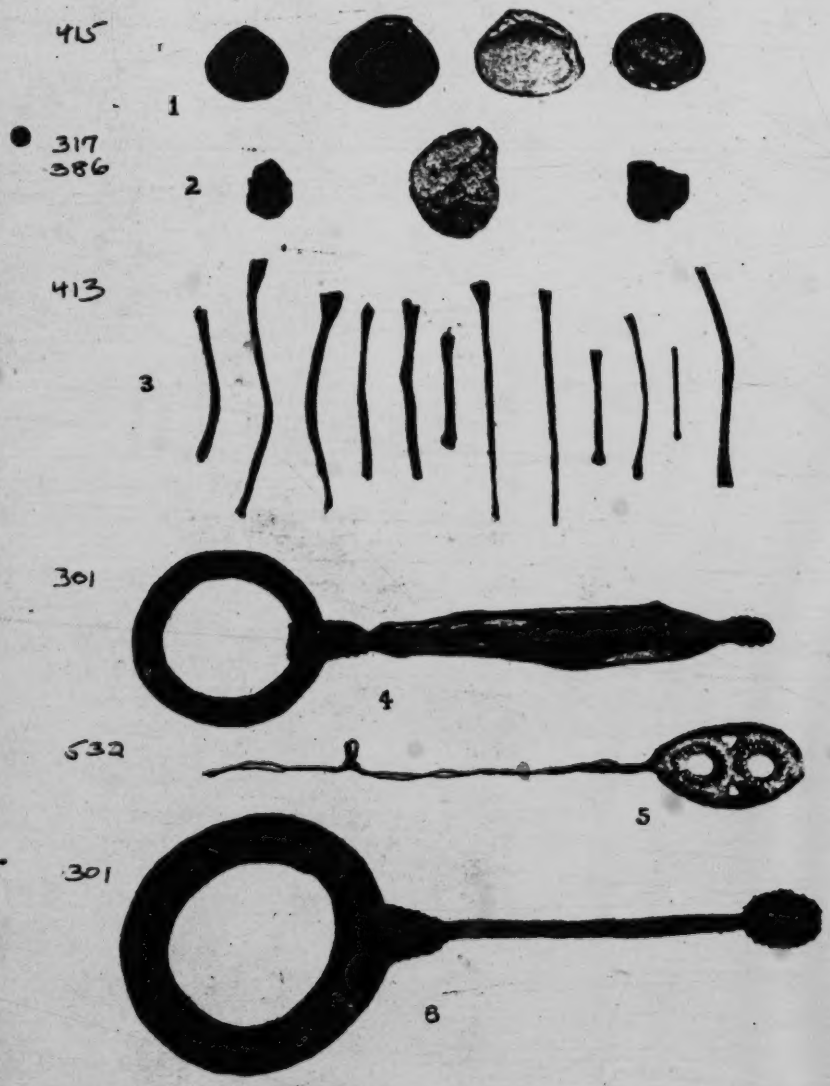
415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cyrena swingtonensis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
317 Fig. 2. Lumps of yellow ochre (on the left), white pipe-clay (in the centre), and red ochre (on
386 the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus australis*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
801 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (?). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in
532 imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).
764

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XV.



NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 9]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE P. 322 — ANALYST]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 The matter of men traveling to distant camps for ceremonials illumi-
595 nates again, and from a new angle, the great value of elderly widows in the
587 household. Tu'untalumi, during his visit to Malau in August, was able to split his household efficiently by taking a couple of old wives with him to supervise his young wives on the journey and leaving other old wives at home in Tangio to begin storing up food for the grass-burning project which he intended to stage on his return. It will be noticed in the account of his movements that he began issuing invitations to the grass burning on his way home from Malau, [224 showing his confidence that the elderly wives he had left at home would 251] have the preparations well in hand during his absence. A big man with a big household really needed three or four elderly widows because these enabled him to split his work force in various ways as his various political and social obligations required and to be sure of trustworthy supervision of each of the segments. A man without widows in his household, or with only one, could not do this; in fact, it was hard for a man without widows to attend ceremonials at all, or even to receive a large party of visitors to his household. And, as we have already pointed out, since such a man would probably go hungry very often because he would not dare to send his unsupervised young wives into the bush to gather food, there were practically no such men nor such households. Widows were indispensable to a senior Tiwi, both in his public and in his private life.

Making Things

592 Throughout this chapter we have been stressing the contrast between
887 the dull routine of life in an isolated Tiwi household during the greater part of the year and the sort of life typical on those relatively rare occasions when something special—a festival, a funeral, a fight, a grass burning, a naming ceremony, some collective phase of men's initiation—required the assembling together of several households for joint activity. Before leaving the daily life of the isolated camp, we should mention one other area of activity—namely, the manufacturing activities of the tribe. The Tiwi did not manufacture much, [32] but spears, throwing sticks, canoes, digging sticks, baskets, bodily ornaments, graveposts, and all the miscellaneous paraphernalia used in ceremonials had to be made in whatever leisure time people could find during the long weeks and months when each of the households lived more or less in isolation from the others. Crude and simple as these artifacts were, their construction required time, and only the older men had the time and the skill based on experience to make the more important of them.

[147] Largely because of their failing eyesight, the older men hunted very little and hence tended to remain in camp all day while the young men were hunting and the women were gathering. There were, of course, some old men who took advantage of this time to do little except doze in the shade, but
182 most of the household heads spent a fairly active day in camp engaged in
511 making things. Here we find another aspect of Tiwi culture that results from
531

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pennant, and the Wanderers, which draws from the permanent native population in Darwin and includes such Tiwi as Bobby Wilson. It is normal for one of these Tiwi players to be considered among the top three in Darwin football circles. 177 526 648

For a while, Edmund, a Tiwi from Bathurst Island Mission, was one of the players on the newly organized St. Mary's basketball team; other Tiwi have played on the Bagot Compound basketball team. Billy Larrakeyah, a Darwin Tiwi, was thought to have Olympic potentialities as a javelin thrower, but strained his arm in the try-outs.[4] Most recently, a group of young Catholic Tiwi has been organized into a water polo team called the Seals. National magazines suggest that they may be the best water polo team in the country, but so far they have not gone south to play any non-Darwin group.

Tiwi carving and painting have had recent popularity in Australian art circles. Traditional Tiwi graveposts are finely carved in geometric designs and painted with precise and complex networks of cross-hatching and other simple, but effective, motifs. The first modern innovation in Tiwi art occurred about 1945 when a native known as Katu (or Short Katu) made his first attempt to carve a human figure atop a mourning post. When Pilling later asked Katu why he had carved this post, he said, "Me see 'm along Darwin. Me savvy." That is, Katu transferred the concept of Western realistic statuary in the round into the Tiwi art form. He carved a second realistic post for presentation to Queen Elizabeth II in 1954. More recently, Tiwi carvers at Snake Bay have taken to realistic carving. Two figurines, both carved by Tiwi at Snake Bay, were given to the Perth Museum in 1958. Sixteen mourning posts from Snake Bay were purchased by the National Art Gallery in Sydney the same year. An art display of Tiwi carving has been held in the United States in Philadelphia. 177 532 323

Tiwi have received recognition in the Northern Territory for other art forms. One of the thirty-year-old female Tiwi at Bathurst Island Mission usually takes first prize for embroidery at the annual Territorial fair. There has also been interest shown by outsiders in the double-barbed ceremonial spears. Male Tiwi skill in dancing has attracted wide attention in Australia. When natives from all over the Territory were sent to dance before Queen Elizabeth in Queensland during her 1954 tour, three Tiwi were among the delegation. The Tiwi contingent, directed by the innovator Short Katu, made every news story covering this part of the Royal Visit. In Darwin, when Bagot Compound needs to raise money for native participation in sports, the Tiwi, usually led by Katu, present a public dance. As a result, Katu's clan under his direction has invented many new dances for white Australian audiences. 177 [531] 177 535 648

Perhaps we may look forward to the day when American television audiences can enjoy such a Tiwi dance, one of Australia's best native products. Yet only sixty years ago, and therefore in the lifetime of many people still living, very few Tiwi had even seen a white man, and white men who set foot on Tiwi soil, like Cooper in his first attempt in 1897, were ferociously chased out.

[4] He was killed in a brawl in Darwin in the spring of 1959.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 778 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals.

[411] [531] Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear, *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

[114] [322] [412] At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *miluanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *muruguna*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

[302] [413] Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[96]

[515] [413] Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 765 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkita*, are used by the Tiwi for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkitas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

[301] [302] As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, his chest ornaments,

[96] The lines of dots on *Wurarkui* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tobacco, *b*, matches, *c*, a pipe, *d*, a calico loin cloth, *e*, a pair of short trousers, *f*, a shirt, *g*, sugar, *h*, tea, and *j*, flour. 202 211 439

Secular

Fig. 60 is a carved stick whose designs were thought out by the artist as he walked along the sandy beach near our camp. Although not a message stick, the illustration is included in the section as an example of how an aboriginal expresses his mental images through the medium of simple wood carving. 532x

The horizontal lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the waves breaking on the beach, and the groups of short lines, a pattern of shallow gutters which had been formed on the sandy shore by the fresh water seeping from a nearby lagoon.

10. THE BURIAL POLES

The painted and decorated poles of Melville and Bathurst Islands attracted the attention of all the early visitors. Sir Gordon Bremer in 1824, possibly the first European to see the *pukamuni* poles, when writing about a grave he saw on Melville Island, states: "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilised people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed around with trees, 7 feet to 8 feet high, some of which were carved with stone or shell and further ornamented by rings of wood. On the tops of these were placed the waddies (throwing sticks) of the deceased. The grave was raised above the level of the earth, but the raised part was not more than 3 feet long. At the head was placed a piece of a canoe (probably a bark basket) and a spear and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and earth were cleared away from the sides and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."[66] 765 211 [322] [413]

I have quoted Sir Gordon Bremer's description in full because it shows that, even after a hundred and thirty years, the aborigines of Melville Island, 211 178 765

[66] Bremer, 1843. From this description it would appear that Bremer chanced to see a grave not long after the aborigines had completed the final rituals. Had any time elapsed the whole area would have been covered with grass and leaves, for, after the *pukamuni* ceremonies, nobody is interested in either the grave or the poles.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

elaborately shaped nor decorated, often being covered with no more than a series of dots.[1] 211 765

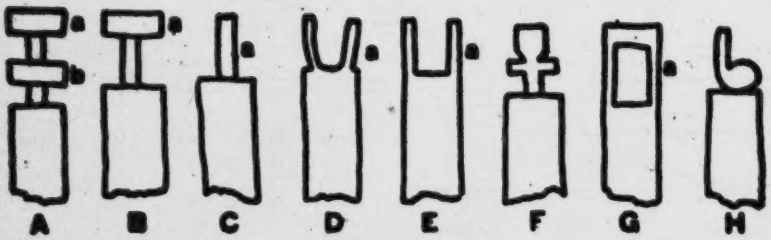


FIG. 8. *The Burial Poles*

Origin of the Pukamuni Poles

At present we have no evidence to show whether the custom of erecting burial poles around the grave in such numbers, not as a memorial, but as a gift to the dead, is confined entirely to the Tiwi tribe, or whether it is used in any other part of the world, and has reached the Tiwi by diffusion. There certainly are no similar burial poles on the Australian continent. 171 765 211 [769]

In north-eastern Arnhem Land, some of the decorated log coffins are as high as seven feet.[2] But the function of those coffins bears no relationship to that of the burial poles of Melville Island, the former being no more than coffins to hold the bones, and the latter, gifts to please the spirit of the dead.

It is possible that, during the long period of isolation from the mainland cultures, the Melville Islanders may have changed coffins of north-eastern Arnhem Land into the burial poles of the Tiwi.

The only examples of burial posts outside of Australia known to me, that are in any way comparable in function to those on Melville Island, are the *malanggan* burial ornaments of New Ireland described by Kramer.[3]

Methods of Manufacture

Although, at the conclusion of the *pukamuni* rituals, the grave is totally neglected and the poles allowed to decay, the "workers", using steel axes[4] 765

[1] Although *Tjamalangua* is not fully correct (see Bremer's and Campbell's statement in the early nineteenth century, pp. 107, 108), it indicates that both the poles and their painted decorations have, with the passing of the years, and the acquisition of steel tools, become more complex.

[2] Mountford, 1956, p. 317. [3] Kramer, 1925.

[4] The evidence of Bremer, Spencer and the aborigines, suggests that before the advent of metal the only cutting tools owned by the aborigines would have been crude stone axes, and the shells of cockles. It is likely that, under these conditions, the poles would 412 174 322

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 and the hardest and most durable timber available, spared no pains to make the best poles they could.[5]

×532 765 When the "workers" had finished shaping the poles they notified the leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, who then gave the order for the poles to be scorched over a fire of blazing leaves to make a black ground on which to paint the design (Mountford, 1956, p. 427). Then, setting up the poles in a double row near the grave (Mountford, 1956, p. 426), the men began their task of decoration (Pl. 33B, D). At the same time, the ceremonial leader sent message sticks (p. 98) to notify the outlying groups that the final rituals were about to start.

386 The materials used for decoration were: red and yellow ochres from Imilu, Cape Van Diemen, a white ochre from a beach nearby, crushed charcoal for black, one of three types of fixatives, i.e., the white of turtle eggs, wild honey and beeswax mixed together, and the particularly gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids.

The ochres were crushed, mixed with water and one or more of the fixatives, and applied to the poles with brushes made from chewed strips of bark or vines (Fig. 2).

517 ×532 As I watched these primitive artists at work, I was impressed with the care they took in the arranging of their simple patterns, and with the obvious pleasure they experienced in their work. A quiet air of contentment pervaded the outdoor studio as each of the ten artists made his own pole as beautiful as possible.

Each artist appeared to be certain as to the designs he would use; there was no evidence of copying; in fact, *Pulanimbuwi* showed me the rough draft of the designs of his pole (Pl. 35A, B, Fig. 9), scratched on the back of a cigarette tin, days before he had even felled the tree.

×532 765 A puzzling aspect of the *pukamuni* poles is the wide variety of the painted designs used, and the almost total absence in those designs of any reference to the myths and totemic localities.[6]

At first sight it would appear that the pole shapes, collected by both Fry and myself, were inventions of the moment. An analysis of the poles

174 412 322 have simpler shapes than at the present time, although Campbell (1834, p. 158) speaks about "poles with tops like lances and halberts". The aborigines may have used fire to assist in the shaping of the poles, in fact, this is suggested by Klaatsch (1907, p. 587).

[5] Not far from our camp was the deserted grave of the father of *Muramajua* (Pl. 38D), who died when his son was an infant. *Muramajua* was then over forty years old, yet the poles, although somewhat eroded and disarranged by the elements, are still in a fair state of preservation.

[177] [6] This and old *Tjamalampua's* statement, p. 109, could indicate that the poles and their designs are a recent cultural trait that is not yet fully absorbed into the culture.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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×532
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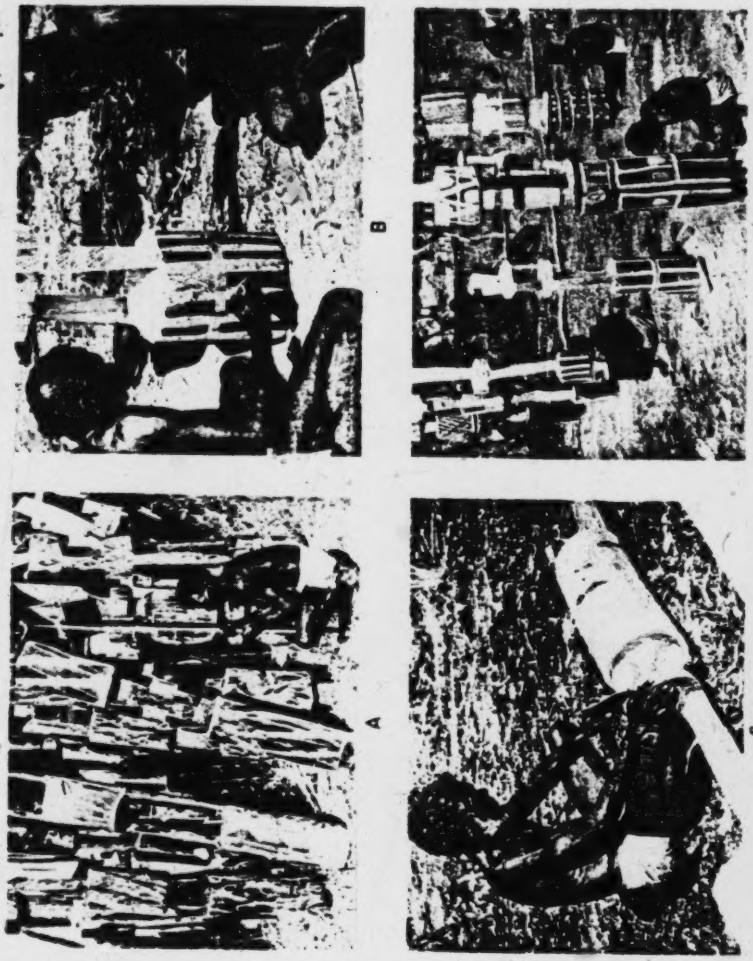

PLATE 33. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

A, Poles at Old Grave; B, D, Painting Burial Poles; C, Cutting Burial Pole.

[p. 120 A]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Personal Decoration.

Plaited armlets of vegetable fibre are worn on both arms, by both sexes, young and old. They are made of a number of central spiral turns of fibre, around which a single outer layer of flexible vegetable ribbon is plaited from either side and through the centre. The armlet is usually painted over with yellow ochre and is worn above the elbow. 301 [531]

Corrobboree-armlets are constructed in the shape of a flat ring of plaited vegetable fibre, from 10 to 20 centimetres in outside diameter (*vide* Plate XV, Figs. 4 and 6). The ring, which is from 2 to 3 centimetres wide and from a ½ to ¾ centimetre thick, is neatly coloured on the outside with ochre in a regular fashion. From a point on the circumference depends a bundle of from seven to fifteen twisted strings of animal or human hair, 30 centimetres long, which ends in a flat oval mass of beeswax, studded on the outside with red seeds of the "gequirity" or so-called "Northern Territory bean" (*Abrus praecatorius*). A similar mass of beeswax and beans surrounds the point of attachment of this tassel.

Special corrobboree arm-decorations[1] are constructed on rather more elaborate lines. A piece of bark (*Eucalyptus sp.*), about 66 centimetres long and 10 broad, is bent once upon itself into a simple loop and the open end kept together by stitching the edges for a distance of some 12 centimetres down (*vide* Plate VII, Figs. 2 and 4). The united end is fenestrated; one oblong space (measuring 6 by 2 centimetres) is cut out some 3 centimetres from the top, and beneath this, at a similar distance from its lower edge, two squares, whose sides are equivalent in length to the smaller side of the oblong. The top end of the united portion, and the top and bottom edges of the oblong and squares, are hemmed with an overlapping crossstitch. One side edge only of the loop is hemmed with a simple backward and forward "run-on" stitch. The lateral edges of the windows and the septum between the lower squares are fixed by transverse winding. The material used for hemming and winding is a light cane obtained from a creeping plant. It is evident that the different methods of stitching have to do with the fibrous structure of the bark; the cross-thread would tend to keep the stitches from pulling out along the fibres, as would be the case in straight up-and-down stitching. Additional complexity is given the ornament by eight thin sticks (about 15 centimetres long) which are pointed at both ends. One of these is stuck vertically into the bark at either end of the top edge. Two others pierce the bark at right angles, immediately below the lower outer corner of each square window; one of them being just below that corner of each of the squares, respectively. At either end of these transverse pieces, another stick is fixed vertically by binding with vegetable string, at about 3 centimetres from the ends. The ornament is coloured on the outside with red and white earth-paints. The ground colour of the upper half is red; the hem stitches and the affixed sticks are white. The lower half, or looped portion, bears four white transverse bands 301 322 301 531

[1] Apparently also used during mourning ceremonies.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

301 bordered with red. Each of the intervening spaces is again sub-divided into two
531 squares at the centre (and a "half-square" at the sides) by three vertical, white lines bordered with red. The squares and "half-squares" are shaded diagonally with from four to six lines passing downwards and away from the central line in the topmost group, and upwards and away from the centre in the two lower groups of
[171] squares. The combined effect resembles the windmill or "wanningi" pattern common throughout Australia. The shading is all in white on one side, but red and white in alternate squares on the opposite side.

301 In another type of this arm decoration, which is also made of bark, the upper
322 united portion is shorter than in the previous case (*vide* Plate VII, Figs. 1 and 3). The top edge is concave and only one oblong window is cut beneath it. The sides have been united by hem-stitching and by the insertion of a few wooden pins which answer the same purpose as rivets. The edges are thickly plastered with beeswax. As in the previous case, the stitches (and the plaster also) are continued only along one side of the loop. A fairly stout rod of wood projects vertically from either end of the top concave edge. Shorter rods project laterally from either top corner of the loop. To the end of each of these rods a plume of
[237 white is attached with beeswax. Cockatoo feathers have been chosen and they are
531] fastened by their distal ends so that the fluffy portions are exposed. A number of twisted strands of fur and vegetable fibre pass from the extremity of one horizontal rod diagonally upwards to the base of the vertical rod above, along it to the top, thence horizontally across to the top of the other vertical rod, whence it is continued the same way down the other side to the extremity of the opposite horizontal rod. Beeswax retains these strands in position at the rod-tops, while more strands, wound horizontally from the base of one vertical rod to the other, and also round the base of each, make the former strands secure there. The painted design in this
301 case consists of one large cruciform figure on either side of the looped portion, the
531 arms being modified at the base in a manner suggestive of a snake design. One arm of the cross is white, the other yellow, both being bordered with red. The intervening spaces are shaded red and yellow, the constituent lines being parallel and straight up-and-down in the upper segment and crossed in the lower.

532 *Corrobboree-mask.*—An interesting object is what I take to be a corrobboree-mask (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 5). As I did not see it in use and did not receive the specimen until it was too late to make inquiries, I cannot, with certainty, describe it as such. The object represents an oval structure, 15 centimetres long and 8 wide, which encloses two connected circular rims resembling a solid pair of spectacles. The internal framework is made of split cane, bound together with vegetable strands. The oval portion is covered with human hair string, wound around it and knotted along the outer edge after the modern "button-hole-stitch" fashion. The rims are broad and covered with beeswax. A circle of the red beans of *Abrus praecatorius*, embedded in the wax, surrounds the "eye-holes" on the front side. At one of the lateral extremities, a band of five human hair strings emerges from a cylindrical mass of beeswax and is surrounded, at 6 centimetres distance,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

by a similar mass, whence two strings only continue for 40 odd centimetres. 532
The whole length of the band, therefore, amounts to approximately 50 centimetres. Its object is, no doubt, to fasten the mask in position over the face during corroboree ceremonies.

Domestic Utensils.

Food carriers.—The most common form of "mika" or carrier for food and 322
other articles is one made of a single piece of bark of the "stringy bark" eucalypt 415
(*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 3, 4, 5, and 6). An oblong piece of such bark, say 1 metre long by 40 centimetres broad, is freshly cut and folded transversely at its centre. The edges on either side are pared down, then laid flat, one over the other, and sewn or laced together with plain "run-on" stitches, 2 centimetres apart. A row of slanting and overlapping stitches often skirts the open edge at a short distance down; occasionally, too, part of the edge is cross-hemstitched and plastered with beeswax. The object of this procedure is to prevent the bark from tearing by virtue of its fibrous structure. The open mouth of the carrier is nearly circular or oval; in the latter case the long axis of the oval runs at right angles to the base-edge of the implement. These carriers are of various sizes; the largest that came under observation measured 63 centimetres in height and 43 in width at the base. Ordinarily they are unpainted, but on special occasions elaborate designs, consisting 415
of circles, oblong and other figures, with cross-hatched shading, are drawn on the 531
outer surface in red, yellow, white, and black. The designs are best studied by reference to the reproductions (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 5 and 6). Occasionally tassel-shaped appendages are noticed at one of the convex outer surfaces of the mouth of the carrier. These consist of a flattish, egg-shaped mass of beeswax (studded on the surface with the red beans of *Abrus praecatorius*), which is suspended by two twisted fur strings (*vide* Plate VIII, Fig. 6).

Water carriers.—Water is taken to camp from a soakage or spring in simple [312]
structures made out of the bark of the paper-bark tree (*Melaleuca sp.*). An oblong 322
piece of this bark is bent upon itself longitudinally, both its ends folded several 415
times and kept together by binding with cane or by spiking with short pointed wooden pegs (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 1 and 2).

Drinking vessels.—Several natural objects are used for drinking vessels. 415
Among the most common are the discarded tests of mollusca. The species *Melo-* [237]
diadema and *Fusus pricei* were found in use at several native wells (*vide* Plate XIV, Figs. 1 and 2).

But when no such shells are available a piece of bark is torn or cut from a 322
tree (usually from a *Melaleuca*) and folded so as to form a water-tight cup (*vide* 415
Plate XIV, Figs. 3 and 4). This piece of bark, which measures about 30 centimetres by 20, is folded longitudinally at about its middle (*vide* Fig. 3, D). Both ends are then bent upon themselves at right angles to this plane and at about one quarter the whole length from either end. The overturned ends and the inner

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

322 piece of the former fold are clasped between the fingers and thus used as a cup
415 the part lying opposite to the fingers being held to the lips.

Honey Eating.

222 In my notes on the north-western tribes of the Northern Territory I have
262 described[1] a honey-collecting implement and there, also, referred to somewhat
264 similar observations made by Dr. Wilson[2] and Keppel.[3]

On Bathurst Island I observed still another modification. A young flower-stalk of the fan-palm (*Livistonia humilis*), when about 50 to 70 centimetres long, is cut just above the trunk of the palm and its bottom end chewed until all the fibres are separated and look like the hairs of a brush. The juice, being quite sweet, is swallowed. The brush end is then inserted into the nest of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*), whereby the honey gathers between the fibres. When saturated with honey, the brush end is passed back to the mouth and again sucked and chewed for a considerable time, after which it is once more returned to the honey for a fresh supply, and this is continued to repletion.

Tree Climbing.

481 Both male and female, young and old, are expert tree-climbers when in
[222] pursuit of game, honey of the wild bee, fruits, and seeds. As none of the trees on the islands grow to an abnormally large size, the butt is usually not too great in circumference to allow of the arms being thrown around it, so that the hands may obtain a firm hold on the side distant from the climber. Having obtained this hold while standing on the ground and facing the tree, the native jumps on to the butt, clutching it with the flat surfaces of his feet in a frog-like fashion. The knees in this position stand well outwards. The body hangs, suspended by the arms above and held against the tree by the legs below. The climber now raises his body; his hands quickly follow by a corresponding distance. Holding on with the latter he draws up his legs in a jumping manner once more to clutch the tree between the soles of his feet. This movement being repeated, he rapidly advances upwards.

Hunting and Fighting.

411 *Throwing-sticks and clubs.*—Several types of throwing-sticks and clubs are in use. They must be referred to under this general or collective heading, since it is hard to discriminate between the two implements and to say definitely where the throwing-stick ends and the club begins. They form an interesting group of Australian implements and weapons that allows of a satisfactory system of

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 26, Fig. 19.
[2] *Narrative Voyage Round the World*, 1835, p. 99.
[3] *A Visit to Indian Archipelago*, 1853, vol. 2, p. 168.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

level, further material has been cut away to reduce its thickness by about 1 centimetre all round. The top portion, which has the appearance of a knob, has been daubed with red ochre; the sunken portion, immediately beneath, is white (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 2). The lower surface of the post bears five vertical bands, three being of white pipe-clay and two of yellow ochre. Two of the former have a border of red, the third one of yellow; and both of the latter (yellow) are bordered with white. Three of the intervening spaces are shaded with inclined lines of white, the remaining two are each filled with a vertical row of white cricoid figures. The original surface upon which the pattern was drawn is charred. 532 764

Having persuaded the natives to repaint the designs on the tomb-posts, in places where they were defective or missing, they set about the work with enthusiasm and did not rest until they had repainted the whole of the surfaces. To accomplish this they leaned the posts against trees and divided themselves into small groups of two to four, each of which undertook part of the work (*vide* Plate XVI, Figs. 1 and 2). Youths were sent to the main camp, whence they soon after returned with lumps of red and yellow ochre and white pipe-clay (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 2). From these they broke off small pieces and crushed them by hand in the strong concave shells of the bivalve mollusc *Cyrena exsingtonensis*.[1] To this crumbled pigment sufficient water was added to make a thick paint, more water being added from time to time as required. One might look upon these shells containing the mixed paint as representing primitive palettes (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 1). The paint is applied to the surface by means of crudely made, yet effective, brushes. Short pieces of the creeping calamus are cut with the sharp edge of a shell and one or both of their ends chewed until all the fibres have become separated (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 3); much in the same way as the flower-stalks of the fan-palm are chewed when feeding on honey (*vide* p. 300). Both of these small artists' requisites are highly interesting inasmuch as they show us a decidedly primitive, yet to the present day practically unaltered stage in the evolution of art. [126] 386 [413] 532 [413]

It is evident that the posts have been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk. Captain Flinders[2] as far back as 1803 noticed that the natives on the north coast (Caledon Bay) were familiar with the use of iron instruments and that they tried to steal his axes. He, therefore, suspected that "they had been previously visited by people possessing iron instruments." Later, he was himself able to confirm this supposition when he discovered, near to Cape Wilberforce, a fleet of proas from Macassar, the crew of which were in the habit of visiting the north coast of Australia to collect trepang, which they took to Timor and sold to the Chinese.[2] 412 [302] 177 171

[1] We have before us an interesting analogy, when we recollect that in our own country the shells of fresh-water mussels were, in former days, much used and are still used as a receptacle for mixing water-colours; whence also the name *Unio pictorum*.

[2] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, pp. 213 and 228–231.

123 sional patch of grass, which the rushing fire had missed, there was not a living green plant below the four-foot line. Burning the country is an annual occurrence and many are the laws governing 221 who may burn and who may subsequently hunt in the newly cleared 224 land. Because the fires are set each year, there is no accumulation of dry tinder to feed the fire and allow it to rage uncontrollably. Only the grass and a few fallen logs catch and these will burn rapidly and fiercely, but for a very short period. Any gap in the vegetation will stop the fire and the heavy dew, falling in the evening, will also put out the flames, leaving perhaps only isolated, smouldering logs to burn through the night. Until the first shoots of new grass push [421] their way through the charred ground, the individual hunter who set the fire has exclusive rights to the area he set alight. Of course, no one except those who belong to that country may burn without [671] permission of the owners. As far as possible, these laws are still upheld.

123 We soon came to a branch in the path and Albert indicated that we two girls should continue straight ahead; he would stop behind. In front of us stretched the fresh-water swamp. Out of the almost inky but clear water rose the gnarled paperbark trees, their roots so intertwined they almost formed a floor, albeit a most slippery and irregular one, over the rotten vegetation in the bottom of the swamp. I picked a particularly large rooted tree for my bath [515] tub, and a short distance away Agnes did the same. If one was careful not to disturb the fine deposit on the bottom but managed to stay on top of the slippery roots, the clear cool water was as sweet and soft as one could wish for. We stayed for about an hour, washing ourselves and our clothes, but finally an impatient call from Albert put an end to this pleasure. Albert had been hunting for a possum, but in this area so close to the camp, they had already been depleted.

123 Instead of returning to camp, Albert decided that now was as good a time as any to cut his *milingani*, the sticks with which they 411 kill the geese. After another mile or so into the bush, we came to a 322 grove of stout bushes of a kind I had not seen before. They had [223] long, straight branches of about a half-inch diameter. These Albert

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Fig. 13. Gathering water-lilies in a fresh-water swamp

cut and after he had collected about thirty he selected a nice, smooth ledge of rock in the shade to work further on the sticks. First he stripped the bark, then measuring them against his arm he cut them so that each stick was as long as the distance from his fingertips to his elbow. All this he did with his knife, holding it by the tip of its long blade so that the handle would add its weight to each blow. He carefully smoothed off the two ends so there were no loose splinters. We each took a bundle of these sticks, tied them with strips of pandanus, and returned to the camp. Here they were laid in the water close to the bank and weighted down with a rock. This would make them good and heavy, it was explained.

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During the afternoon, the two men worked on the permanent house which Bill Grimster had ordered. Big Jack had spent the morning cutting posts and had brought in about half a dozen. By late afternoon, when the others returned, they had been set upright in holes dug to individual measure so that they stood firm without bracing.

Once everyone had returned, a fire was built. The men collected their individual bundles of *milingani* and placed the ends of the dripping sticks in the flames. They squatted over the sticks and individually started a chant during which they cupped their hands in the smoke and carrying it to their bodies, slapped their necks, then their arms. "Knar. Knar Gerra doo (slap), Gerra doo (slap)." The chant was nothing more than the imitation of the cries of the geese and the whir of the sticks. They explained that to bring the goose down they had to hit it directly on the neck or wings. "Why

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 14. "Cooking milingani"

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[322]
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do you cook the sticks?" I asked. "To make them dry so they won't slip in our hands," they replied.

Once the sticks were all well charred on the ends the men took them down to the canoe. For once, I used my status of ethnographer and overruled my role of a woman, and accompanied the men on what was properly men's business. The presence of women or children might bring bad luck. Whether the explanation was simply that women and children are considered to be lacking in the amount of silence or immobility required, or whether the reason was more subtle, I never found out. "This properly men's business," was the only explanation.

We took the canoe a quarter of a mile up stream, where we

171 boomerang, is unknown to the islanders. Ceremonial customs,
[411] language, origin, and burial rites all differ from those of the mainland tribes, and constitute an interesting study for anthropologists. They are the only aborigines who erect memorials on
764 the graves of the departed, and, in the forest beside the aerodrome, you may see a typical grave surrounded with queerly-
[322 carved ironwood totem-poles. The poles, some eight feet in
532] height, are carved in varying patterns. They had been painted in highly decorative designs with red, yellow, and white ochre, with black bands of charcoal to give sharp and artistic contrast. Each kindred totem to that of the deceased must place a pole at the grave. Failure to erect a pole is supposed to signify that no sorrow is felt for the death, and punishment will follow. Something unpleasant always *does* happen to those who neglect this duty.

797 AFTER these necessary digressions, let us return to my visit to the mission station. We followed the fathers over the stile,
[245] up an avenue of palms, and on through the garden, where pineapples and bananas grow, and there are rows of immense and beautifully shady mango-trees. Sturdy, fuzzy-headed
[262] aborigines strode in front (one of them had just come in with a couple of kangaroos for the larder), and the boys trooped along behind us. The quarters of the fathers are very much those of bachelors, perfectly bare, with guns in the corners and a few native weapons and curios hanging on the walls.

Here two lubras brought us morning tea, and here I learnt much of the foregoing matters. The fathers themselves are entertaining men of the world, and their white cricket shirts and khaki slacks gave no indication of their calling. The boys gathered at the foot of the steps leading up to the quarters,
797 and every now and then black-bearded Father McGrath would
522 banter them in their own language. Like all the native peoples

[p. 15 (B)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tribe, owned also the country on the opposite side of Apsley Strait at the southeast corner of Bathurst, while the Malauila, the band in the northern half of Bathurst Island, conversely overlapped their ownership across the strait to take in a thin strip of coastline on the northwest corner of Melville. 423 621

These details illustrate the fact that the band was the land-owning, workaday, territorially organized group which controlled the hunting, the food supply, and the warfare. Until the white man arrived in force in the coastal waters of North Australia, the average Tiwi regarded the nine bands as the main functional units of his existence, and his loyalty to and identification with his band were given much greater opportunity for exercise than any loyalty to or identification with the whole Tiwi tribe. He did many things as a member of a band, but he did little as a member of a tribe. Only when an outsider turned up did he need to think of himself as a Tiwi, and outsiders were very rare. For the rest of the time he thought of himself as a member of his band, thought of his band as his people, and of his band territory as his country. 619 621

The Household

Since the band consisted of anything from one hundred to three hundred people, it could not live together in one place, except for very short periods of time. Hunting and gathering in almost any part of the world (except the northwest coast of America in pre-white times) require the human population to disperse itself very thinly over the countryside and live from day to day in small hunting and camping units. Such small primary groups are usually in one sense families and in another sense households, and this is the case among the Tiwi. We propose to call such units households rather than families for reasons that will soon become apparent. It is true that Tiwi "houses," especially in the long dry season (from March to October), were the flimsiest and most temporary of structures, but the group of people in question was the group who lived together day after day, hunted as a unit, pooled the results of their food getting, and ate and slept together. Functionally this group is identical with an American household, even though the "house" they used was nothing more than a few piled-up tree branches, used as shelter for a night or two and then abandoned. Like the American household also, the Tiwi household usually consisted of a man, his wife (or wives), and their children, though in many would also be included a few leftovers or extras, common to all cultures, such as bachelor uncles, visiting cousins, ancient widowers, and ambiguous "men who came to dinner" and were still there. (Tiwi households did not, however, include maiden aunts, female orphans, or ancient widows, since these could not exist in Tiwi culture.) [361] 592 [342] [574] [589]

Thus the Tiwi household was more or less the same thing as the Tiwi family group, but Tiwi family organization had such a number of unusual twists that we find it desirable to insist upon calling such a group the house-

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. 372 Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 1. Snake Bay Settlement

114 Islanders on a hunt. The trip took us to a small clearing on the right bank of the Paluwiunga River, ten miles upstream from where it empties into the Arafura Sea.

131 A brief glance at the map will help to further pinpoint this location. Ten degrees south of the equator and at a distance of twenty to fifty miles due north from the Australian Northern Territory capital of Darwin, lies the relatively large Melville Island (1,000 square miles), named for Viscount Henry Dundas Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, who authorized the coastal survey of 1818 during which the island was circumnavigated. To the west, separated by a narrow strait, lies the smaller Bathurst
101 Island. The group of people with whom I found myself camped by the river bank were members of the Tiwi, a tribe of Australian Aboriginals whose country includes both these islands. Today about
[161 361] seven hundred members of the tribe live near to the southeast corner of Bathurst Island where they are in various ways administered 797 to by the Sacred Heart Mission. On the northern coast of Melville
161 Island, on a hill overlooking Snake Bay, near the mouth of the
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797 The couples marry young without any thought for the future.
They just marry as, and when, they feel inclined, and the mission
582 fathers provide the new home. Under the palms beside the
342 Strait are many of the queer little iron humpies provided, just a
roof, as it were, sloping on each side from the ridge-pole to the
ground. The whole can be picked up and moved to a fresh
position when fleas become too numerous and the surroundings
otherwise unpleasant. These humpies scarcely seem attractive
to white folk, but the islanders like them, and they are at least
a great improvement on the dog-kennels of old iron that the
blacks persist in erecting for themselves on the beach at Darwin.
797 Proper houses are provided in the Kahlin compound there, but
the blacks despise them; and, although the miserable humpies on
342 the beach are demolished from time to time by the authorities,
they are all up again by next evening. The good fathers know
what the islanders prefer, and they have given the married
couples the kind of accommodation in which they feel most
happy. The humpies may be hot and stuffy, but they are dry
inside when it rains.

142 The island blacks, in many respects, differ considerably from
the tribes of the mainland. They are excessively hirsute, and,
144 on attaining maturity, the men grow long beards, many being of
truly patriarchal proportions. The upper lip is kept bare, which
practice seems to emphasize the magnificence of the beard.
Shocks of hair, sometimes standing six inches high, add to a
wildly impressive appearance. They are tall and muscular, and,
as they stride along, they seem the very acme of physical develop-
ment, a living advertisement for the natural, open-air existence.
302 The hairs, by the way, are plucked from the upper lip one by
one, and this painful proceeding is undertaken in the calmest
manner, certainly with less fuss and facial distortion than the
average white man makes during his morning shave.

171 The use of the woomera for throwing spears, and of the
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[p. 15 (A)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 grass, in the foreground, so that the whirling club slithers on in an unforeseen and most unpleasant manner. It may rise as high as a man's head, or it may strike him on the shins.

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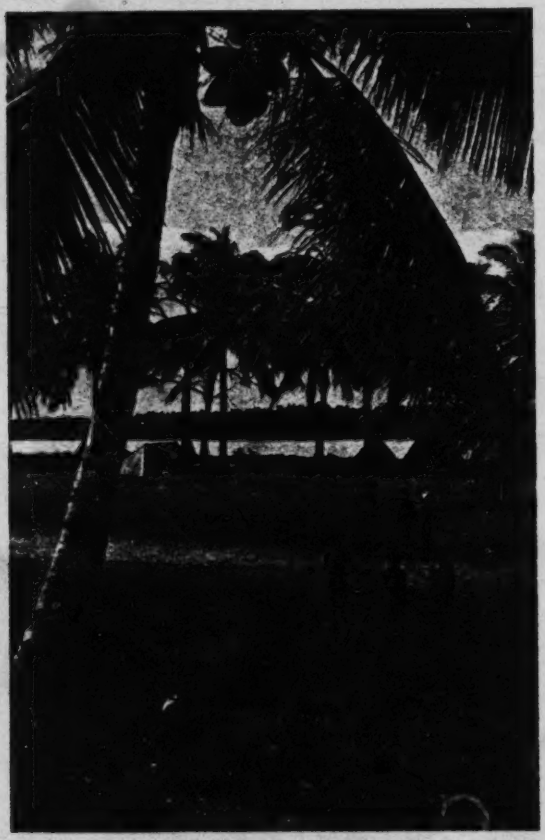

NATIVE "HOUSES" UNDER THE COCO-NUT PALMS AT BATHURST ISLAND MISSION.

726 Sometimes, as in the days of chivalry when English and French knights rode out before the main battle, eight men will advance to fight eight men of the other side, one pair at a time, each warrior throwing his spears and clubs in turn. [198] Sentries are then posted to one side, before and behind the combatants. As a warrior with a stock of pidgin English put it, "That feller, him look out front side. That feller, him look out back side."

At times warriors arrive by canoe to fight a duel on the beach close to the mission station. These are frequently more serious combats, and then men who are camped under the palms chase the duellists off; but these always land later farther down, and fight it out in the long run. Just before my visit, there had been fought the only naval battle in the history of the islands. The encounter took place in the mouth of Apsley Strait to the accompaniment of excited yells as canoes overturned when warriors stepped unevenly in dodging the flying spears. Nobody

[p. 17(B)]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 the background is the sea. The white central transverse panel is the beach at
776 Wulrungku.

The meaning of the designs on the lower panel are similar, the black central and branching lines representing the tracks made by the *Pitipituis* as they travel to and from their camps (the black discs); the encircling lines represent the sand around those camps, and the painted background, the jungle which shelters the little people.

3. THE PARAMANUAS[48]

776 The *Paramanuas* are short, particularly active, agile men, about three feet high, with thick, powerful limbs, tusk-like teeth, and projecting toe and finger nails.

In general, except for these details, they resemble the aborigines in appearance, eat the same foods and follow a similar way of life.

They live in many places throughout Melville and Bathurst Islands, but no one except those captured by the *Paramanuas*, has seen either them or
[753] their homes. As they dislike being talked about, and often make those people
[124] ill who do so, I found it somewhat difficult to gather information about the *Paramanuas*.

The homes of the *Paramanuas*, their wives and their children, are spacious underground caves, the entrances to which are openings either in the side of termite mounds, or hollow trees. In these caves, the men store their utensils,
[343] weapons and food (Fig. 14). Their cooking fire, like that of the aborigines, is always outside of their camp.

Occasionally a *Paramanua*, wishing to befriend an aboriginal, will watch
776 him for some time. Then one day when the aboriginal is hunting by himself,
787 the *Paramanua* will cast a spear at him. But, before the spear has reached its mark, the *Paramanua* will have caught it and, standing at the back of the aboriginal, will be tickling his ribs. The aboriginal, thoroughly scared, turns to strike his opponent, only to find him again at his back. This game goes on until the aboriginal is exhausted, dizzy and confused. Then hitting him on the side of the head with an open hand, rendering the aboriginal unconscious, the spirit man picks up the prostrate man and carries him to the underground home of the *Paramanuas*.

Awaking to find himself in a dark place, the aboriginal is terrified, but on receiving plenty of food from the *Paramanuas*, and treated with every kindness, the aboriginal loses all fear, and as the weeks go by, all sense of time.

[48] Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to these little people as Barminuar.

881 He was in the *kolloponiati* stage of initiation grade and was forbidden in the camp. One
[301] day in great secrecy he showed me some bark arm bracelets known as *tuguti*. A
[114] month later I was on a Malay lugger in the same region and some natives came out to the lugger in canoes. They told me that Cooper was to take the ceremony for his next degree that afternoon. I persuaded the master of the lugger to put me ashore on Papiau beach, opposite old Fort Dundas.
123 The natives were unwilling to take me with them at first, but finally consented. We walked inland for about four miles and met the main group, all painted for the ceremony. Cooper was said to be out in the mangroves, but came in shortly after about midday. He then went out again for a sugar bag. Having learned a few words of the language I attempted conversation. After a time I attempted to ask something about Cooper's *tuguti*. Immediately the cheerful group about me hushed and everyone seemed very concerned. They had gained the impression that I had stolen the *tuguti*. I tried to explain that I had only looked at them. About twenty of the men seated themselves in a circle and proceeded to discuss the problem. I overheard a few recognizable words at times, *ardjidit waitamanna*, no good white men, *paltoa*, dead, *yergobai*, alligator. I was sitting meanwhile with my back to a pandanus facing a salt water inlet. An emissary from the circle visited me from time to time and questioned me anxiously about what I had done with the *tuguti*. One humourist came over several times, tapped me on the shoulder, and grinningly pointed to the water, saying *yergobai*. Suddenly the discussion stopped, everybody stood up, and cordial relations were resumed as if nothing had happened.

881 Cooper returned about 4 p.m. He washed and was smeared all over with red ochre
[343] except the upper part of the face. Mean-

[P. 167-B]

8:Fry D-5 (1913) 1950 O120 Tiwi O120

881 while a small trestle had been built of three upright sticks about 2 ft. 6 in. high in the [343] form of an isosceles triangle, with the apex to the west. Cross sticks were laid across the top of this and the sticks covered with grass. Three old men then took Cooper to a point about twenty yards east of the trestle and faced towards it, two on his right, one on his left. They each held a [411] flat bladed club, *irruella*, in the left hand horizontally above the head and beat the [533] point of it with a light round club with a pointed end, *merkunga*. Cooper held three *merkunga* in the crook of his left arm, one being taken and used by one of the old men. The old men advanced towards the trestle, chanting and beating their clubs in the way described. Cooper was slightly behind them. Young men followed the group. Cooper stood before the trestle as at an altar while the old men chanted for about five minutes. Water was called for, and brought by a woman and given to a visitor from the Mugula tribe. He then poured the water over Cooper's head. Cooper rubbed his belly with his *merkunga*. The visitor then pulled the hair string free from one end of the wooden collar, *eladini*, while Cooper made very wry faces. The collar was removed and the ceremony ended. I was [439] presented with Cooper's *eladini* and *merkunga* in return for gifts, and I was cheerfully escorted back to the beach where the lugger was waiting for me.

H. K. Fry,
D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.

[p. 168 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER I

The Art of the Tiwi

1. THE ART FORMS

ALTHOUGH Melville Island is separated from the mainland of Australia by the Dundas Strait, only fourteen miles in width, the art forms on either side of this swift-running tideway bear little resemblance to each other. That of the mainland, of which the bark and cave paintings of Oenpelli are typical (Mountford, 1956, pp. 112–264; Spencer, 1928, pp. 802–24), is representational, and among the most decorative art forms employed by the Australian aborigines, while that of Melville Island is highly formalized, and cannot be interpreted without the aid of the artist. In this respect (although they employ different motifs) the art of the Melville Islanders resembles that of the aborigines of Central Australia (Mountford, 1937, pp. 84–95). 171 531 [131]

2. MEDIUMS OF EXPRESSION

The aborigines of Melville Island,[5] like those on the mainland (Spencer, 1928, p. 793) painted designs on the inside of the sheets of bark that made up their wet-weather shelters. Basedow (1913, p. 320, Pls. 19–20) figured bark paintings he collected from bark shelters on Melville Island, and Campbell (1834, p. 151), referring to shelters he saw near Fort Dundas (Punata), in Apsley Straits, writes, "Some of them were ornamented with figures drawn in white pipeclay; one, in particular, was neatly and regularly done all over, representing the cross-bars of a cell."[6] 171 353 531

Under normal tribal conditions, however, it is in the carving and painting of the elaborate burial poles and the ceremonial spears, coupled with the decorating of the large bark baskets, that the aborigines of Melville Island find an outlet for their artistic efforts. 531

The effect of the *pukamuni* burial ceremony was evident in many of the bark paintings collected on the expedition. For example, Pl. 3D, Pl. 54F, and Pl. 54A, are essentially the same designs as a Melville Island artist would use to

[5] For the sake of simplicity I will, in future, use the term, Melville Island, or the tribal name, Tiwi, to indicate the Melville and Bathurst Island culture, both of which are part of the same tribal unit. [101]

[6] This would have been a design similar to that on bark painting (Pl. 52D).

[p. 18 blank]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Tiwi Marriage

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Cultural Isolation

PEOPLE WHO LIVE in the congested cities and towns of the modern world have difficulty in realizing how different life can be at the hunting and gathering level of human existence. The basic fact about the life of hunters and gatherers is the thinly spread-out manner in which they live and the isolation of families and households from each other. In the case of the Tiwi, these conditions of isolation and dispersal were accentuated by their island habitat. Melville and Bathurst Islands lie off the northern coast of Australia some fifty to eighty miles from Darwin, which is the administrative capital of the empty north. They are separated from the mainland by about twenty-five miles of open sea at the narrowest part. This distance is slightly greater than the distance that separates England from France at the Straits of Dover, and just as the dim outline of coastal France can be seen from England on clear days, so the dim outline of the Australian mainland can be seen from the southern edges of the islands. However, Tiwi tradition is firm and certain that before the white man's arrival there was no contact between the islands and the mainland. To them, the dimly seen coastline of Australia was *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead, to which all Tiwi souls went after death. It follows from this they they regarded the inhabited world as composed of their own two islands, and on those islands they lived a self-contained and exclusive existence. Occasionally outsiders appeared, either castaways from surrounding areas, including presumably the Australian mainland, and in recent centuries, fishing boats and pirates from Indonesia, loosely called "Malays" in the literature. To such visitors from outside, the Tiwi were consistently and implacably hostile. Their own traditions and what little written history there is of "Malay" penetration into the Arafura Sea both tell the same story. Outsiders who landed on the islands were massacred or vigorously resisted. Whether they were classified as *Malai-ui* ("Malays") or *Wona-rui*

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tribe, owned also the country on the opposite side of Apsley Strait at the southeast corner of Bathurst, while the Malauila, the band in the northern half of Bathurst Island, conversely overlapped their ownership across the strait to take in a thin strip of coastline on the northwest corner of Melville. 423 621

These details illustrate the fact that the band was the land-owning, workaday, territorially organized group which controlled the hunting, the food supply, and the warfare. Until the white man arrived in force in the coastal waters of North Australia, the average Tiwi regarded the nine bands as the main functional units of his existence, and his loyalty to and identification with his band were given much greater opportunity for exercise than any loyalty to or identification with the whole Tiwi tribe. He did many things as a member of a band, but he did little as a member of a tribe. Only when an outsider turned up did he need to think of himself as a Tiwi, and outsiders were very rare. For the rest of the time he thought of himself as a member of his band, thought of his band as his people, and of his band territory as his country. 619 621

The Household

Since the band consisted of anything from one hundred to three hundred people, it could not live together in one place, except for very short periods of time. Hunting and gathering in almost any part of the world (except the northwest coast of America in pre-white times) require the human population to disperse itself very thinly over the countryside and live from day to day in small hunting and camping units. Such small primary groups are usually in one sense families and in another sense households, and this is the case among the Tiwi. We propose to call such units households rather than families for reasons that will soon become apparent. It is true that Tiwi "houses," especially in the long dry season (from March to October), were the flimsiest and most temporary of structures, but the group of people in question was the group who lived together day after day, hunted as a unit, pooled the results of their food getting, and ate and slept together. Functionally this group is identical with an American household, even though the "house" they used was nothing more than a few piled-up tree branches, used as shelter for a night or two and then abandoned. Like the American household also, the Tiwi household usually consisted of a man, his wife (or wives), and their children, though in many would also be included a few leftovers or extras, common to all cultures, such as bachelor uncles, visiting cousins, ancient widowers, and ambiguous "men who came to dinner" and were still there. (Tiwi households did not, however, include maiden aunts, female orphans, or ancient widows, since these could not exist in Tiwi culture.) [361] 592 [342] [574] [589]

Thus the Tiwi household was more or less the same thing as the Tiwi family group, but Tiwi family organization had such a number of unusual twists that we find it desirable to insist upon calling such a group the house-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

starvation level than was the case with many of the mainland tribes.[8] Even to talk about the Tiwi in near-starvation terms seems quite incongruous, for there was an abundance of native food available the whole year around and their only problem was to collect or catch it. We regard the development of their large multiple-wife household as essentially their own evolutionary solution to the problem of finding the most efficient unit of food production. Abundant food was there in the bush in its raw state; the most efficient way to extract it was by a work unit represented by such households as those of Ki-in-kumi, or Tu'untakumi, with the old remarried widows directing the young women and the hunting and fish spearing being done by the younger males.

Even the smallest households nearly always contained at least one old female veteran of the food quest who knew the bush like the palm of her hand and could wrestle some food out of the most inhospitable district. The only households that ever went hungry—and they only overnight or at worst for twenty-four hours or so—were the small households of only one or two wives, especially if both wives were young and inexperienced or young and flighty or both. Such households were uneconomic and were rare. On the other hand, the apparently absurd households such as those in which two young men shared their respective elderly mothers as wives, made good economic sense. Any attempt by two such young men to substitute two young wives or even four young wives for the two old ladies would have drastically reduced the standard of living of the household. When young wives arrived in Tiwi households they were not regarded as replacements for the old crones but joined as reinforcements and apprentices to the skilled workers—the veterans. The sexual aspects of marriage were necessarily subordinated to the housekeeping or food-production aspects, which is why in the previous section we spoke of every young man laying the foundation of his household by marrying an elderly widow usually long before there was any young wife in sight.

Since the bigger the household the more food it produced for its own consumption, there was a tendency for the smaller and therefore hungrier households to hang around the fringes of the bigger ones. Though every household was autonomous and could camp and collect food anywhere in the band territory in which it roamed, it was rare to find all the households in a band distributed evenly over the available territory. In Malau, Enquirio's household and that of Merapanui were usually to be found camped together, since the two men were full brothers and not in competition with each other. Also camped with or near them on any given occasion would be a few other small households. Such a combined group as this would, all told, amount to between forty and fifty people camping at the same spot and remaining together for weeks at a time. Under mainland conditions in most areas, a gathering of forty people for ten days at a time in the same locality was unheard of, except on

[8] As was pointed out earlier, the best-watered and most fertile areas of the mainland were the areas attractive to white settlement, and the tribes who inhabited such areas (for example, Victoria or coastal Queensland) were wiped out quickly. Most of the mainland tribes who survived long enough to be studied by modern anthropologists were tribes whose habitats were unfavorable both for native and for white occupation.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply. The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece of meat or a dish of *kwoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

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The Tiwi Today

Changes since 1930

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There were in 1929 only two year-round settlements of outsiders which were significant to the Tiwi. One was Bathurst Island Mission, by then nearly twenty years old, the only permanent white-man establishment on the islands. It acted as the main exit point for travel to Darwin, the other focus of Tiwi life. There was also the large camp of Mandiimbula and Yeimpi on the south coast of Melville Island, which owed its existence to the sexual arrangement between the Tiwi and Japanese pearlers.

[797]

[361 459]

In the 1930's, the centers of Tiwi activity shifted somewhat. The Australian government successfully broke up the camp located on the south coast by transporting nearly all of the Yeimpi to Darwin and by sending patrol boats out to discourage the Japanese from frequenting the area. In about 1935, the Japanese moved their base for contact with the Tiwi north to the region of Garden Point, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, just beyond the ruins of old Fort Dundas. Around the great fresh-water pool on the beach at that locality there developed a Tiwi camp like that which formerly had existed on the south coast; however, the native bands involved were no longer the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula but the Malauila, Munupula, Wilrangwila, and Turupula of northern Bathurst and Melville islands. The government again attempted to control sexual activities between Tiwi and Japanese, but to get to this spot a patrol boat from Darwin had to travel along forty miles of indented coastline which amplified and seemed to project every throb of an engine toward the ears of the Japanese miles away. The patrol boats found that they could not sneak up on the pearlers unannounced and, therefore, could not catch them in the act of cohabiting with native women.

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By the late 1930's, pressure from missionary and other humanitarian circles in the southern part of Australia forced the government to attempt to terminate, or at least to control, the trade pattern which had become estab-

[p. 104 is blank]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

months after the attack on Darwin. Many of the older Tiwi who were in Darwin during the bombing did not survive the war; the psychological strain and lack of sufficient food was too much for them. Genealogies show that an unusual number of deaths occurred among Tiwi between 1942 and 1946. 648 [165]

When Western food supplies again became available, the old Tiwi bush living seems to have departed. The Tiwi suddenly realized their full dependence upon the products which only the whites could provide. As the war came to an end and one after another of the temporary military bases were abandoned, the missionaries and the Tiwi salvaged what they could, transporting large amounts of corrugated iron to Bathurst Island Mission for native huts. The Tiwi were drawn together around the Mission in larger numbers than ever before, their camps ranging in a line along the Mission beach. The majority of the Tiwi, about 600, considered Bathurst Island Mission their home, although some of the young adult males spent most of the year in Darwin. About 30 islanders lived adjacent to the half-caste Melville Island Mission at Garden Point. Another 150 were permanently located at the government settlement at Snake Bay. The remaining Tiwi, about 150, were year-round residents of Darwin; over one hundred lived at Bagot Native Compound and at an unsupervised native camp at Point Gunn directly opposite the southernmost tip of Melville Island; the rest were inmates at the leper colony. The resulting total population of about 950, in 1954, is only about a hundred less than the figure of 1062 which Hart obtained in his census of 1928-29. 177 361 797 162 [161]

Marriage Arrangements

We have discussed how, under the traditional Tiwi pattern of life, the greatest energies of mature males were expended in bargaining with each other for new wives. The old social system was one which had as normal features prenatal and early childhood engagements for females, remarriage for all widows, considerable age difference between marriage partners, and polygamy. The new Catholic system introduced by Father Gsell outlawed, or at least discouraged, polygamous marriages, nuptial unions between persons of greatly differing ages, and all prenatal or childhood betrothals. As indicated, Father Gsell initiated his new policies by purchasing young females and then allowing them to choose their own partners from among their single agemates. 177 797 58

It is of interest to inspect the actual circumstances surrounding one of the earliest unions which took place under Father Gsell's supervision. About 1914, Polly, an attractive young female who had already had a rather checkered career, having been stolen by a Yuwatja male from her rightful mate, was "stolen back" by another Tiwi, Timalarua of the Rangwila. Polly, however, decided that she did not want an old husband like Timalarua, so she ran away to the sisters and Father Gsell. In time, old Timalarua allowed Father Gsell to buy this wife who did not want to live with him. Shortly afterward, Father Gsell asked Polly whom she wanted to marry. Polly named Cabbagee as the 159 177 584 797

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

from their future sons-in-law and demands which look very much like bride price and bride service developed as a basis for marriage arrangement. A young girl had a relatively "free choice" of her future spouse. But following this selection, her father let it be known to the young man what he expected. The desired payment was often stated in Australian money by the 1950's; some men were asking as much as a hundred pounds for a daughter. (This was a very high sum, since Tiwi males working for the Army received four pounds a week as normal wages.) Other men were asking that their sons-in-law live with them, thus leaving their own parental home, and contribute regularly to the upkeep of the household of the father-in-law. This was, indeed, quite a practical arrangement, for when such a young man went to work in Darwin his wife had to be supervised at home and, further, his employer was supposed to send home to the Mission part of the young man's wages.

Thus, by 1954, the following type of marriage agreement was initiated by the great majority of Tiwi with marriageable daughters, specifically those who centered their activities at Bathurst Island Mission and Garden Point. A young girl chose her future husband from her single, male agemates, sometimes with a suggestion from her father. Her father informed his future son-in-law of the obligations incumbent upon him, which normally included matrilocal postmarital residence and a bride price. An older woman with children, or even one without any offspring, who became a widow, was discouraged from remarrying by her father, if he survived, and by her brother after her father's death. The father or eldest brother of a widow with a daughter reaped the benefits of allowing that daughter to marry the young man whom she desired. The widow herself did not remarry but stayed in the household of her father or brother.

Residence Patterns

By 1953, traditional Tiwi residence patterns had undergone major modifications, some of which have already been mentioned. The old residence areas of the bands had been depopulated; in fact, nearly all the Tiwi were located around one of four European establishments—those at Darwin, Bathurst Island Mission, Garden Point, or Snake Bay. In each of these areas a centralized village pattern had developed. Within the Tiwi communities at Snake Bay, Garden Point, and Bathurst Island Mission there remained a few of the old large households with a polygamous base. But in all these camps the household heads were well past sixty and in most cases past seventy. Polygamous households were dying out by 1953.

But what was replacing them? One might assume that the European pattern of the single family household based upon neolocal residence would have emerged as the new Tiwi system. This was not the case, however. Just as Hart found in 1928-29 that successful Tiwi men were the heads of large establishments, so in 1953-54 the younger male leaders had gathered around

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The territory of the *Tiklawila* is roughly contained in the area in the south of Bathurst Island, south of Point Hurd and west of *Mukambrimo*, which is a river about eight miles to the west of the mission station. In this area, roughly about two hundred square miles, there are a number of districts with specific names. Anyone familiar with the Australian blackfellow knows how certain districts are given certain names, and although no native can tell the exact boundaries, everyone in the tribe knows when he has come into one of these districts and when he has left it. The principle of differentiation of these areas seems to be upon the basis of the physical aspect of the country, a valley for example having a distinct name from either set of hills surrounding it, a plain being distinguished from a thickly-wooded piece of bushland on its margin, and so on. 361 621 103

These districts play an important part in Tiwi land ownership. Certain districts are not owned by the horde as a whole, but by a single family of that horde. Thus in the horde we are considering, *Tayio*, the extensive district in the extreme south-western corner of the island around Cape Fouveroy, is owned by a single set of men, all of whom are the son's sons of *Mikidjimirla*, a man who as far as can be judged died about 1870-1880. The basis of their title is the fact that *Mikidjimirla* died and was buried in the district, hence all the game and fruit in *Tayio* belong to them, and cannot be hunted or collected by anyone else without their consent. 423 [621]

The question immediately arises as to whether the mere burial of a man in a district gives his heirs property rights in that district. The Tiwi answer is that it always does if the man was sufficiently important. The man in question here, *Mikidjimirla*, was from all accounts one who left a deep impression on the society of his time both by his personality and by his prowess in warfare. More than that he left his mark on following generations by the number of children he had. At the present time, there are nine men, all grandchildren of *Mikidjimirla*, in whom the hunting and fruit-collecting rights of *Tayio* are vested, and these men and their families normally camp in *Tayio* and deny the right of other *Tiklawila* families to hunt there. This group has a solidarity of its own which is expressed by a name *Tayiawila*, which is one of the alternative horde-names. It should be noted in this connection that the Tiwi name for father's father is *amini*, and the members of this group will frequently 423 425 554 423 613 [601]

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

which is interesting. It means the "Moon People" and is probably the name of the tribe displaced by the Purakapale people in the past. It is Arakitamun-uwi (plural), Arakitamun-ini (masculine), Arakitamun-inga (feminine). 101

Horde Places. Living in isolated groups, these people talk of horde places. A man from the south of Bathurst Island will tell you he is of the Tikaluwila people, in the horde place of Tikalaru, the country. Thus a man is a Tikaluwinala and a woman is a Tikiluwinila of the country of Tikalaru in the tribe of Worunguwi. (Hart writes Tiklauila). 621 361

As it is with this horde so it is with all the groups, three of which are on Bathurst Island; Tikalaru on the south of the Island, Arangu on the north, and Malo on the western shore of the Island. We are not sure of the Melville Island divisions but the following are fairly reliable: Mundiimpu, Anangatera, Yaimpi, being three hordes united as one horde on the southern shore; Turupu and Maruwu, two hordes living as one horde to the north-east of the Island; and Wilarunggu and Munaipu, two hordes living as one local group on the north-west of the Island. (This does not conflict with Hart's list.)

These hordes have indefinite tribal boundaries, yet it is considered a transgression to go too far into them for hunting purposes. One law relating to food gathering is, "He who burns the grass first is considered to own all the food that is caught on that burnt patch; he is a boss as it were and remains such until after the cold weather sets in and the dews bring on a new lot of grass." 423 224

Clans. Although the people are divided into numerous hordes they have only three clans (*aramipi*), but each of these clans has a number of sub-totems, *emunya*.[2] These may be survivals of weaker clans or possibly an example of classificatory totemism. Hart calls the *aramipi*, phratries. The totems are: 614

1. Main totem	*Kudjarli*	Fire
Sub-totems	*Yarinapila*	Red ochre
	Iywati	Honey nest
	Pinkwarui	Stingray
	Ilitui	Tree with red flower
	Woriapila	Sun
2. Main totem	*Tukambani*	Martin
Sub-totems	*Tapitapini*	March fly
	Buŋgaluwila	Stone
	Ariŋguwila	Stone.
3. Main totem	*Miatui*	Pandanus
Sub-totems	*Murukpungama*	Flying fox
	Mudumbila	Mullet
	Mandupowi	Fly
	Andolui	Spring
	Tjilati	Jabaru.

[2] The same name as the gall-bladder and the pulse.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

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Fig. 1. Snake Bay Settlement

114 Islanders on a hunt. The trip took us to a small clearing on the right bank of the Paluwiunga River, ten miles upstream from where it empties into the Arafura Sea.

131 A brief glance at the map will help to further pinpoint this location. Ten degrees south of the equator and at a distance of twenty to fifty miles due north from the Australian Northern Territory capital of Darwin, lies the relatively large Melville Island (1,000 square miles), named for Viscount Henry Dundas Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, who authorized the coastal survey of 1818 during which the island was circumnavigated. To the west, separated by a narrow strait, lies the smaller Bathurst Island. The group of people with whom I found myself camped by the river bank were members of the Tiwi, a tribe of Australian Aboriginals whose country includes both these islands. Today about seven hundred members of the tribe live near to the southeast corner of Bathurst Island where they are in various ways administered to by the Sacred Heart Mission. On the northern coast of Melville Island, on a hill overlooking Snake Bay, near the mouth of the

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Tjipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families. 161 361 648

It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace. 361 177 [631] [224] [464]

By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives, 123 [132] [825]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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equally entertaining as she sang some risqué love songs she had picked up around camp.

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The evening's goose hunt was even more unsuccessful than the earlier hunts. Two of the men separated and went down river and killed three geese, but the others, upstream in the usual place, did not even see any, and there was more talk of *mobudities* by everyone way into the night.

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The following day was the last and, as the Assistant Superintendent was due that evening, feverish work was done by one and all on the long neglected house. Evidently the arrival of Paul scared off the ghosts, for that evening we almost had a goose per person, and my final memory of Minianapi is one of flickering fires in the moonlight and the smell of fresh roasted goose carried on the gentle breezes.

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Fig. 21. After the return trip the launch's motor gets a much needed overhaul

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Apsley Straits, continuing her journey eastward until she reached her starting point at Murupiangа. On that last journey, *Mudungkala* created the Clarence Strait, thus completely separating the land of the Tiwis from the rest of Australia. 773

Before *Mudungkala* crawled southward, out of all knowledge of the Tiwi, she decreed that the bare land should be clothed with vegetation and inhabited with creatures, so that her children, whom she left behind at Murupiangа, should have food.

2. THE FIRST INHABITANTS

The two daughters of *Mudungkala*, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, with their brother, *Purukupali*, established themselves in the new land.

The accounts of this period are vague and indefinite, the most consistent being that *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pisipisuis*, brought some back, and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, so that they could become mothers.[10] Thus the family at Murupiangа multiplied, and, although many of the genealogies are confused and unreliable, those of the main personalities appear to be consistent.

Murupiangkala, whose husband the aborigines did not remember, had one daughter, *Tukumbuna*, who, in turn, married *Wilindu*.

Tukumbuna had two daughters, *Wilinduela* and *Numanirakala*, and a son, *Tukimbini*. *Tukimbini's* wife, *Waia*, gave birth to one daughter, *Bima*, who became the wife of *Purukupali*. It was the death of their son, *Djinini*, that brought the creation period to a close.

Wuriupranala, whose husband was *Andjalui*, had one son, *Wuriuprinili*. The aborigines did not know who were the parents of *Tjapara*, who later quarrelled with *Purukupali*.

In those early days there was neither light nor heat, so the descendants of old *Mudungkala* had to grope around in the darkness to find their food, and having found it were forced to eat it raw.

Once two men, *Jurumu* (later the wedge-tailed eagle), and *Mudati* (the fork-tailed kite), whose parents the aborigines did not know, were rubbing two sticks together, when they noticed a speck of light where the heat, caused by the friction between the two sticks, had ignited the powdered wood-dust. [372]

[10] The aborigines, who almost certainly do not understand physical paternity, believe that the *Pisipisuis* have always existed although they could not explain their origin. In the later period of creation, it was one of the duties of *Purukupali* to bring the spirit children to his wife, *Bima*, who gave them to the women. Before he died, however, *Purukupali* told the *Pisipisuis* to seek their mothers through the medium of their fathers. [842]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

773 Puzzled over this new phenomenon, *Jurumu* placed the smouldering wood-
[372] dust into the pith of a dead pandanus palm and blew upon it. To the surprise of both men the speck became larger and larger, finally bursting into a flame. This frightened the men so badly that they rushed to *Purukupali* and asked him to destroy the strange thing they had made. But when *Purukupali* saw the blazing wood and felt its heat he realized that *Jurumu* and *Mudati* had inadvertently discovered something that would give the aborigines not only light to dispel the darkness, but heat to cook their food and to keep them warm.[14]

Calling his sister, *Wuriupranala*, he gave her a torch of bark lit from the blazing log and told her that it was her duty to keep it alight always. *Tjapara*,
[821] who later became the moon, was given a smaller torch.

With the coming of light and heat, the descendants of *Mudungkala* spread over the island, hunting and camping in places which, at the close of the creation period, became their totemic country.

About that time, two men, *Puruti* and *Jirakati*, were spearing fish in Tiaupu, a freshwater swamp at Piper Head, near the northern entrance to Apsley Straits, when they noticed, by the movements of the stems of the water-lilies, some large creature moving about under the water.

Not knowing it was his mother, *Tipuru-undunga*, *Puruti* speared her in the
[823] neck. Screaming with pain and urinating in her fright, *Tipuru-undunga* rushed into the sea, which in those days was fresh water, polluting it so much with her blood and urine that it became as salt as the sea of today.

The wounded *Tipuru-undunga* changed herself into the tall, stately bird,
[825] the jabiru (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) which now lives on the edge of the fresh-water lagoons; while the fishermen, *Puruti* and *Jirakati* became the sea-osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and the graceful white-headed sea-eagle (*Haliaetus leucogaster*).[15]

During those early *palaneri* times, a man, *Jirakupai*, lived beside a fresh-water lagoon, *Jirininga*, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. He had married two sisters, *Kuraruna* and *Jaknia*.

Jirakupai was an expert in the making of both the large many-barbed, male
[411] spears, *tunkaringa*, which have a row of barbs on one side (Pl. 32A), and the female spears, *tunkaguni*, with their double row of barbs (Pl. 32B). Both forms are now used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

[14] The aborigines distinguish between light (*milajuka*) from the sun or burning wood, and heat (*ikwai*) from glowing coals.

[15] The large hawk-like birds, *Jirakati*, the sea-eagle, *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite, appear as men in a number of the myths. In each one they transformed themselves from men into birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(a) One of the first series, when the "workers" were appointed, which was held in the main camp. 765

(b) One of the second series, held at a ceremonial ground mid-way between the first and the place of burial.

(c) An *ilania* performed by the Bathurst Island group who attended to take part in the final *pukamuni* rituals.

(a) *The First Ilanias*

The first series of *ilanias* was performed on a ceremonial ground, about forty feet in diameter, adjacent to *Wurarbui's* camp. All stones and tree roots had been dug out so that the dancers would not injure their feet. In the centre of the dancing circle, or *milimika*, a fire was laid ready for the later ritual of *wandiatapinda*, or fire-jumping,[10] a ritual which was carried out at most but not all of the *ilanias* (Pl. 24B). At some of the later *ilanias*, particularly at the second *milimika*, aborigines, close relatives of the dead, performed a similar ritual by climbing a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and dead leaves (Pl. 23C).

Although I suspect that the ritual of jumping over the fire once had a deeper significance, the present day belief is that the fire, by burning the hair on the legs of the aborigines, protects them from stumbling over logs; from their limbs becoming tired on long journeys, or from dead trees falling on them as they travel through the forest. The smoke from the fire also brought them good health. No women took part in the *wandiatapinda* rituals, although the men often held their small children in the smoke. [751] [372]

Wurarbui, the ceremonial leader or *alouwia* (frontispiece) of the *Waniampari's pukamuni* rituals, was an intelligent, sophisticated aboriginal, who had worked for long periods in Darwin, and, more recently, had visited the southern States to dance before the Queen of England. 765 177

Because of his knowledge of European ways and the goods of the white man, the songs and dances of this first series of *ilanias* were a curious mixture of the old and the new cultures. Although most, if not all, of the dances performed at the *ilanias* are traditional and totemic, it is permissible to modify them for the song of the moment. [176]

The ceremony opened when the assembled aborigines, about twenty of them, standing within the *milimika*, gave the low-pitched honey call, with the high-pitched mosquito call, which precedes and finishes all *ilanias*.

[10] Spencer (1928, p. 648), saw this rite at Cockle Point, on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), during 1911. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(iii) *The Totemic Songs and Dances.* At the completion of the meal, both the "workers" and the *pukamuni* men and women performed a series of dances to the accompaniment of traditional totemic songs. 765

Almost without exception, these songs and dances belonged to the totemic beings of Wailu, the country of *Tiparawilimiri*, the father of the dead man, *Waniamperi*.

These rituals were opened by the leader, who, standing in the centre of the *milimika*, called out the names of the totemic beings of Wailu, *Andjahui* (fresh water), *Pukadringa* (thunderstorm), *Tomituka* (rain), and *Bumerali* (lightning). As before, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*" after each name was called.

The men then chanted the rain song, "The heavy rain falls and the frog calls, *poki, poki, puturuka*", while the men danced, with their fingers pointing to the ground, symbolizing falling rain (Pl. 30B), and the woman, *Prupadau*, hopped along the ground in imitation of the frog-woman,[68] *Kwouk-kwouk*. As the dance proceeded, the men and *Prupadau* all imitated the actions of the frog-woman by hopping along the ground on their hands and knees. [539] 765 535

While the dance was in progress, the leader called out "*Tomituka*" (rain). *Prupadau*, picking up a sheet of paper-bark, held it over her head and shivered, and the men, their hands clasped tightly over their heads, shouted, "*Batua, batua*" (rain finish). This completed the dance. *Pulanimbiwi* danced the white-headed sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30J), before the *pumuti* began.

(iv) *The Pumuti.*[69] The *pumuti* rituals, which are always carried out with much goodwill, friendliness and laughter, were performed at most, if not all, of the *ilanias*, and, in a restricted form, at the final *pukamuni*. 765

At some stage, usually toward the end of the *ilania*, sometimes more than once, each man and woman, taking a bunch of leaves, or a roll of paper-bark and calling softly "*Ook, ook, ook*", beat the wife, or husband, sisters, brothers, and all the near relatives of that particular spouse.

(v) *The Rite of Fire-jumping and the sending out of the Message Sticks.* The rite of fire-jumping, or *wandiatapinda*, carried out in the second series of *ilanias*, differed from that in the first series. Instead of the participants stepping over a fire (Pl. 24B), a number of the close relatives climbed a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and leaves (Pl. 23C). As each man 765 372

[68] The frog-woman, whose totemic place is Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island, is the mother of *Pukadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*.

[69] This ritual would tend to reduce tensions between the spouse and his, or her, relatives, which is considerable in some communities. [593] [578]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 slipped down the tree and jumped clear of the fire, the other participants
●372 called his totemic name.

Toward the end of this series of *ilanias*, the "workers" announced that they had finished cutting the poles. The leader, the *aleuwia*, hearing this, gave permission for the poles to be "cooked", i.e., burnt in a fire of blazing boughs, to provide a black ground on which to paint the designs. The leader
[202] also ordered that the *purunkinas* (message sticks, Figs. 5, 6, 7), be sent out to the various totemic groups. These sticks intimated that the final *pukamani* ceremonies would take place in about twenty days.

(c) *The Bathurst Island Ilanias*

765 About a week before the final burial rituals of *Waniamperi*, a number of aborigines from Bathurst Island, accompanied by their wives and *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, made their camp and cleared a ceremonial ground not far from the second *milimika* used by the Melville Island people.

The Bathurst Island *ilanias*, under the leadership of an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, followed the traditional form, except that the first two phases were omitted, i.e., the fighting and the feeding of the "workers".

Three groups of songs were chanted to the accompaniment of the appropriate dances.

(i) The *Ningaui* songs and dances.
(ii) The mission lugger songs and dances.
(iii) The jabiru (*Tjalasi*) songs and dances.

(i) *The Ningaui Songs and Dances*

533 The leader, *Jibunglialumi*, and his companions chanted the following
539 *Ningaui* songs. These are the literal translations.
765 "I am the head man of the *Ningaui*, I am, Eeh, Eeh."[67]

"I push aside the mangrove branches with my hands, Eeh, Eeh."

"The *Ningauis* are out hunting. The calls of the white cockatoos tell them that someone is coming, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* woman, having just given birth to a child, sings—

"The flies are looking at me, the flies are crawling on my shoulder, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* man, looking at his newly born child, sings—

"Little new-born man lying on the ground, Eeh, Eeh."

[825] [67] This is the call of the *Ningauis* which, the aborigines claim, they hear in the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. It is possibly the call of one of the swamp birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

88 | iii. The *Marukumunis* were fed behind their bark shelter and the *Wadjeniatis* in the open camp.

(2) *The Opening Rituals*

After dark, on the day following the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, the fully initiated *kulama* men, and all people above the grade of *Mikinatrina*, prepared for the opening ceremony by clearing an oval about fourteen feet long and six feet wide. The *Marukumuni* initiates were brought from their hiding place, the *Wadjeniatis* from their camp and both were seated just outside the ceremonial ground. Neither of those grades, however, took part in the opening rituals.

[372] [753] In the middle of the ceremonial ground were two smouldering logs, but no flames, for fear of attracting *taini*, the *kulama* sickness. Among the trees outside of the ring, were a number of families of uninitiated men, women and children.

Normally the *kulama* party would have been made up of *Mikintaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, and the songs chanted by the men in that order.

177 533 881 539 On the occasion of our visit the ceremony opened when a *Mikingula*, *Wurarbuti*, seated on the ground, beating his throwing sticks, started to hum a song softly. Becoming more confident, he stood up, and pacing backward and forward still beating his sticks, chanted the following three songs.[35]

(*a*) "My father was king, therefore I am the Prince of Wales. As King George was King, so was the old man on the hill, my (dead) father. I will have warships, money and a flag of red and white." When the singer mentioned his dead father there was a high-pitched wail among the near relatives.

(*b*) The second song dealt with the invitation he had received to dance before the Queen of England. "When the Queen was in England, she said 'I would like to see a black-fellow dance', and so I went up. King Philip watched me a lot while I danced."

(*c*) "My uncle in Darwin said to me 'Why haven't you made a lot of *pukamuni* arm rings. If you don't soon do so, you'll cause a lot of trouble among the *pukamuni* people."

Muramajua also chanted three songs;

(*a*) In the first, of which I did not collect the words, he explained, at length,

[35] This man, who was the ceremonial leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, described earlier, had been invited, only a few months previously, to visit the southern States, and dance before the Queen of England. Naturally, this left such a strong impression on his mind that many of his songs dealt with that remarkable experience.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

881 led by the *Mikinatrinas*, carrying the baskets, followed by the *Mikinaras*, the *Mikiatarimas*, and the *Mikingulas*. No *kulama* woman accompanied this party.

As the *kulama* men entered the jungle they separated, each searching for vines which indicated the presence of the yam.[80] Before digging, however, the [824] [753] *kulama* men, softly calling "Oom-oom", gently patted the ground to wake up the yams, for, should any yam get a fright, its spirit, becoming annoyed, would make everyone ill with the *kulama* sickness. When digging the yams, the men were most careful not to break even one of the fine roots (Pl. 44D).

On filling in the holes, the men again made the thunder call, "Oom-oom", [821] which, they said, would cause more rain to fall before the day was over. One aboriginal accidentally broke a *kulama* yam while digging it. Instantly, he was on his feet, and, with the broken yam in his palm, dodged in and out among the trees, to escape the spirit of sickness released by the angry yam. After a few minutes, however, he returned, placed the broken yam carefully in the basket with the rest, and resumed his digging. His companions said that it was fortunate that he had only damaged the yam slightly, otherwise, its spirit would have made not only the careless aboriginal, but all of the *kulama* people ill.

When sufficient yams were collected, the party returned to camp in the same order as they went out, i.e., *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*. The *Mikinatrinas* carried the yams to the foot of a blood-wood tree, called the *wuringaleta*, cleared the grass from around the base and, taking the yams from the basket, placed them on the ground. They were covered with leaves by the female initiates, the *Mikinatriningas*.

(4) *The Preparation of the Ceremonial Ground*

In the late afternoon, the *kulama* men and the male initiates, excluding the *Marukumuni* and the *W'adjeniatis*, prepared the ceremonial ground, the *milimika*.

372 The men walked toward an open space in the forest, and with low cries, 881 beat the ground with sticks, while the leader, pulling up a tuft of grass, threw it into the air. At the place where it fell, the men dug a small circle, the *tumarapi* (navel), in which the yams were to be cooked. Then, sitting down, the men pushed the sand and grass outwards with their feet until the *milimika*, about fifteen feet in diameter, was cleared and surrounded by a low mound of earth and grass.

[222] [197] [80] The *kulama* yam (*Dioscorea sativa*, variety *rotunda*) (Pl. 44D), is about the size of a hen's egg and covered with hairs similar to a beard. It is held in the palm of the hand until it is placed carefully in the bark basket.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Dry sticks, about three feet in length, were pushed upright into the ground around the *tumarapi* (oven), kindling wood was laid between them, other pieces of dried wood piled cross-wise between the uprights until there was a stack about three feet high (Pl. 45A). 88 [372]

(5) *Placing the Uncooked Yams in Water*

About sunset, the *kulama* men went to the bloodwood tree, the *wuringalua*, where the *Mikinaurinas* had stored the yams in the morning and, on pulling bushes away, revealed some of the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates squatting, holding in their arms a basket of the uncooked *kulama* yams. The *Marukumuni* initiates took the yams to the water, everyone assisting in laying them on a pad of grass in the bed of the stream (Pl. 46B).

Immediately this task was completed, the *kulama* men pushed the *Marukumuni* initiates over,[20] and, holding them by the legs and arms dragged them backward and forward through the now muddy water to wash off their body paint. They were then taken back to camp, seated beside the *milimika* and painted with a different pattern (Pl. 42F). Neither the *Marukumuni* nor the *Wadjeniasi* initiates took any further part in the rituals of that day. When, after dark, the *kulama* men entered the *milimika* to chant another series of songs, the camp fires were allowed to burn brightly, because the aborigines said that the yams, being in the water, were now "quiet" so that there was no fear of *taini*, the spirit of *kulama* sickness. [302]

The chanting men walked counter-clockwise around the *milimika* because *Purujikini* did so at the first *kulama*. To have walked in the opposite direction, even then, would have made the spirit of the *kulama* yam angry. 881

The following are literal translations of a selection of the songs. 533

(*a*) "I had a quarrel with Tom Crow, the Superintendent of Snake Bay Settlement." 539 [177]

(*b*) "My mother-in-law is good to me, she did not take away my promised wife."

(*c*) "The fruit of the *kinamia* (*Eugenia* sp.) ripens and falls to the ground."

(*d*) "The little *Pisipisuis* (spirit children) are dancing on the beach."

[20] Spencer, 1928, p. 664, describing a similar ritual, states, "Several old men seized the *Wagingurai* (my *Wadjeniasi*), and plunged into the water with him. As many as could get near him gripped him by the legs and arms, and yelling, splashing and churning up the mud, . . . dragged him backward and forward several times, . . . As soon as the *Wagingurai* were released, the men turned their attention to the *Marukumuni* boys. . . ." Although my informants did not say so it is likely that the *Wadjeniasi* initiates were also pushed into the water to remove their body paint in readiness for the second design of a *Milimarina* (Pl. 42J). [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE 45. *The Kulama Ceremony*
A, Building the Kulama Fire; B, Placing the Kulama Yams in Water; C, Pressing Heated Sand against Joints; D, Deserted Kulama Oven.

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Cp.144 A]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. 372 Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

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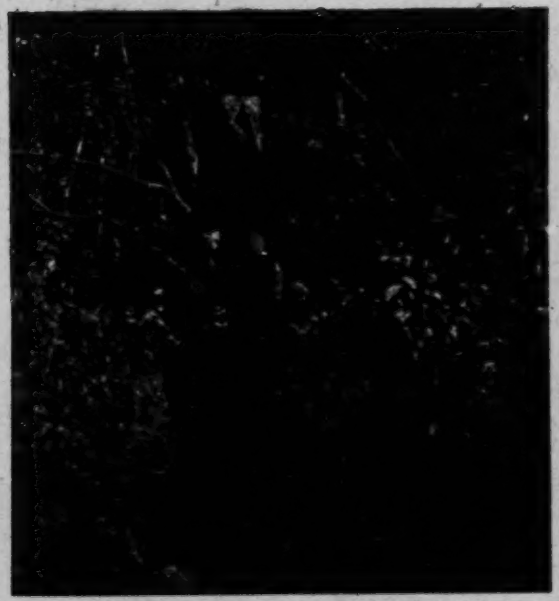
Young girl and boy accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

[Ex. 15 (A)]



baked by placing them atop pieces of anthill heated to a glow by wood fire, then covering the yams with hot earth.

MAN LIGHTS FIRE beneath chunks of anthill. When the pieces are red-hot, burning wood below them will be brushed away.

11,Cooksin F-6 (1964,1966) 1968 CBS Tim CEBO

123 meat, lukewarm tea, and the remains of the fresh bread smothered in jam for dessert.

The sky by this time was growing dark for thick, heavily laden clouds were fast building up. With what light remained from the setting sun we shifted camp to a small hollow in the dunes, free from the prickly seed pods and protected from the wind. Soon it was quite dark and the wind seemed to blow more strongly. Albert, afraid for the safety of the canoe, decided to remove it to the quiet waters of the little creek where Big Jack had found the crabs. Big Jack accompanied him and while they were gone Agnes prepared to make some "damper." She built the fire up again so that the
123 ground would become very hot. While it was burning down she
252 took the bag of flour, opened it, and made a small depression in the contents. Into this hole she poured baking powder, salt, and
372 water from the billy. (Quite often the first two ingredients are
484 omitted.) With both hands still in the bag she worked the mixture into a large lump of dough which she removed and flattened on the outside of the flour bag. By this time the fire had again burned down, and the burning coals were brushed aside and a hole scooped out in the hot sand. The damper, about the size of a large frying pan, was laid in the hole and covered over with more hot sand. "Tomorrow, we make quick breakfast and no stop for lunch," she explained. In about an hour, during which the damper had been turned once, it was removed and the sand brushed from the rough, tough surface. It was then carefully wrapped in a piece of calico and put away in safety.

It was only then that we realized that the men had not returned.
123 Agnes became quite worried, and I must confess I did also. We walked down to the water's edge and called out, but could hear no reply over the roar of the waves, and because of the inky blackness we could see only a few yards. After about ten minutes we returned to the camp and in a brief time both men appeared. Agnes immediately demanded to know why, if they were so close, they didn't answer our calls? Albert insisted that he had replied, so after a while Agnes changed her question to why had it taken them
[481] so long? "Water bin come in long way," Albert replied, "I swim out; take long time find him canoe." When one considers that,

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

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Fig. 7. Agnes (left) and a friend admire a large mangrove crab

together with sharks, these waters contain the large and dangerous salt-water crocodile and all manner of poisonous jellyfish, one realizes that to swim around in a high sea in the pitch dark requires considerable courage. 123

Soon after we had crawled under the mosquito netting and between the blankets rain began to fall in a gentle and persistent way, but still not hard enough to prevent our falling asleep with little conversation.

It was hardly light the next morning when Agnes stood up and rewrapped her *naga*, a strip of calico, about her waist, then took up the billys and went to the well to draw water for the morning tea. Although the rain had been steady during the night, the well-built fire still had some life in it and after a few minutes of concentrated blowing, Albert had it rejuvenated. While the billy boiled, Big Jack shook as much of the wet sand as was possible from the blankets and rolled them into tight bundles. Then he set off to retrieve the canoe. By the time he reappeared, the tea was ready and it helped to wash down the leathery cold strips of damper sweetened with jam. [291] [372]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[6] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[6] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

531 decorate a burial pole; and others, Pl. 2D, Pl. 10C, and Pl. 11A, similar to those he would paint on the ceremonial baskets.

I did not see or hear of figures being made in bark (Mountford, 1956, p. 443, fig. 65C, D); moulded in wax (Elkin and the Berndts, 1950, Pl. 21, Mountford, 1956, Pl. 143) or in the sands of the sea-shore (Mountford, 1956, p. 404, Pl. 91C, D), as is done in north-eastern Arnhem Land. Nevertheless, [532] the men did carve large burial poles in the form of human beings and smaller full-length figures, associated with the *pukamani* ceremonies. These figures bore some small resemblance to those recorded from north-eastern Arnhem Land (Berndt, 1948, Figs. A, B, Pls. 1, 2; Mountford, 1956, Pls. 130–40).

3. TECHNIQUES

●386 (*a*) COLOURS. The pigments used for the decoration of the burial poles and the production of the bark paintings, were red, yellow and white ochres. As there was no suitable black pigment on the islands, the artists used crushed charcoal in its place.

[317] The source of the best ochres is a pit at Imilu on Cape Van Diemen (Fig. 1). This ochre, called *imilu*, is a bright yellow when collected,[7] but, when heated in the fire, it changes to a clear red. A soft white stone is common along the beaches. The ochres are not ground on a stone, as on the mainland (Mountford, 1956, p. 11), but, being friable, are crushed and mixed in a large cockle shell with water and fixative.

The aborigines often spoke of a superior ochre at Numanira, northern Melville Island (Fig. 1), which could be gathered only at low tide. I did not see any of this ochre in use.

(*b*) FIXATIVES. Three different types of fixative are used to ensure that the painted designs, both on the poles and the baskets, were as permanent as possible. They were: the sticky gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids [314] (*Dendrobium* sp.); the wax and honey of the wild bee, well mixed together; [237] and the yolks of the eggs of the sea-going turtle. The fixative was either mixed with the pigments or rubbed on the painting surface.

412 (*c*) BRUSHES. Simple brushes, made of strips of bark of varying widths, square across the bottom, chewed at one end, and held as in Fig. 2A and 2C, were used for the bulk of the work.[8] For making the dots, however, the artists used a

[423] [7] There did not appear to be any restriction on the gathering of this ochre; any aboriginal could go to Imilu and take as much as he wished.

[171] [8] The long flexible brush of the aborigines of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 12, fig. 3), was not used at Melville Island, although the bark brush (Fig. 2B) was often held in a similar manner.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

border, the muddy floor. The other black rectangles, *p*, *p*, etc., indicate rocks 532x
in the sea, and their lighter-coloured borders, the waves breaking over them. 778

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Matinguliu, at Putawini

A eucalyptus-tree woman *Matinguliu* created a rocky island of the same 773
name at the mouth of Putawini Creek, western Bathurst Island. I was not
able to gather further details of the mythical story.

The central vertical panel *a*, of Pl. 16A, is the open sea, and the outer sur- 532x
rounding white rectangle, *h*, *h*, the dry land of the island. Small hills are at 778
k, *k* (top), a large hill is at *o* (top); and deposits of red ochre, *m*, *m*, etc.,
also form part of the island.

A small branch of the Putawini Creek is indicated by the white band at *b*;
another branch, Piriki, at *c*; another near Pintamu, at *d*; and still another
(unnamed) at *f*, *f*. Timinindu and Dunkunaru Creeks (unidentified) are at
g, *g*, and *e*, respectively. The eggs of a crocodile, *kukupiangu*, similar to those
of *Jirukupui*, the dangerous, sea-going *Crocodilus porosus*, are indicated by [825]
the white discs, *n*, *n*, etc.

The Bush-fire woman, Puruliangkala, at Turiturina Island

The totemic place of the woman of the bush-fires, *Puruliangkala*, is on 778
Turiturina Island, in Port Hurd, western Bathurst Island, where the mythical [773]
bird-man and later the *Ningauis* performed the first *kulama* ceremonies
(p. 123).

The central white circle on Pl. 160, is Turiturina Island: the smaller 532x
circles, *a*, *a*, are low rocks in the sea, once the camp-fires of *Puruliangkala*; 778
and *b*, *b*, freshwater springs that provided her with water. The black circles,
c, *c*, etc., are deposits of red ochre, and *d*, *d*, *d*, etc., deposits of white ochre,
used by both the mythical woman and the *Ningauis* to decorate themselves
for their ceremonies during *pulauri* times.

At *e*, *e*, etc., are many milkwood trees, the sap of which, like the ochre [824]
deposits, was also utilized by both *Puruliangkala* and the *Ningauis* for body [386]
decorations. This sap is still used in the opening rituals of the *kulama*
(p. 131). The dots are white fruits, *mandikama*, which *Puruliangkala* created
for food.

The Sand-fly woman, Mandukuka, at Murnini

Mandukuka, the sand-fly woman, established the totemic place of Murnini, 773
south-western Bathurst Island. 778

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 and the hardest and most durable timber available, spared no pains to make the best poles they could.[5]

×532 765 When the "workers" had finished shaping the poles they notified the leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, who then gave the order for the poles to be scorched over a fire of blazing leaves to make a black ground on which to paint the design (Mountford, 1956, p. 427). Then, setting up the poles in a double row near the grave (Mountford, 1956, p. 426), the men began their task of decoration (Pl. 33B, D). At the same time, the ceremonial leader sent message sticks (p. 98) to notify the outlying groups that the final rituals were about to start.

386 The materials used for decoration were: red and yellow ochres from Imilu, Cape Van Diemen, a white ochre from a beach nearby, crushed charcoal for black, one of three types of fixatives, i.e., the white of turtle eggs, wild honey and beeswax mixed together, and the particularly gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids.

The ochres were crushed, mixed with water and one or more of the fixatives, and applied to the poles with brushes made from chewed strips of bark or vines (Fig. 2).

517 ×532 As I watched these primitive artists at work, I was impressed with the care they took in the arranging of their simple patterns, and with the obvious pleasure they experienced in their work. A quiet air of contentment pervaded the outdoor studio as each of the ten artists made his own pole as beautiful as possible.

Each artist appeared to be certain as to the designs he would use; there was no evidence of copying; in fact, *Pulanimbuwi* showed me the rough draft of the designs of his pole (Pl. 35A, B, Fig. 9), scratched on the back of a cigarette tin, days before he had even felled the tree.

×532 765 A puzzling aspect of the *pukamuni* poles is the wide variety of the painted designs used, and the almost total absence in those designs of any reference to the myths and totemic localities.[6]

At first sight it would appear that the pole shapes, collected by both Fry and myself, were inventions of the moment. An analysis of the poles

174 412 322 have simpler shapes than at the present time, although Campbell (1834, p. 158) speaks about "poles with tops like lances and halberts". The aborigines may have used fire to assist in the shaping of the poles, in fact, this is suggested by Klaatsch (1907, p. 587).

[5] Not far from our camp was the deserted grave of the father of *Muramajua* (Pl. 32D), who died when his son was an infant. *Muramajua* was then over forty years old, yet the poles, although somewhat eroded and disarranged by the elements, are still in a fair state of preservation.

[177] [6] This and old *Tjamalampua's* statement, p. 109, could indicate that the poles and their designs are a recent cultural trait that is not yet fully absorbed into the culture.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp, and prepared them for cooking. 881

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42E).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42E), and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh", threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[23] It is believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunderstorms and so prolonging the wet season. 302 881 [821]

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikingulas*, the *Mikiatarimas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts, went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[24] 881 [386] [824]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the *kulama* people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates then sat down to a meal of the edible yams. [775] [824]

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a *pukamuni* man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them ill. [753] [626]

[23] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[24] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 463, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated man.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

level, further material has been cut away to reduce its thickness by about 1 centimetre all round. The top portion, which has the appearance of a knob, has been daubed with red ochre; the sunken portion, immediately beneath, is white (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 2). The lower surface of the post bears five vertical bands, three being of white pipe-clay and two of yellow ochre. Two of the former have a border of red, the third one of yellow; and both of the latter (yellow) are bordered with white. Three of the intervening spaces are shaded with inclined lines of white, the remaining two are each filled with a vertical row of white cricoid figures. The original surface upon which the pattern was drawn is charred. 532 764

Having persuaded the natives to repaint the designs on the tomb-posts, in places where they were defective or missing, they set about the work with enthusiasm and did not rest until they had repainted the whole of the surfaces. To accomplish this they leaned the posts against trees and divided themselves into small groups of two to four, each of which undertook part of the work (*vide* Plate XVI, Figs. 1 and 2). Youths were sent to the main camp, whence they soon after returned with lumps of red and yellow ochre and white pipe-clay (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 2). From these they broke off small pieces and crushed them by hand in the strong concave shells of the bivalve mollusc *Cyrena essingtonensis*.[1] To this crumbled pigment sufficient water was added to make a thick paint, more water being added from time to time as required. One might look upon these shells containing the mixed paint as representing primitive paletes (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 1). The paint is applied to the surface by means of crudely made, yet effective, brushes. Short pieces of the creeping calamus are cut with the sharp edge of a shell and one or both of their ends chewed until all the fibres have become separated (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 3); much in the same way as the flower-stalks of the fan-palm are chewed when feeding on honey (*vide* p. 300). Both of these small artists' requisites are highly interesting inasmuch as they show us a decidedly primitive, yet to the present day practically unaltered stage in the evolution of art. [126] 386 [413] 532 [413]

It is evident that the posts have been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk. Captain Flinders[2] as far back as 1803 noticed that the natives on the north coast (Caledon Bay) were familiar with the use of iron instruments and that they tried to steal his axes. He, therefore, suspected that "they had been previously visited by people possessing iron instruments." Later, he was himself able to confirm this supposition when he discovered, near to Cape Wilberforce, a fleet of proas from Macassar, the crew of which were in the habit of visiting the north coast of Australia to collect trepang, which they took to Timor and sold to the Chinese.[2] 412 [302] 177 171

[1] We have before us an interesting analogy, when we recollect that in our own country the shells of fresh-water mussels were, in former days, much used and are still used as a receptacle for mixing water-colours; whence also the name *Unio pictorum*.

[2] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, pp. 213 and 228–231.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{16}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Balers made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

314 396 137 Fig. 1. Forest scene on Bathurst Island. From the stringy-barked eucalyptus on the left side of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe. Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
501 Fig. 2. Various types of paddles in use on Bathurst Island. About $\frac{1}{16}$ natural size.

PLATE XIII.

764 Figs. 1 and 2. Distant and near view of a native grave, surrounded by five carved and painted posts, Bathurst Island. Note the cleared space and the position of grave, viz.: at the junction between open woodland and jungle. A tall Bathurst Islander in seen in Fig. 2.

PLATE XIV.

415 Fig. 1. A melon-shell (*Melo diadema*) used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Fig. 2. A *Fusus pricei* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 764 Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e. Painted and carved posts of native grave shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XV.

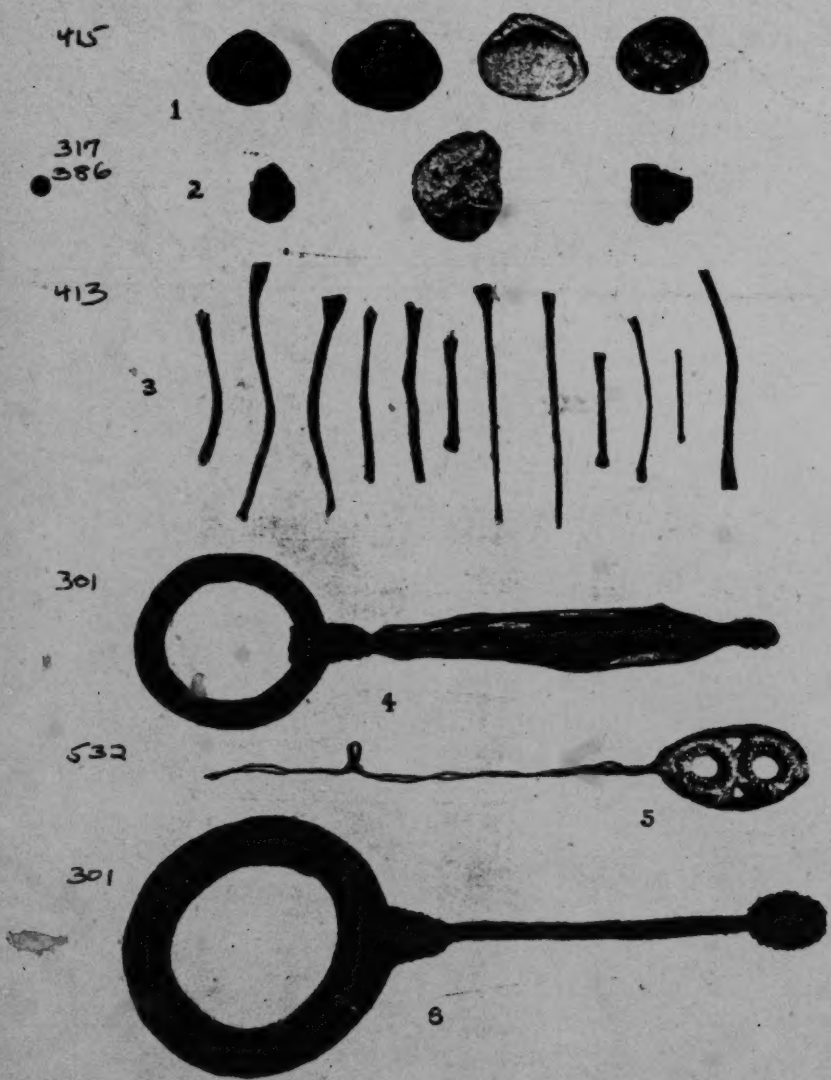
415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cyrena assingtonensis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
317 386 Fig. 2. Lumps of yellow ochre (on the left), white pipe-clay (in the centre), and red ochre (on the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus australis*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
301 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (?). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 532 764 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XV.



NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 9]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE P. 322 — ANALYST]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 then, with the group, returned quietly to their companions among the poles."

(*b*) *The Songs and Dances*[18]

On the return to *milimika* A (Fig. 4), *Wurarbuti* and his wife mimed, to the accompaniment of appropriate songs, paddling a canoe, with their hands around one of the poles. This was followed by a man and his wife, who acted, with considerable detail, the making of a bark canoe; stripping the bark from [396] the tree; holding the bark over a fire to make it flexible; folding the bark and sewing the ends together, and the final launching.

By the time this act was over, it was dark. The aborigines from both *milimikas* retired to the nearby forest, lit their fires and cooked their food. There were no ceremonies during the evening, except, occasionally, some woman left her camp and wailed among the deserted *pukamuni* poles.

533 About 8 o'clock on the morning of the last day, the *pukamuni* men opened
539 the ceremonies with the honey and mosquito calls. These calls were followed
765 by a number of songs, chanted by *Wurarbuti* and some of his companions, which referred to the mythical boobook owl-man, *Purujikini*, and the instructions he gave to his fellow performers at the first *kulama* ceremony (p. 123). They were:

"Make the *milimika* large and clean for many people and when it is ready, sing first, then dance round the ring."

"You will paint yourself beside the *milimika*."

"When you decorate yourself for the *kulama*, put white on one side of your face, yellow on the other, and red down the middle of your hair. And as you dance, your wives will help you, as my wife, *Pinsoma*, the owl-woman, once did for me."

"You sing, *Mikinatrina*[19] (a *kulama* initiate), and we will follow."

"When you sing in a *kulama*, put the cockatoo feathers, *primitiki*, in your hair, and the wind will shake them."

While those songs were being chanted, other men mimed the appropriate action.

[18] Although the aborigines did not explain the ritual, it is likely that the first man looked for and thought he saw the *mapuditi* of *Wanimpari*. On the second occasion, *Marawani*, a near relative, hunted the dead man's spirit away. This ritual, in a modified [114] form, took place at the two other *pukamunis* we witnessed. Spencer (1928, p. 648) mentions the same ritual.

[19] The songs and dances in this series were neither traditional nor totemic. They were composed usually by a number of performers, especially for the occasion, and quite an amount of thought went into their production.

[20] During the initiation of the *Mikinatrina* at the *kulama* ceremony, he performs his first dance amid general applause.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some of the designs being very pleasing to the eye. Some spears, moreover, have human 411 hair strings wound round the shaft, immediately below the head, for a distance of [531] 10 centimetres or more, and this is kept in place with beeswax.

Canoes.

Elsewhere I have referred to the marked absence among the northern 501 Australian tribes of anything but the most primitive crafts and such innovated forms as have resulted from the contact with the white and yellow races. They are, therefore, not to be considered as truly indigenous canoes. On Bathurst Island, however, conditions are different; due, perhaps, in the first place, to its insularity (as well as the numerous estuaries and rivers that cross [133] the land), and, secondly, to the proximity of Melville Island, which is separated from it by only a narrow stretch of calm water known as Apsley Strait. The latter is barely a mile in width at its narrowest points. Numerous canoes are in use within this Strait, and occasionally, when wind and water are favourable, they venture a short distance out to sea. One type is principally in use, namely, a large bark-canoe measuring about 560 centimetres in length (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). It is made of a single sheet of bark, usually from suitable, straight, clear 396 trunks of the woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*) or the stringy-bark (*E. tetradonta*) 501 (*vide* Plate XII, Fig. 1). It is cut from the tree by chopping transversely at the respective distances from the ground, then slitting it once vertically for the whole length and removing it by forcing the edge of the instrument under the bark and finally levering it off with pointed saplings. The outer side of this oblong piece of bark, which is rough, will become the inside surface of the canoe. At a distance of from 65 to 70 centimetres from either end, transverse cuts are made on the inside to a depth of half the thickness of the bark, and such thickness is removed from the whole of the surface lying away from the centre at either incision. Each end is thus reduced by half its original strength and material thereby becoming more pliable. The cutting is done with the sharp edge of a [237 412] bivalve shell, usually a *Cyrena*. The subtilized ends of the sheet may, or may not, be held over a glowing fire to render them more pliant still. The sheet is folded lengthwise along its middle, and one or both ends kept together by vertical stakes, stuck in the ground and tied together at the top. The bottom corner of the fold is cut away in a very gentle upward slope. The two pieces of the fold are next held firmly together and cut in a more decisive upward direction from a point some 30 to 50 centimetres from the bottom edge end. The two freshly cut edges are neatly sewn with close, overcast stitches, and the same is done along the top horizontal edge for a distance of some 15 or 20 centimetres from the end. From the intervening space between the sewn parts at the top and bottom, an angular or curved segment is cut out in imitation of a fish-tail and its edges laced together in a like manner (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). The thread used for these "run-on" stitches is in the form of strips from the split sheets of the

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

● 396 501 climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*).[1] Holes are previously pierced through the [237 412] bark with an awl, made out of the leg-bone of a wallaby.

The stitches are made more secure and watertight by plastering them with [237 314] wax from the comb of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*) or with one of the several resins so extensively used by all natives. The inside corners are caulked with plastic clay and fibre, or resin. Two stays or struts of fairly stout timber, cut to the required length and inserted at the points where the bark was reduced to half its thickness, keep the sides of the canoe apart. From these points, therefore, the sides of the canoe converge to the bow at one end and to the stern at the other; while in between they are more or less parallel. The canoe, if there be any difference at all, is wider aft (74 cm.) than it is nearer the bow (55 cm.); the "fish-tail" incision, too, is acute and deep at the bow and more rounded and shallow at the stern (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). Along the top, inner, edge of either side of the canoe, a straight strengthening pole is lashed with distant, unequally-spaced and grouped "run on" stitches of cane-strips. These structures lend considerable rigidity to the gunwale of the canoe; they do not extend throughout the whole length, but, being straight, are more or less parallel one to another, and do not enclose the stern or bow. Major Campbell,[2] in referring to the bark canoes seen by him while at Fort Dundas, states that "the gunwales are strengthened by two small saplings (such as grow in marshy places) fastened together at each end of the canoe." This method is more like that in use on the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria to-day and was not observed on the islands by me. Long shoots of vines and strips of cane are wound crosswise from side to side of the canoe, and at the same time take in the strengthening-poles along the gunwale. Additional circumferential winding binds the separate cords into one thick rope. Four of such ties are spanned at equal distances, from one side to the other, along the straight edges of the canoe. They not only preserve its shape, but afford a ready means by which the craft may be carried.

501 The canoe is not decorated in any way, but smears of various colours are [531] noticed both at the bow and the stern, resulting from the handling by fingers previously occupied in decorative work with ochre. When not in use the canoes are "housed" on a level piece of ground, under the overhanging branches of a shady banyan or guttapercha tree. They are laid in normal upright position (not inverted), and are kept so by short supports of timber stemmed against the sides. The bark thus dries in the required shape and does not become lop-sided.

Each canoe has its recognized place. Where a dense growth of mangroves [487] skirts the foreshore, a regular approach to the water is kept clear by cutting away the trees. The paddles are laid within the canoes.

Quite a large number of natives may be carried in a canoe, if the occasion

[1] Compare narrative of Mr. Carron in MacGillivray's *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* 1852, vol. ii, pp. 125 and 126; also P. P. King: *Narrative Survey Intertropical Western Coasts of Australia*, London, 1827, vol. i, p. 90.

[2] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 156.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{16}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Balers made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

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396 of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe.
137 Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
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Fig. 2. A *Fusus pricei* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
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386 the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
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301 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (?). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in
532 imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).
764

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XII.

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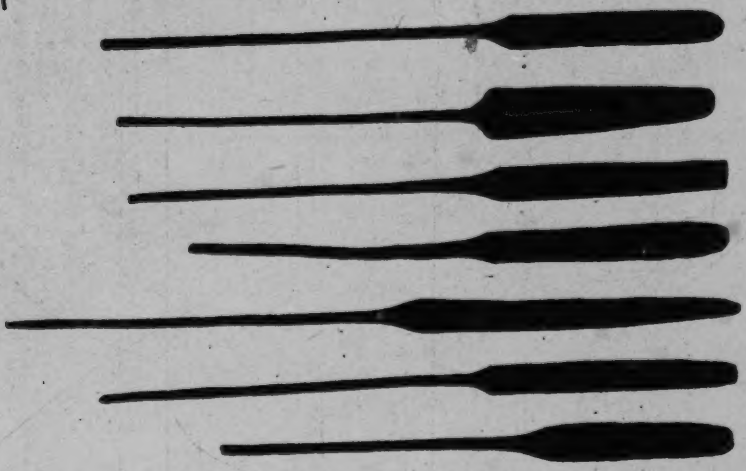

FIG. 2.

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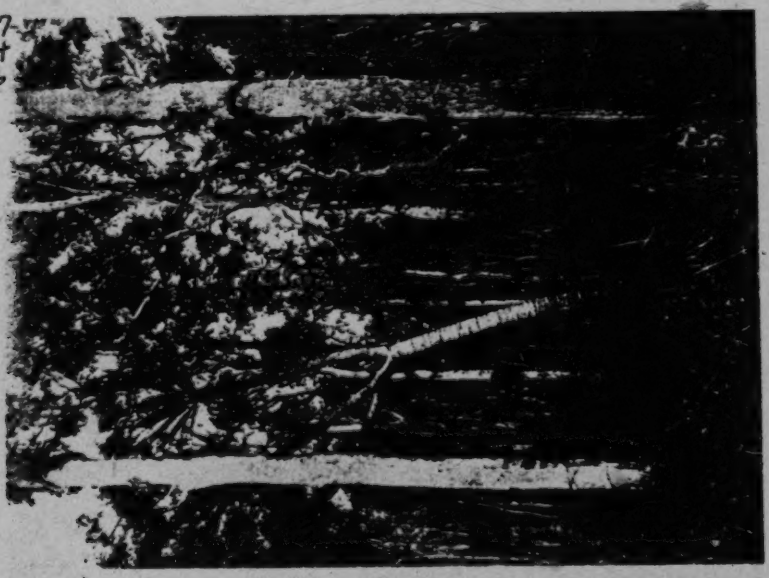

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 6]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE P 322 - ANALYST]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

302

Top to bottom: Timalarua, the canoe maker; Tiwi spears; mourning ceremony around graveposts.

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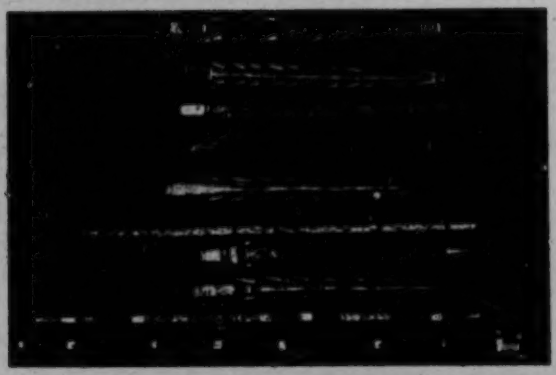

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[p xi]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 609 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human [101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

[173] Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate 171 to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distributional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how [411] isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their [531] wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus- [764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the [511] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

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[197 524] [1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

517 887 quently, on the banks of some creek or river in Tiklauila territory, a party wanting to cross would scout around and find a canoe hidden in the weeds. Everybody would use it to cross, and the question "Whose canoe is it?" would elicit the reply, "Oh, it's always there and everybody uses it who wishes to cross." But if the question were "Who made it in the first place and put it there?" the answer would be, "Probably Timalarua. He likes making canoes; he makes them all the time." He also liked making spears and posts, though he was not as generous with them as Tu'untalumi. When one of his posts appeared at a funeral, people would point it out admiringly saying, "Timalarua made that one" and the speaker would trace the lines and designs on it with his finger, using much the same gestures as an art critic in a modern gallery. When a post by Tu'untalumi was identified and admired, however, the admiration was for Tu'untalumi the generous person rather than Tu'untalumi the [554] artist. One was a wonderful craftsman, the other was a wonderful man. But acclaim given to the song and dance performances of the two men was just the reverse: the dances of Timalarua were adequate but not outstanding, those of Tu'untalumi were in a class by themselves.

Comparison of the activities of these two old men illustrates the impossibility of drawing any line, in the simpler cultures at least, between artistic production and technological production. The canoes and the posts manufactured by Timalarua and the posts manufactured and the new dances created by Tu'untalumi were all, so to speak, in the same category, as far as the Tiwi were concerned. The distinction we might make between the canoes as "useful" products and the posts and dances as ceremonial or artistic products never occurred to them. All were objects or products which only successful old men had the required skill and leisure to make. The fact that one old man liked to make canoes and leave them around for other people to use, and another old man liked to compose dances and perform his compositions widely for other people to enjoy, to them merely indicated individual taste and choice; it did not make the first a craftsman and the second an artist. This point has been overlooked in most of the theorizing about primitive art; perhaps a necessary first step in the development of primitive artists is for a society to be able to provide a few men with enough leisure time to be able to cultivate what might perhaps best be called hobbies, since a hobby can equally well be something "useful" to society, like canoe making, or something personally satisfying, like dancing or decorating graveposts.

[411] 531 556 The huge, heavy, painted spears made by these old Tiwi men were mainly used only for display, and even the oldest men were positive that this had always been the tradition. In fact, they seemed a little shocked at the implication that such beautiful and valuable objects could ever have been used for such mundane purposes as hunting or warfare. The cutting and painting of such spears took time and skill—more time than a grave post—and no important man went to the smallest gathering without bearing on his shoulder at least half a dozen of these symbols of his importance. If on his way through the bush he sighted a kangaroo, he dropped his painted spears and stalked [224] the animal with an ordinary spear, or more probably left it to the young men in the party who carried only ordinary ones.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gumned sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 relatives, soon caught up with them. Several cases of such elopements occurred
583 during the period of fieldwork, including the case of one young couple (Peanut and Jumbo's wife) who made repeated attempts to elope over a period of
[624] several years. But despite the relaxation of standards that white contact had brought, as long as they remained on the islands these violators of the system were soon forced back into conformity by outraged public opinion and its punitive sanctions. Unless he fled to the mainland with his girl, the young bachelor who stole an old man's young wife had to restore her sooner or later to her rightful husband. Under pre-white conditions they could not flee to the mainland; if they tried, they both probably drowned on the way or at least were never heard of again.

182 Thus the isolation of the Tiwi made the rule of the gerontocracy much
691 more absolute, and the enforcement of it much more effective than was possible for any of the mainland tribes where violators of the rules could skip across the border. Tiwi bachelors had to be satisfied, by and large, with casual and temporary liaisons and even in these, because of the constant suspicion of the old husbands and the constant spying and scandalmongering of the old wives, they had to be prepared to be often caught and, when caught, to be punished.
[578] Thus we come to another of the main emphases in Tiwi culture—the enormous frequency of disputes, fights, duels, and war parties arising directly or indirectly out of cases of seduction. If we may call this area of life the legal area, then over 90 percent of legal affairs were matters in which women were in some way involved.

627 THE DUEL The Tiwi formula for handling seduction was very
684 straightforward and clear-cut in its formal outline. Since senior men had young wives and young men had not, seduction was necessarily viewed as an offense by a young man against a senior man. Hence the charge was always laid by the senior and the younger man was always the defendant.[1] At night in camp the accuser hurled his charges at the offender. We described earlier the alternatives available at this stage to both parties. Two of those alternatives were for the old man to press the matter to a public "trial," either the next day, if the camp was already a large one, or else on the next occasion when both men were present in a big gathering.

The basic shape of all Tiwi trials was standardized in the form that we have been calling the duel. Everybody present—men, women, children, and dogs—formed a rough circle in an open space, sitting or standing according to their degree of excitement at the moment. At one end stood the accuser,
[302 the old man, covered from head to foot in white paint, with his ceremonial
411] spears in one hand and a bundle of the more useful hunting spears in the

[1] Under pre-white conditions this had to be so. After the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, some young men through Mission manipulation got a young wife at an age that would have been impossible earlier. This resulted in an occasional case around the Mission where a *young* husband charged a *man* older than himself with seducing his wife. The resulting duel, with an older man as defendant, was regarded by the Tiwi as both embarrassing and ludicrous, perhaps analogous to the average American's attitude toward female professional wrestlers. (See Hart 1954 for a case of this sort, the duel of Bob v. Louis.)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

other. At the opposite end stood the defendant, with little or no paint on him, perhaps holding a hunting spear or two in his hand (a sign of insolence), perhaps holding only throwing sticks (less defiant, since the stick was an inferior weapon more appropriate to young men), or perhaps entirely weaponless (a sign of proper humility and the deference to his seniors that all bachelors ought to show in such situations). The accuser, with many gestures, particularly with much stamping of the feet and chewing of the beard, told the young man in detail precisely what he and all right-minded members of the community thought of him. This angry, loud harangue went into minute detail, not only about the actual offense, but the whole life career of the defendant, and paid particular attention to occasions in the past when the old man even remotely, or some of his relatives, even more remotely, had performed kindnesses toward either the young man or some of his relatives. It is difficult to summarize briefly one of these harangues, but the general formula, subject to much variation by each individual accuser, appeared to be the building up of as much contrast as possible between the criminal or antisocial character of the young man's actions and the fact that he was a member of a network of interpersonal relationships in which mutual aid and reciprocal obligations were essential. The Tiwi orators, of course, did not put the matter in such abstract terms. They listed the long catalogue of people who had done things for the young man since his birth, and for his ancestors and relatives, until the catalogue took in practically the whole tribe—past, present, and future. And what had he done to repay his obligations to all these people? "Why, the miserable, ungrateful wretch spends his time hanging around my camp, etc., etc. And not only my camp, but last year it was widely believed that he was indulging in similar actions around the camp of my esteemed fellow-elder, So and So." We do not think that we are overintellectualizing the content of these harangues if we say that they involved the old man's reminding the young man of his debt to society, and his attempting to convey the idea that social life needed mutual aid and trust between all its members.

After twenty minutes or so of this sociological abuse and blame pinning, the old man threw aside his ceremonial spears and began to throw his hunting spears at the defendant. This active phase of the duel conformed to a stereotyped pattern which in some respects resembled baseball. The old man stood about ten feet farther away from the young man than the pitcher stands from the plate. The young man had to avoid being hit by the spears. To do this he was permitted to jump from side to side or into the air, or to duck, but he was expected always to land on approximately the same spot as he had been standing on when the first spear was thrown. Thus there was no marked strike zone, but an implied one. If the accused jumped well away from the strike zone, he was jeered by the crowd. If the old man was wild, he was jeered too, but more respectfully. Under such rules a modern baseball hitter, having no bat in his hand to worry about, would almost never be hit by a pitched ball, and the Tiwi young men were similarly never likely to be hit by an old man's spears. The main danger was the spear that pitched in the dirt: Although clearly outside the strike zone and hence an indication that the old man was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

southern coast of Bathurst Island. In 1885, the Australian government tried 175
to erect channel markers on the southern shore of Melville Island, where- 648
upon the Tiwi immediately "salvaged" both cloth and iron from them. During June and July of the same year the ship *Jane Anderson* was stranded on the shoals of first Melville and then Bathurst Island. Also in 1886, two Malay proas were wrecked on the north coast of Melville Island. That year was a great one for looting.

Occasionally visitors came ashore on the islands. The Stokes' survey party landed in the late 1830's, but saw no natives. A government party crossed Melville Island in 1887; the Tiwi speared its leader. In 1895, a government tourist party went to look over the ruins of old Fort Dundas; they kept their eyes open and no one was injured. In 1897, Joe Cooper, a buffalo shooter, tried to make a living from the Melville Island buffalo; he was speared and retreated to Darwin.

Tiwi treatment of outsiders prior to 1900 had been to rob them, spear [173]
them, kill them. This is not, however, the picture painted by modern Tiwi when talking of their past. They claim that their ancestors greeted each new group of strangers with the cry: *"Pongki! Pongki!"* (meaning, "Peace! [411]
Peace!"). But then it should be noted that before 1900 many a Tiwi peacemaker carried a spear between his toes. Yet under these circumstances the Tiwi 175
world view did alter. First there were those changes which came from an 177
attempt to understand the new objects which were suddenly thrust into the Tiwi world: the trade knives and axes given by Dutch navigators, the matchlock guns used by the Malays and probably the Portuguese, the rice given to Tiwi by the surveyors under P. P. King, the Indonesian water buffalo introduced by the British at their short-lived settlement, the coconut palms the English left behind them, the cups and plates from shipwrecks in the 1880's, and the flour tossed overboard to lighten foundering vessels. The Tiwi cherished iron knives and axes, readily recognizing their greater efficiency. The Tiwi begged for them; they stole them; and, when a spar washed ashore bound round with iron bands, the natives burned away the wood and took the iron away to grind into axes. The matchlock gun, and even the later flintlock, could be coped with; when one saw the flash, one ducked flat, just in case the weapon worked, and then rushed in to impale the stranger with a spear. Rice was useless; it looked like the larvae of the termite, which was not good for anything anyway. Buffalo were to be killed; they kept wallowing in the best waterholes. Coconut palms were a great disappointment; they were bigger than the local cabbage palm, but when cut down, did not have the same succulent interior. Plates were too much bother to carry around, but cups were worth saving for a while. Flour could be used for white paint, but it was not as good as the best white pigment near at hand.

Other modifications took place in Tiwi life before 1900 as a result of 175
action by outsiders. Probably the greatest of these alterations came as a result 648
of slave raiding, or "black birding" as it is called in the South Seas. The Tiwi [609]
always kept their young women hidden from strangers, even if they were just visitors from other bands. The old men rarely left camp. Therefore, it was the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 Puzzled over this new phenomenon, *Jurumu* placed the smouldering wood-
[372] dust into the pith of a dead pandanus palm and blew upon it. To the surprise of both men the speck became larger and larger, finally bursting into a flame. This frightened the men so badly that they rushed to *Purukupali* and asked him to destroy the strange thing they had made. But when *Purukupali* saw the blazing wood and felt its heat he realized that *Jurumu* and *Mudati* had inadvertently discovered something that would give the aborigines not only light to dispel the darkness, but heat to cook their food and to keep them warm.[16]

Calling his sister, *Wuriupranala*, he gave her a torch of bark lit from the blazing log and told her that it was her duty to keep it alight always. *Tjapara*,
[821] who later became the moon, was given a smaller torch.

With the coming of light and heat, the descendants of *Mudungkala* spread over the island, hunting and camping in places which, at the close of the creation period, became their totemic country.

About that time, two men, *Puruti* and *Jirakati*, were spearing fish in Tiaupu, a freshwater swamp at Piper Head, near the northern entrance to Apsley Straits, when they noticed, by the movements of the stems of the water-lilies, some large creature moving about under the water.

Not knowing it was his mother, *Tipuru-undunga*, *Puruti* speared her in the
[823] neck. Screaming with pain and urinating in her fright, *Tipuru-undunga* rushed into the sea, which in those days was fresh water, polluting it so much with her blood and urine that it became as salt as the sea of today.

The wounded *Tipuru-undunga* changed herself into the tall, stately bird,
[825] the jabiru (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) which now lives on the edge of the fresh-water lagoons; while the fishermen, *Puruti* and *Jirakati* became the sea-osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and the graceful white-headed sea-eagle (*Haliaetus leucogaster*).[18]

During those early *palaneri* times, a man, *Jirakupai*, lived beside a fresh-water lagoon, *Jirininga*, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. He had married two sisters, *Kuraruna* and *Jaknia*.

Jirakupai was an expert in the making of both the large many-barbed, male
[411] spears, *tunkaringa*, which have a row of barbs on one side (Pl. 32A), and the female spears, *tunkaguni*, with their double row of barbs (Pl. 32B). Both forms are now used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

[16] The aborigines distinguish between light (*milajuka*) from the sun or burning wood, and heat (*ikwani*) from glowing coals.

[18] The large hawk-like birds, *Jirakati*, the sea-eagle, *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite, appear as men in a number of the myths. In each one they transformed themselves from men into birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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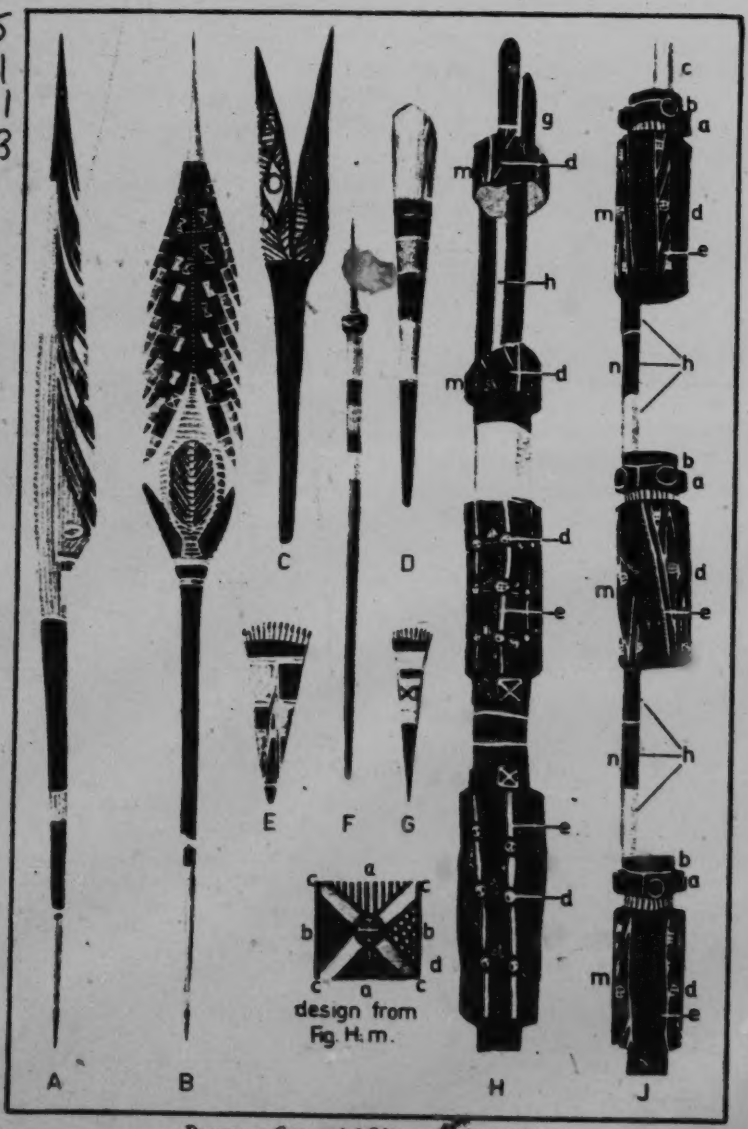

PLATE 32. *Ceremonial Objects and Burial Poles*
A, Male Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaringa; B, Female Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaguni; C, Forked Throwing Stick, Miluanta; D, Plain Throwing Stick, Murugunu; E, G, Tool, Porta, for Body Painting; F, Scratching Stick, Murubunga; H, J, Pukamuni Burial Poles.

[p. 88 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama*
778 rituals.

Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known
[411] respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear,
[531] *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines
[114] told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville
[322] Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making
[412] of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *mituanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *murugana*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines
[302] of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin
[413] paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[84]

Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati*
[515] *kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed
[413] to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkias*, are used by the Tiwi
765 for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E), invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkias*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in
[301] white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, his chest ornaments,
[302]

[84] The lines of dots on *Wurarkui* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly
412 limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe
[177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of
[415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the
[285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[66]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[66] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female
[114] ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This
[173] information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

322 piece of the former fold are clasped between the fingers and thus used as a cup
415 the part lying opposite to the fingers being held to the lips.

Honey Eating.

222 In my notes on the north-western tribes of the Northern Territory I have
262 described[1] a honey-collecting implement and there, also, referred to somewhat
264 similar observations made by Dr. Wilson[2] and Keppel.[3]

On Bathurst Island I observed still another modification. A young flower-stalk of the fan-palm (*Livistonia humilis*), when about 50 to 70 centimetres long, is cut just above the trunk of the palm and its bottom end chewed until all the fibres are separated and look like the hairs of a brush. The juice, being quite sweet, is swallowed. The brush end is then inserted into the nest of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*), whereby the honey gathers between the fibres. When saturated with honey, the brush end is passed back to the mouth and again sucked and chewed for a considerable time, after which it is once more returned to the honey for a fresh supply, and this is continued to repletion.

Tree Climbing.

481 [222] Both male and female, young and old, are expert tree-climbers when in pursuit of game, honey of the wild bee, fruits, and seeds. As none of the trees on the islands grow to an abnormally large size, the butt is usually not too great in circumference to allow of the arms being thrown around it, so that the hands may obtain a firm hold on the side distant from the climber. Having obtained this hold while standing on the ground and facing the tree, the native jumps on to the butt, clutching it with the flat surfaces of his feet in a frog-like fashion. The knees in this position stand well outwards. The body hangs, suspended by the arms above and held against the tree by the legs below. The climber now raises his body; his hands quickly follow by a corresponding distance. Holding on with the latter he draws up his legs in a jumping manner once more to clutch the tree between the soles of his feet. This movement being repeated, he rapidly advances upwards.

Hunting and Fighting.

411 *Throwing-sticks and clubs.*—Several types of throwing-sticks and clubs are in use. They must be referred to under this general or collective heading, since it is hard to discriminate between the two implements and to say definitely where the throwing-stick ends and the club begins. They form an interesting group of Australian implements and weapons that allows of a satisfactory system of

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 26, Fig. 19.
[2] *Narrative Voyage Round the World*, 1835, p. 98.
[3] *A Visit to Indian Archipelago*, 1853, vol. 2, p. 168.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

classification on account of the regularity of the various types, not only as regards the actual cutting of the particular form, but also as regards the way in which they are decorated (*vide* Plate IX, Figs. 1, 2, 3, and 4). 411

Type 1.—The simplest type seen in use is a stick, 46 or 47 centimetres long, usually more or less curved, thin at the hand-end, gradually thickening upwards and swelling to a club-head at the distal end. The surface is longitudinally furrowed, the result of scraping. The stick is painted on special occasions in various colours, as follows: hand-end red or brown (25 cm.), thence successive circular bands of yellow (·5 cm.), white (1 cm.), red (·25 cm.), black (3 cm.), red (·25 cm.), yellow (1 cm.), white (·25 cm.), red (4 cm.), yellow (·5 cm.); club-head white (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 1). 411 53)

Type 2.—The second type to be described is somewhat similar. It measures 60 centimetres in length and is usually straight. Whereas in the previous type the club-head is rounded off at its distal end, it ends with a blunt point in the case now before us. The club-head, too, is larger in proportion. The surface is scraped longitudinally and painted in alternate bands of red and white of different breadths. From the hand-end upwards the coloured bands are as follows: red (19 cm.), white (10 cm.), red (8 cm.), white (23 cm.) (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 3).

Type 3.—The third type is slender and thickens very gradually from the hand- to the club-end, whence a sharp spine projects for 2 centimetres. It is scraped longitudinally and painted in rather more elaborate fashion than the two foregoing types. The hand-end is red for a distance of about 30 centimetres; thence follow successively bands of yellow (1 cm.), white (6 cm.), red (1 cm.), black (4 cm.), yellow (1 cm.). The club-head is white with two longitudinal yellow bands at opposite extremes of a diameter, dividing it into two halves vertically. Within each of the white fields thus produced are two intersecting, undulating lines, one of red and one of yellow, running longitudinally and terminating in the spine at the top, which is red (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 2).

Type 4.—This type consists of a stick, circular in section, which increases slightly in diameter from the hand-end upwards, for a distance of 55 centimetres. The diameter at that distance is 3½ centimetres, but immediately beyond, the stick slopes abruptly to a thickness of only 1½ centimetres, whence it tapers to a long pointed end, about 20 centimetres long. The stick is painted in red, yellow, and white, as follows: the hand-end is red for 23 centimetres, thence follow bands of white (1 cm.), yellow (8 cm.), red (1 cm.), white (12 cm.), red (1 cm.), yellow (8 cm.), red (1 cm.). The extreme end of the stick and the long spine are white (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 4).

The two last-described types have, to my knowledge, not been observed in Australia before.

Spears.

In dealing with the spears used on Bathurst Island (and the same holds good for Melville Island), we are brought into contact with types that are unknown on 411

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

411 the mainland. In the first place no spears are manufactured for projecting by
[161] other method than simply by hand. No spear-throwers, so much in evidence among all true Australian tribes, are in use on these islands. Yet light spears
411 were observed which really marked the beginning of the development of the arrow.
524 These were seen to be used by youths at play and during their sham fights. Light green sticks, a little over a metre in length and slightly more than a lead pencil's thickness, are cut and scraped to a simple point at one end. The opposite end, that is, the back- or hand-end, is next put to the mouth and split with the teeth along its fibres into several strips some 10 centimetres long. The split pieces are then bent outwards like the feathers of an arrow and the toy weapon is ready for use. It can be hurled by hand with astounding precision. The opponents evade the missiles by dodging and crouching and contorting their bodies in much the same clever manner as I have described[1] of the Larrekiya and Wogait tribes.

411 Strictly speaking, one type of spear prevails. It is made of a single piece of solid wood, straightened to a greater or less degree over a fire. It is barbed at the front end and tapers to a simple point behind. The extreme variations in length and, consequently, in weight also, of this spear attract the attention at first sight. It is nothing unusual to find spears measuring 450 centimetres in length and weighing 2,700 grammes, but at the same time the smaller specimens measure only 250 centimetres in length and weigh 370 grammes. When we consider that a fair average length of the Northern Territory spear is 300 centimetres and a good average weight 260 grammes, the maxima of the islanders' spears quoted seem
[136] very remarkable indeed. The more do these appeal to us since the largest species of the indigenous fauna is but a fair-sized wallaby. Crocodiles are comparatively scarce, and the buffalo, introduced from Timor by Captain Barlow, first commandant of Fort Dundas, in 1826, is practically unknown on Bathurst Island. On Melville Island, where similar spears are in use, the buffalo is very plentiful, but it is a singular fact that the natives do not hunt this beast to any considerable extent.

The head of the spear has many barbs carved on one side and, occasionally, on two diametrically opposite sides. There are usually from ten to thirty barbs, which are directed backwards (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 5 (Series)). Behind these there may or may not be from four to eight small serrations that stand out at right angles to the length of the shaft. In other cases, too, some six or more barbs are cut at the back part of the spear-head pointing the opposite way, that is, in the direction the spear is thrown. The spear heads have a long point resembling a cutting-blade or spike. The barbs are symmetrically carved with sharp edges and point. They are flattish lancet-shaped, with a central ridge on the outside, and project from the head to various degrees of prominence in different specimens. Many of the spears are longitudinally grooved with an adze, either for the whole of their length or along the head-end only. They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 33.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some of the designs being very pleasing to the eye. Some spears, moreover, have human 471 ● hair strings wound round the shaft, immediately below the head, for a distance of [531] 10 centimetres or more, and this is kept in place with beeswax.

Canoes.

Elsewhere I have referred to the marked absence among the northern 501 Australian tribes of anything but the most primitive crafts and such innovated forms as have resulted from the contact with the white and yellow races. They are, therefore, not to be considered as truly indigenous canoes. On Bathurst Island, however, conditions are different; due, perhaps, in the first place, to its insularity (as well as the numerous estuaries and rivers that cross [133] the land), and, secondly, to the proximity of Melville Island, which is separated from it by only a narrow stretch of calm water known as Apsley Strait. The latter is barely a mile in width at its narrowest points. Numerous canoes are in use within this Strait, and occasionally, when wind and water are favourable, they venture a short distance out to sea. One type is principally in use, namely, a large bark-canoe measuring about 560 centimetres in length (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). It is made of a single sheet of bark, usually from suitable, straight, clear 396 trunks of the woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*) or the stringy-bark (*E. tetradonta*) 501 (*vide* Plate XII, Fig. 1). It is cut from the tree by chopping transversely at the respective distances from the ground, then slitting it once vertically for the whole length and removing it by forcing the edge of the instrument under the bark and finally levering it off with pointed saplings. The outer side of this oblong piece of bark, which is rough, will become the inside surface of the canoe. At a distance of from 65 to 70 centimetres from either end, transverse cuts are made on the inside to a depth of half the thickness of the bark, and such thickness is removed from the whole of the surface lying away from the centre at either incision. Each end is thus reduced by half its original strength and material thereby becoming more pliable. The cutting is done with the sharp edge of a [237 412] bivalve shell, usually a *Cyrena*. The subtilized ends of the sheet may, or may not, be held over a glowing fire to render them more pliant still. The sheet is folded lengthwise along its middle, and one or both ends kept together by vertical stakes, stuck in the ground and tied together at the top. The bottom corner of the fold is cut away in a very gentle upward slope. The two pieces of the fold are next held firmly together and cut in a more decisive upward direction from a point some 30 to 50 centimetres from the bottom edge end. The two freshly cut edges are neatly sewn with close, overcast stitches, and the same is done along the top horizontal edge for a distance of some 15 or 20 centimetres from the end. From the intervening space between the sewn parts at the top and bottom, an angular or curved segment is cut out in imitation of a fish-tail and its edges laced together in a like manner (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). The thread used for these "run on" stitches is in the form of strips from the split sheets of the

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

The first plate reproduced contains a group composed of five imprints of the left hand of a native (Plate XIX, Fig. 1). The fingers are wide apart; the wrists of the two lowest hands seem very narrow in proportion, but that is due to the fact that they did not lie in close contact with the surface when the pigment was squirted against it. 531

In the lower corner on the right of the reproduction stands a single-masted sailing craft, intended to represent a small European pearling or fishing-boat. The former class of boats have long been in the habit of passing through Apsley Strait on account of the shelter afforded and the chances of procuring fresh water close to the shores of either island. 532

Plate XIX, Fig. 2, is the lower continuation of the proceeding. The sailing craft just described is noticed on the right. Below it is the picture of a frog. Special features of this design are firstly the two circular lateral prominences on the head representing the large eyes and, secondly, the inaccuracy in regard to the number of toes. The smear on the left hind leg, resembling a caudal appendage, is accidental.

The fourth design (Plate XX) is that of a double-masted pearling-lugger[1] in full sail. The proportion and neatness of execution of these designs of sailing crafts are excellent indeed. The hulk and sails of the latter figure are drawn in white pipe-clay and its masts in red ochre.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate VII.

Figs. 1 and 3. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with fur strings and cockatoo feathers. ⅓ natural size. 301 531

Figs. 2 and 4. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with pointed sticks. ⅓ natural size.

Plate VIII.

Figs. 1 and 2. Water-carriers, made of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). ⅓ natural size. 415

Figs. 3, 4, 5 and 6. Food-carriers, made of bark; Figs. 5 and 6 with ochre drawings. ⅓ natural size. 531

Plate IX.

Figs. 1, 2, 3 and 4. Throwing-sticks and clubs. ⅓ natural size. 411

Fig. 5. A collection of spears from Bathurst Island. $\frac{1}{12}$ natural size. 531

by filling the mouth with charcoal powder if the device is to be black, if red with red ochre powder, damping the wall where the mark is to be left, and placing the palm of the hand against it, with fingers stretched out; the charcoal or ochre powder is then blown against the back of the hand; when it is withdrawn, it leaves the space occupied by the hand and fingers clean while the surrounding portions of the wall are all black or red, as the case may be." (Central Australian Natives.)

[1] *Vide* figure in *Report Government Geologist and Staff*, 1905, Adelaide, By authority, p. 14.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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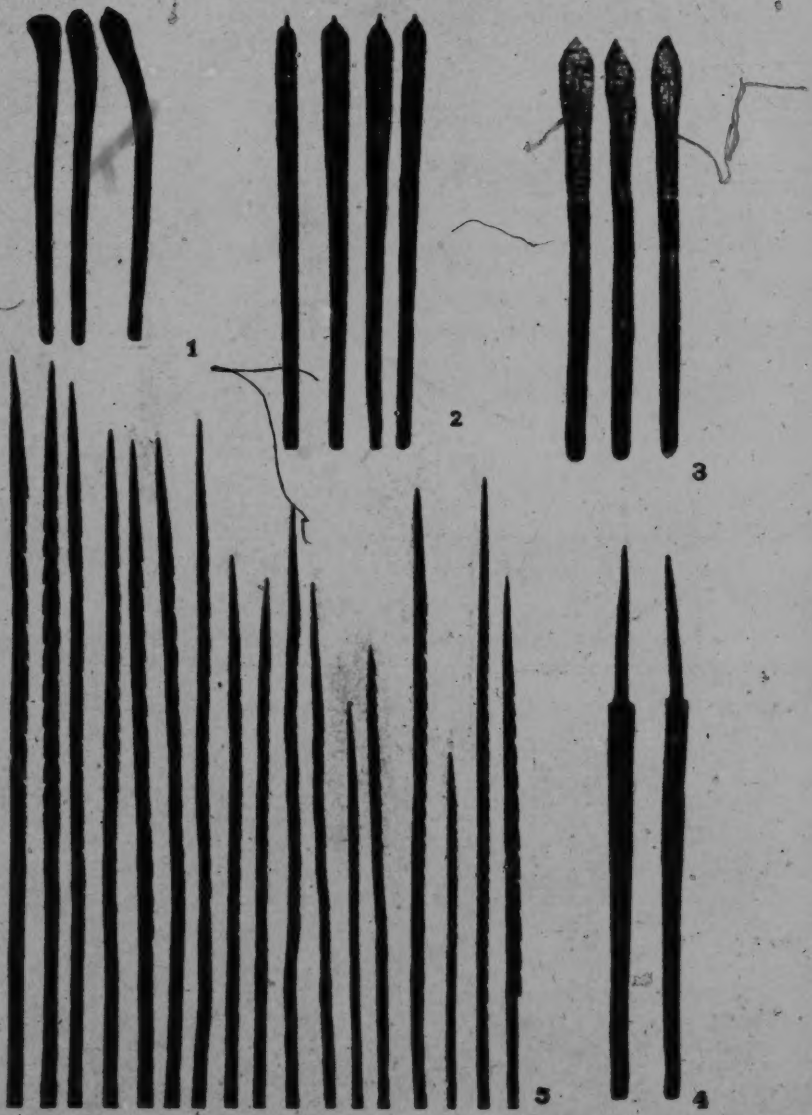

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 3]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 321 - ANALYST]

8:Fry D-5 (1813) 1950 O120 Tiwi O120

881 while a small trestle had been built of three upright sticks about 2 ft. 6 in. high in the [343] form of an isosceles triangle, with the apex to the west. Cross sticks were laid across the top of this and the sticks covered with grass. Three old men then took Cooper to a point about twenty yards east of the trestle and faced towards it, two on his right, one on his left. They each held a [411] flat bladed club, *irruella*, in the left hand horizontally above the head and beat the [533] point of it with a light round club with a pointed end, *merkunga*. Cooper held three *merkunga* in the crook of his left arm, one being taken and used by one of the old men. The old men advanced towards the trestle, chanting and beating their clubs in the way described. Cooper was slightly behind them. Young men followed the group. Cooper stood before the trestle as at an altar while the old men chanted for about five minutes. Water was called for, and brought by a woman and given to a visitor from the Mugula tribe. He then poured the water over Cooper's head. Cooper rubbed his belly with his *merkunga*. The visitor then pulled the hair string free from one end of the wooden collar, *aladini*, while Cooper made very wry faces. The collar was removed and the ceremony ended. I was [439] presented with Cooper's *aladini* and *merkunga* in return for gifts, and I was cheerfully escorted back to the beach where the lugger was waiting for me.

H. K. Fry,
D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.

[p. 168 A]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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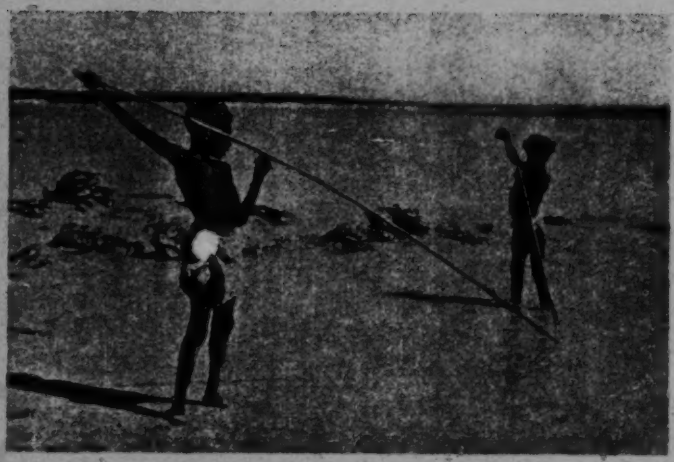

Fig. 9. Two young hunters practicing with fish-spears

123 the impenetrable jungle, which were attributed to the *Ningawi*, the
[776] weird and mysterious "little people" of the mangrove. Rounding a curve in the river, we surprised a flock of whistle ducks sitting on an exposed mudbank. Young Billy tried to shoot one for supper but missed, and soon they were well out of range. On a rare piece of solid ground we saw the long tail and massive hips of a startled
[136] wallaby as he hopped to safety. However, a successful throw of the fish-spear brought us a large barramundi, and the .22 rifle provided both a possum and a fruit bat, or flying fox, for supper.

All of a sudden the mangroves disappeared and our view was no longer restricted to the river bank; rather we gazed through
[137] thick, gnarled white paperbarks on the water's edge to wide expanses of marshy grasslands. A few flocks of black and white geese, which had returned to the swamps early in the evening, were startled by the sound of the motor and rose honking in fright.

About five, we reached Minianapi, a landing place about fifteen yards wide, where solid ground reached the river bank. We were

123 sional patch of grass, which the rushing fire had missed, there was not a living green plant below the four-foot line. Burning the country is an annual occurrence and many are the laws governing 221 who may burn and who may subsequently hunt in the newly cleared 224 land. Because the fires are set each year, there is no accumulation of dry tinder to feed the fire and allow it to rage uncontrollably. Only the grass and a few fallen logs catch and these will burn rapidly and fiercely, but for a very short period. Any gap in the vegetation will stop the fire and the heavy dew, falling in the evening, will also put out the flames, leaving perhaps only isolated, smouldering logs to burn through the night. Until the first shoots of new grass push [421] their way through the charred ground, the individual hunter who set the fire has exclusive rights to the area he set alight. Of course, no one except those who belong to that country may burn without [671] permission of the owners. As far as possible, these laws are still upheld.

123 We soon came to a branch in the path and Albert indicated that we two girls should continue straight ahead; he would stop behind. In front of us stretched the fresh-water swamp. Out of the almost inky but clear water rose the gnarled paperbark trees, their roots so intertwined they almost formed a floor, albeit a most slippery and irregular one, over the rotten vegetation in the bottom of the swamp. I picked a particularly large rooted tree for my bath [515] tub, and a short distance away Agnes did the same. If one was careful not to disturb the fine deposit on the bottom but managed to stay on top of the slippery roots, the clear cool water was as sweet and soft as one could wish for. We stayed for about an hour, washing ourselves and our clothes, but finally an impatient call from Albert put an end to this pleasure. Albert had been hunting for a possum, but in this area so close to the camp, they had already been depleted.

123 Instead of returning to camp, Albert decided that now was as good a time as any to cut his *milingani*, the sticks with which they ● 411 kill the geese. After another mile or so into the bush, we came to a 322 grove of stout bushes of a kind I had not seen before. They had [223] long, straight branches of about a half-inch diameter. These Albert

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 13. Gathering water-lilies in a fresh-water swamp

cut and after he had collected about thirty he selected a nice, smooth ledge of rock in the shade to work further on the sticks. First he stripped the bark, then measuring them against his arm he cut them so that each stick was as long as the distance from his fingertips to his elbow. All this he did with his knife, holding it by the tip of its long blade so that the handle would add its weight to each blow. He carefully smoothed off the two ends so there were no loose splinters. We each took a bundle of these sticks, tied them with strips of pandanus, and returned to the camp. Here they were laid in the water close to the bank and weighted down with a rock. This would make them good and heavy, it was explained.

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During the afternoon, the two men worked on the permanent house which Bill Grimster had ordered. Big Jack had spent the morning cutting posts and had brought in about half a dozen. By late afternoon, when the others returned, they had been set upright in holes dug to individual measure so that they stood firm without bracing.

Once everyone had returned, a fire was built. The men collected their individual bundles of *milingani* and placed the ends of the dripping sticks in the flames. They squatted over the sticks and individually started a chant during which they cupped their hands in the smoke and carrying it to their bodies, slapped their necks, then their arms. "Knar. Knar Gerra doo (slap), Gerra doo (slap)." The chant was nothing more than the imitation of the cries of the geese and the whir of the sticks. They explained that to bring the geese down they had to hit it directly on the neck or wings. "Why

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 14. "Cooking milingani"

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do you cook the sticks?" I asked. "To make them dry so they won't slip in our hands," they replied.

Once the sticks were all well charred on the ends the men took them down to the canoe. For once, I used my status of ethnographer and overruled my role of a woman, and accompanied the men on what was properly men's business. The presence of women or children might bring bad luck. Whether the explanation was simply that women and children are considered to be lacking in the amount of silence or immobility required, or whether the reason was more subtle, I never found out. "This properly men's business," was the only explanation.

We took the canoe a quarter of a mile up stream, where we

797 The couples marry young without any thought for the future.
They just marry as, and when, they feel inclined, and the mission
582 fathers provide the new home. Under the palms beside the
342 Strait are many of the queer little iron humpies provided, just a roof, as it were, sloping on each side from the ridge-pole to the ground. The whole can be picked up and moved to a fresh position when fleas become too numerous and the surroundings otherwise unpleasant. These humpies scarcely seem attractive to white folk, but the islanders like them, and they are at least a great improvement on the dog-kennels of old iron that the blacks persist in erecting for themselves on the beach at Darwin.

797 Proper houses are provided in the Kahlin compound there, but
the blacks despise them; and, although the miserable humpies on
342 the beach are demolished from time to time by the authorities, they are all up again by next evening. The good fathers know what the islanders prefer, and they have given the married couples the kind of accommodation in which they feel most happy. The humpies may be hot and stuffy, but they are dry inside when it rains.

142 The island blacks, in many respects, differ considerably from
the tribes of the mainland. They are excessively hirsute, and,
144 on attaining maturity, the men grow long beards, many being of truly patriarchal proportions. The upper lip is kept bare, which practice seems to emphasize the magnificence of the beard. Shocks of hair, sometimes standing six inches high, add to a wildly impressive appearance. They are tall and muscular, and, as they stride along, they seem the very acme of physical development, a living advertisement for the natural, open-air existence.
302 The hairs, by the way, are plucked from the upper lip one by one, and this painful proceeding is undertaken in the calmest manner, certainly with less fuss and facial distortion than the average white man makes during his morning shave.

171 The use of the woomera for throwing spears, and of the
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[p. 15 (A)]

171 boomerang, is unknown to the islanders. Ceremonial customs,
[411] language, origin, and burial rites all differ from those of the
mainland tribes, and constitute an interesting study for anthro-
pologists. They are the only aborigines who erect memorials on
764 the graves of the departed, and, in the forest beside the
aerodrome, you may see a typical grave surrounded with queerly-
[322 carved ironwood totem-poles. The poles, some eight feet in
532] height, are carved in varying patterns. They had been painted
in highly decorative designs with red, yellow, and white ochre,
with black bands of charcoal to give sharp and artistic contrast.
Each kindred totem to that of the deceased must place a pole
at the grave. Failure to erect a pole is supposed to signify that
no sorrow is felt for the death, and punishment will follow.
Something unpleasant always *does* happen to those who neglect
this duty.

797 AFTER these necessary digressions, let us return to my visit
to the mission station. We followed the fathers over the stile,
up an avenue of palms, and on through the garden, where
[245] pineapples and bananas grow, and there are rows of immense
and beautifully shady mango-trees. Sturdy, fuzzy-headed
[262] aborigines strode in front (one of them had just come in with
a couple of kangaroos for the larder), and the boys trooped
along behind us. The quarters of the fathers are very much
those of bachelors, perfectly bare, with guns in the corners and
a few native weapons and curios hanging on the walls.

Here two lubras brought us morning tea, and here I learnt
much of the foregoing matters. The fathers themselves are
entertaining men of the world, and their white cricket shirts
and khaki slacks gave no indication of their calling. The boys
797 gathered at the foot of the steps leading up to the quarters,
and every now and then black-bearded Father McGrath would
522 banter them in their own language. Like all the native peoples

[p. 15 (B)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 0120 Tiwi 0120

726 One man will then take a step or two forward, hold up a hand, and stamp vigorously, and all the warriors of his side will copy his actions. "Let 'em all come!" is the attitude adopted. If the enemy does not start hostilities at once, they throw their spears down and jump about like wallabies to show their contempt for the sluggard's markmanship. They are, however, careful not to get too far away from their own weapons, on which they pounce immediately the first spear is hurled by their opponents. The air is soon thick with flying spears and war-clubs, and the exchange goes on until some unlucky warrior is really hurt, when the engagement ceases.

727 BOTH sides gather round, howling their dismay, until repairs to the injured have been effected. A red-dyed ball of goose-
[781] down, which is hung from the neck by a string woven of human hair, is held before the mouth as a charm to divert the missiles, but the warriors owe their immunity from death or serious injury to their own remarkable eyesight and to the dexterity with which they evade, or turn to one side, the hurtling weapons of the enemy. The war-clubs used by the islanders are far more
411 difficult to dodge than the spears, which come straight at you.

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A BATHURST ISLANDER BRANDISHES HIS CLUB.

The war-club is merely a short, bent stick with a knob at one end; but, running in the air like a boomerang, it can be thrown for amazing distances by the islanders, considerably over a hundred yards, and not far off two hundred. This weapon is not thrown straight at an opponent, but at a stone, or a tuft of

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

411 grass, in the foreground, so that the whirling club slithers on in an unforeseen and most unpleasant manner. It may rise as high as a man's head, or it may strike him on the shins.

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NATIVE "HOUSES" UNDER THE COCO-NUT PALMS AT BATHURST ISLAND MISSION.

726 Sometimes, as in the days of chivalry when English and French knights rode out before the main battle, eight men will advance to fight eight men of the other side, one pair at a time, each warrior throwing his spears and clubs in turn. [198] Sentries are then posted to one side, before and behind the combatants. As a warrior with a stock of pidgin English put it, "That feller, him look out front side. That feller, him look out back side."

At times warriors arrive by canoe to fight a duel on the beach close to the mission station. These are frequently more serious combats, and then men who are camped under the palms chase the duellists off; but these always land later farther down, and fight it out in the long run. Just before my visit, there had been fought the only naval battle in the history of the islands. The encounter took place in the mouth of Apsley Strait to the accompaniment of excited yells as canoes overturned when warriors stepped unwarily in dodging the flying spears. Nobody

[p. 17(B)]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

531 decorate a burial pole; and others, Pl. 2D, Pl. 10C, and Pl. 11A, similar to those he would paint on the ceremonial baskets.

I did not see or hear of figures being made in bark (Mountford, 1956, p. 443, fig. 65C, D); moulded in wax (Elkin and the Berndts, 1950, Pl. 21, Mountford, 1956, Pl. 143) or in the sands of the sea-shore (Mountford, 1956, p. 404, Pl. 91C, D), as is done in north-eastern Arnhem Land. Nevertheless, *[532] the men did carve large burial poles in the form of human beings and smaller full-length figures, associated with the *pukamuni* ceremonies. These figures bore some small resemblance to those recorded from north-eastern Arnhem Land (Berndt, 1948, Figs. A, B, Pls. 1, 2; Mountford, 1956, Pls. 130–40).

3. TECHNIQUES

386 (*a*) COLOURS. The pigments used for the decoration of the burial poles and the production of the bark paintings, were red, yellow and white ochres. As there was no suitable black pigment on the islands, the artists used crushed charcoal in its place.

[317] The source of the best ochres is a pit at Imilu on Cape Van Diemen (Fig. 1). This ochre, called *imilu*, is a bright yellow when collected,[7] but, when heated in the fire, it changes to a clear red. A soft white stone is common along the beaches. The ochres are not ground on a stone, as on the mainland (Mountford, 1956, p. 11), but, being friable, are crushed and mixed in a large cockle shell with water and fixative.

The aborigines often spoke of a superior ochre at Numanira, northern Melville Island (Fig. 1), which could be gathered only at low tide. I did not see any of this ochre in use.

(*b*) FIXATIVES. Three different types of fixative are used to ensure that the painted designs, both on the poles and the baskets, were as permanent as [314] possible. They were: the sticky gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids (*Dendrobium* sp.); the wax and honey of the wild bee, well mixed together; [237] and the yolks of the eggs of the sea-going turtle. The fixative was either mixed with the pigments or rubbed on the painting surface.

●412 (*c*) BRUSHES. Simple brushes, made of strips of bark of varying widths, square across the bottom, chewed at one end, and held as in Fig. 2A and 2C, were used for the bulk of the work.[8] For making the dots, however, the artists used a

[423] [7] There did not appear to be any restriction on the gathering of this ochre; any aboriginal could go to Imilu and take as much as he wished.

[171] [8] The long flexible brush of the aborigines of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 12, fig. 3), was not used at Melville Island, although the bark brush (Fig. 2B) was often held in a similar manner.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

412 short, cylindrical stick, about three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter. This was dipped in the colour and transferred to the painting surface with the brush held as in Fig. 2B.

FIG. 2. *Methods of Holding Brushes*

4. THE ARTISTS

531 As with other aboriginal groups with whom I have worked in Central and
[463] Northern Australia, there is no special artist class; all aboriginal men and
[302] women of the Tiwi, would, on occasions, be required to paint designs on the bodies of one or another of their relatives, or on objects, particularly those associated with the *pukamuni* ceremony.

Some men, however, were looked upon as being more skilled than others in some particular field, i.e., cutting and decorating the burial poles, or the ceremonial spears, painting the large bark baskets, or the bodies of men and women who take part in the *pukamuni* or *kulama* ceremonies.

On Pl. 1 are four men who were regarded as good craftsmen and artists.

Pulanimbuwi (Pl. 1A), hard-working and meticulous in all he did, produced the unusual *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 35); two other poles as human figures (Pl. 37A, B; 37E, F), and a number of bark paintings; Pl. 13B, D, and Pl. 14C, D, being typical.

Inbidjarmeri (Pl. 1B), being fully employed by the Superintendent of the nearby settlement, was unable to make bark paintings for me. He was most expert in carving and painting the beautiful, multi-barked ceremonial spears. Pl. 32B is his work. He was also in great demand for decorating the performers for the *pukamuni* and *kulama* ceremonies. Pl. 28K and Pl. 28R are examples of his craftsmanship in this field.

115 *Tjamalampua* (Pl. 1C) and *Malumerinita* (Pl. 1D) are two men to whom I

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama*
778 rituals.

Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known
[411] respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear,
[531] *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines
[114] told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville
[322] Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making
[412] of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *miluanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *muruguna*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines
[302] of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin
[413] paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[86]

Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati*
[515] *kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed
[413] to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkita*, are used by the Tiwi
765 for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkitas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in
[301] white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, his chest ornaments,
[302]

[86] The lines of dots on *Wurarkuti* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

elaborately shaped nor decorated, often being covered with no more than a series of dots.[1] 211 765

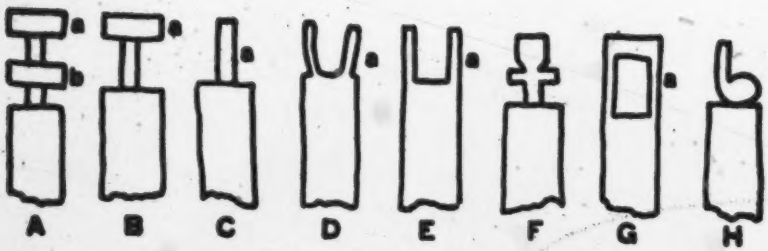

FIG. 8. *The Burial Poles*

Origin of the Pukamuni Poles

At present we have no evidence to show whether the custom of erecting burial poles around the grave in such numbers, not as a memorial, but as a gift to the dead, is confined entirely to the Tiwi tribe, or whether it is used in any other part of the world, and has reached the Tiwi by diffusion. There certainly are no similar burial poles on the Australian continent. 171 765 211 [769]

In north-eastern Arnhem Land, some of the decorated log coffins are as high as seven feet.[2] But the function of those coffins bears no relationship to that of the burial poles of Melville Island, the former being no more than coffins to hold the bones, and the latter, gifts to please the spirit of the dead.

It is possible that, during the long period of isolation from the mainland cultures, the Melville Islanders may have changed coffins of north-eastern Arnhem Land into the burial poles of the Tiwi.

The only examples of burial posts outside of Australia known to me, that are in any way comparable in function to those on Melville Island, are the *malanggan* burial ornaments of New Ireland described by Kramer.[3]

Methods of Manufacture

Although, at the conclusion of the *pukamuni* rituals, the grave is totally neglected and the poles allowed to decay, the "workers", using steel axes[4] 765

[1] Although *Tjamalampua* is not fully correct (see Bremer's and Campbell's statement in the early nineteenth century, pp. 107, 108), it indicates that both the poles and their painted decorations have, with the passing of the years, and the acquisition of steel tools, become more complex.

[2] Mountford, 1956, p. 317. [3] Kramer, 1925.

[4] The evidence of Bremer, Spencer and the aborigines, suggests that before the advent of metal the only cutting tools owned by the aborigines would have been crude stone axes, and the shells of cockles. It is likely that, under these conditions, the poles would 412 174 322

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 and the hardest and most durable timber available, spared no pains to make the best poles they could.[5]

×532 765 When the "workers" had finished shaping the poles they notified the leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, who then gave the order for the poles to be scorched over a fire of blazing leaves to make a black ground on which to paint the design (Mountford, 1956, p. 427). Then, setting up the poles in a double row near the grave (Mountford, 1956, p. 426), the men began their task of decoration (Pl. 33B, D). At the same time, the ceremonial leader sent message sticks (p. 98) to notify the outlying groups that the final rituals were about to start.

386 The materials used for decoration were: red and yellow ochres from Imilu, Cape Van Diemen, a white ochre from a beach nearby, crushed charcoal for black, one of three types of fixatives, i.e., the white of turtle eggs, wild honey and beeswax mixed together, and the particularly gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids.

The ochres were crushed, mixed with water and one or more of the fixatives, and applied to the poles with brushes made from chewed strips of bark or vines (Fig. 2).

517 ×532 As I watched these primitive artists at work, I was impressed with the care they took in the arranging of their simple patterns, and with the obvious pleasure they experienced in their work. A quiet air of contentment pervaded the outdoor studio as each of the ten artists made his own pole as beautiful as possible.

Each artist appeared to be certain as to the designs he would use; there was no evidence of copying; in fact, *Pulanimbuwi* showed me the rough draft of the designs of his pole (Pl. 35A, B, Fig. 9), scratched on the back of a cigarette tin, days before he had even felled the tree.

×532 765 A puzzling aspect of the *pukamuni* poles is the wide variety of the painted designs used, and the almost total absence in those designs of any reference to the myths and totemic localities.[6]

At first sight it would appear that the pole shapes, collected by both Fry and myself, were inventions of the moment. An analysis of the poles

174 412 322 have simpler shapes than at the present time, although Campbell (1834, p. 158) speaks about "poles with tops like lances and halberts". The aborigines may have used fire to assist in the shaping of the poles, in fact, this is suggested by Klaatsch (1907, p. 587).

[5] Not far from our camp was the deserted grave of the father of *Muranajua* (Pl. 38B), who died when his son was an infant. *Muranajua* was then over forty years old, yet the poles, although somewhat eroded and disarranged by the elements, are still in a fair state of preservation.

[177] [6] This and old *Tjamalampua's* statement, p. 109, could indicate that the poles and their designs are a recent cultural trait that is not yet fully absorbed into the culture.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(8) *Cutting up the Yams*

881 After the yams had been in the oven for about one and a half hours, the
252 men gathered around the oven, felt it, and, after a short discussion began to scrape the warm sand away from the paper-bark covering. As they did so, they pressed handfuls of the warm sand against their elbows, chest, shoulders and knees, believing that this sand made their joints strong and supple (Pl. 45c).

When the paper-bark, carefully removed strip by strip, exposed the
881 cooked yams, the women, who had been quietly standing on the outside of the *milimika* murmured reverently, "Ah, *kulama*, ah, *kulama*." Taking the hot yams from the oven each man held them against his chest, and his
[827] head. This they said would give them added strength and vitality. The women although they did not participate in this ritual, sent their children into the *milimika* to have the yams pressed against their bodies so that they would grow to healthy and strong adults.

As the men peeled the yams, exposing the soft, yellow flesh, they sang
[177] about preparing and eating various kinds of food belonging to the white
[533] man,[86] "cutting bread for a meal, carving steak from a bullock and roasting it on the coals, cooking the tongue of a bullock, eating corn beef", and so on. When all the yams were peeled they were left on a sheet of bark whilst
[412] everyone had a meal and a sleep. In the late afternoon the *kulama* men started
[177] to slice the yams (cockle shells, *irakapi*, were used before the advent of steel). As they did so, the men mashed up some of the sliced *kulama* between the palms of the hands, mixed this with red ochre, and each rubbed it on his hair, face, whiskers and body. This, they believed, aided by the earlier rituals, would ensure them good health until the next *kulama*.

(9) *Initiation of the Kilipaniatis and Mikinatrinas*

The sliced yams were put in the basket, and stood in the centre of the *milimika*. A *kulama* man walked into the forest, and collected a length of flexible vine. Returning to the *milimika* he bent the vine round the necks of the male *Marukumunis* and the female *Marukumuningas* in such a way that it could not be removed. These initiates were then *Kilipaniatis* and *Kilipan-*
[301] *iatingas* respectively. This neck ornament, which had a number of cords hanging from it, is called a *mariguani* (Pl. 42D). After these initiates had been further decorated with bark armlets, *tjunguis*[90] (Pl. 42D and G), and cane

[86] No doubt, in times past, they sang about abundant supplies of their own favourite foods.

[90] Spencer, 1928, illustrates the bark armlets, *tjunguis*, on Pl. XI and the belt, *aburini*, on Pl. IX, No. 1.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden
412 barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe
[177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of
[415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the
[285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[48]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[114] [48] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This
[173] information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some of the designs being very pleasing to the eye. Some spears, moreover, have human 411
hair strings wound round the shaft, immediately below the head, for a distance of [531]
10 centimetres or more, and this is kept in place with beeswax.

Canoes.

Elsewhere I have referred to the marked absence among the northern 501
Australian tribes of anything but the most primitive crafts and such innovated forms as have resulted from the contact with the white and yellow races. They are, therefore, not to be considered as truly indigenous canoes. On Bathurst Island, however, conditions are different; due, perhaps, in the first place, to its insularity (as well as the numerous estuaries and rivers that cross [133]
the land), and, secondly, to the proximity of Melville Island, which is separated from it by only a narrow stretch of calm water known as Apsley Strait. The latter is barely a mile in width at its narrowest points. Numerous canoes are in use within this Strait, and occasionally, when wind and water are favourable, they venture a short distance out to sea. One type is principally in use, namely, a large bark-canoe measuring about 560 centimetres in length (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). It is made of a single sheet of bark, usually from suitable, straight, clear 396
trunks of the woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*) or the stringy-bark (*E. tetradonta*) 501
(*vide* Plate XII, Fig. 1). It is cut from the tree by chopping transversely at the respective distances from the ground, then slitting it once vertically for the whole length and removing it by forcing the edge of the instrument under the bark and finally levering it off with pointed saplings. The outer side of this oblong piece of bark, which is rough, will become the inside surface of the canoe. At a distance of from 65 to 70 centimetres from either end, transverse cuts are made on the inside to a depth of half the thickness of the bark, and such thickness is removed from the whole of the surface lying away from the centre at either incision. Each end is thus reduced by half its original strength and material thereby becoming more pliable. The cutting is done with the sharp edge of a [237 412]
bivalve shell, usually a *Cyrena*. The subtilized ends of the sheet may, or may not, be held over a glowing fire to render them more pliant still. The sheet is folded lengthwise along its middle, and one or both ends kept together by vertical stakes, stuck in the ground and tied together at the top. The bottom corner of the fold is cut away in a very gentle upward slope. The two pieces of the fold are next held firmly together and cut in a more decisive upward direction from a point some 30 to 50 centimetres from the bottom edge end. The two freshly cut edges are neatly sewn with close, overcast stitches, and the same is done along the top horizontal edge for a distance of some 15 or 20 centimetres from the end. From the intervening space between the sewn parts at the top and bottom, an angular or curved segment is cut out in imitation of a fish-tail and its edges laced together in a like manner (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). The thread used for these "run-on" stitches is in the form of strips from the split sheets of the

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

396 50) climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*).[1] Holes are previously pierced through the [237 +12] bark with an awl, made out of the leg-bone of a wallaby.

The stitches are made more secure and watertight by plastering them with [237 314] wax from the comb of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*) or with one of the several resins so extensively used by all natives. The inside corners are caulked with plastic clay and fibre, or resin. Two stays or struts of fairly stout timber, cut to the required length and inserted at the points where the bark was reduced to half its thickness, keep the sides of the canoe apart. From these points, therefore, the sides of the canoe converge to the bow at one end and to the stern at the other; while in between they are more or less parallel. The canoe, if there be any difference at all, is wider aft (74 cm.) than it is nearer the bow (55 cm.); the "fish-tail" incision, too, is acute and deep at the bow and more rounded and shallow at the stern (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). Along the top, inner, edge of either side of the canoe, a straight strengthening pole is lashed with distant, unequally-spaced and grouped "run on" stitches of cane-strips. These structures lend considerable rigidity to the gunwale of the canoe; they do not extend throughout the whole length, but, being straight, are more or less parallel one to another, and do not enclose the stern or bow. Major Campbell,[2] in referring to the bark canoes seen by him while at Fort Dundas, states that "the gunwales are strengthened by two small saplings (such as grow in marshy places) fastened together at each end of the canoe." This method is more like that in use on the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria to-day and was not observed on the islands by me. Long shoots of vines and strips of cane are wound crosswise from side to side of the canoe, and at the same time take in the strengthening-poles along the gunwale. Additional circumferential winding binds the separate cords into one thick rope. Four of such ties are spanned at equal distances, from one side to the other, along the straight edges of the canoe. They not only preserve its shape, but afford a ready means by which the craft may be carried.

501 [531] The canoe is not decorated in any way, but smears of various colours are noticed both at the bow and the stern, resulting from the handling by fingers previously occupied in decorative work with ochre. When not in use the canoes are "housed" on a level piece of ground, under the overhanging branches of a shady banyan or guttapercha tree. They are laid in normal upright position (not inverted), and are kept so by short supports of timber stemmed against the sides. The bark thus dries in the required shape and does not become lop-sided.

Each canoe has its recognized place. Where a dense growth of mangroves [487] skirts the foreshore, a regular approach to the water is kept clear by cutting away the trees. The paddles are laid within the canoes.

Quite a large number of natives may be carried in a canoe, if the occasion

[1] Compare narrative of Mr. Carron in MacGillivray's *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* 1852, vol. ii, pp. 125 and 126; also P. P. King: *Narrative Survey Intertropical Western Coasts of Australia*, London, 1827, vol. i, p. 90.

[2] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 156.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

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level, further material has been cut away to reduce its thickness by about 1 centimetre all round. The top portion, which has the appearance of a knob, has been daubed with red ochre; the sunken portion, immediately beneath, is white (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 2). The lower surface of the post bears five vertical bands, three being of white pipe-clay and two of yellow ochre. Two of the former have a border of red, the third one of yellow; and both of the latter (yellow) are bordered with white. Three of the intervening spaces are shaded with inclined lines of white, the remaining two are each filled with a vertical row of white cricoid figures. The original surface upon which the pattern was drawn is charred. 532 764

Having persuaded the natives to repaint the designs on the tomb-posts, in places where they were defective or missing, they set about the work with enthusiasm and did not rest until they had repainted the whole of the surfaces. To accomplish this they leaned the posts against trees and divided themselves into small groups of two to four, each of which undertook part of the work (*vide* Plate XVI, Figs. 1 and 2). Youths were sent to the main camp, whence they soon after returned with lumps of red and yellow ochre and white pipe-clay (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 2). From these they broke off small pieces and crushed them by hand in the strong concave shells of the bivalve mollusc *Cyrena essingtonensis*.[1] To this crumbled pigment sufficient water was added to make a thick paint, more water being added from time to time as required. One might look upon these shells containing the mixed paint as representing primitive palettes (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 1). The paint is applied to the surface by means of crudely made, yet effective, brushes. Short pieces of the creeping calamus are cut with the sharp edge of a shell and one or both of their ends chewed until all the fibres have become separated (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 3); much in the same way as the flower-stalks of the fan-palm are chewed when feeding on honey (*vide* p. 300). Both of these small artists' requisites are highly interesting inasmuch as they show us a decidedly primitive, yet to the present day practically unaltered stage in the evolution of art. [126] 386 [413] 532 [413]

It is evident that the posts have been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk. Captain Flinders[2] as far back as 1803 noticed that the natives on the north coast (Caledon Bay) were familiar with the use of iron instruments and that they tried to steal his axes. He, therefore, suspected that "they had been previously visited by people possessing iron instruments." Later, he was himself able to confirm this supposition when he discovered, near to Cape Wilberforce, a fleet of proas from Macassar, the crew of which were in the habit of visiting the north coast of Australia to collect trepang, which they took to Timor and sold to the Chinese.[2] 412 [322] 177 171

[1] We have before us an interesting analogy, when we recollect that in our own country the shells of fresh-water mussels were, in former days, much used and are still used as a receptacle for mixing water-colours; whence also the name *Unio pictorum*.

[2] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, pp. 213 and 228–231.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 177 412 When Captain King[1] dropped anchor in Apsley Strait in 1818, and came into contact with natives near Luxmore Head on Melville Island, he noticed that "they repeatedly asked for axes by imitating the action of chopping."

171 764 532 Ethnologically these tomb-posts are of the greatest importance. With the exception of the records left by Jukes and MacGillivray, we know of nothing of the kind existing nowadays on the mainland. That, however, the inhabitants of some of the Torres Strait islands adopt methods of preserving the memory of their dead by means of painted and decorated structures of a different type is an established fact. The Continental Australian certainly, also, has methods of his own to mark a place of burial, but in a decidedly more transitory and less laborious way. The latter leaves already existing belongings of the deceased upon the grave; the islander, in addition, surrounds the spot with specially prepared posts such as have been described herein. Apart from the carvings, the painted designs, alone, are quite superior to anything existing on the mainland. The marked symmetry of the individual patterns and their diversity, when compared with one another, can hardly find a parallel on the mainland. We might look upon these island productions as representing interesting and independent transition stages between the primitive art of the Continental Australian, on the one hand, and the more perfected types of equatorial island tribes to the north of Australia, on the other.

APPENDIX.

NATIVE OCHRE DRAWINGS ON BARK FROM MELVILLE ISLAND, NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA.

531 While visiting Bathurst Island in 1911, I also entered several of the inlets of Melville Island from Apsley Strait. At one point, not far from the southern entrance to the Strait, where some aborigines were living in huts near to Cooper's Buffalo-Shooters Camp, I found the drawings here described. They were upon sheets of bark of the Woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*), used for building their shelters and huts. All drawings are in pipe-clay and red ochre; these materials having been smeared or squirted on to the bark in the form of a thin paste or in aqueous suspension. Typical among the drawings of the aboriginals on the mainland are the negative imprints of hands produced by holding the palm of the hand flat against the surface and squirting a mouthful of pipe-clay or ochre, suspended in water, against the back of the hand and around it. The surrounding surface is thus coloured so that, when the hand is removed, its outline stands out conspicuously by the absence of colour.[2]

[1] *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, pp. 111 and 121.

[2] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, 1907, vol. xxxi, p. 56, Plate XII. Among other references note E. Giles, *Australia Twice Traversed*, 1889, vol. i, p. 78. "The drawing is done

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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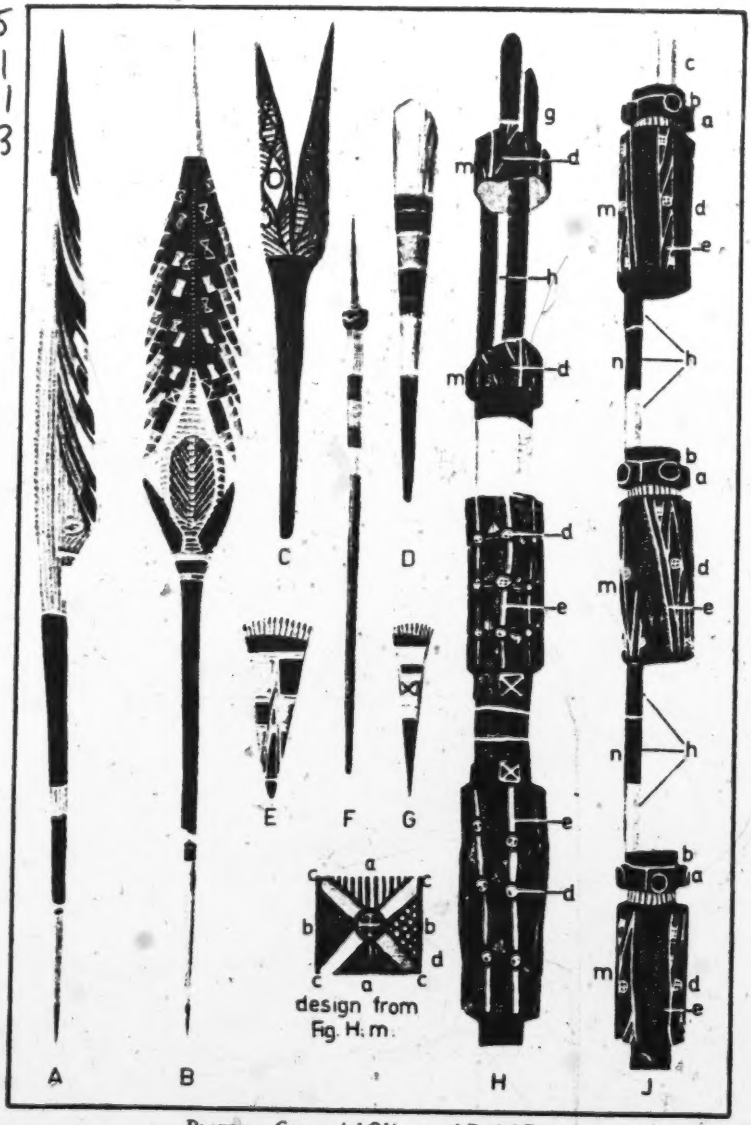


PLATE 32. *Ceremonial Objects and Burial Poles*
A, Male Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaringa; B, Female Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaguni; C, Forked Throwing Stick, Miluanta; D, Plain Throwing Stick, Murnguna; E, G, Tool, Porta, for Body Painting; F, Scratching Stick, Murubunga; H, J, Pukamuni Burial Poles.

[p. 88 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 778 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals.

[411] [531] Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear, *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

[114] [322] [412] At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *miluanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *murugunu*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

[302] [413] Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[96]

[515] [413] Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 765 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkita*, are used by the Tiwi for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkitas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

[301] [302] As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, his chest ornaments,

[96] The lines of dots on *Wurarbuti* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tobacco, *b*, matches, *c*, a pipe, *d*, a calico loin cloth, *e*, a pair of short trousers, *f*, a shirt, *g*, sugar, *h*, tea, and *j*, flour. 202 211 439

Secular

Fig. 60 is a carved stick whose designs were thought out by the artist as he walked along the sandy beach near our camp. Although not a message stick, the illustration is included in the section as an example of how an aboriginal expresses his mental images through the medium of simple wood carving. 532x

The horizontal lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the waves breaking on the beach, and the groups of short lines, a pattern of shallow gutters which had been formed on the sandy shore by the fresh water seeping from a nearby lagoon.

10. THE BURIAL POLES

The painted and decorated poles of Melville and Bathurst Islands attracted the attention of all the early visitors. Sir Gordon Bremer in 1824, possibly the first European to see the *pukamuni* poles, when writing about a grave he saw on Melville Island, states: "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilised people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed around with trees, 7 feet to 8 feet high, some of which were carved with stone or shell and further ornamented by rings of wood. On the tops of these were placed the waddies (throwing sticks) of the deceased. The grave was raised above the level of the earth, but the raised part was not more than 3 feet long. At the head was placed a piece of a canoe (probably a bark basket) and a spear and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and earth were cleared away from the sides and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."[24] 765 211 [322] [413]

I have quoted Sir Gordon Bremer's description in full because it shows that, even after a hundred and thirty years, the aborigines of Melville Island, 211 178 765

[24] Bremer, 1843. From this description it would appear that Bremer chanced to see a grave not long after the aborigines had completed the final rituals. Had any time elapsed the whole area would have been covered with grass and leaves, for, after the *pukamuni* ceremonies, nobody is interested in either the grave or the poles.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Notes on the

level, further material has been cut away to reduce its thickness by about 1 centimetre all round. The top portion, which has the appearance of a knob, has been daubed with red ochre; the sunken portion, immediately beneath, is white (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 2). The lower surface of the post bears five vertical bands, three being of white pipe-clay and two of yellow ochre. Two of the former have a border of red, the third one of yellow; and both of the latter (yellow) are bordered with white. Three of the intervening spaces are shaded with inclined lines of white, the remaining two are each filled with a vertical row of white cricoid figures. The original surface upon which the pattern was drawn is charred. 532 764

Having persuaded the natives to repaint the designs on the tomb-posts, in places where they were defective or missing, they set about the work with enthusiasm and did not rest until they had repainted the whole of the surfaces. To accomplish this they leaned the posts against trees and divided themselves into small groups of two to four, each of which undertook part of the work (*vide* Plate XVI, Figs. 1 and 2). Youths were sent to the main camp, whence they soon after returned with lumps of red and yellow ochre and white pipe-clay (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 2). From these they broke off small pieces and crushed them by hand in the strong concave shells of the bivalve mollusc *Cyrena essingtonensis*.[1] To this crumbled pigment sufficient water was added to make a thick paint, more water being added from time to time as required. One might look upon these shells containing the mixed paint as representing primitive palettes (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 1). The paint is applied to the surface by means of crudely made, yet effective, brushes. Short pieces of the creeping calamus are cut with the sharp edge of a shell and one or both of their ends chewed until all the fibres have become separated (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 3); much in the same way as the flower-stalks of the fan-palm are chewed when feeding on honey (*vide* p. 300). Both of these small artists' requisites are highly interesting inasmuch as they show us a decidedly primitive, yet to the present day practically unaltered stage in the evolution of art. [126] 386 [413] 532 [413]

It is evident that the posts have been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk. Captain Flinders[2] as far back as 1803 noticed that the natives on the north coast (Caledon Bay) were familiar with the use of iron instruments and that they tried to steal his axes. He, therefore, suspected that "they had been previously visited by people possessing iron instruments." Later, he was himself able to confirm this supposition when he discovered, near to Cape Wilberforce, a fleet of proas from Macassar, the crew of which were in the habit of visiting the north coast of Australia to collect trepang, which they took to Timor and sold to the Chinese.[2] 412 [302] 177 171

[1] We have before us an interesting analogy, when we recollect that in our own country the shells of fresh-water mussels were, in former days, much used and are still used as a receptacle for mixing water-colours; whence also the name *Unio pictorum*.

[2] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, pp. 213 and 228–231.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Balers made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

314 396 137 Fig. 1. Forest scene on Bathurst Island. From the stringy-barked eucalyptus on the left side of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe. Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
501 Fig. 2. Various types of paddles in use on Bathurst Island. About $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.

PLATE XIII.

764 Figs. 1 and 2. Distant and near view of a native grave, surrounded by five carved and painted posts, Bathurst Island. Note the cleared space and the position of grave, viz.: at the junction between open woodland and thicket. A tall Bathurst Islander in seen in Fig. 2.

PLATE XIV.

415 Fig. 1. A melon-shell (*Melo diadema*) used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Fig. 2. A *Fusus pricei* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 764 Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e. Painted and carved posts of native grave shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XV.

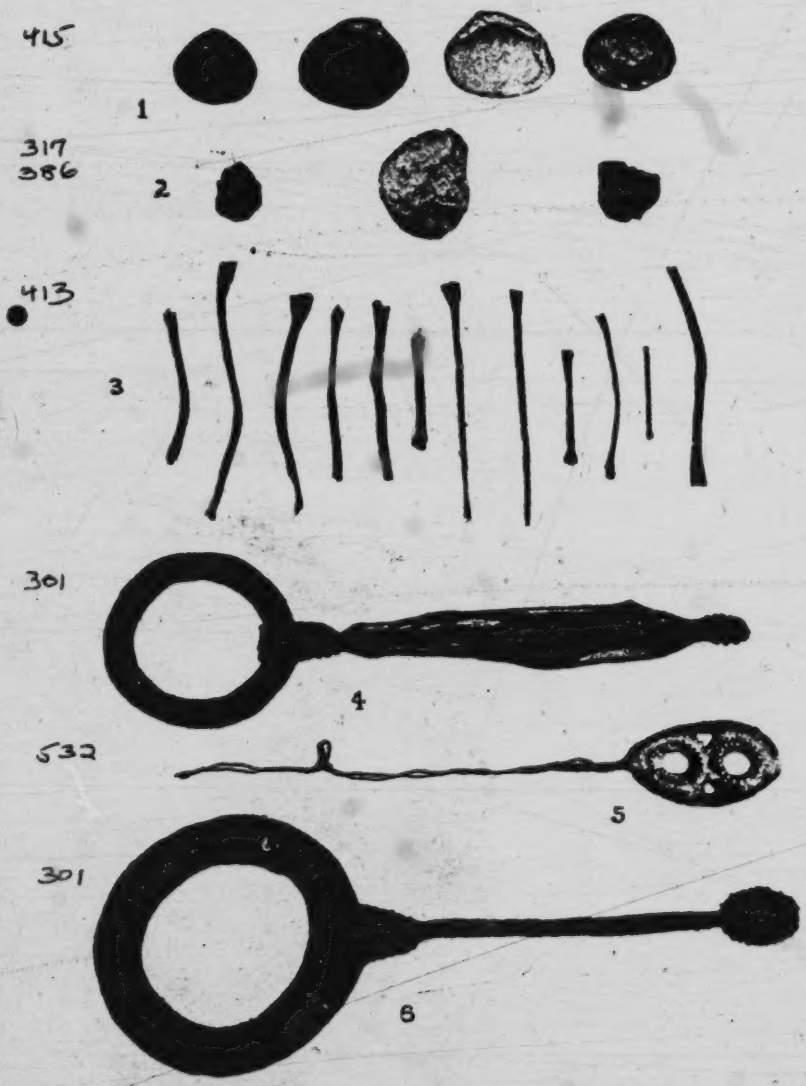
415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cypræa assingtonensis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
317 386 Fig. 2. Lumps of yellow ochre (on the left), white pipe-clay (in the centre), and red ochre (on the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
● 413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus australis*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
301 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (?). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 532 764 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XV.



NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 9]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE P. 322 – ANALYSIS]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly
412 limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe
[177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of
[415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the
[285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[46]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[114] [46] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This
[173] information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

by a similar mass, whence two strings only continue for 40 odd centimetres. 532
The whole length of the band, therefore, amounts to approximately 50 centimetres. Its object is, no doubt, to fasten the mask in position over the face during corroboree ceremonies.

Domestic Utensils.

Food carriers.—The most common form of "mika" or carrier for food and 322
other articles is one made of a single piece of bark of the "stringy bark" eucalypt 415
(*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 3, 4, 5, and 6). An oblong piece of such bark, say 1 metre long by 40 centimetres broad, is freshly cut and folded transversely at its centre. The edges on either side are pared down, then laid flat, one over the other, and sewn or laced together with plain "run-on" stitches, 2 centimetres apart. A row of slanting and overlapping stitches often skirts the open edge at a short distance down; occasionally, too, part of the edge is cross-hemstitched and plastered with beeswax. The object of this procedure is to prevent the bark from tearing by virtue of its fibrous structure. The open mouth of the carrier is nearly circular or oval; in the latter case the long axis of the oval runs at right angles to the base-edge of the implement. These carriers are of various sizes; the largest that came under observation measured 63 centimetres in height and 43 in width at the base. Ordinarily they are unpainted, but on special occasions elaborate designs, consisting 415
of circles, oblong and other figures, with cross-hatched shading, are drawn on the 531
outer surface in red, yellow, white, and black. The designs are best studied by reference to the reproductions (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 5 and 6). Occasionally tassel-shaped appendages are noticed at one of the convex outer surfaces of the mouth of the carrier. These consist of a flattish, egg-shaped mass of beeswax (studded on the surface with the red beans of *Abrus praecatorius*), which is suspended by two twisted fur strings (*vide* Plate VIII, Fig. 6).

Water carriers.—Water is taken to camp from a soakage or spring in simple [312]
structures made out of the bark of the paper-bark tree (*Melaleuca sp.*). An oblong 322
piece of this bark is bent upon itself longitudinally, both its ends folded several 415
times and kept together by binding with cane or by spiking with short pointed wooden pegs (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 1 and 2).

Drinking vessels.—Several natural objects are used for drinking vessels. 415
Among the most common are the discarded tests of mollusca. The species *Melo-* [237]
diadema and *Fusus pricei* were found in use at several native wells (*vide* Plate XIV, Figs. 1 and 2).

But when no such shells are available a piece of bark is torn or cut from a 322
tree (usually from a *Melaleuca*) and folded so as to form a water-tight cup (*vide* 415
Plate XIV, Figs. 3 and 4). This piece of bark, which measures about 30 centimetres by 20, is folded longitudinally at about its middle (*vide* Fig. 3, D). Both ends are then bent upon themselves at right angles to this plane and at about one quarter the whole length from either end. The overturned ends and the inner

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

322 piece of the former fold are clasped between the fingers and thus used as a cup
415 the part lying opposite to the fingers being held to the lips.

Honey Eating.

222 In my notes on the north-western tribes of the Northern Territory I have
262 described[1] a honey-collecting implement and there, also, referred to somewhat
264 similar observations made by Dr. Wilson[2] and Keppel.[3]

On Bathurst Island I observed still another modification. A young flower-stalk of the fan-palm (*Livistonia humilis*), when about 50 to 70 centimetres long, is cut just above the trunk of the palm and its bottom end chewed until all the fibres are separated and look like the hairs of a brush. The juice, being quite sweet, is swallowed. The brush end is then inserted into the nest of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*), whereby the honey gathers between the fibres. When saturated with honey, the brush end is passed back to the mouth and again sucked and chewed for a considerable time, after which it is once more returned to the honey for a fresh supply, and this is continued to repletion.

Tree Climbing.

481 [222] Both male and female, young and old, are expert tree-climbers when in pursuit of game, honey of the wild bee, fruits, and seeds. As none of the trees on the islands grow to an abnormally large size, the butt is usually not too great in circumference to allow of the arms being thrown around it, so that the hands may obtain a firm hold on the side distant from the climber. Having obtained this hold while standing on the ground and facing the tree, the native jumps on to the butt, clutching it with the flat surfaces of his feet in a frog-like fashion. The knees in this position stand well outwards. The body hangs, suspended by the arms above and held against the tree by the legs below. The climber now raises his body; his hands quickly follow by a corresponding distance. Holding on with the latter he draws up his legs in a jumping manner once more to clutch the tree between the soles of his feet. This movement being repeated, he rapidly advances upwards.

Hunting and Fighting.

411 *Throwing-sticks and clubs.*—Several types of throwing-sticks and clubs are in use. They must be referred to under this general or collective heading, since it is hard to discriminate between the two implements and to say definitely where the throwing-stick ends and the club begins. They form an interesting group of Australian implements and weapons that allows of a satisfactory system of

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 26, Fig. 19.
[2] *Narrative Voyage Round the World*, 1835, p. 99.
[3] *A Visit to Indian Archipelago*, 1853, vol. 2, p. 168.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

demands it; but usually, when on a simple turtle or dugong hunting expedition, 501
two persons only occupy places in the craft, one near the bow and another near
the stern (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). The boatmen, while propelling the [516]
craft, squat with their buttocks resting upon the heels and with their knees pressed
against the sides. The weight of their body being thus well within the boat, its
stability is thereby considerably increased.

Paddles.—Propulsion is effected by means of paddles which are made of hard 501
wood. They have a single well-shaped blade and a rounded handle (*vide* Plate
XII, Fig. 2). The edges of the blade are parallel or taper slightly towards the end,
which is square or rounded. Apart from the marks left by the tomahawk used in [531]
its making, the implement is without ornamentation. In one case only, a circular
collar was carved around the handle, immediately above the sloping shoulder of the
blade. The longest paddle noted measured 167 centimetres in length, its blade
80; the shortest was 115 centimetres in length and its blade 45. The width
of the blades ranges from 7 to 9 centimetres. Both hands clasp the paddle,
which is dipped alternately on one side or the other as the occasion and the steering
require it.

Balers.—Water that accumulates in the canoe, either by leakage or overwash [415 824]
in a rough sea, is removed by means of a baler which is made out of the melon
shell[1] (*Melo diadema*). The columella of the shell is carefully cut away, leaving
only the large body-whorl, which is used as a scoop (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 3 and 4).
The outer surface of the shell is painted with red and yellow ochre in large cross [531]
pattern, with a fine cross shading.

Dug-outs.—The dug-out canoes to which I have elsewhere referred[2] have, in [175]
all probability, been introduced by Malays from whom the natives obtain them by
barter. Dr. Walter Roth has also proved that the dug-outs met with along the coast of
Queensland are of Papuan origin. The form observed in Apsley Strait is without
outrigger and hollowed out of a single tree trunk. The bow and stern are raised
(*vide* Plate X, Fig. 2).

Corrobborees.

As with all primitive folk, song and dance constitute the ultimate stage of 535
any social intercourse or festivity. The islanders are even more ready than ~~their~~ 527
brothers on the mainland to resort to this means of entertainment. It thus
happened that, wherever we came into contact with the blacks and presented them
with divers small articles, a corrobboree was immediately inaugurated; even though
the encounter happened to occur in the middle of the day. Corrobborees on the

[1] *Cf. Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* vol. ii, p. 17: "the baler (a melon shell) is in constant requisition."

[2] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 53. Among others, note that Major Campbell says of the Port Essington natives that "such of the canoes as I saw were hollowed from the trunks of trees, like those of the Malays and were probably either left by these people or stolen from them," *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 170.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The first plate reproduced contains a group composed of five imprints of the left hand of a native (Plate XIX, Fig. 1). The fingers are wide apart; the wrists of the two lowest hands seem very narrow in proportion, but that is due to the fact that they did not lie in close contact with the surface when the pigment was squirted against it. 531

In the lower corner on the right of the reproduction stands a single-masted sailing craft, intended to represent a small European pearling or fishing-boat. The former class of boats have long been in the habit of passing through Apsley Strait on account of the shelter afforded and the chances of procuring fresh water close to the shores of either island. 532

Plate XIX, Fig. 2, is the lower continuation of the proceeding. The sailing craft just described is noticed on the right. Below it is the picture of a frog. Special features of this design are firstly the two circular lateral prominences on the head representing the large eyes and, secondly, the inaccuracy in regard to the number of toes. The smear on the left hind leg, resembling a caudal appendage, is accidental.

The fourth design (Plate XX) is that of a double-masted pearling-lugger[1] in full sail. The proportion and neatness of execution of these designs of sailing crafts are excellent indeed. The hulk and sails of the latter figure are drawn in white pipe-clay and its masts in red ochre.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate VII.

Figs. 1 and 3. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with fur strings and cockatoo feathers. ¼ natural size. 301 531

Figs. 2 and 4. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with pointed sticks. ¼ natural size.

Plate VIII.

Figs. 1 and 2. Water-carriers, made of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). ¼ natural size. 415

Figs. 3, 4, 5 and 6. Food-carriers, made of bark; Figs. 5 and 6 with ochre drawings. ¼ natural size. 531

Plate IX.

Figs. 1, 2, 3 and 4. Throwing-sticks and clubs. ¼ natural size. 411

Fig. 5. A collection of spears from Bathurst Island. $\frac{1}{12}$ natural size. 531

by filling the mouth with charcoal powder if the device is to be black, if red with red ochre powder, damping the wall where the mark is to be left, and placing the palm of the hand against it, with fingers stretched out; the charcoal or ochre powder is then blown against the back of the hand; when it is withdrawn, it leaves the space occupied by the hand and fingers clean while the surrounding portions of the wall are all black or red, as the case may be." (Central Australian Natives.)

[1] *Vide* figure in *Report Government Geologist and Staff*, 1905, Adelaide, By authority, p. 14.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE X.

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Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.
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PLATE XV.

415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cyrena assingtonensis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{3}$ natural size.
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413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*). $\frac{1}{3}$ natural size.
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PLATE XVI.

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5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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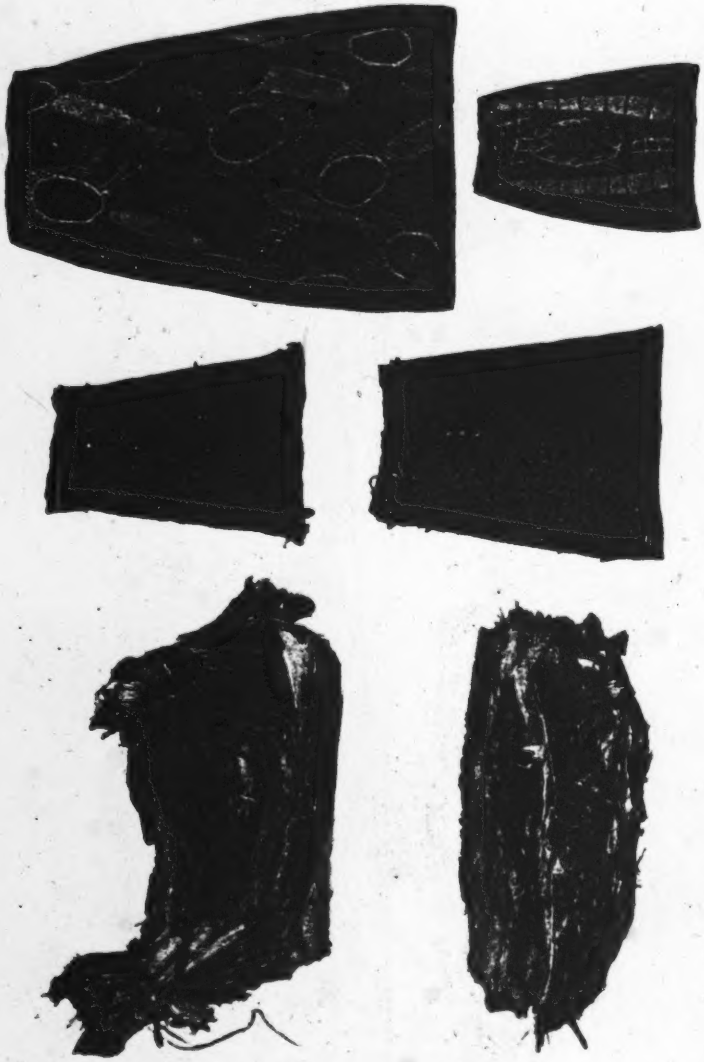

[END PLATE 2]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 321]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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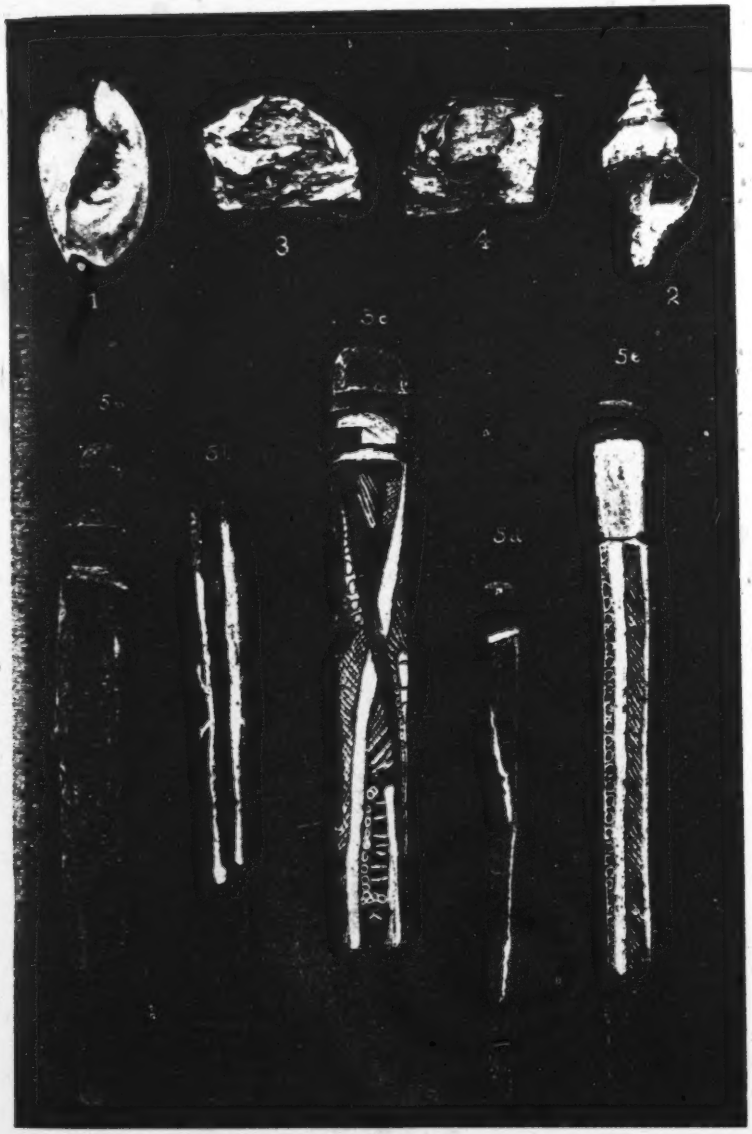

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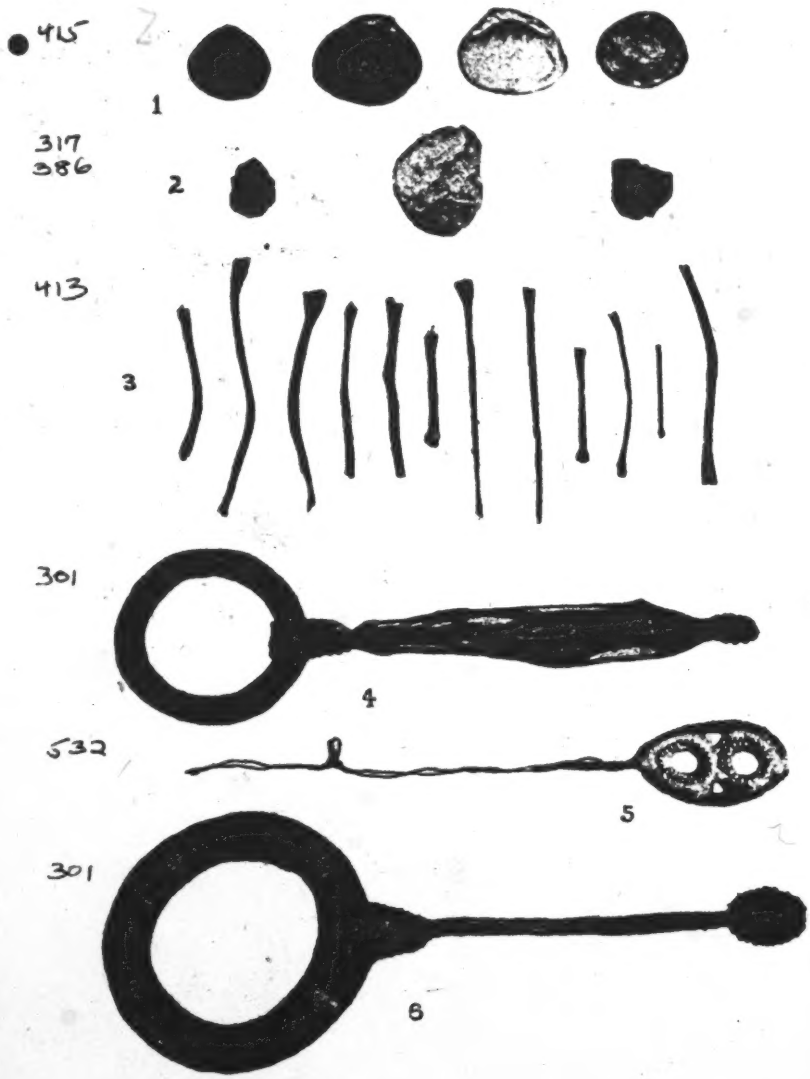
NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 8]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 322 - ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XV.



NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 9]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 322— ANALYST]

123 sional patch of grass, which the rushing fire had missed, there was not a living green plant below the four-foot line. Burning the country is an annual occurrence and many are the laws governing 221 who may burn and who may subsequently hunt in the newly cleared 224 land. Because the fires are set each year, there is no accumulation of dry tinder to feed the fire and allow it to rage uncontrollably. Only the grass and a few fallen logs catch and these will burn rapidly and fiercely, but for a very short period. Any gap in the vegetation will stop the fire and the heavy dew, falling in the evening, will also put out the flames, leaving perhaps only isolated, smouldering logs to burn through the night. Until the first shoots of new grass push [421] their way through the charred ground, the individual hunter who set the fire has exclusive rights to the area he set alight. Of course, no one except those who belong to that country may burn without [671] permission of the owners. As far as possible, these laws are still upheld.

123 We soon came to a branch in the path and Albert indicated that we two girls should continue straight ahead; he would stop behind. In front of us stretched the fresh-water swamp. Out of the almost inky but clear water rose the gnarled paperbark trees, their roots so intertwined they almost formed a floor, albeit a most slippery and irregular one, over the rotten vegetation in the bottom of the swamp. I picked a particularly large rooted tree for my bath [515] tub, and a short distance away Agnes did the same. If one was careful not to disturb the fine deposit on the bottom but managed to stay on top of the slippery roots, the clear cool water was as sweet and soft as one could wish for. We stayed for about an hour, washing ourselves and our clothes, but finally an impatient call from Albert put an end to this pleasure. Albert had been hunting for a possum, but in this area so close to the camp, they had already been depleted.

123 Instead of returning to camp, Albert decided that now was as 411 good a time as any to cut his *milingani*, the sticks with which they kill the geese. After another mile or so into the bush, we came to a 322 grove of stout bushes of a kind I had not seen before. They had [223] long, straight branches of about a half-inch diameter. These Albert

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

father's name towards him and thus implying their approval of his taking 428
that name. To select one example—there is at present in the Tiklowila 553
horde a man *Pwandjilora* whose father was also a *Pwandjilora* who died about fifteen years ago. His father in turn was also a *Pwandjilora*, who is only remembered by the very old people of the horde.

This succession of names also takes place though to a very much lesser degree in the female line, that is from mother to daughter.

It must not be thought, however, that there is any such thing as 424
private ownership of names by a family. A man but distantly related to 553
Pwandjilora II would be quite at liberty to bestow that name upon one of his children were it not already in use and had a sufficient time elapsed since his death. An example is a famous warrior of the last generation called *Walitoami*. This name has recently been bestowed by one of the Tiklowila upon his son though neither he, the child, nor the mother of the child is closely related to the first *Walitoami*. As a matter of fact the child is the mother's brother's son's daughter's son of *Walitoami I*.

One or two other aspects of this subject may be dismissed briefly 551
as they are more important in a study of kinship or ceremonial, than in a 422
study of names as such.

A man may not in any circumstances use the name of the wife of another man, even the names of his brother's wives, without giving the husband a *casus belli*. A woman is a man's own property and the use of her name is an infringement of his property rights. In the same way a man's own name is his own property and cannot be used with impunity, at least in the presence of the owner of the name. In calling out to a person for instance, he will always be addressed by a kinship term, never by a personal name. This also is the manner by which the news of a death is 551
carried to distant camps and the name of the dead man avoided, "your [196
mother's brother at *Wilraŋgu* of the *Tjilarui* totem and the son of so and so 203]
is dead at *Brega*" being an example of how a relative is informed. The dead man is thenceforward referred to as "he who died recently at *Brega*."

There is another prohibition against the use by a husband of his own 551
wife's name whilst she is in childbirth. For a couple of weeks before the 843
birth and for a couple of weeks afterwards the husband must not look upon his wife, he cannot use any of her names, nor can any others of the tribe mention her either by name or by implication to him. Even such an

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tralian tribe that was able to develop within the general Australian type of culture a number of distinct features, some of them unique, while at the same time lacking entirely other features which were widespread on the mainland. Tiwi isolation from the mainland explains the differences and the lacks; their favorable environment explains why they were able to develop certain traits along their own unique lines.

The Tribe and the Bands

Because they were isolated and few outsiders came near them, they did very little as a united tribe. Everybody on the two islands was a Tiwi, and the Tiwi world stopped at the water's edge. Fuzziness on the edges of tribal territory—a chronic headache to anthropologists working with mainland tribes—did not exist, nor did the problem of marriage outside the tribe. All Tiwi, of course, spoke the same language and practiced the same customs and regarded themselves as *the* people; these were almost the only respects in which they could be said to do anything as a tribal unit. There was no tribal government, there were no tribal officials, and no occasions which required the whole tribe to assemble together as a collective entity. For daily and yearly living, the important group was the band or horde,[3] of which there were nine. The total area of the two islands is about 3000 square miles, but some of this is swampy, some of it waterless, some of it mosquito-infested mangrove jungle, and the suitability of the rest for native living varies a good deal. Hence, the actively used and lived-in areas for each band probably averaged about two hundred square miles each and, in any case, there was not a very close relationship between band size and area occupied. Details of band size at various times are given in a later chapter, but, typically, Tiwi bands probably varied in size between a hundred and three hundred people.

The band was the territorial group with which a man most closely identified himself. Though the band lived from day to day spread out over a wide area and a man might not see many of his fellow band-members for weeks at a time, the average Tiwi thought of the two or three hundred square miles of band territory as his "own country" and of his fellow members as his own people. This is why the tribal name—Tiwi—so seldom needed to be used at home on the islands. It did not identify one group as distinct from another, since all locals were Tiwi. Just as in a New York suburb one does not say that there are some Americans in the house next door, but may say that there are some Texans or some Californians or some people from Michigan next door, so a Tiwi, seeing a group of visitors arriving in his band territory, would immediately identify them as Malauila or Rangwila or by whatever band they belonged to. A father would say casually, "I have betrothed my daughter to a

[3] Radcliffe-Brown, the great authority on Australian tribal society, tried to introduce the word "horde" for the Australian local group, but probably because of its suggestion to the popular mind of a dense concentration of people, it has never become established and in these pages we have used the more neutral word "band."

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

621 Tiklauila" or "My wife is a Munupula woman"; a mourner would say, "He
619 died when visiting the Munupula and therefore we will have to go to Munupi for the funeral"; an old man would reminisce about being brought up as a youth by his mother's brother, who was a Turupula, and the good times he had in Turupi; and another would recount details of big battles between the Munupula and the Malauila. All of these were band names or band territories. The nine bands thus acted, psychologically, as small tribelets or semisovereign groups, since it was with one of them that every Tiwi most closely identified in his day-to-day life on the islands. It is only when, as nowadays, he leaves the islands to go to work for the white man in Darwin that he has to think of himself as a Tiwi, since there he mingles with men of other tribes. Even then,
[177] work and residence in the white man's town does not entirely obliterate band identification. A Tiklauila in Darwin prefers to work with and to consort in the evenings with other Tiklauila, and Malauila with Malauila.[8]

Because of certain peculiar features of Tiwi domestic life, to be dis-
621 cussed below, it is difficult to sum up the Tiwi band in any simple formula.
591 People, especially women, changed their band residence frequently in the course of their lives, and being born into a band did not at all require permanent residence with that band, either for males or for females. Thus the district (for example, Tiklaru or Malau) was a firm, fixed, known quantity, but the people who "owned" the district (for example, Tiklauila or Malauila) were a flexible and constantly shifting collection of individuals.

423 The territorial boundaries between bands were clear and well known
621 to everybody, though they were not the sharp lines on a map such as we regard as essential for a frontier or a land boundary. All pieces of country—clumps of jungle, stretches of grassland, sections of thick woods—had names. One such piece of country, say a thickly wooded area, belonged to one band, while the more open country that began where the woods thinned out belonged to another; thus the boundary was not a sharp line but a transitional zone—
[137] perhaps of several miles—where the change from trees to open savannah became noticeable, with the band territories thus fusing into one another rather
[323] than being separated by sharp lines. The Tiwi, so to speak, thought of the landscape as a sort of spectrum where a man moved gradually out of one district into another as he passed from one type of horizon to the next. Since
[133] rivers, and even Apsley Strait, a very narrow arm of the sea separating Melville from Bathurst Island, usually have similar types of vegetation on *both* sides or banks, none of the island rivers nor Apsley Strait was a boundary or frontier between bands. The Mandiimbula, predominantly a Melville Island

[8] In the early 1930's the situation at the Government Hospital in Darwin offered
177 a good illustration of this. The hospital authorities said they gave preference for house-
797 boy jobs to "Melville Islanders because of their greater intelligence and reliability." In
181 point of fact, some of the younger Tiklauila had established a monopoly on hospital jobs and no Tiwi other than a Tiklauila was ever hired there. The whites thought they were hiring Tiwi but the Tiklauila saw to it that they hired only Tiklauila and felt no vestige of obligation to other Tiwi to help them get these desirable jobs. The alleged greater intelligence of the islanders was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Tiklauila, having had a Catholic mission in their territory since 1911, were more used to white requirements.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tribe, owned also the country on the opposite side of Apsley Strait at the southeast corner of Bathurst, while the Malauila, the band in the northern half of Bathurst Island, conversely overlapped their ownership across the strait to take in a thin strip of coastline on the northwest corner of Melville. 423 621

These details illustrate the fact that the band was the land-owning, workaday, territorially organized group which controlled the hunting, the food supply, and the warfare. Until the white man arrived in force in the coastal waters of North Australia, the average Tiwi regarded the nine bands as the main functional units of his existence, and his loyalty to and identification with his band were given much greater opportunity for exercise than any loyalty to or identification with the whole Tiwi tribe. He did many things as a member of a band, but he did little as a member of a tribe. Only when an outsider turned up did he need to think of himself as a Tiwi, and outsiders were very rare. For the rest of the time he thought of himself as a member of his band, thought of his band as his people, and of his band territory as his country. 619 621

The Household

Since the band consisted of anything from one hundred to three hundred people, it could not live together in one place, except for very short periods of time. Hunting and gathering in almost any part of the world (except the northwest coast of America in pre-white times) require the human population to disperse itself very thinly over the countryside and live from day to day in small hunting and camping units. Such small primary groups are usually in one sense families and in another sense households, and this is the case among the Tiwi. We propose to call such units households rather than families for reasons that will soon become apparent. It is true that Tiwi "houses," especially in the long dry season (from March to October), were the flimsiest and most temporary of structures, but the group of people in question was the group who lived together day after day, hunted as a unit, pooled the results of their food getting, and ate and slept together. Functionally this group is identical with an American household, even though the "house" they used was nothing more than a few piled-up tree branches, used as shelter for a night or two and then abandoned. Like the American household also, the Tiwi household usually consisted of a man, his wife (or wives), and their children, though in many would also be included a few leftovers or extras, common to all cultures, such as bachelor uncles, visiting cousins, ancient widowers, and ambiguous "men who came to dinner" and were still there. (Tiwi households did not, however, include maiden aunts, female orphans, or ancient widows, since these could not exist in Tiwi culture.) [361] 592 [342] [574] [589]

Thus the Tiwi household was more or less the same thing as the Tiwi family group, but Tiwi family organization had such a number of unusual twists that we find it desirable to insist upon calling such a group the house-

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

531 decorate a burial pole; and others, Pl. 2D, Pl. 10C, and Pl. 11A, similar to those he would paint on the ceremonial baskets.

I did not see or hear of figures being made in bark (Mountford, 1956, p. 443, fig. 65C, D); moulded in wax (Elkin and the Berndts, 1950, Pl. 21, Mountford, 1956, Pl. 143) or in the sands of the sea-shore (Mountford, 1956, p. 404, Pl. 91C, D), as is done in north-eastern Arnhem Land. Nevertheless, *[532] the men did carve large burial poles in the form of human beings and smaller full-length figures, associated with the *pukamuni* ceremonies. These figures bore some small resemblance to those recorded from north-eastern Arnhem Land (Berndt, 1948, Figs. A, B, Pls. 1, 2; Mountford, 1956, Pls. 130–40).

3. TECHNIQUES

386 (*a*) COLOURS. The pigments used for the decoration of the burial poles and the production of the bark paintings, were red, yellow and white ochres. As there was no suitable black pigment on the islands, the artists used crushed charcoal in its place.

[317] The source of the best ochres is a pit at Imilu on Cape Van Diemen (Fig. 1). This ochre, called *imilu*, is a bright yellow when collected,[7] but, when heated in the fire, it changes to a clear red. A soft white stone is common along the beaches. The ochres are not ground on a stone, as on the mainland (Mountford, 1956, p. 11), but, being friable, are crushed and mixed in a large cockle shell with water and fixative.

The aborigines often spoke of a superior ochre at Numanira, northern Melville Island (Fig. 1), which could be gathered only at low tide. I did not see any of this ochre in use.

(*b*) FIXATIVES. Three different types of fixative are used to ensure that the painted designs, both on the poles and the baskets, were as permanent as possible. They were: [314] the sticky gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids (*Dendrobium* sp.); the wax and honey of the wild bee, well mixed together; [237] and the yolks of the eggs of the sea-going turtle. The fixative was either mixed with the pigments or rubbed on the painting surface.

412 (*c*) BRUSHES. Simple brushes, made of strips of bark of varying widths, square across the bottom, chewed at one end, and held as in Fig. 2A and 2C, were used for the bulk of the work.[8] For making the dots, however, the artists used a

[423] [7] There did not appear to be any restriction on the gathering of this ochre; any aboriginal could go to Imilu and take as much as he wished.

[171] [8] The long flexible brush of the aborigines of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 12, fig. 3), was not used at Melville Island, although the bark brush (Fig. 2B) was often held in a similar manner.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The territory of the *Tiklauila* is roughly contained in the area in the 361
south of Bathurst Island, south of Point Hurd and west of *Mukambrimo*, 621
which is a river about eight miles to the west of the mission station. In 103
this area, roughly about two hundred square miles, there are a number of districts with specific names. Anyone familiar with the Australian blackfellow knows how certain districts are given certain names, and although no native can tell the exact boundaries, everyone in the tribe knows when he has come into one of these districts and when he has left it. The principle of differentiation of these areas seems to be upon the basis of the physical aspect of the country, a valley for example having a distinct name from either set of hills surrounding it, a plain being distinguished from a thickly-wooded piece of bushland on its margin, and so on.

These districts play an important part in Tiwi land ownership. 423
Certain districts are not owned by the horde as a whole, but by a single [621]
family of that horde. Thus in the horde we are considering, *Tanio*, the extensive district in the extreme south-western corner of the island around Cape Fouveroy, is owned by a single set of men, all of whom are the son's sons of *Mikidjimirla*, a man who as far as can be judged died about 1870-1880. The basis of their title is the fact that *Mikidjimirla* died and was buried in the district, hence all the game and fruit in *Tanio* belong to them, and cannot be hunted or collected by anyone else without their consent.

The question immediately arises as to whether the mere burial of a 423
man in a district gives his heirs property rights in that district. The 425
Tiwi answer is that it always does if the man was sufficiently important. 554
The man in question here, *Mikidjimirla*, was from all accounts one who left a deep impression on the society of his time both by his personality and by his prowess in warfare. More than that he left his mark on following generations by the number of children he had. At the present 423
time, there are nine men, all grandchildren of *Mikidjimirla*, in whom the 613
hunting and fruit-collecting rights of *Tanio* are vested, and these men and their families normally camp in *Tanio* and deny the right of other *Tiklauila* families to hunt there. This group has a solidarity of its own which is expressed by a name *Taniauwila*, which is one of the alternative horde-names. It should be noted in this connection that the Tiwi name for [601]
father's father is *amini*, and the members of this group will frequently

423 refer to one another as *ŋia yirt'amini* (my "one grandfather") in preference
613 to *ŋi'iwuni* (my brother), or *ŋia kalipini* (my half-brother), which is the
601 normal term of address.

423 A member of another horde found trespassing upon the territory
685 of the *Tiklauila* would be killed immediately unless he had been invited for
609 a corroboree or some such festival. A member of the same horde who,
621 not belonging to the *yirt'amini* group, trespasses in *Taŋio* would not be put to death, but he and his relatives would become embroiled in a serious quarrel with the group.

423 *Taŋio* is the best example of this peculiar institution because being
613 in an out-of-the-way peninsula no one needs to go there except people
621 who have a right there. Consequently the *Taŋiauwila* can exercise a much stricter supervision and hence as a matter of fact guard their rights more jealously than the people with such rights over districts that lie upon the main roads of the two islands. Nevertheless the whole of *Tiklaru* is divided into such districts and the whole of the *Tiklauila* into such *yirt' amini* groups.

Thus bordering on the *Taŋiauwila* to the east, we find the *Arupula* who have similar hunting and food-collecting rights over *Arupi*, the coastal district in the middle of the south coast of Bathurst Island. The origin of their title is lost in obscurity inasmuch as nobody to-day knows who the ancestor was or exactly where is the grave that gave them such a right. Nor is the *Arupula* title respected as much as is the *Taŋiauwila* partly because *Arupi* is crossed by several "high-roads"—notably the only road to *Taŋio* from the east, and the *Wraŋgwila* road to the Mission Station —but even more because the present representatives of the *Arupula* are either uninitiated youths or peaceful old men.

423 This introduces what is perhaps the main factor in the perpetuation
628 of this institution—the power of the *yirt'amini* groups to enforce their
613 rights. The ownership of a particular territory by a horde and the
685 punishment of trespass upon it can always be enforced because there is always a certain number of fighting men in the horde. Hence horde-ownership is respected. In the *yirt' amini* group, however, periods frequently occur when the group is not strong enough to enforce its claims, and unless the claims are constantly brought under the notice of the rest of the horde they are ignored. The result is that unless the family gets a new lease of life by boys growing up into formidable warriors, such a

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 0120 Tiwi 0120

period is the prelude to the complete lapsing of the title to the district. 423
The prominent part played in this institution by the father's father and the 628
fact that most of the present districts held on such a title are held from the 613
father's father whereas comparatively few are held through an ancestor 685
(necessarily more remote) who has been forgotten, seems to indicate that *yirt' amini* holdings do not last more than three generations before they lapse for want of sufficient able-bodied men to enforce them.

It must not be imagined that the whole of Melville and Bathurst 423
Islands are divided into such holdings nor indeed that everyone in the tribe 613
belongs to such a group. The main obstacle to this lies in the self- 621
evident fact that if one's father's father dies in the territory of another horde, as must have quite frequently have happened in the days of marauding expeditions between hordes, there can be no such thing as a *yirt' amini* holding of the district wherein he died. Moreover there are numbers of the Tiwi whose fathers and grandfathers died young, and the essence of the system is that the grandfather should have been old enough to have sufficient male children and grandchildren to enforce the claim.

It can easily be seen from the above how it comes about that each horde has a number of names, since each one of the *yirt' amini* group-names 621
is liable to be applied to the whole horde merely by adding *-ila* or *-ula* to 101
the name of the district they control.

Spencer's list of horde names is at variance with mine, because he 101
did not realize this. Out of six men of the *Tiklauwila*, one might easily 114
get six different answers to his question as to their "country," each 103
giving the name of his *yirt' amini* group. It is quite possible that the 621
horde names that are used here—*Tiklauwila*, *Munupula*, etc.—are really *yirt' amini* names that have become extended to include a whole horde either by the identification of a very powerful *yirt' amini* group with a horde in the eyes of the rest of the tribe or by the former horde name becoming tabu and a *yirt' amini* name being substituted. This view is strengthened by the fact that in one or two of the hordes, the horde name is still in use as the name of a district. Thus whereas the whole of the territory of the *Wilraŋgwila* on the north of Melville is technically *Wilraŋgu*, the native name for Karslake Island, a small portion of that territory, is *Wilraŋgu*. Similarly *Malau* is a creek in the territory of the *Malauila* horde.

A man is born into the horde of his father. Should his father die and 591
his mother be taken by a member of another horde he goes with her, and [611]
WHILE THE WOMAN WILL ALWAYS BE LOOKED UPON 621
AS BELONGING TO HER FORMER HORDE, THE CHILD [768]
CHANGES HIS, TAKING THAT OF HIS STEPFATHER.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 0120 Tiwi 0120

which is interesting. It means the "Moon People" and is probably the name of the tribe displaced by the Purakapale people in the past. It is Arakitamun-uwi (plural), Arakitamun-ini (masculine), Arakitamun-inga (feminine). 101

Horde Places. Living in isolated groups, these people talk of horde places. A man from the south of Bathurst Island will tell you he is of the Tikaluwila people, in the horde place of Tikalaru, the country. Thus a man is a Tikaluwinala and a woman is a Tikiluwinila of the country of Tikalaru in the tribe of Worunguwi. (Hart writes Tiklauila). 621 361

As it is with this horde so it is with all the groups, three of which are on Bathurst Island; Tikalaru on the south of the Island, Arangu on the north, and Malo on the western shore of the Island. We are not sure of the Melville Island divisions but the following are fairly reliable: Mundiimpu, Anangatera, Yaimpi, being three hordes united as one horde on the southern shore; Turupu and Maruwu, two hordes living as one horde to the north-east of the Island; and Wilarunggu and Munaipu, two hordes living as one local group on the north-west of the Island. (This does not conflict with Hart's list.)

These hordes have indefinite tribal boundaries, yet it is considered a transgression to go too far into them for hunting purposes. One law relating to food gathering is, "He who burns the grass first is considered to own all the food that is caught on that burnt patch; he is a boss as it were and remains such until after the cold weather sets in and the dews bring on a new lot of grass." 423 224

Clans. Although the people are divided into numerous hordes they have only three clans (*aramipi*), but each of these clans has a number of sub-totems, *emuŋa*.* These may be survivals of weaker clans or possibly an example of classificatory totemism. Hart calls the *aramipi*, phratries. The totems are: 614

1. Main totem	*Kudjarli*	Fire
Sub-totems	*Yarinapila*	Red ochre
	Iŋwati	Honey nest
	Pinkwarui	Stingray
	Ilitui	Tree with red flower
	Woriapila	Sun
2. Main totem	*Tukambani*	Martin
Sub-totems	*Tapitapini*	March fly
	Buŋgaluwila	Stone
	Ariŋguwila	Stone.
3. Main totem	*Miatui*	Pandanus
Sub-totems	*Murukpungama*	Flying fox
	Mudumbila	Mullet
	Mandupowi	Fly
	Andolui	Spring
	Tjilati	Jabaru.

* The same name as the gall-bladder and the pulse.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as 765
ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a
sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own 535
dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major
chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out 765
again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus.
Most of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually
owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to [424]
death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial
occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special 765
to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony,
when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts
and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive
the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners'
state of *pukimani*.

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has 182
been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions
of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious 557
occasions. The connecting link was the state of *pukimani* in which death put 571
the relatives. Men in a state of *pukimani* were at a disadvantage in social and
political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things 765
for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not
afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they [577]
would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the
spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for
the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts
came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and
thus their own *pukimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to
them for many months, came to an end.

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, 881
which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females
there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and 571
elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the
status of *Marukumarni*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and
did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the
ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than
himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for
the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring
it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests.
The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials
or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems;
indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the
beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who 881
were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation 607
of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely [605]

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

father's name towards him and thus implying their approval of his taking 428
that name. To select one example—there is at present in the Tiklowila 553
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private ownership of names by a family. A man but distantly related to 553
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as they are more important in a study of kinship or ceremonial, than in a 422
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4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 To sum up then the main points in the customs of the Tiwi connected with personal names, the outstanding features are these :—

(1) Multiplicity of personal names.
(2) Death renders tabu the names of the dead man.
(3) Death renders tabu similar words in the language.
(4) Death renders tabu names bestowed upon others by the dead man.
(5) Method of coining names.
(6) Tabu on names at certain times (*e.g.*, childbirth, initiation).

551 It is fairly evident from the facts cited in this paper that among the
424 Tiwi at any rate a personal name is the absolute property of the person
725 possessing it. Further than that, it is so identified with his personality
198 that even the use of it by anyone else in resented by the owner. There is no space here to describe the theology of the Tiwi, but it must be pointed out that after the death of a man his spirit does not go with his body to the region of the dead, but wanders about the world in a form both invisible and malignant. Just as an individual when alive would resent the use of his name so too will his spirit and will be much more dangerous an enemy on account of his supernatural form. Spirits are not only malignant, they are also unreasonable, and whereas a live man would not quarrel with you for using an ordinary word resembling his name, his ghost is quite likely not to appreciate the difference. Hence the prohibition against similar words. While in touch with the unseen world it pays to be careful. But in dealing with the unseen world the Tiwi have a special language. This body of words has a sacredness of its own, it is a part of the spirit world itself. Therefore you may incur the enmity of a spirit by using his mundane name or some similar mundane word, but the use of a similar word in the sacred language cannot do any harm ; the spirit will not get annoyed with you for using a spirit word, especially as you can only use it in any case on sacred occasions. Hence there is no tabu on similar words in the sacred language.

551 This principle of the sacred language for use when in touch with
844 supernatural situations also helps us to understand several other things. The birth of a child is, to a native, a most mysterious affair and the woman is regarded as being intimately in touch with the spirit world. Hence her name as part of herself is invested with a ghostly character and this is expressed by the tribe in treating her husband as if she did not exist, as if

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The territory of the *Tiklauila* is roughly contained in the area in the south of Bathurst Island, south of Point Hurd and west of *Mukambrimo*, which is a river about eight miles to the west of the mission station. In this area, roughly about two hundred square miles, there are a number of districts with specific names. Anyone familiar with the Australian blackfellow knows how certain districts are given certain names, and although no native can tell the exact boundaries, everyone in the tribe knows when he has come into one of these districts and when he has left it. The principle of differentiation of these areas seems to be upon the basis of the physical aspect of the country, a valley for example having a distinct name from either set of hills surrounding it, a plain being distinguished from a thickly-wooded piece of bushland on its margin, and so on. 361 621 103

These districts play an important part in Tiwi land ownership. Certain districts are not owned by the horde as a whole, but by a single family of that horde. Thus in the horde we are considering, *Tanio*, the extensive district in the extreme south-western corner of the island around Cape Fouveroy, is owned by a single set of men, all of whom are the son's sons of *Mikidjimirla*, a man who as far as can be judged died about 1870-1880. The basis of their title is the fact that *Mikidjimirla* died and was buried in the district, hence all the game and fruit in *Tanio* belong to them, and cannot be hunted or collected by anyone else without their consent. 423 [621]

The question immediately arises as to whether the mere burial of a man in a district gives his heirs property rights in that district. The Tiwi answer is that it always does if the man was sufficiently important. The man in question here, *Mikidjimirla*, was from all accounts one who left a deep impression on the society of his time both by his personality and by his prowess in warfare. More than that he left his mark on following generations by the number of children he had. At the present time, there are nine men, all grandchildren of *Mikidjimirla*, in whom the hunting and fruit-collecting rights of *Tanio* are vested, and these men and their families normally camp in *Tanio* and deny the right of other *Tiklauila* families to hunt there. This group has a solidarity of its own which is expressed by a name *Taniauwila*, which is one of the alternative horde-names. It should be noted in this connection that the Tiwi name for father's father is *amini*, and the members of this group will frequently 423 425 554 423 613 [601]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing.

768 [428] [183] [825]

(2) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulanimbuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers".

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One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[53] from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *tokwiangu* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs.

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The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[54] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground

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[53] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[54] After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditis* fear the light.

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For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

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4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

198 apparently were once part of the ordinary language but by reason of their
192 becoming *pukimani* by one of the methods mentioned above have been dropped completely from everyday use and retained only in the memory of the older people until they are brought out again in some new song or substituted in the ordinary language for some word newly prohibited. The meaning then has to be explained to the younger people who have been born since the word formed part of the ordinary language.

It can easily be understood that in this mass of words handed down orally for centuries there are a number retained of which the meanings have been lost. For example it is quite impossible to obtain a word for word translation of any initiation song of the Tiwi, numbers of words being introduced which are totally meaningless alike to the singer, the maker of the song and to the audience. These words correspond to some extent to the "tra-la-la" or other nonsense syllables frequently found in modern American popular songs, being introduced to provide the correct rhythm or metre, to echo the sense of the song or for some conventional reason, certain meaningless words being exclusively found associated with other words, the meaning of which is known.

551 One of the favourite methods of coining names is to select one of these meaningless words and add one of the nominal suffixes mentioned above to it. Thus *matirandjiŋili* is a word frequently used in songs, the meaning of which is obscure. *Materandjiŋimirli* is, however, a proper name.

Place names are sometimes added to by a suffix or otherwise changed to become proper names. Thus *Pripanyimili*, a district of South Bathurst, gives *Pripantimiri* a masculine name; *Poru*, the district opposite the mission station, gives rise to *Porutimiri* a male name and *Porutimiu* a female name. (It should be noted that there is no connection between such a name and the district of origin or residence of the person bearing the name.)

● 428 The commonest method of all is for the name to descend in the direct
553 male line. That is, after the death of the father one of his sons (usually but not invariably the eldest) disregarding the name bestowed upon him by his mother's new husband, allows a sufficient time to elapse for the tabu to lose its efficacy and then assumes his father's name. This is done either of his own volition or by the older men of his horde who were the contemporaries of his father adopting the practice of using his

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

father's name towards him and thus implying their approval of his taking 428
that name. To select one example—there is at present in the Tiklowila 553
horde a man *Pwandjilora* whose father was also a *Pwandjilora* who died about fifteen years ago. His father in turn was also a *Pwandjilora*, who is only remembered by the very old people of the horde.

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It must not be thought, however, that there is any such thing as 424
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Pwandjilora II would be quite at liberty to bestow that name upon one of his children were it not already in use and had a sufficient time elapsed since his death. An example is a famous warrior of the last generation called *Walitoami*. This name has recently been bestowed by one of the Tiklowila upon his son though neither he, the child, nor the mother of the child is closely related to the first *Walitoami*. As a matter of fact the child is the mother's brother's son's daughter's son of *Walitoami I*.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI2

the relatively favorable food supply. Some of the Tiwi artifacts, particularly the highly decorative graveposts and ceremonial spears, are unique among Australian tribes, and the carving and painting of these graveposts and spears were skills possessed only by the senior men. They were provided with the leisure time necessary to develop and use these skills by the efficiency in food production of the large household which all old men were expected to accumulate with age, and which many old men did succeed in accumulating. We said earlier that the bigger the household, the better its members ate. We now add the further correlation that the bigger the household, the more leisure time was provided for its head to engage in manufacturing and artistic production. Tu'untalumi has been cited as an example of a large household head (twelve resident wives and thirteen children at home in 1928-29) who loved ceremonial affairs. It would be wrong to infer from this that Tu'untalumi only loved going to parties. He also loved preparing for them, and this preparation (for him as for all other senior men) included the manufacture of ceremonial spears, the preparation of graveposts, and the composition of songs and dances. In the long dull periods between trips outside his home district, he spent most of the days and many of the nights in the creation of these ceremonial necessities. He was not a full-time specialist in the sense that he made spears or posts to exchange with other men who had neither the time nor the skill—the rules of kinship required that every senior man make his own ceremonial spears and contract for his own posts. Tu'untalumi manufactured his graveposts to meet his own ritual obligations, but he took a more magnanimous view of those obligations than did most men. Put in our terms, we might say that he was wealthy enough (in the size of his household) to be generous with his own productions. One example of this attitude was his attendance at funerals that other men of equal kinship to the deceased did not find it necessary to attend; his frequent contribution of an extra gravepost to those provided by the chief mourners of the deceased was a similar gesture. "Tu'untalumi not only came to our mother's funeral, he also made a gravepost for it" was a very gratifying reflection for an obscure group of mourners to cherish among their memories, and of course it was acts of this sort that made the old man so well liked and admired. The economic point of the matter, however, is that only a man with as large a household as his could afford the gesture of giving away, in a situation where kinship obligations did not demand it, a gravepost that required about a week's full-time work.

It was, however, sad to observe that as an artistic producer Tu'untalumi, like many intellectuals in other cultures, tended to operate in too many media. His work as a composer of songs and dances was universally admired, but his graveposts, while appreciated, were not regarded as being as outstanding, technically speaking, as those of another old man, his crony Timalarua. In personality, Timalarua, a successful household head (eleven living wives, ten children at home), was quiet spoken, placid, and only mildly gregarious, and he is mainly of interest because in his leisure-time activity he paid but routine attention to song and dance compositions and concentrated rather single mindedly on making canoes, ceremonial spears, and graveposts. Fre-

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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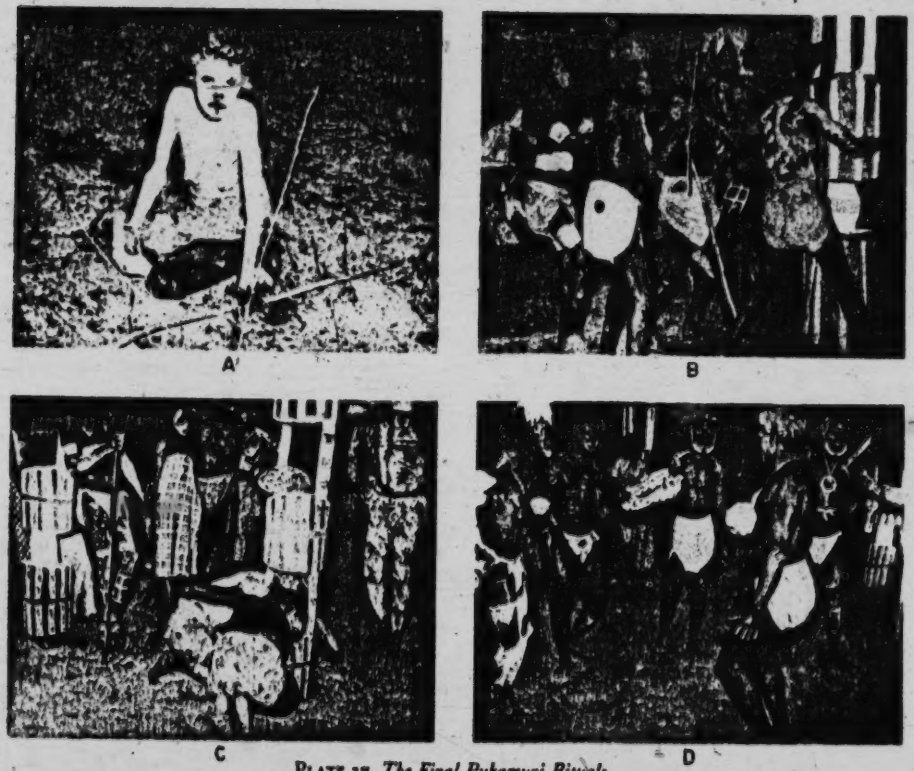

PLATE 27. *The Final Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Chief Woman Mourner; B, Scene at Burial Poles; C, Mourning at Burial Poles; D, Presentation of Gifts.

[pl. 27 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 their bodies (p. 138). Again, a man picked up a *pukamani* basket, symbolised the pouring out of the cooked *kulama* yam on a sheet of bark and passed it to the *kulama* call of "*Brr, brr, brr*". This action completed the dance.

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

●431 While other dances, which I did not see, were being performed in the two
765 *milimika*s, the *pukamani* men and their wives unpacked the gifts for the "workers", and spread them out on the ground (Pl. 26a). There was much good-natured discussion about their equitable distribution before the presents were finally separated into lots and placed one on the top of each pole.

177 *Wurarbui*, resplendent in his body paint and coloured *pukamani* orna-
533 ments, mounted one of the larger poles and chanted songs telling how he
765 became possessed of the great wealth which enabled him to buy the presents
[302] for the "workers".

[539] "I am a big Government man," he boasted, "so I was able to get plenty of money."

"I stole the money from the Government to pay for the presents and the police locked me up."

[535] While *Wurarbui* chanted this song, *Marawani* and the women danced with their hands crossed as if in handcuffs.

As the song continued, *Marawani* ran after *Pulanimbwi*, dragged him into the *milimika*, and struggled with him in imitation of a policeman making an arrest.

Other songs were chanted ridiculing a Government clerk at Darwin, while one of them "wrote" out an order, passed the "money" to a *pukamani* man through a window (an opening in a pole) and then demanded, in a loud domineering voice, his thumb-print on a scrap of paper as a receipt.

177 *Wurarbui*, still seated on the top of a pole, started to distribute the
431 presents, imitating, as he did so, the actions and broken English which the
765 same clerk used when dealing with aborigines.

"You a worker," said *Wurarbui*. "Have you a wife? How many children? You work for me, make proper good pole, I pay you."

The "worker" on accepting his payment, put his thumb-print on a scrap of paper (initialled—with a twig—by another *pukamani* man), and walked away satisfied[81] with his square of printed calico, pipes and tobacco. As each "worker" received his gift the *pukamani* men performed a dance.

[81] This is not always so. Sometimes a "worker" becomes so annoyed over inadequate payment that he will not allow his pole to be carried to the grave, preferring to let it rot in the forest. On several occasions we saw a pole which had been left in the forest because its maker was dissatisfied with the payment.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

When all the "workers" had been paid, *Wurarbuti* called my name and presented me with a number of *pukamuni* arm and chest ornaments (Pl. 31), which normally would have been left on the grave. 431 765 123

These ornaments, *Wurarbuti* explained, were a gift from the dead man, *Waniamperi*, because I had assisted in making his *pukamuni* a success.[88]

In the Bathurst Island *milimika* the three "workers" were also receiving their payments. 765

Jibunglialumi, although he did not have as good a story to tell as *Wurarbuti*, danced around the poles with some of the presents in his hand, singing, "Here I come in an expensive motor-car, with lots of money to pay the 'workers' for cutting such beautiful poles."[89] [535] [539] [177]

(*d*) *Erecting the Poles around the Graves*

The distribution of the last of the presents was a signal for the "workers" to carry the poles from the respective *milimikas* to the grave. 765

Some of the poles were both large and heavy; in particular that illustrated on Pl. 34D, which was eighteen feet long, and so heavy that it took seven "workers" to carry it from the *milimika* and up-end it in the hole prepared for it at the grave (Pl. 26A).

As the poles were carried past the Bathurst Island ceremonial ground, *Jibunglialumi* threw short sticks over them to commemorate the time when the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, took part in a spear-throwing contest at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* (p. 33).

While the "workers" nonchalantly carried the poles to the grave, the women, with tears running down their cheeks, beat themselves with sticks (until someone restrained them), and the close male relatives, mourning loudly, hysterically cut their heads with steel knives. 765 785

Katopi, the son of the dead man, had washed the painted decorations from his body, and was about to cut his head when he was stopped by his stepmother, *Dominao*. On seeing this, *Marawani*, one of the chief *pukamuni* men, took the knife from the woman and gave it to *Katopi*, who gashed his head two or three times, and, with blood pouring down his face, threw himself on the ground in a paroxysm of grief.

[88] To help them in their payments I had given the *pukamuni* men some printed calico.

[89] Although these stories about great wealth to pay the "workers" are much Europeanised, they are probably following a traditional pattern, when, instead of referring to money and the goods of the white man, the ceremonial leaders exaggerated the number of spears, ornaments, and other goods they had collected to pay the "workers".

evening to kill geese. When they returned with only three geese, a long conference was held. I offered all the food I could spare and it was decided that, in return for a few yams and some of the goose, I should make dampers and put jam on them for the children, all of whom were under five and very hungry, and give small pieces of tobacco to the men and women. This was Albert's, Agnes's, and Big Jack's tobacco, and so everyone traded something and all pronounced it a fair deal. I cooked the damper, smothered it with jam and, with Agnes prompting, called, "Kakritjui Kali." "Little ones, come." The five who could walk, ran, then stood shyly by while I handed each a piece; then they ran back to their mothers. Soon they were back and, nudged by their mothers, all murmured "Thank you very much." This was a phrase I never heard, either in the native language or in English, when they were receiving from another native. Giving and receiving were so much a part of their life that among themselves "thank you's" seemed unnecessary.

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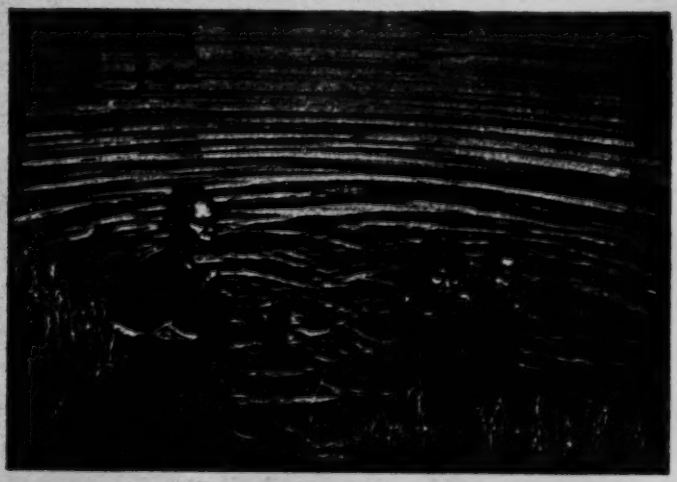

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Fig. 16. Agnes, Filicy, and Crissy-boy cooling off in the river

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Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

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262 cooked, with that delicious charcoal-broiled flavor so much sought after in our more elite dining establishments or in our backyards.

123
224 Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goanas, they brought over to show us an extremely large water [431] snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came [513] over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tremendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minianapi in time to meet the geese.
123 All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless
231 baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's
484 hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The two forms of fire-jumping (described earlier, p. 73) were also used in these rituals. 765

The *ilanis* closed with the performance of the rite of *pumuti*, then the usual honey and mosquito calls.

5. THE FINAL PUKAMUNI RITUALS

(1) *The Pukamuni of Waniamperi*

For the sake of simplicity I will describe, under this heading, the rituals carried out during the last two days of the closing phases of the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*. These rituals took place about three months after burial and about a month after the performance of the first *ilanis* and the receiving of the message stick (Fig. 5F, G, H) from the Bathurst Island aborigines. [202]

During these final ceremonies, the aborigines divided themselves into two groups; the Melville Island men and women, under the leadership of *Wurarbui*, and the Bathurst Island men and women, with a few of the Melville Island aborigines linked with them totemically, under their leader, *Jilungfinlani*. [616]

The "workers" had cleared two dancing grounds: one, Fig. 4A, about fifty yards south of *Waniamperi's* grave, belonging to the Melville Island aborigines, and the other, Fig. 4B, about thirty yards east, to the people from Bathurst Island.

There were seven decorated burial poles on *milimika*, A, and three on B (Fig. 4). The three poles, although cut and painted by the local men, had been given, with their permission, to the Bathurst Island group who were responsible for the payment of them. [432]

The final rituals extended over two days. After both groups had performed *ilanias* in the middle of the first morning, they spent about six hours decorating each other with elaborate facial and body designs, one of which, that of *Wurarbui*, is illustrated on the frontispiece. Other facial designs are illustrated on Pl. 28. In the late afternoon all the participants, men and women, moved to the two *milimikas* near the grave (Fig. 4A, B), where they performed a series of dances until dark. The aborigines camped nearby, most of them within a hundred yards of the grave. The next morning the final rituals started. [302]

These *pukamuni* rituals can be divided into five distinct phases—

(*a*) The opening rituals.

(*b*) The songs and dances.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

578 quietly slipped away to some other camp and was not seen the following
684 morning. The matter might then die, depending largely on whether the old husband wanted to carry it further or was content to drop it. If the young
[627] man was still in camp the following day, the old man might insist on a duel then and there, but it would take place only if the camp were large, since Tiwi duels were essentially legal actions and as such needed a sizable audience for their correct staging. Disputes between men, of which old men accusing young men of seduction were by far the most common type, usually remained at the verbal level until a large body of spectators was available. Since such large
[527 concentrations of many households were necessary for the performance of the
627] main collective ceremonials, it was at the time of these ceremonials that most verbal arguments were pushed by the aggrieved party to the action level.

554 During the dry season (April to November) when travel was easy, the
764 only collective ceremonials sufficiently important to draw together a large number of households were those held for the funerals of big men. In the wet season (November to March) when the grass and bush were high and travel was difficult, the main collective phases of the male initiation ceremonies were
[881] held (see Chapter 4), and these brought together for a few weeks at a time large numbers of households. The funeral ceremonies for adults were always held some considerable time after the death and burial of the deceased. How long a period elapsed between the death and the funeral ceremonies depended on the expected size of the gathering, and this figure correlated; at least roughly, with the importance of the deceased. Here again the overriding considera-
574 tion was food supply, since the chief mourners (that is, the deceased's closer
764 relatives) had to feed everybody who came to the funeral while the ceremonies
● 433 lasted, which might be almost a week. The more important the dead person the bigger the crowd at his funeral, and hence the greater the amount of time
182 needed by the mourners to arrange the catering. As much as a year might elapse between the death and the time when the mourners felt that the funeral arrangements—especially the food supply, but also the ceremonial preparation—were sufficiently well in hand to permit them to set a date and send out invitations for the funeral ceremonies. Funerals, therefore, were not held at regular times but were individually scheduled at times fixed by the chief mourners. They were always held in the dry season, however (except those of
[627] young children, to which nobody came in any case), and therefore an old man who had a dispute to settle or a case to try publicly could always depend on a few big funerals being held in the not very distant future which would provide the large audience necessary to make the settlement of the dispute legal. During the wet season the *kolema* phases of the initiation ceremonial
[881] always drew a large attendance; the annual time of these was pretty definitely fixed by the ripening of the *kolema* yams.

578 Hence the verbal wrangles in the small scattered encampments at night,
684 about seduction during the day, could have any one of three outcomes, depending largely upon the determination of the old man-accuser and the demeanor
627 of the young man-accused. If by the following morning the young man had disappeared and showed no further interest in the old man's menage, the

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

291 observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission,
[797] automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for
177 the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst
[20] of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their oppo-
[578] nents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark
834 aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We
174 think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were
291 needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at
535 dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households
511 enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

433 1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were econom-
595 ically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to
182 produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

[556] 5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat and so prevent the theft. 776 821 648

The Maratjis at Maundu

Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained by the faeces of the *Maratjis*. 776 778

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandubuka* totem are the only people safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from his own armpits, rubs it over his companion. 751 776 [827]

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then, walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi* which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialuni*, whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of Maundu. [437] [753] [164]

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon, they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an aboriginal, called *Alumgun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this taboo. [841] [784]

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu. 532 x 778

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained) water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the 776

evening to kill geese. When they returned with only three geese, a long conference was held. I offered all the food I could spare and it was decided that, in return for a few yams and some of the goose, I should make dampers and put jam on them for the children, all of whom were under five and very hungry, and give small pieces of tobacco to the men and women. This was Albert's, Agnes's, and Big Jack's tobacco, and so everyone traded something and all pronounced it a fair deal. I cooked the damper, smothered it with jam and, with Agnes prompting, called, "Kakritjui Kali." "Little ones, come." The five who could walk, ran, then stood shyly by while I handed each a piece; then they ran back to their mothers. Soon they were back and, nudged by their mothers, all murmured "Thank you very much." This was a phrase I never heard, either in the native language or in English, when they were receiving from another native. Giving and receiving were so much a part of their life that among themselves "thank you's" seemed unnecessary.

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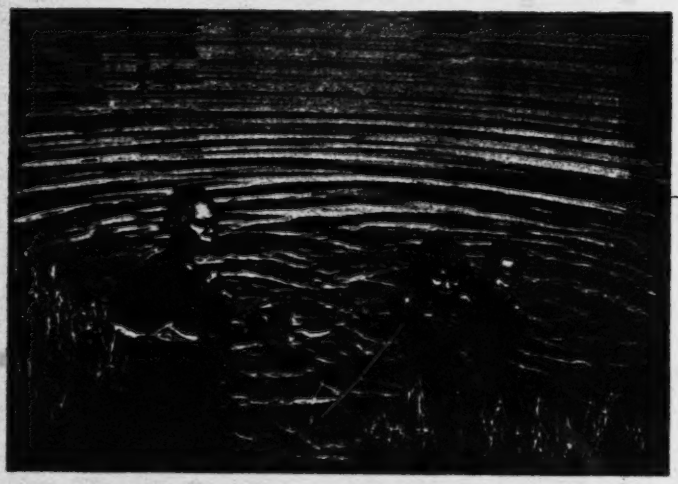

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Fig. 14. Agnes, Filicy, and Crissy-boy cooling off in the river

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Thus Cooper with his well-armed retinue of mainlanders had made the islands safe for white men and introduced a desire for white men's goods, particularly tobacco. His retirement from Melville Island left the newly established Mission on Bathurst Island as the only source of supply for these goods. After World War I, however, another influence began to grow in importance. Large numbers of Japanese pearling boats came and anchored off the coasts of southern and southeastern Melville Island, where they traded with the local bands—the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula. These bands got tobacco and European-type food (flour, rice, tea, sugar) from the Japanese in quantities which the Catholic missionaries could not afford to provide; all the Japanese asked in return was access to young native women. Men who controlled many women—as fathers, as husbands, or as brothers—were thus in a favorable position to profit by the traffic with the Japanese.

Whereas the demands made by the Japanese on the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula for women were quite straightforward and uncomplicated, Father Gsell's demands on the bands of south Bathurst Island were somewhat more complex in their consequences. Many aspects of the old pattern of Tiwi life had to be abandoned to make them into Christians. To the missionaries, polygamy was sinful and could not be part of the new Tiwi life. Prenatal and infant bestowal had to be abolished. Marriages should be between agemates and should be arranged freely and solely by the couple involved. Such changes were the crux of Father Gsell's program, and the story of how he went about it has run in many a Sunday supplement in the cities of Australia under the title "The Bishop With 150 Wives."[6] Father Gsell did not try to convert or drastically change the behavior of the older Tiwi; he believed that they were too set in their ways. Rather, he built toward a distant day by working among the younger generation. When infant girls became widows, he purchased them from their fathers. Men with young widowed daughters and those with spare young wives sold such girls for axes, flour, tobacco, cloth, and trinkets. Such "Blackies," as they became affectionately called,[7] lived in the convent with the French (and later Australian) sisters. When such a girl reached the age of about 18, she was asked to choose one of the young single men for her husband. For his part in this excellent deal which provided him with a wife long before he would get one under the old tribal system, the young man had only to promise that he would never take another wife. Such a wedding was not a Mass, for neither party was Catholic. However, the children born of this new union were baptized and reared as Catholics. Later, a few of the girls who had been sold to Father Gsell before they were ten went through confirmation as did their youthful fiances. The first nuptial Mass between two such Tiwi took place in 1928.

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[6] Father Gsell became Bishop of Darwin in 1938. He lived on in retirement to 1958, having seen in his lifetime the fulfilment of his dream of the Tiwi as a Catholic tribe.

[7] The Tiwi today strongly resent being called "African," "Negro," or "nigger," but they do not seem to mind being called "Blacks." The term "Blackie" for a young female is in general use by Mission school girls for themselves; it is in no sense derogatory.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

When between the mid-1920's and the early 1940's the Japanese began to give trade goods to men for sexual access to their wives, Father Gsell's missionization program ran into competition. The Japanese gave the old Tiwi males a much better deal than did Father Gsell. The Japanese with their continuous payment for access to women poured into the households of these old men the same sort of goods which Gsell provided. But in the case of the Japanese, the goods were paid time and again over a matter of years and the old father or husband was kept permanently in tobacco and food. Thus, oddly indeed, the two chief outside influences which came to bear upon the traditional Tiwi system of marriage, after about 1920, were both agencies which were anxious (for entirely different reasons and ends) to "buy" young girls and pay their ancient husbands or fathers for relinquishing them; temporarily in the case of the Japanese, permanently in the case of the missionaries. The Tiwi could scarcely be expected to cease putting a high value on women, and upon control over women, under these conditions.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

6

The Tiwi Today

Changes since 1930

THERE WERE in 1929 only two year-round settlements of outsiders which were significant to the Tiwi. One was Bathurst Island Mission, by then nearly twenty years old, the only permanent white-man establishment on the islands. It acted as the main exit point for travel to Darwin, the other focus of Tiwi life. There was also the large camp of Mandiimbula and Yeimpi on the south coast of Melville Island, which owed its existence to the sexual arrangement between the Tiwi and Japanese pearlers. 648 [747] [361 459]

In the 1930's, the centers of Tiwi activity shifted somewhat. The Australian government successfully broke up the camp located on the south coast by transporting nearly all of the Yeimpi to Darwin and by sending patrol boats out to discourage the Japanese from frequenting the area. In about 1935, the Japanese moved their base for contact with the Tiwi north to the region of Garden Point, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, just beyond the ruins of old Fort Dundas. Around the great fresh-water pool on the beach at that locality there developed a Tiwi camp like that which formerly had existed on the south coast; however, the native bands involved were no longer the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula but the Malauila, Munupula, Wilrangwila, and Turupula of northern Bathurst and Melville islands. The government again attempted to control sexual activities between Tiwi and Japanese, but to get to this spot a patrol boat from Darwin had to travel along forty miles of indented coastline which amplified and seemed to project every throb of an engine toward the ears of the Japanese miles away. The patrol boats found that they could not sneak up on the pearlers unannounced and, therefore, could not catch them in the act of cohabiting with native women. [361]

By the late 1930's, pressure from missionary and other humanitarian circles in the southern part of Australia forced the government to attempt to terminate, or at least to control, the trade pattern which had become estab-

[p. 104 is blank]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

202 211 ×532 *Mudungkala* totemic group. On the reverse side (Fig. 7B), the zig-zag line *a*, is the road between Snake Bay (upper end, *b*), and Cockle Point, in Apsley Straits (lower end, *c*). At *d*, *d*, is a request for two six-pound bags of sugar; *e*, for tea; *f*, sufficient printed calico for a loin cloth; *g*, three sticks of tobacco; *h*, a tin of tobacco; *j*, a pair of trousers; *k*, a pocket knife, and *m*, a pipe. The crossed lines at *n* indicate the camp of *Tjamalumpua*, the sender of the message stick.

Buchanan Island

The message stick (Fig. 7D) refers to the Jaulama jungle, about a half a mile south of our camp.

This stick was sent by the chief mourner of the Melville Island *pukamani* group to the members of the ironwood, *Mudungkala*, totemic group of Buchanan Island, and adjacent Bathurst Islanders, notifying them of the oncoming burial rituals. The designs on the stick, however, have no relationship to either the ironwood tree group or the message they would receive. The short vertical lines at *c*, *c*, are living paper-bark trees, and the transverse lines, *a*, *a*, dead paper-bark trees in the Jaulama jungle. At *b*, are the roots of the trees, and at panels *c*, the vines of the edible *roko* yams on the branches of the paper-barks. The four panels, *d*, *d*, etc., are jungle trees, and *e* indicates their roots.

Invitation to Adjoining Tribe

[574] Fig. 6G, H, illustrates a message stick (not associated with a *pukamani* ceremony) from the Melville Island people, inviting the aborigines on the Coburg Peninsula to pay them a visit and to perform some of their mainland ceremonies.[17]

On the obverse side, Fig. 6G, the parallel lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the shores of the Coburg Peninsula, and the zig-zag line, *b*, a mangrove creek in the same locality.

On the reverse side, 6H, the V-shaped patterns, *a*, indicate the men who have been invited from the Coburg Peninsula, and those in the lower section, *b*, the women. The short transverse lines at *c*, represent the Melville Island men who will act as hosts to the visitors.

Secular

202 211 ●439 Fig. 5E is a secular message stick sent to an aboriginal, *Marawani*, who was on a visit to Darwin, asking him to bring back the following goods; *a*,

[17] This message stick suggests that, at the present time, members of the mainland tribes and those of the Tiwi, occasionally visit each other.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tobacco, *b*, matches, *c*, a pipe, *d*, a calico loin cloth, *e*, a pair of short trousers, *f*, a shirt, *g*, sugar, *h*, tea, and *j*, flour. 202 211 439

Secular

Fig. 6D is a carved stick whose designs were thought out by the artist as he walked along the sandy beach near our camp. Although not a message stick, the illustration is included in the section as an example of how an aboriginal expresses his mental images through the medium of simple wood carving. 532x

The horizontal lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the waves breaking on the beach, and the groups of short lines, a pattern of shallow gutters which had been formed on the sandy shore by the fresh water seeping from a nearby lagoon.

10. THE BURIAL POLES

The painted and decorated poles of Melville and Bathurst Islands attracted the attention of all the early visitors. Sir Gordon Bremer in 1824, possibly the first European to see the *pukamuni* poles, when writing about a grave he saw on Melville Island, states: "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilised people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed around with trees, 7 feet to 8 feet high, some of which were carved with stone or shell and further ornamented by rings of wood. On the tops of these were placed the waddies (throwing sticks) of the deceased. The grave was raised above the level of the earth, but the raised part was not more than 3 feet long. At the head was placed a piece of a canoe (probably a bark basket) and a spear and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and earth were cleared away from the sides and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."[90] 765 211 [322] [413]

I have quoted Sir Gordon Bremer's description in full because it shows that, even after a hundred and thirty years, the aborigines of Melville Island, 211 178 765

[90] Bremer, 1843. From this description it would appear that Bremer chanced to see a grave not long after the aborigines had completed the final rituals. Had any time elapsed the whole area would have been covered with grass and leaves, for, after the *pukamuni* ceremonies, nobody is interested in either the grave or the poles.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

were words like "insecure" and "uneasy." He was not particularly aggressive nor particularly submissive, but he fluctuated between the two attitudes. One got the impression after associating with him that he was never sure of what was expected of him and acted therefore in contradictory ways according to what *he thought* was expected of him. Or to put the same impression another way, there seemed a constant discrepancy between what people expected of Antonio and what he wanted to do if left alone. In tribal fights, for instance, he acted fiercely and aggressively and with the air of swaggering braggadocio that that all important men are expected to show in fighting, yet at the earliest possible moment he melted into the crowd with visible relief at being able to quit the center of the stage and without a trace of rancor or ill will toward any of the people whom he had been abusing or had been abused by a few minutes before. In council meetings of senior men he was always listened to with respect yet always had to be prodded into speaking at all. He never initiated a policy or offered his opinion until pressure was put upon him to state what he thought, and while his opinion when given was listened to with attention it was always a paraphrase of some opinion already given, usually the majority opinion of the group. He expressed what he thought the group wanted him to say, never an "opinion of his own." In this respect Antonio had many of the characteristics of a "yes-man" and like his counterparts in more civilized societies he seldom took the unpopular side and seldom stood up to opposition.

Two burning political issues agitating the Tiwi in 1928-30 were the issues of (1) plural marriage and (2) the visits of the Japanese pearling luggers. The Catholic missionaries had taken a strong stand on plural marriages and were bringing all the economic and moral pressure they could exert on the younger Tiwi to induce them to restrict themselves to one wife. Failure to bow to Mission pressure resulted in the recalcitrant's being cut off from the European food, tobacco, clothes, etc. which could only be obtained through the Mission. But beginning in the middle 1920's Japanese pearling boats in ever increasing numbers had carried on the practice of anchoring on the further side of Melville Island during the period of high tide (when diving for pearl shell was impossible) and inviting the natives to provide their women as prostitutes for the use of the crews during their stay on the beaches. The Japanese captains paid lavishly in European goods for any women thus provided and the subtribes on the southeast side of Melville, in particular the subtribe called the Yeimpi, proved very susceptible to the Japanese temptations.

These two issues of plural marriage and prostitution for the Japanese rather neatly complemented each other at two points. Not only did the Japanese rival the Mission station as a source of supply for European goods; the possession of a large number of wives was a condition that made a man very unpopular with the missionaries, but, if he were disposed to rent out some of them, made the same man very popular with the Japanese. The plural marriage issue, if alone, would clearly have divided the tribe into the conservatives, staunchly upholding plural marriage as the Tiwi way, and the radicals abandoning it in return for Mission favor. But such an alignment was cut right across

881 while a small trestle had been built of three
[343] upright sticks about 2 ft. 6 in. high in the form of an isosceles triangle, with the apex to the west. Cross sticks were laid across the top of this and the sticks covered with grass. Three old men then took Cooper to a point about twenty yards east of the trestle and faced towards it, two on his right, one on his left. They each held a
[411] flat bladed club, *irrutilla*, in the left hand horizontally above the head and beat the
[533] point of it with a light round club with a pointed end, *merkunga*. Cooper held three *merkunga* in the crook of his left arm, one being taken and used by one of the old men. The old men advanced towards the trestle, chanting and beating their clubs in the way described. Cooper was slightly behind them. Young men followed the group. Cooper stood before the trestle as at an altar while the old men chanted for about five minutes. Water was called for, and brought by a woman and given to a visitor from the Mugula tribe. He then poured the water over Cooper's head. Cooper rubbed his belly with his *merkunga*. The visitor then pulled the hair string free from one end of the wooden collar, *dadini*, while Cooper made very wry faces. The collar was removed and the ceremony ended. I was
[439] presented with Cooper's *dadini* and *merkunga* in return for gifts, and I was cheerfully escorted back to the beach where the lugger was waiting for me.

H. K. Fry,
D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.

[p. 168 A]

under the surface by the massive roots of the paperbarks. It was in 123
just this sort of pool that the largest of the five crocs landed that [225]
night, was harpooned. The huge 18-foot animal dived into the roots
and it took about twenty tense minutes to dislodge and dispatch him.
Aside from the crocodiles the only wild life seen that night was a
small and very frightened little mouse who suddenly appeared on
my lap and then just as suddenly disappeared over the boat's side.

We returned to Minianapi at daybreak and the hot tea and
roast goose seemed a perfect breakfast, or was it supper? It didn't
matter for we were soon sound asleep.

When we finally awoke in mid-afternoon we found the camp
almost deserted. "Everyone go walkabout; kill geese," Albert
informed us as he and Agnes gathered more wood to build up the
smouldering fire. It was very quiet in the small clearing and only
the little black spots of charcoal spaced in irregular intervals on the
ground were evidence that there were more than our mob in resi-
dence. The clearing itself was quite bare because it had been burned
by the first comers, with the double purpose of clearing out the
four-foot grass itself, and any of the various poisonous snakes [136]
which were quite likely to infest it. In back of the clearing was a
thick tangle of low bushes through which ran a little foot-path.
Agnes started down this path carrying a billy can and I offered to
go with her, but Albert said, "No, by um by we go, him long way,
him only get a little bit now." After one gets used to the pronoun [195]
"him" being used to refer to everything animal, vegetable, and
mineral, this phrase is perfectly understandable: the first "him"
referred to the water, the second to Agnes.

So instead of collecting water, I wandered down to the river
bank where Billy-Two, Brownie, and a few of the other men, were
busy skinning the crocodiles. This they did by cutting the skin first
around the head, then down either side of the rows of bumps
running along the spine to the tail. The skin was then carefully [281]
peeled and cut from the body. Once free it was rubbed with salt
which would act as a preservative until such time as the supply boat
would arrive to carry it to Darwin. There the skins would be sold [439]
to the dealer and the proceeds credited to the hunter's account or 452
sent in the form of hard cash to the settlement for distribution. Now
they were folded into bundles and loaded into the launch, and large [262]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

797 telephone, with which they keep in touch with the Presbytery in Darwin, not only were the good fathers there to greet us, but the children of the mission school had also been given a holiday to celebrate the occasion. Small boys and half-grown lads were there in force and soon crowded round the 'plane. The bearded men against the fence kept in the background, while women and girls peered over the stile that leads into the garden. Men and boys wore only the little naga, women and girls a short sarong [291] —and they are all the better for this lack of clothing.

KINDLY and shrewd old Father Gsell, who founded the mission rather more than a quarter of a century ago, has his own ideas with regard to the black man. He does not ruin his health by dressing him (or her) up in mission clothing, and he sees that the blacks who come into the mission do not become mere spongers and hangers-on. When a black asks for flour or anything else that he requires, Father Gsell replies, "What have you to give for it?" He may have a spear, for which the good father has no use, but he will take it, or anything that the black can offer in payment. If the black's reply is "Nothing," Father Gsell will say "Well, you are a big, strong man; you can dig the garden."

It does not matter that the garden has been dug before. The thing is to keep the blacks from becoming cadgers. Treated so, they retain their self-respect and do not degenerate into useless loafers hanging round the mission station, just for what they can get without any effort. The mission fathers, of course, do all they can for the sick and injured—that is an entirely different matter. Every missionary who has been long on any field in North Australia must recognize that it is impossible to do anything with a full-grown black to alter his outlook in any way, and the methods of the Sacred Heart Mission must appeal to all unbigoted members of any church as admirable common-sense.

It is only with the very young that the missionaries can hope for any success in the inculcating of Christian ideals, and it is towards the little boys and girls that the good fathers look for 797 the reward of their self-sacrificing labours. They are able to get them, too, without pandering to the laziness of their parents. 562 The natives, who are always fond of children, are quite willing 567 to have their little boys well fed and well looked after; but, ●439 when it comes to the girls, self-interest enters into the question. Little girls can be sold to the Japanese of the pearling fleets, [855] and the Japanese are liberal in the matter of prices.

FATHER Gsell must therefore buy the girls in competition with the Japanese. It has been said that this is countenancing a shameful and revolting slave-trade, and that to buy the girls is definitely wrong in principle. What would the worthy critics do? Are they content to see this dreadful traffic continued, or have they any practical alternative to offer? Father Gsell is trying at least to save as many girls as possible from the horrible fate in store for them. The regular patrol of North Australian waters by the forces of the Government may eventually put an end to the practice, but what of all these little girls in the meantime? As they grow up, the Christian boys and girls marry one another, and, as the Christians have one wife only, they are unwilling to sell or to hire her out to the Japanese. This, like all the dealings of the Sacred Heart Mission with the islanders, is based on practical common sense.

[p. 14(B)]

under the surface by the massive roots of the paperbarks. It was in 123
just this sort of pool that the largest of the five crocs landed that [225]
night, was harpooned. The huge 18-foot animal dived into the roots
and it took about twenty tense minutes to dislodge and dispatch him.
Aside from the crocodiles the only wild life seen that night was a
small and very frightened little mouse who suddenly appeared on
my lap and then just as suddenly disappeared over the boat's side.

We returned to Minianapi at daybreak and the hot tea and
roast goose seemed a perfect breakfast, or was it supper? It didn't
matter for we were soon sound asleep.

When we finally awoke in mid-afternoon we found the camp
almost deserted. "Everyone go walkabout; kill geese," Albert
informed us as he and Agnes gathered more wood to build up the
smouldering fire. It was very quiet in the small clearing and only
the little black spots of charcoal spaced in irregular intervals on the
ground were evidence that there were more than our mob in resi-
dence. The clearing itself was quite bare because it had been burned
by the first comers, with the double purpose of clearing out the
four-foot grass itself, and any of the various poisonous snakes [136]
which were quite likely to infest it. In back of the clearing was a
thick tangle of low bushes through which ran a little foot-path.
Agnes started down this path carrying a billy can and I offered to
go with her, but Albert said, "No, by um by we go, him long way,
him only get a little bit now." After one gets used to the pronoun [195]
"him" being used to refer to everything animal, vegetable, and
mineral, this phrase is perfectly understandable: the first "him"
referred to the water, the second to Agnes.

So instead of collecting water, I wandered down to the river
bank where Billy-Two, Brownie, and a few of the other men, were
busy skinning the crocodiles. This they did by cutting the skin first
around the head, then down either side of the rows of bumps
running along the spine to the tail. The skin was then carefully [281]
peeled and cut from the body. Once free it was rubbed with salt
which would act as a preservative until such time as the supply boat
would arrive to carry it to Darwin. There the skins would be sold [439]
to the dealer and the proceeds credited to the hunter's account or 452
sent in the form of hard cash to the settlement for distribution. Now
they were folded into bundles and loaded into the launch, and large [262]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The mobility of people other than household heads was much less. 562
Women and children could move only with the permission, and usually in the 571
company, of their lord and master. Occasionally old and trusted wives might
be sent, unsupervised, on a journey by their husbands or their brothers, [203]
usually to carry messages and bring back gossip, but young wives were never
trusted to be out of sight either of the husband or of elderly female supervisors. Young men were less subject to their fathers' orders and hence were fairly free to come and go as they pleased, but the universal suspicion which all husbands bore toward wandering young men put severe restrictions on their mobility and prevented them attaching themselves to any household or camp in which they did not have some close relative.

The fact, then, that a man like Tu'untalumi was (in Tiwi terms) very 159
mobile did not necessarily mean that members of his household shared his 222
degree of mobility. When he took most of his large household with him on his 462
journeys away from home, as he often did, it was always because he was going 527
a considerable distance and was traveling slowly, living off the country as he
went. In such cases he liked to have a large retinue to feed him on the way and also to permit him to entertain in fitting style when he arrived. For
while it was true that at a funeral or at an initiation the relatives of the de-
ceased or of the novices were supposed to take care of the feeding of all the [574]
visitors, nonetheless, wealthy and generous men like Tu'untalumi believed in taking along with them a bevy of young wives, with a couple of efficient elderly widow-wives in charge of them, to contribute to the food-getting and
food-preparing activities. Of course the supervision of the young wives' morals [837
in the strange environment was often difficult, especially in the hectic at-
mosphere of a big ceremonial, but this worry was compensated for by the fact 593]
that the visitor who came so attended was contributing a number of extra food providers to the labor force of the harassed hosts and thus making a generous gesture, and also by the fact that such a visitor was not dependent upon the hospitality provided by the hosts. Having his own food-producing unit with him, he could live better and stay longer than if he had come alone or only as one of a party of men. In this respect, as in so many others, a Tiwi household head's decision had to be reached by balancing against one another the two competing motives of, on the one hand, the desire to eat well and, on the other, the desire to keep his young wives safe from prowling bachelors. Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest man of the Malauila band, usually decided not only to leave his wives at home but also not even to go himself. But Ki-in-kumi was a gloomy, pessimistic old man. Tu'untalumi usually decided to do the thing in style, travel with a large retinue, have all the comforts of home while in strange districts, and take his chances on the strange bachelors. He clearly believed that a good booming ceremony with lots to eat and himself in the center directing the dancing was well worth the risk of a few of his young
wives being seduced off-stage. Men like Ki-in-kumi thought Tu'untalumi an [184]
old fool for not leaving his young wives at home, and Tu'untalumi probably thought that old Ki-in-kumi might as well be dead, especially since his death would be the occasion for a really magnificent funeral.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white ties and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 557 571 764 mourners for their services. Death, in other words, incapacitated the relatives, so the nonrelatives swarmed in to "help" them—that is, take advantage of their incapacity. A man who could say, "I helped to dig your mother's grave" had a hold for the rest of his life over the man or men to whom he could say it. Such a hold was not as strong, of course, as that of a man who could say, "I helped you get your first bestowed wife," but the difference of obligation was only a difference of degree. The Tiwi were always "helping" each other, but the man who was "helped" therefore "owed" something to his helper. At deaths, mourners mourned and nonmourners did the work; therefore the mourners "owed" the nonmourners, and such debts were carried on the same mental ledgers as other debts, such as marriage debts.

182 571 765 [764] When deaths occurred suddenly and unexpectedly, the mourners had to choose their helpers for the burial from the relatively few people present at the time, and were thus often forced to become obligated to men they did not much relish being under obligation to. At the funerals the same bookkeeping mentality prevailed, but since these were not held until months after the death and burial, the chief mourners had time to select their helpers with care and political finesse. Satellites were very useful in this connection, since a man could ask his satellites to perform the necessary ceremonial services and thus get a return from them for the debts of gratitude they already owed him. This was one reason why a skillful Tiwi politician did not by any means select only close kinsmen for satelliteship. A death which made him *pukimani* was likely to make his close kinsmen *pukimani* also, hence he needed some satellites who were not close kinsmen.

182 557 571 765 [462] In the interval between the burial and the funeral, the chief mourner, on behalf of all the mourners but fairly independently if he were a big man, allocated all the jobs that had to be done in preparation for the funeral. Everybody who came had to be fed by the mourners, and the collection and hoarding of the necessary food devolved on the women of the mourning households. Thus the mourners provided the food, but everything else necessary had to be prepared by nonmourners. The chief item among the ceremonial necessities was the graveposts. The prohibition on mourners approaching the body and the grave extended to the posts, and therefore the cutting, carving, erecting on the grave, and painting of these central features of the funeral ceremonies had to be carried out by nonmourners, "asked to cut the posts" by the chief mourner. Here there was much room for influence maneuvers. A big man acting as chief mourner for a dead relative wanted the funeral to be as lavish as possible, to show his own importance. But the more important the [554] nonmourners he selected to cut the posts for him, the more he owed them for their services. Such a request was in the nature of asking a favor, and to ask a favor was to put oneself in a subordinate position, in terms of influence. The Tiwi power orientation was so ingrained that, even when acting as chief mourner, an elder could not avoid making his requests and allocating the ceremonial tasks so as to gain ground if possible, or at least not lose any ground, in the influence and prestige race.

765 The mourning ceremonies, though prolonged for several days of con-

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Logger-head Turtle-woman, Ringa, at Jutapinta

773 At the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, *Ringa*, the logger-head turtle, with *Garagalani*, the hawk-bill turtle, were responsible for making the large bark ceremonial baskets.[87] When, at the close of the creation period, the men and women changed themselves into creatures or plants, the turtle-women, including *Ringa*, became the sea-going turtles.

×532 778 Pl. 12c deals with the totemic place of the logger-head turtle, a submerged reef, called Jutapinta, some miles north of Karslake Island. The central figure is the reef, the totemic body of the woman, *Ringa*, and the encircling dark-coloured area, *a*, the white sand on the sea bottom. At *b*, is the sea-water, and *c*, *c*, etc., are black rocks under the water, which today are frequented by the logger-head turtles. The yellow bands, *d*, *d*, etc., indicate the seaweed, and the white dotted areas, *e*, *e*, etc., the oysters that live on the reef. The dots, surrounding the central figure, symbolize the eggs inside the body of the logger-head turtle. Unlike the green or hawkbill turtles, the logger-heads do not lay their eggs on the sandy shore.

The Crocodile-woman, Wilinduela, at Wilindu

773 Toward the close of the creation period, the woman, *Wilinduela*, and her sister, *Numanirakala*, were sent out by their brother, *Tukimbini*, to establish totemic centres on northern Melville Island. When they reached Shark Bay, *Wilinduela* stayed on the high ground, i.e., Wilindu Island, while she sent her younger sister to Numanira, a reef uncovered only at low water. Before the two sisters separated, however, they camped together on the mainland at Mundinju (Pl. 10A).

×532 778 The black centre of Pl. 11A, is the totem place of the crocodile-woman on Wilindu Island, the surrounding white circle indicating the jungle around the totemic place. The small black discs are dark-coloured rocks on the cliffs, and the ligher-coloured, rocks on the sea beach. The outer circle is the sea.

On Pl. 11B the central disc is Wilindu Island, while the four circles on its circumference are freshwater springs.

The lower panel *a*, indicates black and *b*, yellow rocks on the coast; *c*, and *e*, *e*, etc., are areas of jungle; *f*, is a rock projecting from the sea, and *h*, the shores of Shark Bay. Poisonous yams, *kuku*, are indicated at *d*, and edible yams at *g*. The many circular discs are oysters on the rocks at Wilindu.

[462] [764] [87] At the conclusion of the present-day burial rites, these baskets, made by the women and painted by the men, are placed on the top of the burial poles as presents to the dead.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Pl. 10A pictures Mundinju, the place where the two sisters, *Wilinduela* and *Numanirakala* camped before the former made her home at Wilindu, and the latter at Numanira. 532x 778

The central black disc is Mundinju; the smaller black discs, throughout the painting, are holes in the cliffs from which seep streams of fresh water. The long, radiating panels are bands of red and yellow ochres in the cliffs, the groups of parallel lines, gutters formed in the cliffs, where *Wilinduela* winnowed; and the groups of chevron designs, ferns growing among the rocks.

The Red-ochre Woman, Numanirakala, at Numanira

Numanira, created by *Numanirakala*, is a partly submerged reef a short distance from Wulrungku (Karalake Island), north-western Melville Island. 778

At low tide, the aborigines collect one of the best ochres in the country from this locality, even better than that from Imilu (Fig. 1), for, although Imilu ochres are brightest when used dry, those from Numanira are best when mixed with water. [317]

The central design on Pl. 12B indicates the flat rocks of the submerged totemic place at Numanira, while similar designs, above and below, are other rocks near by. The darker-coloured segments in these three designs indicate the red ochre, and the lighter segments the mud on the sea bottom. The white circles represent sea-weed, the darker, small rocks under the water, and the dots, the corals growing on those rocks. 532x 778

The central black disc of Pl. 12D is Numanira; the surrounding white circle, the sand on the sea floor, and the narrow darker line on the periphery, the red ochre, for which the island is noted.

The radiating black panels symbolize clams, the lighter panels, oysters, both of which are plentiful on the rocks of the island. The outer circle is the mud, and the dots are bunches of weed on the sea-bottom.

The Spider-woman, Baraka, at Rungani

During *pakanari* times, the spider-woman, *Baraka*, who lived at Rungani, made a bark basket for the *pukamani* of *Purukupali*. She first stripped a sheet of bark from a eucalyptus tree, heated it over the fire to make it flexible, then, bending it double, sewed the edges together with split lawyer vine. From that day until now, the women of Melville and Bathurst Islands have made their baskets in the same manner. After the *pukamani* of *Purukupali*, *Tokindini* instructed his wife, *Baraka*, to establish a totemic place at Rungani, northern Melville Island. 773 285 [462] 773

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By Jane C. Goodale

884 In 1912 Sir Baldwin Spencer, a professor of biology at
[114] the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the
[824] ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately
[114] associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony,
[178] however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe
[177] that such participation cannot prepare them adequately for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what
161 the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a
131 thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Melville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well
178 supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Economically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied,
[224] and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little
825 physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or
462 digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were
868 taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

000 Tiwi native on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11, (B)]

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SHARK DANCE is among traditional, imitative figures that are performed during ritual preparation of toxic *Kulama* yams.

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ceived additional instruction in spear-fishing and birding, while girls were taught more intensively to locate and identify edible plants. The children, as a result, were generally independent economically in their early teens, by which time the girls were already married. Young males contributed to their parents' larder and to other households, but did not marry and acquire households until they were more than thirty years old. Even now, this late marriage age obtains in theory, but not always in practice.

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[883]
[183]

885 THUS, to the Tiwi, economic independence and/or marriage did not alone signify adulthood. The Tiwi adult was intellectually, rather than physiologically, a mature individual who was expected to join actively in the non-economic affairs of the community. An adult was also expected to be almost entirely responsible for his own health, wealth, and future prospects. This included attaining success in hunting and in war and, for the men, in wife-collecting. If an adult became ill or was injured or, as a Tiwi would say, was unlucky in the pursuit of life's benefits, he alone was responsible for not behaving as an adult should.

884 The annual *Kulama* ceremony, held by each community in April at the end of the rainy season, was a most important event to insure individual success. Although a collec-

[P. 11, (C)]

[TEXT continues on P. 12(C)]

884 tive, community ceremony, its benefits accrued only to individual participants, and then only to those who had followed the complex procedures correctly. Thus it was vitally important to every Tiwi individual, male or female, to receive instruction in the *Kulama* ritual before being considered a fully adult member of the tribe. The instruction period lasted six years, during which the initiates, among other requirements, had to participate actively in six *Kulama* rituals. Following this training, the individuals were considered responsible adults by other members of the tribe, but only through continued participation in the ritual could that condition be maintained.

[178] TODAY the ritual is still performed by those who believe in it, and it will probably continue until the last initiated Tiwi dies, or until the underlying meaning is totally lost and is replaced by ideas of how to be successful that have their origins in Western thought.

[262] [257] The ceremony itself takes three days to complete and centers on the preparation of a toxic variety of yam, the *Kulama*. To make this yam edible, it must first be soaked. It is then baked, mashed, and again soaked for a time in fresh water. Even after the poisons have been removed by this elaborate process, an extremely bitter taste remains. The Tiwi say they never eat the yam except at the conclusion of the *Kulama* ceremony. Those who believe in the [178] ritual say the yam has tremendous power for causing good or evil, and thus one must handle the yam carefully during the preparation, speak to it softly, sing to it at times, and always treat it with respect. The individual absorbs the power of the yam by touching it, by rubbing the body with it, and finally by eating it. All these steps are ritualized. [462] Special digging sticks are made, and, contrary to the usual practice of having the women gather plants, only men

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 13(B)..Author]

[P. 12, (C)]

884 are allowed to dig the yam. A special dance area, or cere-
462 monial ring, is cleared on the ground and a special cook-
535 ing fire is built in its center. On each of the three ceremonial
301 days the participants paint themselves in specified ways
with ocher. During the evening of each day, while the yams
are soaking or cooking, the male participants, singly or
884 together, walk slowly counterclockwise around the cere-
533 monial fire, beating sticks together as an accompaniment
534 to specially composed songs. At times the wives, who re-
main outside the ring, sing with the men, or they may join
535 their husbands in traditional dances that imitate various
aspects of the natural world around them.

The songs are a vital part of the ritual. They must be newly composed for the occasion and may relate to any event or abstract idea the composer chooses. The songs
154 often deal with injustices the singer has experienced in the past year, about which he wishes to register an "official" complaint:

539 "There was a funeral,
You went first, I came after.
Old people came in first.
I was late because I had a *Kulama*.
Why didn't you wait for me?"

or

"When Dory have baby girl
The old man said, 'That's for you.'
Dory, my mother-in-law, she burns me.
Dory doesn't know the old people way.
I would like to kill her."

Others may be in the nature of news reports, in which the listeners are informed of anything interesting that may have happened to the singer during the preceding year.
CX20 For instance, the composer of the following song had just

[Text continues on p.14, (A)--Analyst]
[p.13, (B)]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 14. "Cooking milingasi"

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[322]
[462]
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do you cook the sticks?" I asked. "To make them dry so they won't slip in our hands," they replied.

Once the sticks were all well charred on the ends the men took them down to the canoe. For once, I used my status of ethnographer and overruled my role of a woman, and accompanied the men on what was properly men's business. The presence of women or children might bring bad luck. Whether the explanation was simply that women and children are considered to be lacking in the amount of silence or immobility required, or whether the reason was more subtle, I never found out. "This properly men's business," was the only explanation.

We took the canoe a quarter of a mile up stream, where we

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

412 short, cylindrical stick, about three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter. This was dipped in the colour and transferred to the painting surface with the brush held as in Fig. 2B.

FIG. 2. *Methods of Holding Brushes*

4. THE ARTISTS

531 As with other aboriginal groups with whom I have worked in Central and Northern Australia, there is no special artist class; all aboriginal men and [463] women of the Tiwi, would, on occasions, be required to paint designs on the [302] bodies of one or another of their relatives, or on objects, particularly those associated with the *pukamani* ceremony.

Some men, however, were looked upon as being more skilled than others in some particular field, i.e., cutting and decorating the burial poles, or the ceremonial spears, painting the large bark baskets, or the bodies of men and women who take part in the *pukamani* or *kulama* ceremonies.

On Pl. 1 are four men who were regarded as good craftsmen and artists.

Pulanimbuwi (Pl. 1A), hard-working and meticulous in all he did, produced the unusual *pukamani* pole (Pl. 35); two other poles as human figures (Pl. 37A, B; 37E, F), and a number of bark paintings; Pl. 13B, D, and Pl. 14C, D, being typical.

Inbidjarmeri (Pl. 1B), being fully employed by the Superintendent of the nearby settlement, was unable to make bark paintings for me. He was most expert in carving and painting the beautiful, multi-barked ceremonial spears. Pl. 32B is his work. He was also in great demand for decorating the performers for the *pukamani* and *kulama* ceremonies. Pl. 28K and Pl. 28B are examples of his craftsmanship in this field.

115 *Tjamalampua* (Pl. 1C) and *Malumerinita* (Pl. 1D) are two men to whom I

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

of the oldest and most respected seniors, particularly of Tu'untalumi and those swayed by his opinion. It follows from this that Tip though given to jokes and pranks cannot be written off as merely a privileged buffoon. On the contrary his wit and gaiety earned him friends and his friends gave him influence out of proportion to his youth. Some insight into this is supplied by the shadow of the ubiquitous Louis. Tipperary, through the missionaries' efforts on behalf of monogamy, had obtained a wife at a much earlier age than would have been possible under pre-white conditions, and according to the women, who have their own sources of information about such things, Louis was strongly attracted by Tipperary's wife. Since Louis was not noted for restraint or self-discipline in these matters the obvious question was why he did not press his attention on her as he had done on numerous other women, including the wife of Tip's younger brother Bob. "Oh no, he doesn't dare chase after Tipperary's wife. The old men would be very angry if he did anything to her," was the reply of the old hags who were the local gossip columnists. This belief that the "old men" would undoubtedly protect Tip's wife while they had noticeably failed to protect Bob's wife from a similar threat (see below) is a pretty clear indication that the two young men had very different places in tribal estimation—a fact that in turn can be correlated with no status differential between them and leaves only the "personality" difference between the two men to account for it. Tip was popular with the control groups, Bob was not, therefore the control groups would support Tip because they liked him. They were indifferent toward Bob.[10]

To summarize Tipperary is relatively easy. He was a cheery, relaxed, fun-loving young man who enjoyed his own humor but enjoyed it all the more if it were shared by an appreciative audience. He was therefore gregarious, friendly, outgoing and extroverted. He would have been a good Rotarian or a better disk-jockey. Because of these traits he was noticed a great deal more by his elders than his age justified and the notice he received was usually favorable. He was popular in a way none of his brothers were, and because of this popularity was able to express opinions and exert influence to an extent unusual for one of his years. In a society where men under 30 are expected to be seen and not heard, Tip was constantly being heard. This was only possible because his natural gaiety and warmth prejudiced almost everybody in his favor. He was the sort of man about whom it is often said in our culture "he always makes a party go," or, "he is the sort of person who just naturally makes friends."

BOB

The youngest brother, Bob, needs only two words to describe him—complete nonentity. About 27 or 28 when I knew him and, because of the Mission's efforts, married a good deal younger than he would have been under pre-white conditions, Bob, whatever the occasion or circumstances, was always part of the background. Like many of the younger Tiwi he was inclined to spend part of each year in Darwin working for the white men, and by them he was regarded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker.

Tipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families. 161 361 648

It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace. 361 177 [631] [224] [464]

By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives, 123 [132] [825]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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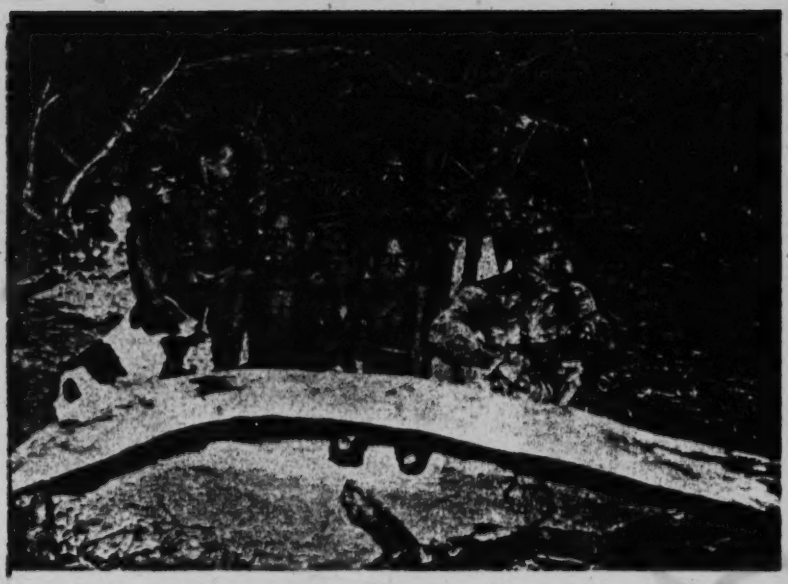

Fig. 12. A Tiwi family camped for the night

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Black Joe, Fat Alice's brother, had given them his eldest daughter in adoption. However, Dennis spent as much time with her proper parents as with her foster parents and it was quite evident that her affection was at least equally divided. Albert went over and managed to bring the screaming, kicking child back to our camp and asked me to give her some of the hard candy which I had brought with me. It was some time, however, before her attention was sufficiently distracted to allow Tuki and the other men to slip away into the canoe to hunt crocodiles for another night. Agnes commented to me, "Let him cry? That white man rule no good. By and by they go silly."

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We strolled back to Black Joe's camp with Dennis, and listened to a discussion concerning the superiority of crocodile hunting over

settlement work. It seemed the chief advantage was that they 123
received 'money-in-the-finger' from the skins they caught. They 465
didn't understand why they didn't also get paid for the settlement 521
work. I kept silent, but soon they turned to me and said, "You get job; how much you pay?" I told them, and then went on to say that out of that salary I had to pay someone for the food I ate, the clothes I wore, the house I lived in and so on, whereas they did not have to pay for the flour, tea, sugar, meat, blankets, or clothes the welfare people gave them. There was a long silence during which, I believe, each man was figuring how much all these benefits were worth in hard money. Finally Ginger said slowly, "Maybe, this way more better."

Soon the visitors rose and returned to their fires. Someone 123
started a song, a low nasal chant. Another, a woman, began a high- 533
pitched love song, and to this discordant lullaby I soon fell asleep.

As usual, it was barely light when the camp came to life again. 123
After the customary tea breakfast, the various families discussed 512
among themselves the day's plans. Black Joe and Long Peter, their wives and children, were taking the canoe up-river to hunt. Young Brook and his brothers, Danny Brown and Charlie Cook, their wives and children, soon left to hunt in the area back of Minianapi. Charlie Quiet and Roger also left. "Now we go?" I turned in question to Albert. "No, we stay behind. Build house. No good you go bush. Too much grass, plenty big mob cheeky snake. By and by that mob burn grass; then we go bush." It seemed like a logical explanation, but I was disappointed.

The day was already sticky and muggy, and tired of inactivity 123
I started off toward the creek, saying I was going for a swim. Both natives jumped up and said, "No. No. Too much crocodile, more better go along billabong." So with Agnes ahead we started down the path leading away from the creek. Soon we were out of the thick tangle of bushes separating the clearing from the true bush. Now the path led over the rocky, dusty ground, which had but recently been burned. The trunks of the large bloodwood and [137]
stringy-bark trees were blackened for about four feet up from their base. The spiraled trunks of the screwpalm, as well as their lower dried leaves, also had a charred appearance. Except for an occa-

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 17. "Hunting a possum"

It was soon overtaken by Albert who killed it quickly with a blow from a stick. As he brought it back he said, "Him big mother. See him pickaninni." And he held up a hairless baby barely three inches long, its eyes still closed, but very much alive. "Oh, kill it quick, Albert," I begged. He shook his head, "I can't kill him, I too sorry alonga him." Here we were at an impass, two people too sorry alonga him; one too sorry to kill it, and one too sorry to let it live. Who was right?

Meanwhile, Agnes took the mother possum and pulled the fur from a small area on the belly and then slitting the skin with the sharp end of a broken stick, she withdrew the gall bladder and intestines. "Him make him bad," she explained. We did not stop to cook the animal, but continued our search. This area had all been burned by the previous parties and already little delicate shoots of grass were poking up through the black ground.

During the next hour we wandered slowly through the bush and, although we saw many trees which had been inhabited by possums, they were now empty. One that looked most likely was hollow and Albert hopefully built a fire in the rotten base, then sat back and waited for the smoke to drive the animal out. After half an hour, it was quite obvious that no one was at home.

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Then our luck turned. This time, when Albert gave the "come here" call, it was because he had located a wild honey nest, or "sugar-bag," high in a large stringy-bark eucalyptus. There was little point in cutting this large tree down so Albert prepared to climb. First he cut a small sapling and laid it at a 45-degree angle against a crotch where the massive trunk split in two. Then, grip-

123 ping the axe with his teeth, he ran up the sapling on all fours with
222 as much agility as a monkey. Upon reaching the crotch, he put his
481 arms around the trunk, placed the soles of his feet close together against the bark, and quickly progressed in a sort of leaping motion up to the top of the tree. Once there he casually climbed up, over, and around the various branches, until he reached the object of his climb, the hollow branch with the little hole through which was passing a steady stream of small insects. This branch was quickly cut through and fell crashing to the ground. Soon Albert was down again, investigating this find with Agnes and me. The hole was enlarged and the combs of dark honey exposed, still crawling with the little black bees. We dug in with our fingers or
[133] brushes made by chewing small twigs, quite unmindful of the bees, who obligingly never developed stings in this part of the world.
[262 The honey was dark and very strong, but when mixed with the dry,
237] crumbly, yellow "bee bread" a nice balance of taste was obtained. It took the three of us very little time to finish the sugar-bag and off we went—this time in a homeward direction.

123 The one possum looked very small and Albert again began mut-
224 tering about "someone *mobuditi* make me bad luck." We separated again and when almost to the creek Agnes suddenly held me back
[777] and cautioned silence. Carefully she picked up a stout stick from the ground and then approached what I suddenly noticed was a very fat goana, about two feet long, apparently sound asleep on a nearby tree trunk. One quick blow and the lizard fell to the ground, quite dead. We carried the catch to the landing and quickly had another swim before Albert caught up. We were gathering firewood when Albert arrived and explained his delay by holding up another
123 possum. The second possum was immediately gutted, then both
252 were laid on the fire and turned frequently until all the fur had been burned off and the skin made brittle. The animals were quartered and laid again on the fire until well roasted. The goana received no preliminary treatment before going on the fire. When all were
[264] cooked, they were removed and laid on a "table" of clean, green leaves, and we reached in and tore off pieces of the steaming, juicy
123 meat. It is impossible to describe this meat to someone who has not
262 tasted it. All I can say is that it was tender and tasty and perfectly

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Figs. 18 and 19. With a tomahawk between his teeth, Albert goes after honey.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

322 piece of the former fold are clasped between the fingers and thus used as a cup
415 the part lying opposite to the fingers being held to the lips.

Honey Eating.

222 In my notes on the north-western tribes of the Northern Territory I have
262 described[1] a honey-collecting implement and there, also, referred to somewhat
264 similar observations made by Dr. Wilson[2] and Keppel.[3]

On Bathurst Island I observed still another modification. A young flower-stalk of the fan-palm (*Livistonia humilis*), when about 50 to 70 centimetres long, is cut just above the trunk of the palm and its bottom end chewed until all the fibres are separated and look like the hairs of a brush. The juice, being quite sweet, is swallowed. The brush end is then inserted into the nest of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*), whereby the honey gathers between the fibres. When saturated with honey, the brush end is passed back to the mouth and again sucked and chewed for a considerable time, after which it is once more returned to the honey for a fresh supply, and this is continued to repletion.

Tree Climbing.

●481 [222] Both male and female, young and old, are expert tree-climbers when in pursuit of game, honey of the wild bee, fruits, and seeds. As none of the trees on the islands grow to an abnormally large size, the butt is usually not too great in circumference to allow of the arms being thrown around it, so that the hands may obtain a firm hold on the side distant from the climber. Having obtained this hold while standing on the ground and facing the tree, the native jumps on to the butt, clutching it with the flat surfaces of his feet in a frog-like fashion. The knees in this position stand well outwards. The body hangs, suspended by the arms above and held against the tree by the legs below. The climber now raises his body; his hands quickly follow by a corresponding distance. Holding on with the latter he draws up his legs in a jumping manner once more to clutch the tree between the soles of his feet. This movement being repeated, he rapidly advances upwards.

Hunting and Fighting.

411 *Throwing-sticks and clubs.*—Several types of throwing-sticks and clubs are in use. They must be referred to under this general or collective heading, since it is hard to discriminate between the two implements and to say definitely where the throwing-stick ends and the club begins. They form an interesting group of Australian implements and weapons that allows of a satisfactory system of

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 26, Fig. 19.
[2] *Narrative Voyage Round the World*, 1835, p. 99.
[3] *A Visit to Indian Archipelago*, 1853, vol. 2, p. 168.

123 meat, lukewarm tea, and the remains of the fresh bread smothered in jam for dessert.

The sky by this time was growing dark for thick, heavily laden clouds were fast building up. With what light remained from the setting sun we shifted camp to a small hollow in the dunes, free from the prickly seed pods and protected from the wind. Soon it was quite dark and the wind seemed to blow more strongly. Albert, afraid for the safety of the canoe, decided to remove it to the quiet waters of the little creek where Big Jack had found the crabs. Big Jack accompanied him and while they were gone Agnes prepared to make some "damper." She built the fire up again so that the
123 ground would become very hot. While it was burning down she
252 took the bag of flour, opened it, and made a small depression in the contents. Into this hole she poured baking powder, salt, and
372 water from the billy. (Quite often the first two ingredients are
484 omitted.) With both hands still in the bag she worked the mixture into a large lump of dough which she removed and flattened on the outside of the flour bag. By this time the fire had again burned down, and the burning coals were brushed aside and a hole scooped out in the hot sand. The damper, about the size of a large frying pan, was laid in the hole and covered over with more hot sand. "Tomorrow, we make quick breakfast and no stop for lunch," she explained. In about an hour, during which the damper had been turned once, it was removed and the sand brushed from the rough, tough surface. It was then carefully wrapped in a piece of calico and put away in safety.

It was only then that we realized that the men had not returned.
123 Agnes became quite worried, and I must confess I did also. We walked down to the water's edge and called out, but could hear no reply over the roar of the waves, and because of the inky blackness we could see only a few yards. After about ten minutes we returned to the camp and in a brief time both men appeared. Agnes immediately demanded to know why, if they were so close, they didn't answer our calls? Albert insisted that he had replied, so after a while Agnes changed her question to why had it taken them
[481] so long? "Water bin come in long way," Albert replied, "I swim out; take long time find him canoe." When one considers that,

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of bands as part of any political or legal system; they were members of households as part of a domestic system. What held the unit together was the central position and dominance of the father or husband, and hence the life of a household was only as long as his lifetime. When he died, the household broke up and the surviving members joined other households, perhaps in the same district, perhaps in some other band territory. Such change of household was carried out by the individuals concerned, not quite at will, but certainly not with sufficient uniformity for any political or legal label to be put upon it.

Uniformity was derived from the fact that every Tiwi had to live in a household. The universal prohibition on unmarried females was obviously one expression of that requirement. For men, the requirement was less firm, and if a young man wanted to live entirely alone he was free to try—although there is no record of any man having tried it for more than a few weeks at a time. Even if his mother were dead and his father or step-father did not welcome him, he attached himself to some household since, apart from any question of loneliness, this was the only way by which he could eat regularly. For Tiwi households were primarily autonomous food-producing and food-consumption units. A household made its own decisions, camped where it saw fit to camp, moved on when the food quest made it advantageous or necessary to move on. A large household, such as that of Ki-in-kumi or any other big man, was a complete community in itself, with the old man as executive director. He laid down the daily, weekly, and monthly work and travel schedules for the women, the young men, and the children. Most of the time the work went automatically because all the adults and the older children knew their jobs.

Daily Activities

By shortly after dawn each day, the household was up, and after a light breakfast, usually of leftovers from the previous night, everybody left camp to go to work. The women and children (except perhaps the five- to ten-year-old boys, who were rather useless at that age) scattered in every direction from the camp with baskets and/or babies on their backs, to spend the day gathering food, chiefly vegetable foods, grubs, worms, and anything else edible. Since they had spent their lives doing it, the old women knew all about gathering and preparing vegetable foods, and they supervised the younger women. This was one important reason for men marrying widows, and even a man with many young wives was quite likely to remarry an elderly widow or two nonetheless. A husband with only young wives might have a satisfactory sex life, but he still needed a household manager if he wished to eat well. The supervision of the female members of the household was left to the old women and, provided the returns were good, the husband did not attempt to interfere nor to give orders concerning the details of women's work.

After the women had scattered out in a wide circuit from the camp, the husband might hunt, but only if he were not too old. In hunting kanga-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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[P.2]
[P.1 not processed]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 ,0120 Tiwi 0120

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BATHURST ISLAND ABORIGINAL MOTHER AND CHILD.

600 crocodile, nothing that breathes so utterly immobile; but there are few beasts that can spring more quickly into deadly activity when the occasion warrants a display of strength and agility.

The Vernons do not appear to be the sort of emergency landing-ground that one would choose if it could possibly be avoided. Apart from the crocodiles, the terrain does not promise too safe a landing.

Sea and sky alike were palest blue, and, in the farthest distance, the vast and faintly-wrinkled expanse of ocean mingled softly with the sky in a pearly sea-haze. One could not say where the one began and the other ended, and, partly obscured in the haze, far-distant luggers, with all sail set, headed for Darwin. Beneath the 'plane, rounded boiling swirls, long straight lines of white foam, and darker turbulent streaks in the pale-blue surface of the sea clearly defined the spring-tide turrents. Down beneath us, too, shoals and deeps showed emerald or blue, and the long, pale-brown lines of reef that run

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 2. Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

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As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend, Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these

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The sky by this time was growing dark for thick, heavily laden clouds were fast building up. With what light remained from the setting sun we shifted camp to a small hollow in the dunes, free from the prickly seed pods and protected from the wind. Soon it was quite dark and the wind seemed to blow more strongly. Albert, afraid for the safety of the canoe, decided to remove it to the quiet waters of the little creek where Big Jack had found the crabs. Big Jack accompanied him and while they were gone Agnes prepared to make some "damper." She built the fire up again so that the
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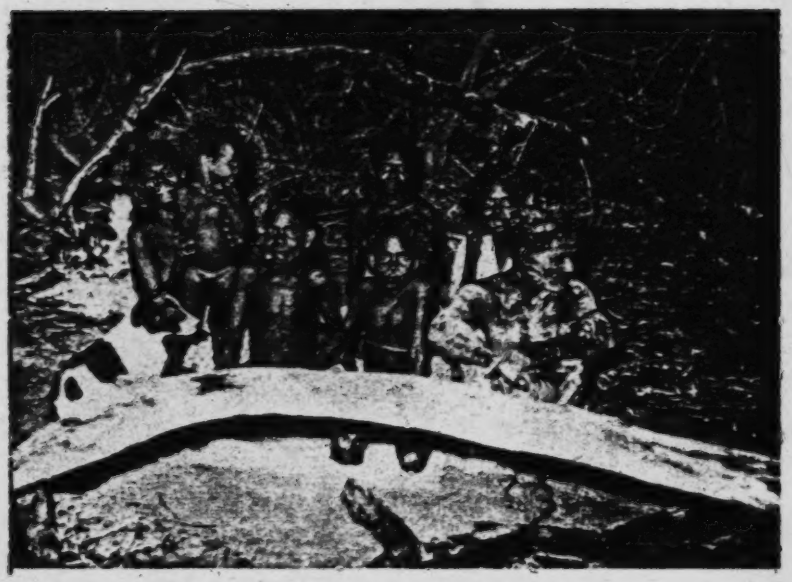

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

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262 cooked, with that delicious charcoal-broiled flavor so much sought after in our more elite dining establishments or in our backyards.

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224 Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goanas, they brought over to show us an extremely large water [431] snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tre- [513] mendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minianapi in time to meet the geese. 123 All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's 231 hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we 484 reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was

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5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

396 501 climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*).[1] Holes are previously pierced through the
[237 412] bark with an awl, made out of the leg-bone of a wallaby.

The stitches are made more secure and watertight by plastering them with
[237 314] wax from the comb of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*) or with one of the several resin
so extensively used by all natives. The inside corners are caulked with plasti
clay and fibre, or resin. Two stays or struts of fairly stout timber, cut to the
required length and inserted at the points where the bark was reduced to half it
thickness, keep the sides of the canoe apart. From these points, therefore, th
sides of the canoe converge to the bow at one end and to the stern at the other
while in between they are more or less parallel. The canoe, if there be an
difference at all, is wider aft (74 cm.) than it is nearer the bow (55 cm.); th
"fish-tail" incision, too, is acute and deep at the bow and more rounded an
shallow at the stern (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). Along the top, inner, edge o
either side of the canoe, a straight strengthening pole is lashed with distan
unequally-spaced and grouped "run on" stitches of cane-strips. These structure
lend considerable rigidity to the gunwale of the canoe; they do not exten
throughout the whole length, but, being straight, are more or less parallel one t
another, and do not enclose the stern or bow. Major Campbell,[2] in referring t
the bark canoes seen by him while at Fort Dundas, states that "the gunwales a
strengthened by two small saplings (such as grow in marshy places) fastene
together at each end of the canoe." This method is more like that in u
on the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria to-day and was not observed on th
islands by me. Long shoots of vines and strips of cane are wound crosswise fro
side to side of the canoe, and at the same time take in the strengthening-pol
along the gunwale. Additional circumferential winding binds the separate cor
into one thick rope. Four of such ties are spanned at equal distances, from o
side to the other, along the straight edges of the canoe. They not only preser
its shape, but afford a ready means by which the craft may be carried.

501 The canoe is not decorated in any way, but smears of various colours a
[531] noticed both at the bow and the stern, resulting from the handling by finge
previously occupied in decorative work with ochre. When not in use the canc
are "housed" on a level piece of ground, under the overhanging branches of
shady banyan or guttapercha tree. They are laid in normal upright positi
(not inverted), and are kept so by short supports of timber stemmed against t
sides. The bark thus dries in the required shape and does not become lop-sided.

Each canoe has its recognized place. Where a dense growth of mangrov
[487] skirts the foreshore, a regular approach to the water is kept clear by cutti
away the trees. The paddles are laid within the canoes.

Quite a large number of natives may be carried in a canoe, if the occasi

[1] Compare narrative of Mr. Carron in MacGillivray's *Narrative Voyage H.M* "*Rattlesnake*," 1852, vol. ii, pp. 125 and 126; also P. P. King: *Narrative Survey Intertropi Western Coasts of Australia*, London, 1827, vol. i, p. 90.

[2] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 156.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired
[175] the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indi-
[177] cate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even
[609] had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some of the designs being very pleasing to the eye. Some spears, moreover, have human 471
hair strings wound round the shaft, immediately below the head, for a distance of [531]
10 centimetres or more, and this is kept in place with beeswax.

Canoes.

Elsewhere I have referred to the marked absence among the northern 501
Australian tribes of anything but the most primitive crafts and such innovated forms as have resulted from the contact with the white and yellow races. They are, therefore, not to be considered as truly indigenous canoes. On Bathurst Island, however, conditions are different; due, perhaps, in the first place, to its insularity (as well as the numerous estuaries and rivers that cross [133]
the land), and, secondly, to the proximity of Melville Island, which is separated from it by only a narrow stretch of calm water known as Apsley Strait. The latter is barely a mile in width at its narrowest points. Numerous canoes are in use within this Strait, and occasionally, when wind and water are favourable, they venture a short distance out to sea. One type is principally in use, namely, a large bark-canoe measuring about 560 centimetres in length (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). It is made of a single sheet of bark, usually from suitable, straight, clear 396
trunks of the woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*) or the stringy-bark (*E. tetrodonta*) 501
(*vide* Plate XII, Fig. 1). It is cut from the tree by chopping transversely at the respective distances from the ground, then slitting it once vertically for the whole length and removing it by forcing the edge of the instrument under the bark and finally levering it off with pointed saplings. The outer side of this oblong piece of bark, which is rough, will become the inside surface of the canoe. At a distance of from 65 to 70 centimetres from either end, transverse cuts are made on the inside to a depth of half the thickness of the bark, and such thickness is removed from the whole of the surface lying away from the centre at either incision. Each end is thus reduced by half its original strength and material thereby becoming more pliable. The cutting is done with the sharp edge of a [237 412]
bivalve shell, usually a *Cyrena*. The subtilized ends of the sheet may, or may not, be held over a glowing fire to render them more pliant still. The sheet is folded lengthwise along its middle, and one or both ends kept together by vertical stakes, stuck in the ground and tied together at the top. The bottom corner of the fold is cut away in a very gentle upward slope. The two pieces of the fold are next held firmly together and cut in a more decisive upward direction from a point some 30 to 50 centimetres from the bottom edge end. The two freshly cut edges are neatly sewn with close, overcast stitches, and the same is done along the top horizontal edge for a distance of some 15 or 20 centimetres from the end. From the intervening space between the sewn parts at the top and bottom, an angular or curved segment is cut out in imitation of a fish-tail and its edges laced together in a like manner (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). The thread used for these "run-on" stitches is in the form of strips from the split sheets of the

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

396 501 climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*).[1] Holes are previously pierced through the [237 412] bark with an awl, made out of the leg-bone of a wallaby.

The stitches are made more secure and watertight by plastering them with [237 314] wax from the comb of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*) or with one of the several resins so extensively used by all natives. The inside corners are caulked with plastic clay and fibre, or resin. Two stays or struts of fairly stout timber, cut to the required length and inserted at the points where the bark was reduced to half its thickness, keep the sides of the canoe apart. From these points, therefore, the sides of the canoe converge to the bow at one end and to the stern at the other; while in between they are more or less parallel. The canoe, if there be any difference at all, is wider aft (74 cm.) than it is nearer the bow (55 cm.); the "fish-tail" incision, too, is acute and deep at the bow and more rounded and shallow at the stern (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). Along the top, inner, edge of either side of the canoe, a straight strengthening pole is lashed with distant, unequally-spaced and grouped "run on" stitches of cane-strips. These structures lend considerable rigidity to the gunwale of the canoe; they do not extend throughout the whole length, but, being straight, are more or less parallel one to another, and do not enclose the stern or bow. Major Campbell,[2] in referring to the bark canoes seen by him while at Fort Dundas, states that "the gunwales are strengthened by two small saplings (such as grow in marshy places) fastened together at each end of the canoe." This method is more like that in use on the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria to-day and was not observed on the islands by me. Long shoots of vines and strips of cane are wound crosswise from side to side of the canoe, and at the same time take in the strengthening-poles along the gunwale. Additional circumferential winding binds the separate cords into one thick rope. Four of such ties are spanned at equal distances, from one side to the other, along the straight edges of the canoe. They not only preserve its shape, but afford a ready means by which the craft may be carried.

501 The canoe is not decorated in any way, but smears of various colours are [531] noticed both at the bow and the stern, resulting from the handling by fingers previously occupied in decorative work with ochre. When not in use the canoes are "housed" on a level piece of ground, under the overhanging branches of a shady banyan or guttapercha tree. They are laid in normal upright position (not inverted), and are kept so by short supports of timber stemmed against the sides. The bark thus dries in the required shape and does not become lop-sided.

Each canoe has its recognized place. Where a dense growth of mangroves [487] skirts the foreshore, a regular approach to the water is kept clear by cutting away the trees. The paddles are laid within the canoes.

Quite a large number of natives may be carried in a canoe, if the occasion

[1] Compare narrative of Mr. Carron in MacGillivray's *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* 1852, vol. ii, pp. 125 and 126; also P. P. King: *Narrative Survey Intertropical Western Coasts of Australia*, London, 1827, vol. i, p. 90.

[2] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 156.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

demands it; but usually, when on a simple turtle or dugong hunting expedition, 501 ● two persons only occupy places in the craft, one near the bow and another near the stern (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). The boatmen, while propelling the [516] craft, squat with their buttocks resting upon the heels and with their knees pressed against the sides. The weight of their body being thus well within the boat, its stability is thereby considerably increased.

Paddles.—Propulsion is effected by means of paddles which are made of hard 501 wood. They have a single well-shaped blade and a rounded handle (*vide* Plate XII, Fig. 2). The edges of the blade are parallel or taper slightly towards the end, which is square or rounded. Apart from the marks left by the tomahawk used in [531] its making, the implement is without ornamentation. In one case only, a circular collar was carved around the handle, immediately above the sloping shoulder of the blade. The longest paddle noted measured 167 centimetres in length, its blade 80; the shortest was 115 centimetres in length and its blade 45. The width of the blades ranges from 7 to 9 centimetres. Both hands clasp the paddle, which is dipped alternately on one side or the other as the occasion and the steering require it.

Balers.—Water that accumulates in the canoe, either by leakage or overwash [415 824] in a rough sea, is removed by means of a baler which is made out of the melon shell[1] (*Melo diadema*). The columella of the shell is carefully cut away, leaving only the large body-whorl, which is used as a scoop (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 3 and 4). The outer surface of the shell is painted with red and yellow ochre in large cross [531] pattern, with a fine cross shading.

Dug-outs.—The dug-out canoes to which I have elsewhere referred[2] have, in [175] all probability, been introduced by Malays from whom the natives obtain them by barter. Dr. Walter Roth has also proved that the dug-outs met with along the coast of Queensland are of Papuan origin. The form observed in Apsley Strait is without outrigger and hollowed out of a single tree trunk. The bow and stern are raised (*vide* Plate X, Fig. 2).

Corrobborees.

As with all primitive folk, song and dance constitute the ultimate stage of 535 any social intercourse or festivity. The islanders are even more ready than ~~their~~ 527 brothers on the mainland to resort to this means of entertainment. It thus happened that, wherever we came into contact with the blacks and presented them with divers small articles, a corrobboree was immediately inaugurated; even though the encounter happened to occur in the middle of the day. Corrobborees on the

[1] *Cf. Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* vol. ii, p. 17: "the baler (a melon shell) is in constant requisition."

[2] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 53. Among others, note that Major Campbell says of the Port Essington natives that "such of the canoes as I saw were hollowed from the trunks of trees, like those of the Malays and were probably either left by these people or stolen from them," *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 170.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Balers made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

314 396 137 Fig. 1. Forest scene on Bathurst Island. From the stringy-barked eucalyptus on the left side of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe. Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
501 Fig. 2. Various types of paddles in use on Bathurst Island. About $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.

PLATE XIII.

764 Figs. 1 and 2. Distant and near view of a native grave, surrounded by five carved and painted posts, Bathurst Island. Note the cleared space and the position of grave, viz.: at the junction between open woodland and thicket. A tall Bathurst Islander in seen in Fig. 2.

PLATE XIV.

415 Fig. 1. A melon-shell (*Melo diadema*) used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Fig. 2. A *Fusus priesi* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 764 Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e. Painted and carved posts of native grave shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XV.

415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cyrena easingtonensis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{3}$ natural size.
317 386 Fig. 2. Lumps of yellow ochre (on the left), white pipe-clay (in the centre), and red ochre (on the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{3}$ natural size.
413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*). $\frac{1}{2}$ natural size.
301 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (*l*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 532 764 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate X.

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FIG. 1.

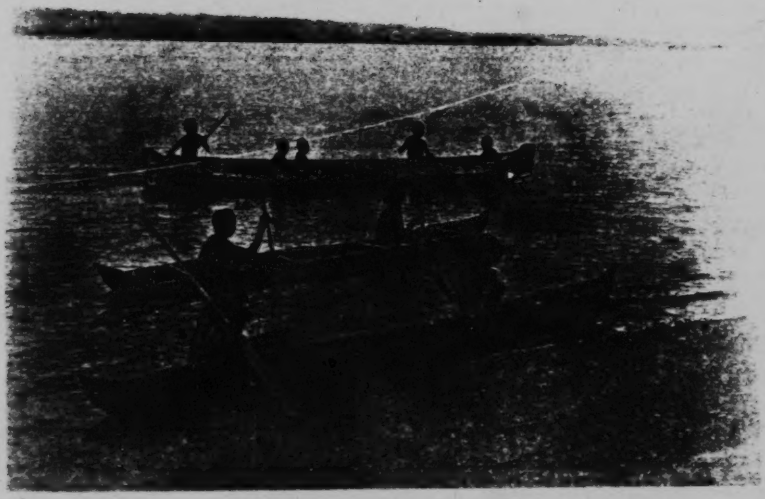

FIG. 2.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 4]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 322 – ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XI.

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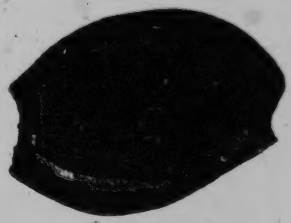

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[END PLATE 5]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 322 — ANALYSIS]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XII.

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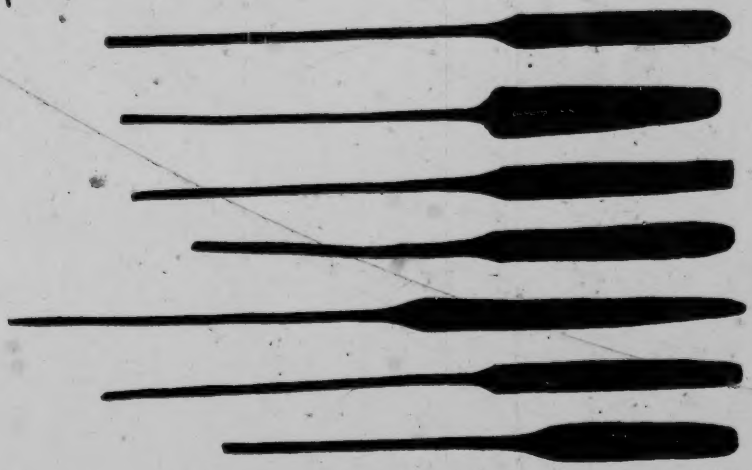

FIG. 2.

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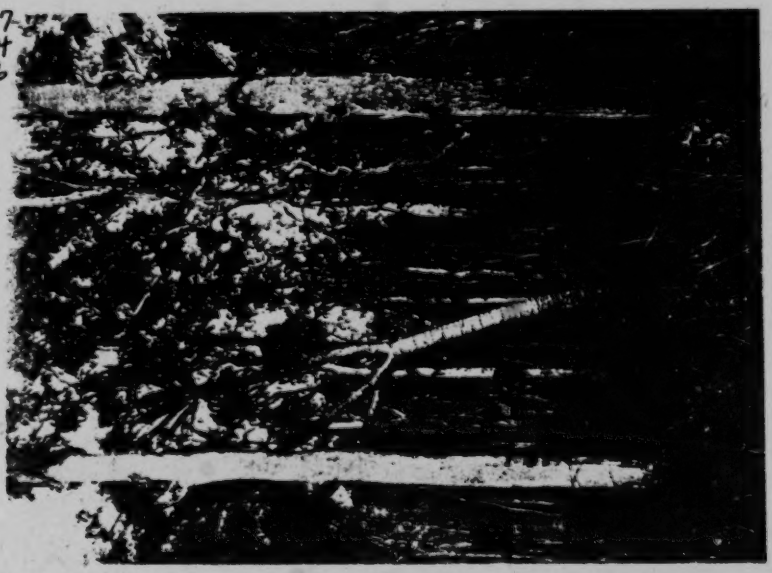

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 6]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p 322 - ANALYST]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

lores and customs, and if the white people were disappointed by his performance in settlement work, the old men of the tribe were just as pleased by his attitude to his native heritage.

Agnes, a slim tall girl of twenty, was even shyer than Albert and to cover up this shyness she always smiled or giggled. She was a cheerful soul to have around. Feeling that the responsibility of the care and feeding of the *murandanga* (female white person) was a little more than their young shoulders could bear, Albert asked Big Jack, his older brother, a "big man" in the tribe to come along. At the last minute a fifth member was added, Tchuwiunga, a tiny black-and-white puppy of about eight weeks old.

Number one canoe was the largest canoe and was considered the safest. The Malay fishermen, a century or more ago, had taught the Melville Islanders how to hew a rough canoe from a single log, but the art had never been perfected. This canoe measured about fifteen feet in length by about three feet in width at the center. There were small platforms in the bow and stern which

Fig. 1. Setting off in Number one canoe

123 served as seats except when the mast was mounted in the
501 forward platform.

It took us quite a while to load, but we finally launched out into the bay about mid-morning. In the stern, sat Albert, his knees folded under so that as he lifted and dipped the heavy ironwood paddle only his arms and back supplied the power. He kept in perfect time with Big Jack who sat just in front of him. They would both paddle on the same side for about six strokes and then bringing the paddles overhead would continue on the other side with perfect rhythm. Agnes and Tchuwiunga sat amidships among the rolls of blankets and cartons of food, while I surveyed the scene from the forward seat, clutching my waterproofed KLM overnight bag containing my camera, toothbrush, and change of clothing and the ever-present supply of pencils and "six-penny" notebooks.

The bay was smooth, too smooth, for not a ripple broke the gently rolling surface. We could, however, see and hear breakers on Piriu Point; so, with the promise of some wind to propel the craft, and incidentally break the close, muggy atmosphere, Albert and Big Jack paddled strongly and swiftly so that soon we reached the opposite shore and began to work our way up to the point.
[533 Although the men were silent, Agnes entertained us with the singing
837] of other women's love songs. All women, regardless of the degree of affection they have for their husband, have lovers and compose long love songs extolling the chosen man's virtues. Agnes, however, only sang her song about her lover, Ginger-Two, when out of audible range of her husband.

About noon the canoe rounded the point and at once a strong easterly wind prompted us to raise the sail. This required little effort as the thin and greatly patched canvas was permanently attached to the 12-foot mast and boom with wire. All that was needed was to drop the mast through a hole in the forward platform and let the boom fall into place. Unfortunately it was soon apparent that the forces of nature and the design of the canoe were against us; the wind was too strong and without a keel the canoe could not head into the wind which was dead against us. The mast was unstepped, the sail furled, and the paddles taken up once more, but now instead of a calm sea we faced large rollers, some of which broke under the force of the wind. It was heavy going; Agnes

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Fig. 4. A casuarina grove

123 clutched Tchuwiunga more tightly
501 and I hugged my KLM bag while the two men worked to head the canoe into the largest waves while trying at the same time to head in [137] towards the shore. This meant taking a good many not so large waves broadside and we got very wet. Facing sternwards, I could not see the waves, so if a particularly [823] large one (Agnes called them "female waves!") approached, I would be given a few seconds warning and would duck the breaking spray which would cover the boat and its occupants. The only miserable one was the puppy who presented a very puzzled and hurt expression as he peered out from under the folds of Agnes's *naga*. For the rest of us the cold spray was a welcome relief from the burning sun.

Once in close to the shore, our skilful paddlers brought the canoe safely onto the beach, riding in on one of the breakers. We unloaded everything, although we intended to stop only for lunch, for the canoe would soon be swamped by the sea if left alone. After unloading, Albert swam the canoe out beyond the breakers where he anchored it with a large rock.

123 Then we climbed the low dunes close to the shore and came to a grove of casuarinas. These provided much appreciated shade but a very uncomfortable carpet of spiny seed pods. Taking up our two billy cans, Agnes led me to the back of the grove where she [312] showed me a small well. There were many footprints around the sandy hole which were identified as belonging to Black Joe's mob, the natives who had preceded us. They had, however, not depleted the well for in the bottom was a small puddle, and since this was at the very end of the six months dry season, it was considered fortunate that there was any water at all. Agnes carefully tasted

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

726 received any serious damage, and it seemed to have been a most enjoyable occasion. An islander, who had seen the world from the decks of many luggers, made a remark that was truer than he knew, "When white feller go to war, he takem rifle, he takem

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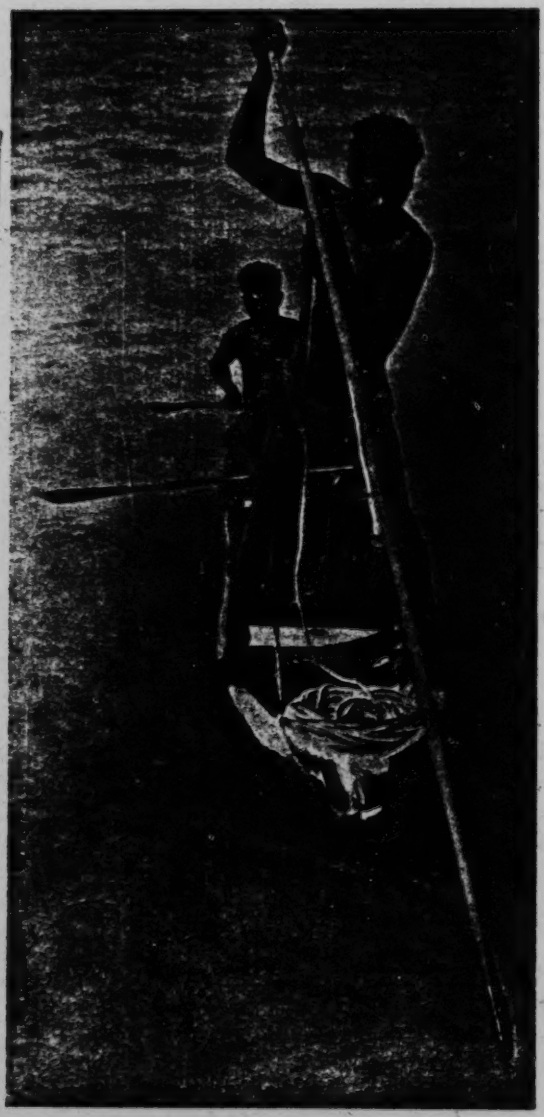

HUNTING TURTLE, FROM A DUG-OUT CANOE NEAR BATHURST ISLAND.

bomb. Some feller *must* be killed! White feller silly b——!" It cannot be said that the mission fathers have a dull time at Bathurst Island.

797 There are two sisters of the order at the Mission Station. In addition to teaching the girls, they attend to all household mat-

[p. 18(A)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not
609 real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human
[101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate
[173] to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distribu-
171 tional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how
[411] isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their
[531] wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus-
[764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the
[511] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

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[1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the
[177] result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely
524 guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 595 587 The matter of men traveling to distant camps for ceremonials illuminates again, and from a new angle, the great value of elderly widows in the household. Tu'untalumi, during his visit to Malau in August, was able to split his household efficiently by taking a couple of old wives with him to supervise his young wives on the journey and leaving other old wives at home in Tangió to begin storing up food for the grass-burning project which he intended to stage on his return. It will be noticed in the account of his movements that he began issuing invitations to the grass burning on his way home from Malau, [224 251] showing his confidence that the elderly wives he had left at home would have the preparations well in hand during his absence. A big man with a big household really needed three or four elderly widows because these enabled him to split his work force in various ways as his various political and social obligations required and to be sure of trustworthy supervision of each of the segments. A man without widows in his household, or with only one, could not do this; in fact, it was hard for a man without widows to attend ceremonials at all, or even to receive a large party of visitors to his household. And, as we have already pointed out, since such a man would probably go hungry very often because he would not dare to send his unsupervised young wives into the bush to gather food, there were practically no such men nor such households. Widows were indispensable to a senior Tiwi, both in his public and in his private life.

Making Things

592 887 Throughout this chapter we have been stressing the contrast between the dull routine of life in an isolated Tiwi household during the greater part of the year and the sort of life typical on those relatively rare occasions when something special—a festival, a funeral, a fight, a grass burning, a naming ceremony, some collective phase of men's initiation—required the assembling together of several households for joint activity. Before leaving the daily life of the isolated camp, we should mention one other area of activity—namely, the manufacturing activities of the tribe. The Tiwi did not manufacture much, [32] but spears, throwing sticks, canoes, digging sticks, baskets, bodily ornaments, graveposts, and all the miscellaneous paraphernalia used in ceremonials had to be made in whatever leisure time people could find during the long weeks and months when each of the households lived more or less in isolation from the others. Crude and simple as these artifacts were, their construction required time, and only the older men had the time and the skill based on experience to make the more important of them.

[147] Largely because of their failing eyesight, the older men hunted very little and hence tended to remain in camp all day while the young men were hunting and the women were gathering. There were, of course, some old men who took advantage of this time to do little except doze in the shade, but 182 most of the household heads spent a fairly active day in camp engaged in 511 making things. Here we find another aspect of Tiwi culture that results from 531

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the relatively favorable food supply. Some of the Tiwi artifacts, particularly the highly decorative graveposts and ceremonial spears, are unique among Australian tribes, and the carving and painting of these graveposts and spears were skills possessed only by the senior men. They were provided with the leisure time necessary to develop and use these skills by the efficiency in food production of the large household which all old men were expected to accumulate with age, and which many old men did succeed in accumulating. We said earlier that the bigger the household, the better its members ate. We now add the further correlation that the bigger the household, the more leisure time was provided for its head to engage in manufacturing and artistic production. Tu'untalumi has been cited as an example of a large household head (twelve resident wives and thirteen children at home in 1928-29) who loved ceremonial affairs. It would be wrong to infer from this that Tu'untalumi only loved going to parties. He also loved preparing for them, and this preparation (for him as for all other senior men) included the manufacture of ceremonial spears, the preparation of graveposts, and the composition of songs and dances. In the long dull periods between trips outside his home district, he spent most of the days and many of the nights in the creation of these ceremonial necessities. He was not a full-time specialist in the sense that he made spears or posts to exchange with other men who had neither the time nor the skill—the rules of kinship required that every senior man make his own ceremonial spears and contract for his own posts. Tu'untalumi manufactured his graveposts to meet his own ritual obligations, but he took a more magnanimous view of those obligations than did most men. Put in our terms, we might say that he was wealthy enough (in the size of his household) to be generous with his own productions. One example of this attitude was his attendance at funerals that other men of equal kinship to the deceased did not find it necessary to attend; his frequent contribution of an extra gravepost to those provided by the chief mourners of the deceased was a similar gesture. "Tu'untalumi not only came to our mother's funeral, he also made a gravepost for it" was a very gratifying reflection for an obscure group of mourners to cherish among their memories, and of course it was acts of this sort that made the old man so well liked and admired. The economic point of the matter, however, is that only a man with as large a household as his could afford the gesture of giving away, in a situation where kinship obligations did not demand it, a gravepost that required about a week's full-time work.

It was, however, sad to observe that as an artistic producer Tu'untalumi, like many intellectuals in other cultures, tended to operate in too many media. His work as a composer of songs and dances was universally admired, but his graveposts, while appreciated, were not regarded as being as outstanding, technically speaking, as those of another old man, his crony Timalarua. In personality, Timalarua, a successful household head (eleven living wives, ten children at home), was quiet spoken, placid, and only mildly gregarious, and he is mainly of interest because in his leisure-time activity he paid but routine attention to song and dance compositions and concentrated rather single mindedly on making canoes, ceremonial spears, and graveposts. Fre-

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission, automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their opponents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were economically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Politics of Widow Remarriage

Ki-in-kumi's large establishment was the sort of set-up that every Tiwi sought to achieve but few accomplished. An establishment such as his meant wealth, power, prestige, and influence for its head, and, in Malau, Ki-in-kumi was the only man with such a household. With eleven males, many of them food producing; sixteen women, all of them food producing; and several of the girls under fourteen able to assist the older women, the amount of food this unit could collect in a day provided an ample food surplus for the establishment. A man whose household was a surplus food producer was a successful man. Moreover, since the large work force that produced the food surplus contained numerous young wives who (usually) could be relied upon also to produce numerous female babies, he was doubly blessed with both the requisites—surplus food and surplus daughters—necessary to increase his influence and make more people beholden to him or dependent on him. Of the thirty-five married women in Malau, sixteen, or over 45 percent, were in this one establishment.

By comparison, the other old men of Malau were less successful.[8] Through pooling their work forces, Enquirio and Merapanui had achieved an establishment (Unit II) almost as big as that of Ki-in-kumi, and probably its members ate almost as well as the members of his, but their effort was a shared effort and their influence and prestige had to be divided between them. They had been lucky with daughters but, divided between the two fathers, the eleven daughters in their establishment were less impressive than Ki-in-kumi's eight, and the total of seven young wives between them was quite overshadowed by Ki-in-kumi's nine. The two old brothers were successful men and headed a successful operation, but their prestige and success must be rated at least one whole degree below that of Ki-in-kumi.

Another pair of elderly brothers, White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua, had also joined forces (Unit III), but the results can be judged as only fair. They were at least the best off of their age group, the 45- to 55-year-olds, but the competition in that age group was weak, as can be seen by comparison of their establishment with Units IV and V, the households of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai. Perhaps the best indication of the respective success in life of the seven oldest men is that given in the column of Table III headed "young wives." Of the twenty-three such women in the band, eighteen were in the establishments[9] of the three oldest men (Units I and II); the next five men in age shared the remaining five (Units III, IV, and V).

It might be thought that the small establishments of the unsuccessful junior elders like White Man, Ku-nai-u-ua, Pingirimini, and Tipiperna-gerai could be expected to increase sharply in size and these men to grow in relative prestige and influence when death removed the three old men at the heads

[8] It will be noticed that as we move into the older group of men we have to use their native names, since most of them had no "whiteman" names.

[9] Two of these eighteen were of course actually married to Padimo, but still part of the establishment of their father, Ki-in-kumi, since Padimo's wives all lived with Ki-in-kumi's wives.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he still had six years to go after that, not finishing the final grade of *Mikingula* until somewhere past the age of 24 or 25.

In contrast with the mainland initiation ceremonies, we think the most interesting point about Tiwi initiation resides not in the formal ceremonies but in the removal from the food-production units, for long periods of the year, of all the young males between the ages of 14 and 25. It is true that they did not spend *all* their time in seclusion and that after the age of twenty they remained mostly in their household camps, where they contributed to the household food production. Nonetheless, it remains clear that only a very well-off tribe could afford to allow so much time off from food production to all its young hunters. Tiwi fathers, it would seem, in arranging for the initiation of their sons to begin just when they were becoming productive hunters, were willing to sacrifice that productivity for less tangible advantages. The youths, secluded and guarded in the bush while getting an education, were not only out of the work force but were also out of the predatory-bachelor force. A Tiwi elder made sacrifices to "send his sons to college" but he breathed easier to know that the sons of the other elders were all there too.

All males without exception had to go through the full initiation cycle, and from the time of their first forcible seizure at the age of 14-15 to their final graduation at 24-26, they were in a state of *pukimani* and their personal names were strictly taboo to everybody in the tribe. Each youth was referred to only by his grade name, *Marukumarni* for the first year, *Mikingula* for the last four years, and so on. And here we return finally to a point which was mentioned much earlier—namely, the complete unimportance in tribal eyes of all males below the age of twenty-five. Until they had completed the final stage of initiation, Tiwi males were still boys; they did not even have names. Occasionally, when collecting genealogies and coming upon a reference to a young man, the innocent anthropologist would ask, "Is he married?" In tones of the deepest contempt the informant would reply, "That kid, how could he be married? He's still *Mikingula*." Though *Mikingula* was the stage typically reached by a man at about 20-21 and lasted for the next four years, to the Tiwi it was still a stage in the life of a boy. Not until he had finished as *Mikingula* could he step out into the world and life of men. How he spent the years immediately after finishing initiation decided how soon some senior man would think sufficiently highly of him to aid him in acquiring his first ancient widow.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of bands as part of any political or legal system; they were members of households as part of a domestic system. What held the unit together was the central position and dominance of the father or husband, and hence the life of a household was only as long as his lifetime. When he died, the household broke up and the surviving members joined other households, perhaps in the same district, perhaps in some other band territory. Such change of household was carried out by the individuals concerned, not quite at will, but certainly not with sufficient uniformity for any political or legal label to be put upon it.

Uniformity was derived from the fact that every Tiwi had to live in a household. The universal prohibition on unmarried females was obviously one expression of that requirement. For men, the requirement was less firm, and if a young man wanted to live entirely alone he was free to try—although there is no record of any man having tried it for more than a few weeks at a time. Even if his mother were dead and his father or step-father did not welcome him, he attached himself to some household since, apart from any question of loneliness, this was the only way by which he could eat regularly. For Tiwi households were primarily autonomous food-producing and food-consumption units. A household made its own decisions, camped where it saw fit to camp, moved on when the food quest made it advantageous or necessary to move on. A large household, such as that of Ki-in-kumi or any other big man, was a complete community in itself, with the old man as executive director. He laid down the daily, weekly, and monthly work and travel schedules for the women, the young men, and the children. Most of the time the work went automatically because all the adults and the older children knew their jobs.

Daily Activities

By shortly after dawn each day, the household was up, and after a light breakfast, usually of leftovers from the previous night, everybody left camp to go to work. The women and children (except perhaps the five- to ten-year-old boys, who were rather useless at that age) scattered in every direction from the camp with baskets and/or babies on their backs, to spend the day gathering food, chiefly vegetable foods, grubs, worms, and anything else edible. Since they had spent their lives doing it, the old women knew all about gathering and preparing vegetable foods, and they supervised the younger women. This was one important reason for men marrying widows, and even a man with many young wives was quite likely to remarry an elderly widow or two nonetheless. A husband with only young wives might have a satisfactory sex life, but he still needed a household manager if he wished to eat well. The supervision of the female members of the household was left to the old women and, provided the returns were good, the husband did not attempt to interfere nor to give orders concerning the details of women's work.

After the women had scattered out in a wide circuit from the camp, the husband might hunt, but only if he were not too old. In hunting kanga-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

224 roos,[3] wildfowl, and other game, keen eyesight is essential, hence Tiwi men
[887] did very little hunting once they were past about forty-five, though they hated to admit their hunting days were over. The meat, fish, and game provided for the large household of an old man was obtained by the young men, and this was about the only thing an old man thought his sons or his step-sons were good for. Typically the young man, when he returned at nightfall with
[592 a kangaroo which he had spent most of the day tracking down and spearing,
888] would ignore the old man and dump the carcass at the feet of his mother as if to say, "I brought this back for you, not for that old So and So."

As the women straggled back to camp toward sundown with the results
512 of their day's gathering and the young hunters brought in their bags, cooking
595 began and the main meal of the day (usually the only hot meal) was eaten. The Tiwi themselves had no doubt about the close relationship between plural marriage and good eating. "If I had only one or two wives I would starve,"
[797] the head of a large household once told the missionary who was preaching against plural marriage, "but with my present ten or twelve wives I can send them out in all directions in the morning and at least two or three of them are likely to bring something back with them at the end of the day, and then
262 we can all eat." This was a realistic appraisal of the economic situation and it is to be noted that he put the emphasis on the food obtained by the women
[222] gatherers rather than that supplied by the male hunters. Based on the observations of 1928-29, it would appear that the Tiwi ate pretty well, especially in the larger households. Kangaroo and other marsupials, and some of the larger lizards (for example, the goanna) were very plentiful in the bush, as were fish and turtles and dugong on the coasts and wild geese in many districts. But all these were extras or dividends; the staple everyday foods were the vegetable foods gathered day after day in apparently unending quantities by the women. For most months of the year there was always plenty of *kwoka*,
[252] a porridgelike dish prepared by soaking and mashing the small nuts of a native palm. These nuts grew in such quantity that in every large camp baskets or dishes of *kwoka*, at various stages of preparation, were always available, even for midnight snacks if anybody woke up hungry. *Kwoka* was about as dull and tasteless as Scotch porridge, but equally filling, and naked small boys full of *kwoka* had stomachs distended like balloons. In the wet season the place of *kwoka* was taken by *kolema*, a yam whose ripening and growing season was much shorter than that of the nuts from which *kwoka* was made. It was
[796] on the abundance of the *kolema* yams during January and February that the Tiwi supported the more elaborate of their collective ceremonials.

The abundance of these and other vegetable foods, plus the ample supply of game and fish in many places, meant that under aboriginal conditions the Tiwi lived at a food-consumption level much further above the near-

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[3] Actually there are no kangaroos on Melville and Bathurst Islands; the chief meat animal is a slightly smaller species of marsupial technically called the wallaby. As the distinction is important only to zoologists, and as many of the so-called kangaroos in American zoos are in fact wallabies, we prefer to use the more familiar word.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

361 special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply.
592 The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general
[171] thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably
592 smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during
574 supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger
[593 household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece
602] of meat or a dish of *kuoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the
[561 general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through
578] all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all
512 resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated
517 with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive
[562] work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the
[513] shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an
[578] argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

578 Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion
182 with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part
837 of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic
592 efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 However, before all these changes took place, *Tukimbini* assembled the mythical people who had attended *Purukupali's* ceremony, and taught them the rules of behaviour, and the laws of marriage and tribal relationship they must always obey. *Tukimbini* also laid down the periods of light and darkness that still determine the daily cycle of aboriginal life.

512 821 [825] When the first light appears in the morning sky it is the melodious call of *Tukimbini*, now the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) that wakens the aborigines from their sleep.

The sun-woman, rising above the eastern horizon with her blazing torch, is a signal for the aboriginal men, with spears and wooden clubs, to go hunting, and for the women, with bark baskets hanging from the sticks over their shoulders, to gather their food from the forest and the swamp-lands.

About mid-day, the sun-woman, cooking the food she has gathered, makes the heat of the day unbearable. The aborigines then retire to the shade of the trees until the late afternoon when they continue their food gathering, returning to camp to cook their evening meal just as the sun-woman sinks below the western horizon.

Soon, darkness creeps across the sky, the stars, *tapalinga*, show themselves and the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, span the heavens. It is then that the dried perspiration which the *Maludaianini* rub from their bodies, [512] falls on the eyelids of the aborigines, making them so heavy that they cannot keep awake. Next morning, at dawn, *Tukimbini* wakes the aborigines to a new day.

776 778 The following is the list of the totemic places of Melville and Bathurst Islands, illustrated by bark paintings, the names of the totemic people and their relationships to each other.

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
Murupianga	Tukimbini (bird)	Great-grandson of *Mudungkala*
Wuriupi	Garagalani (turtle)	Not known
	Wuriupranala (sun)	Daughter of *Mudungkala*
Panindu	Paninduela (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Wailu	Andjalui (fresh water)	Husband of *Wuriupranala*
	Kwouk-kwouk (frog)	Not known

settlement work. It seemed the chief advantage was that they received 'money-in-the-finger' from the skins they caught. They didn't understand why they didn't also get paid for the settlement work. I kept silent, but soon they turned to me and said, "You get job; how much you pay?" I told them, and then went on to say that out of that salary I had to pay someone for the food I ate, the clothes I wore, the house I lived in and so on, whereas they did not have to pay for the flour, tea, sugar, meat, blankets, or clothes the welfare people gave them. There was a long silence during which, I believe, each man was figuring how much all these benefits were worth in hard money. Finally Ginger said slowly, "Maybe, this way more better." 123 465 521

Soon the visitors rose and returned to their fires. Someone started a song, a low nasal chant. Another, a woman, began a high-pitched love song, and to this discordant lullaby I soon fell asleep. 123 533

As usual, it was barely light when the camp came to life again. After the customary tea breakfast, the various families discussed among themselves the day's plans. Black Joe and Long Peter, their wives and children, were taking the canoe up-river to hunt. Young Brook and his brothers, Danny Brown and Charlie Cook, their wives and children, soon left to hunt in the area back of Minianapi. Charlie Quiet and Roger also left. "Now we go?" I turned in question to Albert. "No, we stay behind. Build house. No good you go bush. Too much grass, plenty big mob cheeky snake. By and by that mob burn grass; then we go bush." It seemed like a logical explanation, but I was disappointed. 123 512

The day was already sticky and muggy, and tired of inactivity I started off toward the creek, saying I was going for a swim. Both natives jumped up and said, "No. No. Too much crocodile, more better go along billabong." So with Agnes ahead we started down the path leading away from the creek. Soon we were out of the thick tangle of bushes separating the clearing from the true bush. Now the path led over the rocky, dusty ground, which had but recently been burned. The trunks of the large bloodwood and stringy-bark trees were blackened for about four feet up from their base. The spiraled trunks of the screwpalm, as well as their lower dried leaves, also had a charred appearance. Except for an occa- 123 [137]

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5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. 372 Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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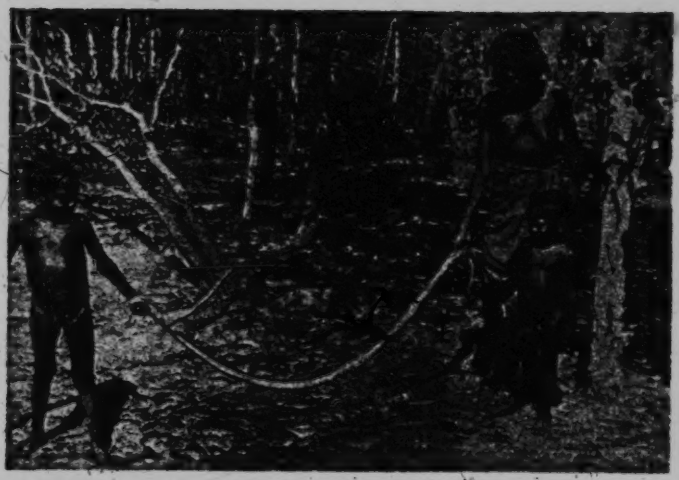

Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

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cooked, with that delicious charcoal-broiled flavor so much sought after in our more elite dining establishments or in our backyards.

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Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goanas, they brought over to show us an extremely large water snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tremendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minnanapi in time to meet the geese. All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 778 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals.

[411] [531] Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear, *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

[114] [322] [412] At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *miluanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *muruguna*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

[302] [413] Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[94]

[515] [413] Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 765 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkita*, are used by the Tiwi for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkitas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

[301] [302] As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, his chest ornaments,

[94] The lines of dots on *Wurarkuti* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

how a slow canoe journey had made him late for a recent *pukamuni* ceremony. 177

(*b*) "I was sick in the Darwin hospital. Sister Philips said it was because I had had too much grog." 533 539

(*c*) "There was a man at Cockle Point (opposite the Bathurst Island Mission), who wanted to kill me with a spear. So I changed myself into a mullet and he didn't see me." 881

Another singer chanted,

(*a*) "I am a goose and a man cast his throwing stick and hit me." 533

(*b*) "I want that girl from Bathurst Island to wash her with fresh water to make it square for giving away my sister."[26] 539 881

Another *Mikingula*, *Palitara*, aired his differences with a woman, *Batali*, in the following song.

(*a*) "I fed *Batali*, but she did not give her daughter to me as a wife."[27]

(3) *Collecting the Kulama Yam*

Early on the following morning, the *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikintaras*, the *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, went to the ceremonial ground of the previous evening. They first dipped their hands in a bark container filled with water, throwing some over their bodies; then, taking a mouthful, they squirted water into the air in imitation of rain, afterwards calling out "Oom-oom", to symbolize thunderstorms. Taking two small sticks, one in each hand, the men used them to clean the wax from their ears, afterwards standing the sticks upright in the ground.[28] 881 [515]

Placing their palms on a sheet of bark covered with white paint, the men patted their hair, chest, wrists and pubes (Pl. 44c), turning toward the north as they again called out "Oom-oom", in imitation of thunder.

Following this ritual, each *kulama* man painted another with a design in white (Pl. 42L). The leader then picked up the bark basket, held it on his arm, and facing north, south, east and west, again called "Oom-oom", while he made a drum-like sound, symbolical of thunder, by hitting the basket with his hand. After this the men set out to collect the *kulama* yams. They were

[26] I did not find out the significance of this ritual.

[27] When a woman promises her daughter to a man, it is the duty of the future son-in-law to give her continuous presents of food. On this occasion, the woman had accepted *Palitara's* gifts, but when her daughter was old enough, she gave the girl to another man. [584]

Quarrelling at a *kulama* ceremony is forbidden, otherwise *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, will destroy all the participants. This prohibition allows an aboriginal, such as *Palitara*, to air his grievances without causing a quarrel, even though, as on this occasion, the defaulting person was present. [626] [753]

[28] The meaning of this ritual is obscure. According to the aborigines it prevents trouble and quarrelling during the *kulama* rituals.

123 sional patch of grass, which the rushing fire had missed, there was not a living green plant below the four-foot line. Burning the country is an annual occurrence and many are the laws governing 221 who may burn and who may subsequently hunt in the newly cleared 224 land. Because the fires are set each year, there is no accumulation of dry tinder to feed the fire and allow it to rage uncontrollably. Only the grass and a few fallen logs catch and these will burn rapidly and fiercely, but for a very short period. Any gap in the vegetation will stop the fire and the heavy dew, falling in the evening, will also put out the flames, leaving perhaps only isolated, smouldering logs to burn through the night. Until the first shoots of new grass push [421] their way through the charred ground, the individual hunter who set the fire has exclusive rights to the area he set alight. Of course, no one except those who belong to that country may burn without [671] permission of the owners. As far as possible, these laws are still upheld.

123 We soon came to a branch in the path and Albert indicated that we two girls should continue straight ahead; he would stop behind. In front of us stretched the fresh-water swamp. Out of the almost inky but clear water rose the gnarled paperbark trees, their roots so intertwined they almost formed a floor, albeit a most slippery and irregular one, over the rotten vegetation in the bottom of the swamp. I picked a particularly large rooted tree for my bath [515] tub, and a short distance away Agnes did the same. If one was careful not to disturb the fine deposit on the bottom but managed to stay on top of the slippery roots, the clear cool water was as sweet and soft as one could wish for. We stayed for about an hour, washing ourselves and our clothes, but finally an impatient call from Albert put an end to this pleasure. Albert had been hunting for a possum, but in this area so close to the camp, they had already been depleted.

123 Instead of returning to camp, Albert decided that now was as good a time as any to cut his *milingani*, the sticks with which they 411 kill the geese. After another mile or so into the bush, we came to a 322 grove of stout bushes of a kind I had not seen before. They had [223] long, straight branches of about a half-inch diameter. These Albert

evening to kill geese. When they returned with only three geese, a long conference was held. I offered all the food I could spare and it was decided that, in return for a few yams and some of the goose, I should make dampers and put jam on them for the children, all of whom were under five and very hungry, and give small pieces of tobacco to the men and women. This was Albert's, Agnes's, and Big Jack's tobacco, and so everyone traded something and all pronounced it a fair deal. I cooked the damper, smothered it with jam and, with Agnes prompting, called, "Kakritjui Kali." "Little ones, come." The five who could walk, ran, then stood shyly by while I handed each a piece; then they ran back to their mothers. Soon they were back and, nudged by their mothers, all murmured "Thank you very much." This was a phrase I never heard, either in the native language or in English, when they were receiving from another native. Giving and receiving were so much a part of their life that among themselves "thank you's" seemed unnecessary.

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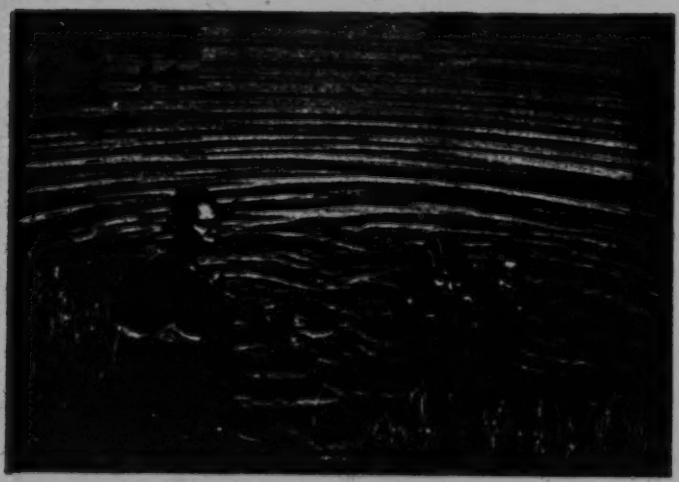

Fig. 16. Agnes, Filicy, and Crissy-boy cooling off in the river

123 The following day we finally went hunting. Peter, his wife Dorrie, and daughter Althea, Filicy and her son Crissy-Boy, Albert, Agnes and I all squeezed into the canoe and paddled about two miles upstream to the next landing. Tudiunginarim, "white-paint-place," [177] used to be an old camp of the white buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who at the turn of the century was the first white contact for many of these people. It was very hot and the women took their children 123 into the water, waist deep near the bank, for a swim. It was easy 291 for them in their *nagas*, for when they came out they merely wrapped a dry one around and slid the wet one off underneath very 515 modestly. I, in my shorts and shirt, finally gave in to the temptation 609 and, vowing that if I were to live here longer I would take up the native costume, went in fully dressed. This modesty was a funny thing; they who wore no clothes until contact with white men, were being modest only for my sake, and in return I could do no less. So with dripping clothes, which incidentally felt wonderful in the heat, I set off following Albert and Agnes.

123 The nature of the bush was the same as that in back of Minianapi and indeed the same as that around Snake Bay: the same 224 trees, the same burned earth, the same fan palms and pandanus, and the same flatness. The natives always knew where they were; I never did. We were looking for possums and as these furry marsupials sleep in hollow trees during the day, we investigated every likely tree for evidence that they had recently climbed it. Sometimes the little tears in the rough bark could only be seen silhouetted against the sun; at other times the dry ground around the base of the tree would show very definite tracks. Soon Agnes, who was off somewhere to the left of Albert and me, gave two high-pitched calls. [198] In the hunting language I had already learned, one call meant "I'm here, where are you?" and would be answered by their companions with a similar single call. However, two calls meant "Come; I've found something." So we turned in the direction of the call and soon found Agnes standing by a short, hollow tree. Albert took his axe and cut a long pole which he then thrust up through a hole in the tree's base and wiggled. Out popped a large grey possum which sat on the top of the tree trying to make itself as small as possible. Agnes and Albert threw all manner of sticks and stones at it and finally managed to knock it down, when it scuttled away.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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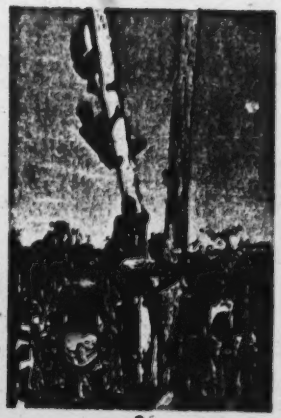

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PLATE 23. *The Pukamuni Rituals*

A, Pulanimbuwi decorated for Burial Rituals; B, Pulanimbuwi mourning; C, Rite of Wandiatapinda; D, Final Scene at Grave; E, Pulanimbuwi being washed.

[p. 44 b]

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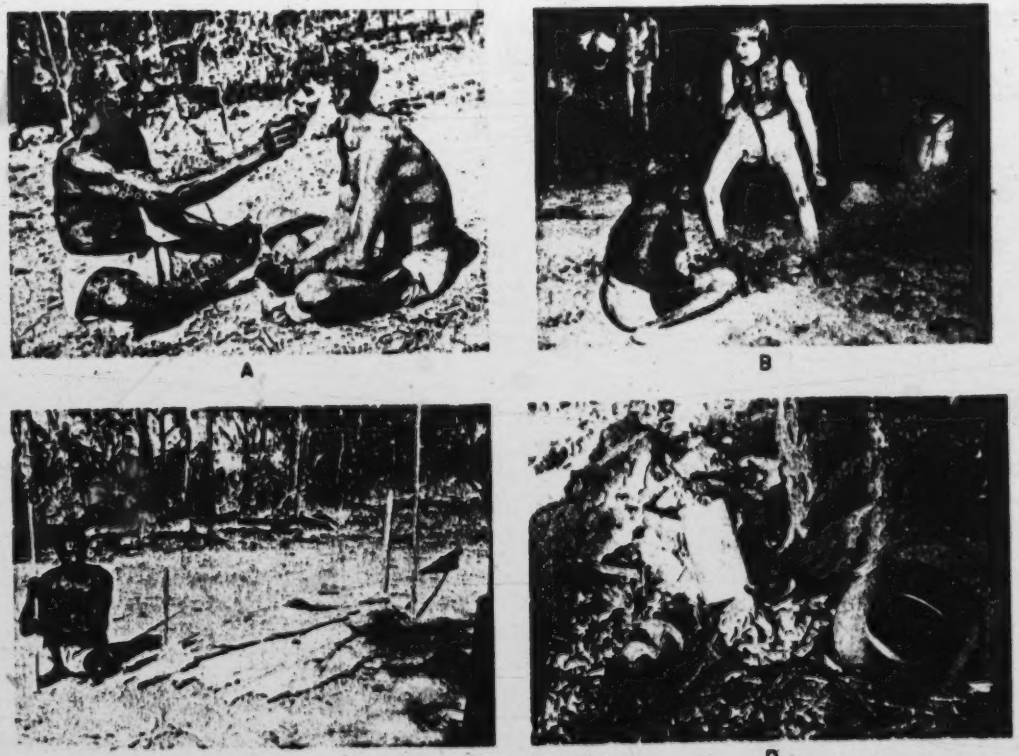
2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120



A B C D

PLATE 24. *The Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Feeding Pukamuni Man; B, Rite of Wandiatapinda; C, The Grave; D, Belongings of Dead Man, Waniamperi.

Cp. 72 A)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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PLATE 25. *The Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Young Girls and Men Dancing; B, Feeding Pukamuni Workers; C, Women and Boys Dancing; D, Ceremonial Fight at Ilanis.

CP 72 B

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

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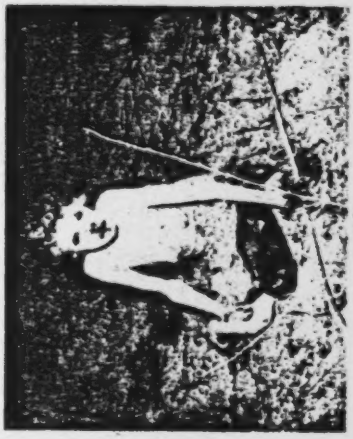

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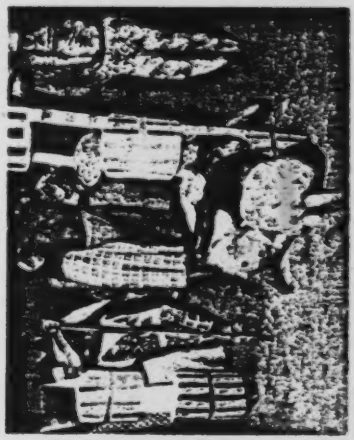

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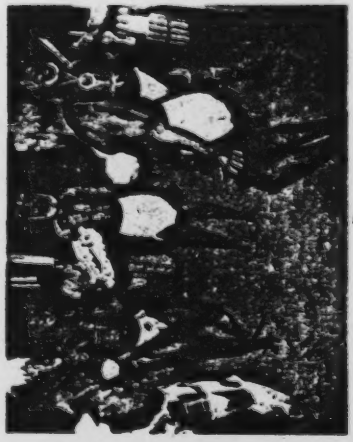

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PLATE 27. *The Final Pukamani Rituals*

A, Chief Woman Mourner; B, Scene at Burial Poles; C, Mourning at Burial Poles; D, Presentation of Gifts.

[p. 72 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

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PLATE 38. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*
A, B, C, Carved and Painted Pole on Old Grave; D, Poles on Old Grave.

[p. 120 F]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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PLATE 44. *The Kulama Ceremony*
A, Chanting Kulama Songs; B, Placing Kulama Yams in Oven; C, Ritual before collecting Kulama Yam; D, The Kulama Yam.

[p. 128 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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PLATE 45. *The Kulama Ceremony*
A, Building the Kulama Fire; B, Placing the Kulama Yams in Water; C, Pressing Heated Sand against Joints; D, Deserted Kulama Oven.

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[p.144 A]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. 372 Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

demands it; but usually, when on a simple turtle or dugong hunting expedition, 501
two persons only occupy places in the craft, one near the bow and another near
the stern (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). The boatmen, while propelling the [516]
craft, squat with their buttocks resting upon the heels and with their knees pressed
against the sides. The weight of their body being thus well within the boat, its
stability is thereby considerably increased.

Paddles.—Propulsion is effected by means of paddles which are made of hard 501
wood. They have a single well-shaped blade and a rounded handle (*vide* Plate
XII, Fig. 2). The edges of the blade are parallel or taper slightly towards the end,
which is square or rounded. Apart from the marks left by the tomahawk used in [531]
its making, the implement is without ornamentation. In one case only, a circular
collar was carved around the handle, immediately above the sloping shoulder of the
blade. The longest paddle noted measured 167 centimetres in length, its blade
80; the shortest was 115 centimetres in length and its blade 45. The width
of the blades ranges from 7 to 9 centimetres. Both hands clasp the paddle,
which is dipped alternately on one side or the other as the occasion and the steering
require it.

Balers.—Water that accumulates in the canoe, either by leakage or overwash [415
in a rough sea, is removed by means of a baler, which is made out of the melon 824]
shell[1] (*Melo diadema*). The columella of the shell is carefully cut away, leaving
only the large body-whorl, which is used as a scoop (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 3 and 4).
The outer surface of the shell is painted with red and yellow ochre in large cross [531]
pattern, with a fine cross shading.

Dug-outs.—The dug-out canoes to which I have elsewhere referred[2] have, in [175]
all probability, been introduced by Malays from whom the natives obtain them by
barter. Dr. Walter Roth has also proved that the dug-outs met with along the coast of
Queensland are of Papuan origin. The form observed in Apsley Strait is without
outrigger and hollowed out of a single tree trunk. The bow and stern are raised
(*vide* Plate X, Fig. 2).

Corrobborees.

As with all primitive folk, song and dance constitute the ultimate stage of 535
any social intercourse or festivity. The islanders are even more ready than ~~their~~ 527
brothers on the mainland to resort to this means of entertainment. It thus
happened that, wherever we came into contact with the blacks and presented them
with divers small articles, a corrobboree was immediately inaugurated; even though
the encounter happened to occur in the middle of the day. Corrobborees on the

[1] *Cf. Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* vol. ii, p. 17: "the baler (a melon shell) is in constant requisition."

[2] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 53. Among others, note that Major Campbell says of the Port Essington natives that "such of the canoes as I saw were hollowed from the trunks of trees, like those of the Malays and were probably either left by these people or stolen from them," *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 170.

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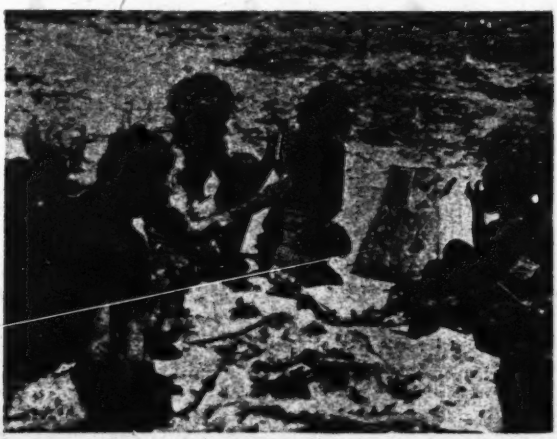
HOT EARTH over baked *Kulama* yams is removed. Yams that are to be eaten at end of ritual must be resoaked in water.

[824]

SOME COOKED YAMS are cut, peeled, and mashed. Water and paint are then added. Yams are always handled with respect.



[951]
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MEN RUB MASH on bodies to insure health, then do so to the uninitiated young, whose health is paternal responsibility.

[P. 16, (A)]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Figs. 5 and 6. Probing in the sand at the head of turtle tracks sometimes locates a nest of eggs

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 10. Skinning a large crocodile

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pieces of the white meat were carried into the camp to be roasted for dinner. What was not to be consumed that night was thrown into the water, for meat spoils quickly in this sticky climate.

Darkness came early, and with it came the return of the goose hunters and the departure of the launch with the Grimsters and their crocodile team. Once more they would spend the night hunting crocodiles, this time downstream on their way back to the settlement. Soon many little fires broke up the darkness of the clearing and the smell of fresh roasting meat wafted over to where Albert, Agnes, Jack, and I were opening cans of corned beef. "Tomorrow we go bush," Albert remarked and I heartily assented.

Young Brook, a lean young man, and his wife, Alice,

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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Fig. 11. Even the youngest respect the teeth of the crocodile

approached our fire. "You savey goose?" he asked me. "Oh yes," I said, "we eat him along America." He handed me a large juicy leg which I gave to Albert to divide, then squatted down at the edge of the fire's glow. I handed my tin of tobacco to Alice and she filled her husband's pipe. Picking up a burning branch from the fire, she knocked a hot coal into the bowl of the pipe and began smoking. Soon she handed it to Young Brook. Suddenly our attention was directed to the opposite side of the clearing where Dennis, the four-year old daughter of Black Joe was crying hysterically. Tuki, a tall powerful man of fifty-five, was doing his best to calm her and disentangle himself from her clinging arms so that he could leave. Tuki and his wife, Fat Alice, were a childless couple and

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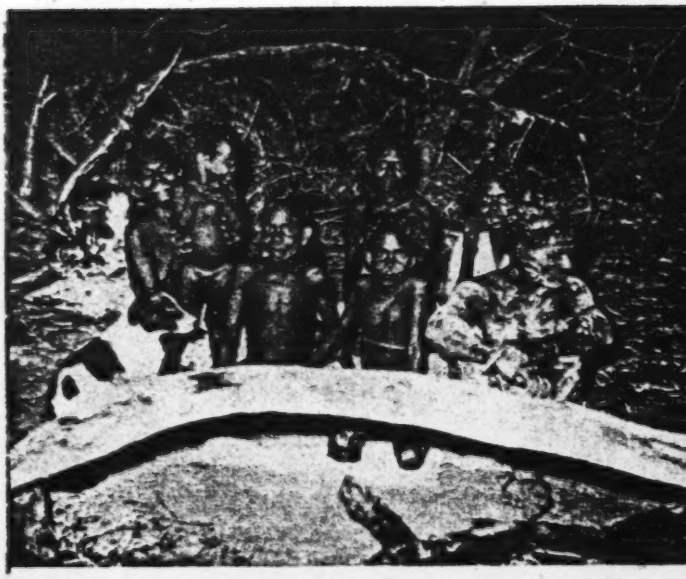

Fig. 12. A Tiwi family camped for the night

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Black Joe, Fat Alice's brother, had given them his eldest
in adoption. However, Dennis spent as much time with h
parents as with her foster parents and it was quite eviden
affection was at least equally divided. Albert went over and
to bring the screaming, kicking child back to our camp and
to give her some of the hard candy which I had brought wi
was some time, however, before her attention was suffici
tracted to allow Tuki and the other men to slip away into
to hunt crocodiles for another night. Agnes commented to
him cry? That white man rule no good. By and by they

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We strolled back to Black Joe's camp with Dennis, an
to a discussion concerning the superiority of crocodile hun

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 14. "Cooking milingasi"

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do you cook the sticks?" I asked. "To make them dry so they won't slip in our hands," they replied.

Once the sticks were all well charred on the ends the men took them down to the canoe. For once, I used my status of ethnographer and overruled my role of a woman, and accompanied the men on what was properly men's business. The presence of women or children might bring bad luck. Whether the explanation was simply that women and children are considered to be lacking in the amount of silence or immobility required, or whether the reason was more subtle, I never found out. "This properly men's business," was the only explanation.

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We took the canoe a quarter of a mile up stream, where we

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Fig. 17. "Hunting a possum"

It was soon overtaken by Albert who killed it quickly with a blow from a stick. As he brought it back he said, "Him big mother. See him pickaninni." And he held up a hairless baby barely three inches long, its eyes still closed, but very much alive. "Oh, kill it quick, Albert," I begged. He shook his head, "I can't kill him, I too sorry alonga him." Here we were at an impass, two people too sorry alonga him; one too sorry to kill it, and one too sorry to let it live. Who was right?

Meanwhile, Agnes took the mother possum and pulled the fur from a small area on the belly and then slitting the skin with the sharp end of a broken stick, she withdrew the gall bladder and intestines. "Him make him bad," she explained. We did not stop to cook the animal, but continued our search. This area had all been burned by the previous parties and already little delicate shoots of grass were poking up through the black ground.

During the next hour we wandered slowly through the bush and, although we saw many trees which had been inhabited by possums, they were now empty. One that looked most likely was hollow and Albert hopefully built a fire in the rotten base, then sat back and waited for the smoke to drive the animal out. After half an hour, it was quite obvious that no one was at home.

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Then our luck turned. This time, when Albert gave the "come here" call, it was because he had located a wild honey nest, or "sugar-bag," high in a large stringy-bark eucalyptus. There was little point in cutting this large tree down so Albert prepared to climb. First he cut a small sapling and laid it at a 45-degree angle against a crotch where the massive trunk split in two. Then, grip-

726 One man will then take a step or two forward, hold up a hand, and stamp vigorously, and all the warriors of his side will copy his actions. "Let 'em all come!" is the attitude adopted. If the enemy does not start hostilities at once, they throw their spears down and jump about like wallabies to show their contempt for the sluggard's markmanship. They are, however, careful not to get too far away from their own weapons, on which they pounce immediately the first spear is hurled by their opponents. The air is soon thick with flying spears and war-clubs, and the exchange goes on until some unlucky warrior is really hurt, when the engagement ceases.

727 BOTH sides gather round, howling their dismay, until repairs to the injured have been effected. A red-dyed ball of goose-
[781] down, which is hung from the neck by a string woven of human hair, is held before the mouth as a charm to divert the missiles, but the warriors owe their immunity from death or serious injury to their own remarkable eyesight and to the dexterity with which they evade, or turn to one side, the hurtling weapons of the enemy. The war-clubs used by the islanders are far more
411 difficult to dodge than the spears, which come straight at you.

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● 516

A BATHURST ISLANDER BRANDISHES HIS CLUB.

The war-club is merely a short, bent stick with a knob at one end; but, spinning in the air like a boomerang, it can be thrown for amazing distances by the islanders, considerably over a hundred yards, and not far off two hundred. This weapon is not thrown straight at an opponent, but at a stone, or a tuft of

[P. 17(A)]

797 ters, supervising the lubras' work and ordering stores, which are brought from Darwin by the mission's own lugger *St. Francis*. The pleasant lunch we had at the refectory, where wide windows, open all round, admitted every wandering breeze, was due to their efforts, and later I was to see something of the results of their teaching.

797 School, both for boys and for girls, takes up only two and a half hours each day, but the pupils learn quickly, and the more 871 they are taught the more they can absorb. Reading and writing are mastered without any more difficulty than in the case of white children of the same age, though the pupils were very shy and almost inaudible when exhibiting their prowess. Arithmetic they do not take to so kindly, unless they happen to be interested by some problem that has a definitely practical application to their own lives; but drawing comes natural to the islanders, as it does to the blacks of the mainland, where I had already seen very spirited sketches made by aboriginal children. Of the affection of the children, both for the sisters and the mission fathers, there was no doubt. To be as close to them as possible was an honour they were all bent on securing.

797 THE "blackies," as they call the girls, range in age from tiny 562 tots to those who are practically young women. They were all much excited by the novelty of our visit, bubbling over with laughter, whispering and giggling together. The older "blackies" eye a visitor coyly, smiling over their shoulders with a flash of white teeth; and, when the pilot and I came along with one of the sisters to hear them sing the "Magnificat" and "Adeste Fideles," they fled shrieking, only to turn round and giggle again when they thought that they were far enough away.

"No more gammon!" called the sister, and they lined up demurely to sing their hymns right tunefully, with spasms of giggles in the intervals. To hold up a finger is quite sufficient to bring shrieks of delight from these childish, happy creatures. "Georgie," a very little boy with a very big tummy, so young that he was not yet at the boys' school, sang "Georgie Porgie, puddiny pie, kissed the girls and made them cry" with much aplomb and gesture. If Georgie was at the girls' school, he did not forget that he was a man. He spoke man's language, not woman's [198 talk such as women by custom must use on Bathurst Island, and 516] he sat down like a man with knees wide apart, not together as a woman must.

535 Then, while the older "blackies" formed a circle, chanting in their own language and clapping their hands in time, little girls, [562] two by two, performed women's dances, which again differ from those of the men. There were buffalo, bullock, and lugger dances, when they imitated the animals with arms widespread or bent slightly at the elbows to represent the horns, or held at angles such as those at which sails are set on a lugger, while, now and then, two little fists beaten together faithfully copied the "put-put" of Diesel engines.

More ambitious and complicated was the dance of the overseas mail 'plane that flies from Singapore to Darwin, when whirling arms represented the propellers and stamping feet the beat of [198 the engines. There is, by the way, a sacred language used for 533 songs, and it is only in this language that the name of the dead 768] can be mentioned. If by chance anyone should mention a dead man's name in the ordinary language, every one within hearing will spit with vigour. If defunctum, the maker of such a faux pas will be hit about the head.

[P. 18(B)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply. The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece of meat or a dish of *kwoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the relatively favorable food supply. Some of the Tiwi artifacts, particularly the highly decorative graveposts and ceremonial spears, are unique among Australian tribes, and the carving and painting of these graveposts and spears were skills possessed only by the senior men. They were provided with the leisure time necessary to develop and use these skills by the efficiency in food production of the large household which all old men were expected to accumulate with age, and which many old men did succeed in accumulating. We said earlier that the bigger the household, the better its members ate. We now add the further correlation that the bigger the household, the more leisure time was provided for its head to engage in manufacturing and artistic production. Tu'untalumi has been cited as an example of a large household head (twelve resident wives and thirteen children at home in 1928-29) who loved ceremonial affairs. It would be wrong to infer from this that Tu'untalumi only loved going to parties. He also loved preparing for them, and this preparation (for him as for all other senior men) included the manufacture of ceremonial spears, the preparation of graveposts, and the composition of songs and dances. In the long dull periods between trips outside his home district, he spent most of the days and many of the nights in the creation of these ceremonial necessities. He was not a full-time specialist in the sense that he made spears or posts to exchange with other men who had neither the time nor the skill—the rules of kinship required that every senior man make his own ceremonial spears and contract for his own posts. Tu'untalumi manufactured his graveposts to meet his own ritual obligations, but he took a more magnanimous view of those obligations than did most men. Put in our terms, we might say that he was wealthy enough (in the size of his household) to be generous with his own productions. One example of this attitude was his attendance at funerals that other men of equal kinship to the deceased did not find it necessary to attend; his frequent contribution of an extra gravepost to those provided by the chief mourners of the deceased was a similar gesture. "Tu'untalumi not only came to our mother's funeral, he also made a gravepost for it" was a very gratifying reflection for an obscure group of mourners to cherish among their memories, and of course it was acts of this sort that made the old man so well liked and admired. The economic point of the matter, however, is that only a man with as large a household as his could afford the gesture of giving away, in a situation where kinship obligations did not demand it, a gravepost that required about a week's full-time work.

It was, however, sad to observe that as an artistic producer Tu'untalumi, like many intellectuals in other cultures, tended to operate in too many media. His work as a composer of songs and dances was universally admired, but his graveposts, while appreciated, were not regarded as being as outstanding, technically speaking, as those of another old man, his crony Timalarua. In personality, Timalarua, a successful household head (eleven living wives, ten children at home), was quiet spoken, placid, and only mildly gregarious, and he is mainly of interest because in his leisure-time activity he paid but routine attention to song and dance compositions and concentrated rather single mindedly on making canoes, ceremonial spears, and graveposts. Fre-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

517 887 quently, on the banks of some creek or river in Tiklauila territory, a party wanting to cross would scout around and find a canoe hidden in the weeds. Everybody would use it to cross, and the question "Whose canoe is it?" would elicit the reply, "Oh, it's always there and everybody uses it who wishes to cross." But if the question were "Who made it in the first place and put it there?" the answer would be, "Probably Timalarua. He likes making canoes; he makes them all the time." He also liked making spears and posts, though he was not as generous with them as Tu'untalumi. When one of his posts appeared at a funeral, people would point it out admiringly saying, "Timalarua made that one" and the speaker would trace the lines and designs on it with his finger, using much the same gestures as an art critic in a modern gallery. When a post by Tu'untalumi was identified and admired, however, the admiration was for Tu'untalumi the generous person rather than Tu'untalumi the [554] artist. One was a wonderful craftsman, the other was a wonderful man. But acclaim given to the song and dance performances of the two men was just the reverse: the dances of Timalarua were adequate but not outstanding, those of Tu'untalumi were in a class by themselves.

Comparison of the activities of these two old men illustrates the impossibility of drawing any line, in the simpler cultures at least, between artistic production and technological production. The canoes and the posts manufactured by Timalarua and the posts manufactured and the new dances created by Tu'untalumi were all, so to speak, in the same category, as far as the Tiwi were concerned. The distinction we might make between the canoes as "useful" products and the posts and dances as ceremonial or artistic products never occurred to them. All were objects or products which only successful old men had the required skill and leisure to make. The fact that one old man liked to make canoes and leave them around for other people to use, and another old man liked to compose dances and perform his compositions widely for other people to enjoy, to them merely indicated individual taste and choice; it did not make the first a craftsman and the second an artist. This point has been overlooked in most of the theorizing about primitive art; perhaps a necessary first step in the development of primitive artists is for a society to be able to provide a few men with enough leisure time to be able to cultivate what might perhaps best be called hobbies, since a hobby can equally well be something "useful" to society, like canoe making, or something personally satisfying, like dancing or decorating graveposts.

[411] 531 556 The huge, heavy, painted spears made by these old Tiwi men were mainly used only for display, and even the oldest men were positive that this had always been the tradition. In fact, they seemed a little shocked at the implication that such beautiful and valuable objects could ever have been used for such mundane purposes as hunting or warfare. The cutting and painting of such spears took time and skill—more time than a gravepost—and no important man went to the smallest gathering without bearing on his shoulder at least half a dozen of these symbols of his importance. If on his way through the bush he sighted a kangaroo, he dropped his painted spears and stalked [224] the animal with an ordinary spear, or more probably left it to the young men in the party who carried only ordinary ones.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending
535 over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milimika* to the
766 rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first
[177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[90]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten-
[114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and
[775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[91] the fundamental idea
[517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the
[775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[92]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon
[126] drawings[93] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[90] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.
[832] [91] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women were attracted to them.
[92] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.
[93] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 and the hardest and most durable timber available, spared no pains to make the best poles they could.[6]

×532 765 When the "workers" had finished shaping the poles they notified the leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, who then gave the order for the poles to be scorched over a fire of blazing leaves to make a black ground on which to paint the design (Mountford, 1956, p. 427). Then, setting up the poles in a double row near the grave (Mountford, 1956, p. 426), the men began their task of decoration (Pl. 33B, D). At the same time, the ceremonial leader sent message sticks (p. 98) to notify the outlying groups that the final rituals were about to start.

386 The materials used for decoration were: red and yellow ochres from Imilu, Cape Van Diemen, a white ochre from a beach nearby, crushed charcoal for black, one of three types of fixatives, i.e., the white of turtle eggs, wild honey and beeswax mixed together, and the particularly gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids.

The ochres were crushed, mixed with water and one or more of the fixatives, and applied to the poles with brushes made from chewed strips of bark or vines (Fig. 2).

● 517 ×532 As I watched these primitive artists at work, I was impressed with the care they took in the arranging of their simple patterns, and with the obvious pleasure they experienced in their work. A quiet air of contentment pervaded the outdoor studio as each of the ten artists made his own pole as beautiful as possible.

Each artist appeared to be certain as to the designs he would use; there was no evidence of copying; in fact, *Pulanimbuwi* showed me the rough draft of the designs of his pole (Pl. 35A, B, Fig. 9), scratched on the back of a cigarette tin, days before he had even felled the tree.

×532 765 A puzzling aspect of the *pukamuni* poles is the wide variety of the painted designs used, and the almost total absence in those designs of any reference to the myths and totemic localities.[6]

At first sight it would appear that the pole shapes, collected by both Fry and myself, were inventions of the moment. An analysis of the poles

174 412 322 have simpler shapes than at the present time, although Campbell (1834, p. 158) speaks about "poles with tops like lances and halberts". The aboriginies may have used fire to assist in the shaping of the poles, in fact, this is suggested by Klaatsch (1907, p. 387).

[6] Not far from our camp was the deserted grave of the father of *Muramajua* (Pl. 38D), who died when his son was an infant. *Muramajua* was then over forty years old, yet the poles, although somewhat eroded and disarranged by the elements, are still in a fair state of preservation.

[177] [6] This and old *Tjamalampua's* statement, p. 109, could indicate that the poles and their designs are a recent cultural trait that is not yet fully absorbed into the culture.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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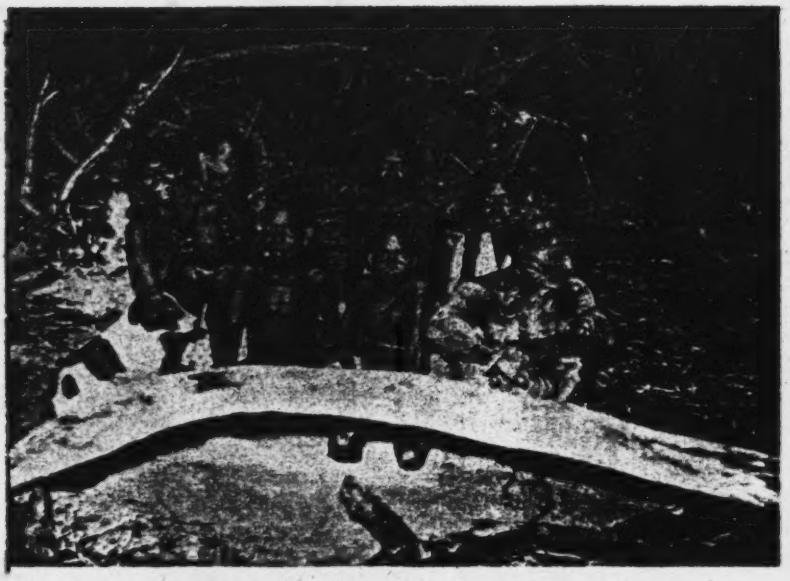

Fig. 12. A Tiwi family camped for the night

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Black Joe, Fat Alice's brother, had given them his eldest daughter in adoption. However, Dennis spent as much time with her proper parents as with her foster parents and it was quite evident that her affection was at least equally divided. Albert went over and managed to bring the screaming, kicking child back to our camp and asked me to give her some of the hard candy which I had brought with me. It was some time, however, before her attention was sufficiently distracted to allow Tuki and the other men to slip away into the canoe to hunt crocodiles for another night. Agnes commented to me, "Let him cry? That white man rule no good. By and by they go silly."

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We strolled back to Black Joe's camp with Dennis, and listened to a discussion concerning the superiority of crocodile hunting over

settlement work. It seemed the chief advantage was that they 123
received 'money-in-the-finger' from the skins they caught. They 465
didn't understand why they didn't also get paid for the settlement 521
work. I kept silent, but soon they turned to me and said, "You get job; how much you pay?" I told them, and then went on to say that out of that salary I had to pay someone for the food I ate, the clothes I wore, the house I lived in and so on, whereas they did not have to pay for the flour, tea, sugar, meat, blankets, or clothes the welfare people gave them. There was a long silence during which, I believe, each man was figuring how much all these benefits were worth in hard money. Finally Ginger said slowly, "Maybe, this way more better."

Soon the visitors rose and returned to their fires. Someone 123
started a song, a low nasal chant. Another, a woman, began a high- 533
pitched love song, and to this discordant lullaby I soon fell asleep.

As usual, it was barely light when the camp came to life again. 123
After the customary tea breakfast, the various families discussed 512
among themselves the day's plans. Black Joe and Long Peter, their wives and children, were taking the canoe up-river to hunt. Young Brook and his brothers, Danny Brown and Charlie Cook, their wives and children, soon left to hunt in the area back of Minianapi. Charlie Quiet and Roger also left. "Now we go?" I turned in question to Albert. "No, we stay behind. Build house. No good you go bush. Too much grass, plenty big mob cheeky snake. By and by that mob burn grass; then we go bush." It seemed like a logical explanation, but I was disappointed.

The day was already sticky and muggy, and tired of inactivity 123
I started off toward the creek, saying I was going for a swim. Both natives jumped up and said, "No. No. Too much crocodile, more better go along billabong." So with Agnes ahead we started down the path leading away from the creek. Soon we were out of the thick tangle of bushes separating the clearing from the true bush. Now the path led over the rocky, dusty ground, which had but recently been burned. The trunks of the large bloodwood and [137]
stringy-bark trees were blackened for about four feet up from their base. The spiraled trunks of the screwpalm, as well as their lower dried leaves, also had a charred appearance. Except for an occa-

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

"i, i, i, . . . ," changing, it may be, occasionally to a "hi, hi, hi, ..." "That one 527
all-a-same bird," remarked one of my Larrekiya boys, who stood near to me, quite 533
overcome with excitement; and, indeed, I did now recognize the similarity to the trill of the great stone-plover or "curlew" (*Oedicnemus sp.*). The leader having in 527
the interim returned to the starting point and thus completed that part of the 535
performance in which we might be prone to find an analogy with the polonaise of a modern ball, suddenly "doubles" or breaks to a running pace and all the others follow his example. He selects a wide spiral course, gradually nearing the centre and concentrating the body of men to a mass of humanity which to the observer seems to be moving in confusion and disorder. The pace quickens. The men stamp the ground with their feet, at the same time throwing up their arms and keeping them erect from the shoulder. An explosive shriek from the leader is echoed by the voices of all the others. The stamping of feet ceases and the arms of the performers drop to their sides. The leader now steps out to a position in front of his group of men, who, all of them, have turned to face the same way, viz., towards him. Looking to one side and lifting his arm in that direction, the leader emits a high-pitched shriek, which, as his arm is swept downwards on that side, is followed by a combined roaring "hoi" of all the others. This item is repeated several times over; alternately on one side and the other, in succession. This concludes another part of the corrobboree.

All performers now form themselves into a semi-circular group. The excite- [522]
ment is intense; forcible argument and debating ensue, accompanied by jocular shouting and laughing, which are repeatedly stimulated by gleeful interjections of "irr," an exclamation common to all Australian tribes.[1]

Having come to some different arrangement among themselves, a "tempo" is [533]
set by all members clapping either one or both of their hands upon the sides of their thighs, or their buttocks, producing dull and drum-like sounds by the impact. The latter are in marked unison and rhythmical. A performer now jumps from the semicircle of the time-beaters and runs round in a circle, facing its centre, and all the while stamping his feet. The interest and excitement increase among the [533]
audience, who further subsidize the accompaniment with a note, that is produced by a spluttering movement of the lips and sounds like "brr, brr, brr." As the stamping of the performer is accelerated, the clapping quickens with it. All at once he throws up his head and shouts "poop." This solicits an immediate response of "iah" from all others present.

Stationing himself in the centre, he next cuts some wonderfully clever and athletic antics. At the start he stamps the ground vigorously with both feet in alternation; the crowd keeping excellent time with their accompaniment of clapping hands upon their buttocks. As his pace increases, the beats of the hands become sharper and both hands are used (usually when striking the buttocks more posteriorly). While he stamps his feet, the performer, at the same time, vibrates

[1] *Vide* footnotes, H. Basedow, *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 33.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 548 595 668 797 (b) had each a number of wives at home, (c) had not rented any to the Japanese as yet (mainly because of lack of opportunity), but (d) were all suspecting each other of contemplating an early trip to the Yeimpi country and therefore were in chronic indecision on the whole matter. Hence Mariano's arguments were greeted with the applause that any group of people caught among a complicated set of moral alternatives will give to one of their number who has solved for himself the conflicts that beset them and has solved them moreover in a way perfectly consistent with all his previous attitudes. It was the applause and approval that is expressed in our culture by some such phrase as "I may not agree with him but at least he is sincere and you always know where he stands."

159 593 But like similar people elsewhere Mariano inspired no close intimate loyalty. Nobody felt warmly toward him. The missionaries used him but didn't like him, the anthropologist found him invaluable as an informant but intensely irritating in his self-importance and his belief in his own indispensability; among the natives he had no intimates and no close friends. His relations with his wife were much more formal and distant than was usual among monogamous couples and she frequently criticized him both in public and in private for what she called his "failure to talk to her"—undoubtedly the Tiwi equivalent of the American wife's complaint against her husband's absorption in business or politics. He was fond of his children but played with them little and then in a silent, brooding sort of way, confining his caresses to tickling and squeezing them, unlike Antonio whose play with his children was always carried on in an endless flow of chatter and two-way conversations. Child-talk, one surmises, was beneath Mariano's dignity.

177 159 All in all, Mariano was a forceful, domineering, self-important, introverted man, pursuing his dedicated way as the leader of a cause—collaboration with and imitation of the whites—but having personality traits which prevented him from inspiring any of the affection or warm devotion that other types of leaders inspire. There were many Tiwi, especially among the younger men, who were ready and willing to adopt at least the easier aspects of white culture such as clothes, work in Darwin, disrespect for tribal laws, violation of taboos, but in no sense can they be described as Mariano's followers, still less his admirers. Everyone respected Mariano, everybody consulted him, everybody made use of him and listened to him, but nobody warmed to him. He was as sound, as domineering, as aggressive, as humorless, as dedicated, as admirable as one of the Old Testament prophets—and just as difficult to like.

LOUIS

159 Of the five sons of Turimpi, it may be that the two who were most similar in whatever it is that is called personality were the second and third sons, Mariano and Louis. Both were "lonely ones," both had about them a kind of gloomy, inward-focused aura which inhibited warm friendly relations with others. Among a people to whom laughter and gaiety come easily, both were completely devoid of humor. Both were men dedicated to a cause, but in the

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 Tip, and every white man who came in contact with him immediately shortened his name to the obvious diminutive form, was a person whose whole life was devoted to laughter. No English word fits him so well as the word "gay." This gaiety was not clownishness or buffoonery nor did it contain any element of malice or desire to hurt others; it was simply an enormous sense of fun. The other four brothers were in their different ways rather taut and tense personalities, or at least three were and Antonio was when away from home. Tip alone of the five brothers was always completely relaxed and unselfconscious. He was always looking on the bright side, always trying to banish tension and worry with a quip or a wisecrack, always making a joke. His favorite sentence opening was "perhaps." On one occasion a camp I was in was badly scared by a ghost appearing in the middle of the night in the midst 159 522 [775] of the camp fires. Everybody, anthropologist included, huddled around their fires, not daring to look and yet unable to abstain from furtive peeps. Finally the apparition seemed to have gone and there were low whispers from various firesides of, "Has it gone?—I think it's gone—it doesn't seem to be there now." "Perhaps it's gone to Port Darwin to see a movie," said Tip, loudly, and immediately the tension was broken and the whole camp shouted with laughter. On another occasion a group of natives who were escorting an elderly and venerable French priest through the bush, were chased by a herd of wild buffalo[8] and forced to take refuge in the nearby trees. The buffalo pawed and snorted under the trees and a discussion took place as to how to frighten them away. Shouting, swearing and throwing sticks failed to frighten them off. "Perhaps, Father," said Tip, convulsed with laughter at the whole proceeding and addressing the priest, "perhaps they would go away if you cursed at them in the Church language [i.e., Latin]."

159 522 561 There are several important things to notice about Tip's humor. One is that much of the time he used it as a means of initiating action, as in the ghost incident where he took the lead over several senior men in dissolving the tension, or in the Warner incident,[9] where the initiating suggestion to play a very old and hackneyed joke came from him. In a culture that looked with disfavor on young men speaking out of turn, Tip was always speaking out of turn, but because such speaking was always in a joking form, few if any natives recognized it as being out of turn. From certain points of view we might say that Tip had found, through his gaiety, a tool which he used to make his presence felt without exciting social disapproval because of his lack of age. But that statement makes the whole matter sound far too conscious and de- 159 liberate. Again we face a constantly recurring problem—how much of "personality" is status-dictated and how much "natural"? Will increasing years and dignity cause Tip to cease laughing at life and its problems? There seem at least two grounds for strongly doubting it. One is the admittedly subjective but strongly held view that Tip didn't laugh and joke and come out with his incongruous "perhaps" to achieve effect or as a means to the end of social recognition, but because he genuinely and naturally enjoyed his own humor. Too many nights have I dozed off to sleep listening to Tip gurgling with sup-

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

pressed laughter on the other side of the fire as he recalled to himself the amusing incidents of the day. Even when alone with his thoughts he was still laughing. This suggests that Tip's gaiety was "natural" rather than contrived for effect, and there is support for the suggestion in the fact that Tip was regarded as a poor hunter, because, as one critic put it, "He doesn't concentrate on killing the kangaroo but plays jokes on the kangaroo and makes a game out of hunting." Another indication that when alone he behaved in the same irresponsible manner that he exhibited in public. 159

The second ground that suggests that fun-loving and gaiety are not incompatible with increasing age and tribal status is the fact that there were many old and venerable Tiwi who loved fun and laughter just as Tipperary did. One such was Tu'untalumi, one of the most elderly of the Tiklauila, a man of weight, dignity and poise. He was a highly respected person, an expert in ceremonial performances and a rigid traditionalist in all things. But despite his age and dignity this man was as given to fun and laughter as Tip was. The main difference was that Tip's laughter was loud, boisterous and prankish; Tu'untalumi's jokes and quips were delivered in low, gentle tones and his laughter was dignified and restrained. But within the limitations imposed by his status he got as much fun and extracted as much humor out of life as Tip, illustrating the point that age and seniority in Tiwi do not at all necessarily mean sourness and lack of humor. Although the two were not related Tipperary played up to the old man and courted and valued his approval while Tu'untalumi clearly liked having Tip around him. They were kindred souls but separated by more than forty years of age. 157 522 561 159 522 572

As is probably the case in most cultures, so among the Tiwi—the genuinely gay person is popular. Tipperary though the next to youngest of Turimpi's sons was the one with most friends. Perhaps significantly, his friends were among both his seniors and juniors, but not among his brothers. Antonio was the only brother who sought Tip's company and this can be accounted for either by the fact that Antonio, when not harassed by his status, was an easy-going, friendly and none too intelligent man who laughed readily even when none too sure of what the joke was, or that he found Tip's company a relaxation from the cares of state. Of the other brothers, the self-righteous and puritanical Mariano considered Tip frivolous and deplored (or was jealous of) the tendency of white men to become fond of him. Louis actively disliked Tip perhaps because his love affairs were an obvious target for some of Tip's better quips. "Perhaps he is going into the bush to take a nap" was one of his comments when he saw Louis disappearing among the trees. With his full brother Bob, Tip had few close ties, perhaps because Bob spent much of his time in Darwin, but even more likely, one suspects, because Bob, an indefinite and colorless youngster, shrank from attracting public notice, whereas Tip was always drawing attention to himself, with the result that Bob to save himself embarrassment avoided his company. 159 593

Outside his siblings, Tipperary's gaiety earned him the liking and companionship of the younger men and made him a favorite younger man of some 159 522 572

159 of the oldest and most respected seniors, particularly of Tu'untalumi and those
322 swayed by his opinion. It follows from this that Tip though given to jokes and
372 pranks cannot be written off as merely a privileged buffoon. On the contrary his wit and gaiety earned him friends and his friends gave him influence out of proportion to his youth. Some insight into this is supplied by the shadow of the ubiquitous Louis. Tipperary, through the missionaries' efforts on behalf
[797] of monogamy, had obtained a wife at a much earlier age than would have been
[582] possible under pre-white conditions, and according to the women, who have their own sources of information about such things, Louis was strongly attracted by Tipperary's wife. Since Louis was not noted for restraint or self-discipline in these matters the obvious question was why he did not press his attention on her as he had done on numerous other women, including the wife of Tip's younger brother Bob. "Oh no, he doesn't dare chase after Tipperary's
[626] wife. The old men would be very angry if he did anything to her," was the reply of the old hags who were the local gossip columnists. This belief that the "old men" would undoubtedly protect Tip's wife while they had noticeably failed to protect Bob's wife from a similar threat (see below) is a pretty clear indication that the two young men had very different places in tribal estimation—a fact that in turn can be correlated with no status differential between them and leaves only the "personality" difference between the two men to account for it. Tip was popular with the control groups, Bob was not, therefore the control groups would support Tip because they liked him. They were indifferent toward Bob.[10]

159 To summarize Tipperary is relatively easy. He was a cheery, relaxed, fun-loving young man who enjoyed his own humor but enjoyed it all the more if it were shared by an appreciative audience. He was therefore gregarious, friendly, outgoing and extroverted. He would have been a good Rotarian or a better disk-jockey. Because of these traits he was noticed a great deal more by his elders than his age justified and the notice he received was usually favorable. He was popular in a way none of his brothers were, and because of this popularity was able to express opinions and exert influence to an extent unusual for one of his years. In a society where men under 30 are expected to be seen and not heard, Tip was constantly being heard. This was only possible because his natural gaiety and warmth prejudiced almost everybody in his favor. He was the sort of man about whom it is often said in our culture "he always makes a party go," or, "he is the sort of person who just naturally makes friends."

BOB

The youngest brother, Bob, needs only two words to describe him—complete nonentity. About 27 or 28 when I knew him and, because of the Mission's efforts, married a good deal younger than he would have been under pre-white conditions, Bob, whatever the occasion or circumstances, was always part of the background. Like many of the younger Tiwi he was inclined to spend part
[464] of each year in Darwin working for the white men, and by them he was regarded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 0120 Tiwi 0120

leads to the situation—quite foreign to our way of thought and also apparently to that of Polynesian cultures—whereby a young bachelor can prowl around the bush all night without arousing the slightest interest but his daytime wanderings, ostensibly in search of game, are watched by his married seniors with the deepest suspicion. 837

[8] The buffalo, which are confined to Melville Island, are the wild descendants of domestic East Asian water buffalo which were imported during an early attempt at settlement. 136

[9] It is perhaps not without interest that one of Tip's jokes is imperishably preserved in the files of the Peabody Museum at Harvard. Tip was in Darwin in 1927 when W. Lloyd Warner was collecting at the Native Compound the anthropometric measurements which were afterwards analyzed by W. W. Howells (1937), and like all other natives in town from many tribes he and a number of Tiwi were measured by Warner. On the card for each subject Warner wished to record the personal name of the native. Led by Tip, all the Tiwi measured bestowed upon themselves the most obscene "native name" they could think of, and years later Tip would shout with laughter when telling how Warner faithfully recorded these obscenities, often repeating them several times to make sure of the correct pronunciation. 159 522 114

[10] This set of sentiments surrounding Tip's wife also gives a little more insight into the sex activities of Louis. His reluctance to move in on her, because of the way "the old men would feel," while showing no such reluctance to move in on Mrs. Bob, supports the view implied above that Louis, while sex dominated, was no fool in his amours. He had an intelligent and realistic appreciation of just how much he could get away with. 159 626

[11] I use this slang term deliberately, since it expresses somewhat the Tiwi attitude toward those young bachelors who go about seducing the wives of their elders and betters.

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171 boomerang, is unknown to the islanders. Ceremonial customs,
[411] language, origin, and burial rites all differ from those of the mainland tribes, and constitute an interesting study for anthropologists. They are the only aborigines who erect memorials on
764 the graves of the departed, and, in the forest beside the aerodrome, you may see a typical grave surrounded with queerly-
[322 carved ironwood totem-poles. The poles, some eight feet in
532] height, are carved in varying patterns. They had been painted in highly decorative designs with red, yellow, and white ochre, with black bands of charcoal to give sharp and artistic contrast. Each kindred totem to that of the deceased must place a pole at the grave. Failure to erect a pole is supposed to signify that no sorrow is felt for the death, and punishment will follow. Something unpleasant always *does* happen to those who neglect this duty.

797 AFTER these necessary digressions, let us return to my visit to the mission station. We followed the fathers over the stile, up an avenue of palms, and on through the garden, where
[245] pineapples and bananas grow, and there are rows of immense and beautifully shady mango-trees. Sturdy, fuzzy-headed aborigines strode in front (one of them had just come in with
[262] a couple of kangaroos for the larder), and the boys trooped along behind us. The quarters of the fathers are very much those of bachelors, perfectly bare, with guns in the corners and a few native weapons and curios hanging on the walls.

Here two lubras brought us morning tea, and here I learnt much of the foregoing matters. The fathers themselves are entertaining men of the world, and their white cricket shirts and khaki slacks gave no indication of their calling. The boys gathered at the foot of the steps leading up to the quarters,
797 and every now and then black-bearded Father McGrath would
522 banter them in their own language. Like all the native peoples

[p. 15 (B)]

797 of North Australia, they are fond of a joke. They chuckled delightedly. Father McGrath can preach in the native language,
● 522 but dear old Father Gsell (every one on the north alludes to him in these affectionate terms) must deliver his sermons in pidgin.
[198] Sometimes this greatly amuses the congregation, and many spirited and life-like reproductions are enacted again and again after the service.

797 WHILE taking a walk round the grounds of the mission station, an urchin of no more than three and a half years of age
753 was pointed out. That very morning this little fellow had
761 plunged into the shark-infested straits and saved his baby sister from drowning. She was unconscious when brought ashore, and the usual methods of resuscitation were followed by Father McGrath, who had hurried to the scene. Then arose one of the difficulties the mission staff are constantly encountering. All the
[754] ills that befall the islanders are attributed to magic. No black ever dies a natural death: always there is some evilly-disposed person responsible!

When treatment was commenced, the child had been laid on her stomach while the water was pushed out of her body. The blacks had seen an apparently drowned boy revived when laid on his back, and immediately became excited and angry. It was necessary to turn the child over for a while, otherwise the mission fathers would have been held responsible if she had not recovered. And, all the time that treatment was in progress, an old woman (very much in the way) had sung in the baby's ear.

In the opinion of the women who had gathered round, it was the singing that brought the little girl back to life, and her recovery had nothing whatever to do with the father's efforts, although he would have been held responsible if he had not been able to save her! The old men have some glimmerings of common sense, but the old women are terrible old witches and it is quite impossible to convince them.

When anyone is sick, it is the invariable custom to sing a monotonous phrase over and over again in the patient's ear to bring him back to health; and, wherever a pain is felt, it is usual to cut the skin down to the third integument to let the sickness out. On one occasion a man was suffering from acute abdominal pains, and his relations, who wanted to cut him open, came to the mission fathers to seek their approval of this drastic treatment. Here was an awkward predicament! If the sick man was cut open, he was sure to die; and, since nothing would induce him to go to the hospital at Darwin for skilled attention, he might die in any case. In either event the fathers would be held responsible. They stood firm and refused their approval. However, while the relations were hesitating in view of the emphatic assertions of the mission fathers, the man made a surprising recovery. The cure was of course ascribed to the singing, not to the good advice that kept the man on a starvation diet of water only.

755 The islanders firmly believe that they will be poisoned if they go to Darwin for treatment, but they will always trust their own people. One man, who had been employed on a pearling lugger (all the islanders are naturally good seamen), had a leg taken by a crocodile, and was forced to find some new way of making a living. He had learnt a lot too much in the years that he was away, and, on his return to Bathurst Island, he set up in practice as a witch-doctor. A woman on the point of

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not
609 real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human
[101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate
[173] to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distribu-
171 tional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how
[411] isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their
[531] wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus-
[764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the
[541] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

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[177 [1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the
524] result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pawi*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 the mainland. In the first place no spears are manufactured for projecting by
[101] other method than simply by hand. No spear-throwers, so much in evidence among all true Australian tribes, are in use on these islands. Yet light spears
411 were observed which really marked the beginning of the development of the arrow.
524 These were seen to be used by youths at play and during their sham fights. Light green sticks, a little over a metre in length and slightly more than a lead pencil's thickness, are cut and scraped to a simple point at one end. The opposite end, that is, the back- or hand-end, is next put to the mouth and split with the teeth along its fibres into several stripe some 10 centimetres long. The split pieces are then bent outwards like the feathers of an arrow and the toy weapon is ready for use. It can be hurled by hand with astounding precision. The opponents evade the missiles by dodging and crouching and contorting their bodies in much the same clever manner as I have described[1] of the Larrekiya and Wogait tribes.

411 Strictly speaking, one type of spear prevails. It is made of a single piece of solid wood, straightened to a greater or less degree over a fire. It is barbed at the front end and tapers to a simple point behind. The extreme variations in length and, consequently, in weight also, of this spear attract the attention at first sight. It is nothing unusual to find spears measuring 450 centimetres in length and weighing 2,700 grammes, but at the same time the smaller specimens measure only 250 centimetres in length and weigh 370 grammes. When we consider that a fair average length of the Northern Territory spear is 300 centimetres and a good average weight 260 grammes, the maxima of the islanders' spears quoted seem
[136] very remarkable indeed. The more do these appeal to us since the largest species of the indigenous fauna is but a fair-sized wallaby. Crocodiles are comparatively scarce, and the buffalo, introduced from Timor by Captain Barlow, first commandant of Fort Dundas, in 1826, is practically unknown on Bathurst Island. On Melville Island, where similar spears are in use, the buffalo is very plentiful, but it is a singular fact that the natives do not hunt this beast to any considerable extent.

The head of the spear has many barbs carved on one side and, occasionally, on two diametrically opposite sides. There are usually from ten to thirty barbs, which are directed backwards (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 5 (Series)). Behind these there may or may not be from four to eight small serrations that stand out at right angles to the length of the shaft. In other cases, too, some six or more barbs are cut at the back part of the spear-head pointing the opposite way, that is, in the direction the spear is thrown. The spear heads have a long point resembling a cutting-blade or spike. The barbs are symmetrically carved with sharp edges and point. They are flattish lancet-shaped, with a central ridge on the outside, and project from the head to various degrees of prominence in different specimens. Many of the spears are longitudinally grooved with an adze, either for the whole of their length or along the head-end only. They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 33.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

corrobboree of the Melville Islanders, but it appears that he regarded the [114] demonstration as hostile. He writes that "the dance consisted chiefly of the per- 527 formers leaping two or three times successively out of the sea, and then violently 535 moving their legs so as to agitate the water into a foam for some distance around them, all the time shouting loudly and laughing immoderately; then they would run through the water for eight or ten yards and perform again; and this was repeated over and over as long as the dance lasted."

During none of these ceremonies, or indeed anywhere on the island, did I see [171] anything of totemism in the scientific sense of the word. This fact is in accordance [114] with my observations in Central and North Australia, and my negative evidence is amply borne out by the researches of Drs. W. E. Roth and H. Klaatsch and others.

Pastimes.

The sham-fights of youths with small arrow-shaped spears have already been 524 mentioned. Children were observed upon the beach competing in running and long jump. A favourite amusement of the younger folk on a breezy day is to collect the light globular seed-heads of the "spring rolling grass" (*Spinifex hirsutis*), that grow on every sand-hill near the coast, and take them to the beach and there release them on the hardened sand. Driven along by the wind, these seeds travel over the surface at no mean pace. Allowing them to gain a fair start, the children bolt after them and endeavour to overtake them and pick them up from the ground while dashing past them at full speed in "cow-boy" fashion.

Another game is that of hand-ball. The seeds of the zamia (*Cycas media*) take the place of a small ball. Two lads stand facing one another and hit the seed to and fro with the palms of their hands, after the style of a modern game of tennis.

Despite their keenness of sight and quickness of hand, they are, nevertheless, [147] very backward in catching with their hands an object which is thrown at them.

Burial Method.

The aborigines of Bathurst and Melville Islands have a unique and elaborate 764 method of burial; graves have been found on both islands. It appears that the favourite places for burying the dead are there, where a jungle or mangrove-thicket breaks to the ordinary eucalypt-woodland, usually near to the sea-coast or to a native water.

Historically we have to note several observations in this connection.

Sir Gordon Bremer[1] mentions having discovered a grave on Bathurst Island in 1824. "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it

[1] *Imperial Parliamentary Paper*, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, London, March 27th, 1843; also in *The Genesis of Queensland*, by H. S. Russell, Sydney, 1888, p. 34.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 feuding system departed and the Tiwi community became more centralized,
611 especially around the Bathurst Island Mission, the utility of the old band
614 organization diminished and the underlying clan organization dominated. Sud-
621 denly, fighting was no longer in terms of band membership, for the matrilineal clan had become the only social unit of significance.

Today young Tiwi often deny that they have any band membership. But it is not unknown for teen-age Tiwi males to lie awake at night counting
[578] up the members of their matrilineal clan. According to informants, in the 1940's and 50's the major fights which occurred at Bathurst Island Mission were interclan skirmishes.

177 Thus, among the Tiwi, we have an example of how a society with a patrilineal emphasis under strong influence from another society with a
611 patrilineal emphasis may, if there is an underlying matrilineal organization, become a society which is for all practical purposes solely matrilineal. The introductory student of anthropology is thereby warned that characterizations of societies as matrilineal or patrilineal are rarely adequate to form the basis for reconstructing past or predicting future forms of such societies.

Tiwi and the Australian Nation

648 Finally, let us consider those aspects of modern Tiwi life which attract national attention in Australia. What do the newspaper-reading members of the Australian public know about the Tiwi?

Probably the best known Tiwi is a male in his thirties, formerly known to other Tiwi and local residents of Darwin as Bobby Wilson. About 1953, an Australian movie producer, Charles Chauvel, went hunting for a "full-blood" aborigine who could act well enough to portray an aboriginal male in what became the Australian movie "Jedda." In Darwin, the producer found a football star from the Darwin group of Tiwi who could fill the part. Bobby Wilson soon was billed as Robert Tudawali.[8] He went "on location" at several spots in the Territory and finally traveled to Sydney for the studio shooting. The Sydney papers caught his story and spread his bearded face over the country. Bobby Wilson's photo from the local newspaper was hung up in several native huts at Bathurst Island Mission. After much publicity, he ultimately returned to his wife and their hut in the Bagot Native Compound in Darwin. Again the newshounds caught his story. According to them, he had returned to a life of degradation. The Australian public was shocked that a star of one of their best films should be discarded to live again like every other aborigine in Darwin. Tudawali was "rescued" and given a second role in another Australian film.

177 Bobby Wilson was only one of a large number of young Tiwi who are
● 526 recognized as fine athletes. There are two football teams in Darwin which have
648 Tiwi members: the Catholic team, St. Mary's, which often takes the local

[8] The last name Tudawali is an attempt to spell the Tiwi word for shark.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pennant, and the Wanderers, which draws from the permanent native population in Darwin and includes such Tiwi as Bobby Wilson. It is normal for one of these Tiwi players to be considered among the top three in Darwin football circles. 177 526 648

For a while, Edmund, a Tiwi from Bathurst Island Mission, was one of the players on the newly organized St. Mary's basketball team; other Tiwi have played on the Bagot Compound basketball team. Billy Larrakeyah, a Darwin Tiwi, was thought to have Olympic potentialities as a javelin thrower, but strained his arm in the try-outs.[4] Most recently, a group of young Catholic Tiwi has been organized into a water polo team called the Seals. National magazines suggest that they may be the best water polo team in the country, but so far they have not gone south to play any non-Darwin group.

Tiwi carving and painting have had recent popularity in Australian art circles. Traditional Tiwi graveposts are finely carved in geometric designs and painted with precise and complex networks of cross-hatching and other simple, but effective, motifs. The first modern innovation in Tiwi art occurred about 1945 when a native known as Katu (or Short Katu) made his first attempt to carve a human figure atop a mourning post. When Pilling later asked Katu why he had carved this post, he said, "Me see 'm along Darwin. Me savvy." That is, Katu transferred the concept of Western realistic statuary in the round into the Tiwi art form. He carved a second realistic post for presentation to Queen Elizabeth II in 1954. More recently, Tiwi carvers at Snake Bay have taken to realistic carving. Two figurines, both carved by Tiwi at Snake Bay, were given to the Perth Museum in 1958. Sixteen mourning posts from Snake Bay were purchased by the National Art Gallery in Sydney the same year. An art display of Tiwi carving has been held in the United States in Philadelphia. 177 532 322

Tiwi have received recognition in the Northern Territory for other art forms. One of the thirty-year-old female Tiwi at Bathurst Island Mission usually takes first prize for embroidery at the annual Territorial fair. There has also been interest shown by outsiders in the double-barbed ceremonial spears. Male Tiwi skill in dancing has attracted wide attention in Australia. When natives from all over the Territory were sent to dance before Queen Elizabeth in Queensland during her 1954 tour, three Tiwi were among the delegation. The Tiwi contingent, directed by the innovator Short Katu, made every news story covering this part of the Royal Visit. In Darwin, when Bagot Compound needs to raise money for native participation in sports, the Tiwi, usually led by Katu, present a public dance. As a result, Katu's clan under his direction has invented many new dances for white Australian audiences. 177 [531] 177 535 648

Perhaps we may look forward to the day when American television audiences can enjoy such a Tiwi dance, one of Australia's best native products. Yet only sixty years ago, and therefore in the lifetime of many people still living, very few Tiwi had even seen a white man, and white men who set foot on Tiwi soil, like Cooper in his first attempt in 1897, were ferociously chased out.

[4] He was killed in a brawl in Darwin in the spring of 1959.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

578 quietly slipped away to some other camp and was not seen the following
684 morning. The matter might then die, depending largely on whether the old husband wanted to carry it further or was content to drop it. If the young
[627] man was still in camp the following day, the old man might insist on a duel then and there, but it would take place only if the camp were large, since Tiwi duels were essentially legal actions and as such needed a sizable audience for their correct staging. Disputes between men, of which old men accusing young men of seduction were by far the most common type, usually remained at the verbal level until a large body of spectators was available. Since such large
[527] concentrations of many households were necessary for the performance of the
627 main collective ceremonials, it was at the time of these ceremonials that most verbal arguments were pushed by the aggrieved party to the action level.

554 During the dry season (April to November) when travel was easy, the
764 only collective ceremonials sufficiently important to draw together a large number of households were those held for the funerals of big men. In the wet season (November to March) when the grass and bush were high and travel was difficult, the main collective phases of the male initiation ceremonies were
[881] held (see Chapter 4), and these brought together for a few weeks at a time large numbers of households. The funeral ceremonies for adults were always held some considerable time after the death and burial of the deceased. How long a period elapsed between the death and the funeral ceremonies depended on the expected size of the gathering, and this figure correlated; at least roughly, with the importance of the deceased. Here again the overriding considera-
574 tion was food supply, since the chief mourners (that is, the deceased's closer
764 relatives) had to feed everybody who came to the funeral while the ceremonies
433 lasted, which might be almost a week. The more important the dead person the bigger the crowd at his funeral, and hence the greater the amount of time
182 needed by the mourners to arrange the catering. As much as a year might elapse between the death and the time when the mourners felt that the funeral arrangements—especially the food supply, but also the ceremonial preparation —were sufficiently well in hand to permit them to set a date and send out invitations for the funeral ceremonies. Funerals, therefore, were not held at regular times but were individually scheduled at times fixed by the chief mourners. They were always held in the dry season, however (except those of
[627] young children, to which nobody came in any case), and therefore an old man who had a dispute to settle or a case to try publicly could always depend on a few big funerals being held in the not very distant future which would provide the large audience necessary to make the settlement of the dispute legal. During the wet season the *kolema* phases of the initiation ceremonial
[881] always drew a large attendance; the annual time of these was pretty definitely fixed by the ripening of the *kolema* yams.

578 Hence the verbal wrangles in the small scattered encampments at night,
684 about seduction during the day, could have any one of three outcomes, depending largely upon the determination of the old man-accuser and the demeanor
627 of the young man-accused. If by the following morning the young man had disappeared and showed no further interest in the old man's menage, the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

staged and this was usually sufficient to incapacitate the offender and make him decide to move—at least for a while—into some other district. The group thus hastily convened to mete out public justice seldom numbered more than sixty or seventy people (seven or eight households) and having been convened *ad hoc* would remain camped together only for the forty-eight hours or less needed to deal with the emergency.

Joint Activities

This discussion of the alternative lines of action open to an outraged household head enables us to specify the relatively rare occasions during the year when the dull, quiet, day-by-day, food-gathering routines of the dispersed household camps were interrupted by events that required many households to gather together in one place and indulge in joint action. Foremost among these occasions were big funerals and the *kolema* ceremonial, both of which were mentioned above. These were the main religious events of the year, full of dancing, singing, wailing, and excitement. The excitement was the psychological result of so many people being together at the same time, a rare experience in the life of any Tiwi. Since the *kolema* ceremonial was an annual event and even the most enthusiastic funeral goer did not attend more than three or four really big funerals in the course of a year, we may reckon that even an old and important man, much concerned with ritual observances, would probably find himself a participant in such crowd activities on not more than some six occasions per year. For less important men and for women and children the number of such occasions was less than six. The *kolema* ceremonial lasted two weeks or more, big funerals, even when they became the occasion for carrying on other public business, did not last more than four or five days each. Hence we may reckon an average of about a week each for the half-dozen times a really big man spent in the company of a sizable crowd of fellow tribesmen, giving a total annual average of about six or seven weeks at most out of every fifty-two—or a little less than 10 percent of the year spent by an old important man in large ceremonial activities or what Durkheim calls the collective life of the tribe.

In addition there were the smaller gatherings, such as the funerals of younger men and most women, and the calling together of a number of households to settle a dispute in the manner we have described above. These were collective occasions also but they brought together a considerably smaller crowd. A really big man's funeral was likely to draw over three hundred people or even as much as one-third of the whole tribe.[4] Not only did many

[4] Tamboo's funeral in May 1929 (he died in the previous August) drew practically the full band membership (men, women, and children) of the four Bathurst Island bands; almost all the Munupula; many Mandiimbula; and large delegations from the remaining three bands. With such a crowd, an actual head count was difficult, especially of the children, but there must have been over four hundred people present. Needless to say, excitement was intense; more fights occurred, more insults were exchanged, more ancient feuds revived and new ones started, and more food consumed than at any funeral in living memory. At least that was the opinion of Tamboo's chief mourners, but since it was they who threw the party and had to pay for it, they may have been biased.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Not only did many

people come to such a funeral to express their kinship with, and pay their 527
respects to, the deceased, but as mentioned above, many men with disputes to 571
settle or fights to pick let such matters ride until the next big funeral was 619
called and then took advantage of the large crowd to provide the necessary 764
witnesses for the transaction of the outstanding legal business. Gatherings of 627
many households for purely legal affairs, without funerals or *kolema* ceremonial as the main *raison d'etre* for the gathering, were comparatively rare and when they did occur they were usually called by one man, to settle one case only, and hence did not promote the attendance of very many households. Similarly, the funerals of most women and of younger and therefore less important men drew together at most ten or twelve households and a few other individuals, so that the crowd was usually not above one hundred people at the most. A single *ad hoc* legal duel, even when an episode in a long-drawn out and notorious dispute, seldom drew more than this number. Duels always attracted some spectators who came for the excitement, even though not personally involved, provided of course they were camped somewhere in the vicinity.

This second type of collective gathering, of which the smaller funerals and the single duels were the main occasions, might then require the attendance of a household head, accompanied by some or all of his household members, perhaps five or six times a year. These gatherings would each last less than forty-eight hours, and since the people the household head met at them would mostly be people of his own band or of closely adjoining bands, the excitement of seeing unfamiliar faces—people not seen for over a year perhaps—would be absent. We may reckon that attendance at these smaller, more localized gatherings, and the participation in group activity which they entailed, took up two more weeks, all told, out of the yearly round. When these two weeks are added to the six or seven already estimated for the time spent by a busy public man at the large gatherings, we find that even the busiest and most gregarious senior elders spent less than ten weeks out of the fifty-two in collective activity outside their immediate households.

To complete the list of occasions which called for joint activity by the 224
members of several households, we must include the joint kangaroo hunt. This activity was very localized and very spasmodic, occurring only when and where conditions were right and somebody felt sufficiently energetic to organize it. Much of the Tiwi country is a mixture of dense scrub and relatively [137]
open savannah; kangaroo are relatively easy to hunt in the latter but very hard to get near in the denser types of vegetation. The native method of hunting was based on getting as close as possible to the animal before it saw or heard the hunter. If it detected the hunter, it fled, and no Tiwi in his senses ever threw a spear or a throwing stick at a moving kangaroo.[5] Only when the animal was standing still and the hunter was close enough to aim carefully at a vital part was the spear thrown. At certain seasons of the year, particularly 221
after the end of the wet and early in the dry season, many sections of good 224
kangaroo country gave very poor hunting returns because the grass had become

[5] The up-and-down movement of a hopping kangaroo in flight makes it an extraordinarily difficult target even for skilled white hunters armed with shotguns or rifles.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The mobility of people other than household heads was much less. 562
Women and children could move only with the permission, and usually in the 571
company, of their lord and master. Occasionally old and trusted wives might
be sent, unsupervised, on a journey by their husbands or their brothers, [203]
usually to carry messages and bring back gossip, but young wives were never trusted to be out of sight either of the husband or of elderly female supervisors. Young men were less subject to their fathers' orders and hence were fairly free to come and go as they pleased, but the universal suspicion which all husbands bore toward wandering young men put severe restrictions on their mobility and prevented them attaching themselves to any household or camp in which they did not have some close relative.

The fact, then, that a man like Tu'untalumi was (in Tiwi terms) very 159
mobile did not necessarily mean that members of his household shared his 222
degree of mobility. When he took most of his large household with him on his 462
journeys away from home, as he often did, it was always because he was going 527
a considerable distance and was traveling slowly, living off the country as he
went. In such cases he liked to have a large retinue to feed him on the way and also to permit him to entertain in fitting style when he arrived. For while it was true that at a funeral or at an initiation the relatives of the de-
ceased or of the novices were supposed to take care of the feeding of all the [594]
visitors, nonetheless, wealthy and generous men like Tu'untalumi believed in taking along with them a bevy of young wives, with a couple of efficient elderly widow-wives in charge of them, to contribute to the food-getting and food-preparing activities. Of course the supervision of the young wives' morals [837
in the strange environment was often difficult, especially in the hectic at- 593]
mosphere of a big ceremonial, but this worry was compensated for by the fact that the visitor who came so attended was contributing a number of extra food providers to the labor force of the harassed hosts and thus making a generous gesture, and also by the fact that such a visitor was not dependent upon the hospitality provided by the hosts. Having his own food-producing unit with him, he could live better and stay longer than if he had come alone or only as one of a party of men. In this respect, as in so many others, a Tiwi household head's decision had to be reached by balancing against one another the two competing motives of, on the one hand, the desire to eat well and, on the other, the desire to keep his young wives safe from prowling bachelors. Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest man of the Malauila band, usually decided not only to leave his wives at home but also not even to go himself. But Ki-in-kumi was a gloomy, pessimistic old man. Tu'untalumi usually decided to do the thing in style, travel with a large retinue, have all the comforts of home while in strange districts, and take his chances on the strange bachelors. He clearly believed that a good booming ceremony with lots to eat and himself in the center directing the dancing was well worth the risk of a few of his young wives being seduced off-stage. Men like Ki-in-kumi thought Tu'untalumi an [184]
old fool for not leaving his young wives at home, and Tu'untalumi probably thought that old Ki-in-kumi might as well be dead, especially since his death would be the occasion for a really magnificent funeral.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

demands it; but usually, when on a simple turtle or dugong hunting expedition, 501
two persons only occupy places in the craft, one near the bow and another near
the stern (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). The boatmen, while propelling the [516]
craft, squat with their buttocks resting upon the heels and with their knees pressed
against the sides. The weight of their body being thus well within the boat, its
stability is thereby considerably increased.

Paddles.—Propulsion is effected by means of paddles which are made of hard 501
wood. They have a single well-shaped blade and a rounded handle (*vide* Plate
XII, Fig. 2). The edges of the blade are parallel or taper slightly towards the end,
which is square or rounded. Apart from the marks left by the tomahawk used in [531]
its making, the implement is without ornamentation. In one case only, a circular
collar was carved around the handle, immediately above the sloping shoulder of the
blade. The longest paddle noted measured 167 centimetres in length, its blade
80; the shortest was 115 centimetres in length and its blade 45. The width
of the blades ranges from 7 to 9 centimetres. Both hands clasp the paddle,
which is dipped alternately on one side or the other as the occasion and the steering
require it.

Balers.—Water that accumulates in the canoe, either by leakage or overwash [415
in a rough sea, is removed by means of a baler which is made out of the melon 824]
shell[1] (*Melo diadema*). The columella of the shell is carefully cut away, leaving
only the large body-whorl, which is used as a scoop (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 3 and 4).
The outer surface of the shell is painted with red and yellow ochre in large cross [531]
pattern, with a fine cross shading.

Dug-outs.—The dug-out canoes to which I have elsewhere referred[2] have, in [175]
all probability, been introduced by Malays from whom the natives obtain them by
barter. Dr. Walter Roth has also proved that the dug-outs met with along the coast of
Queensland are of Papuan origin. The form observed in Apsley Strait is without
outrigger and hollowed out of a single tree trunk. The bow and stern are raised
(*vide* Plate X, Fig. 2).

Corrobborees.

As with all primitive folk, song and dance constitute the ultimate stage of 535
any social intercourse or festivity. The islanders are even more ready than ~~their~~ 527
brothers on the mainland to resort to this means of entertainment. It thus
happened that, wherever we came into contact with the blacks and presented them
with divers small articles, a corrobboree was immediately inaugurated; even though
the encounter happened to occur in the middle of the day. Corrobborees on the

[1] *Cf. Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* vol. ii, p. 17: "the baler (a melon shell) is in constant requisition."

[2] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 53. Among others, note that Major Campbell says of the Port Essington natives that "such of the canoes as I saw were hollowed from the trunks of trees, like those of the Malays and were probably either left by these people or stolen from them," *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 170.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

527 mainland, it will be remembered, are with preference postponed until after night-
535 fall. The women were not permitted to take part in the proceedings, but were,
[562] indeed, kept at some considerable distance off. Youths and male children were allowed to join in the ceremonies without apparent restriction. When we met with men, hunting in the bush, and they had been convinced of our *bona fide* intentions, they would approach us in groups of from two to four, and deliver up their long
[200] spears to us. Several of the young men would, in the meantime, run into the woods as messengers to summon others who were as yet unaware of the presence of the strangers in their haunts.

203 A corrobboree[1] having been decided upon, the signal or invitation to take part
527 in the event is sounded by two or three of the older men, who have previously arranged it among themselves. This initial note is a long-drawn, continuous yell resembling the German diphthong ö! Other members immediately fall in with the same note and are joined, at intervals, by others excitedly rushing up to take their stand alongside of those who started the call. The monosyllabic "ö" is kept continuous by the combined efforts of many voices, each of which individually expires for a moment, after the lungs' capacity for air has been completely exhausted. The note is, however, taken up again immediately after a fresh supply of air has been inhaled. The weirdness of the monotone is suddenly broken by the powerful voice of the "master" of the ceremonies, who brings forth a penetrating, but abrupt, order resembling "wahoi." This is instantly and collectively repeated by all others present. A momentary silence follows and allows the sombre trunks of the surrounding forest to reiterate the final word in ringing echoes.

The leader once more gives the note; this time in a slightly modified form resembling a long-continued "ye," that merges imperceptibly into a "yi." A sudden shrill "wahoi-hoi" brings that note also to a stop. A deadly silence prevails.

527 The primary appellation now being over, the performers congregate themselves into a compact group. In the meanwhile much excited vociferation ensues from every mouth, young as well as old. At this stage their eyes make a survey of any
[628] neighbouring encampment and if, by chance, a likely performer is noticed who has not heeded the appeal and is shirking his duty by non-attendance, he is furiously implored, at times abusively, to join the assemblage of performers. The leader now emerges from the group at a walking pace and is followed, in single file, by all participants, each in his turn falling into regular order as though his place had previously been allotted to him. The course taken by the leader is a winding one; walking, at first, some distance away from the point of starting but returning
527 eventually thereto. The musical accompaniment is started afresh, and though not
533 exactly melodious to the European ear, it is certainly a remarkably clever and original production on the part of the aboriginal. The nearest way we might describe it in words is that it is in the form of a trill, produced by a rapidly repeated

Compare also H. Klaatsch, *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, pp. 589 and 590.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Notes on the

"i, i, i, . . . ," changing, it may be, occasionally to a "hi, hi, hi, ..." "That one 527
all-a-same bird," remarked one of my Larrekiya boys, who stood near to me, quite 533
overcome with excitement; and, indeed, I did now recognize the similarity to the
trill of the great stone-plover or "curlew" (*Oedicnemus sp.*). The leader having in 527
the interim returned to the starting point and thus completed that part of the 535
performance in which we might be prone to find an analogy with the polonaise of a modern ball, suddenly "doubles" or breaks to a running pace and all the others follow his example. He selects a wide spiral course, gradually nearing the centre and concentrating the body of men to a mass of humanity which to the observer seems to be moving in confusion and disorder. The pace quickens. The men stamp the ground with their feet, at the same time throwing up their arms and keeping them erect from the shoulder. An explosive shriek from the leader is echoed by the voices of all the others. The stamping of feet ceases and the arms of the performers drop to their sides. The leader now steps out to a position in front of his group of men, who, all of them, have turned to face the same way, viz., towards him. Looking to one side and lifting his arm in that direction, the leader emits a high-pitched shriek, which, as his arm is swept downwards on that side, is followed by a combined roaring "hoi" of all the others. This item is repeated several times over; alternately on one side and the other, in succession. This concludes another part of the corrobboree.

All performers now form themselves into a semi-circular group. The excite- [522]
ment is intense; forcible argument and debating ensue, accompanied by jocular shouting and laughing, which are repeatedly stimulated by gleeful interjections of "irr," an exclamation common to all Australian tribes.[1]

Having come to some different arrangement among themselves, a "tempo" is [533]
set by all members clapping either one or both of their hands upon the sides of their thighs, or their buttocks, producing dull and drum-like sounds by the impact. The latter are in marked unison and rhythmical. A performer now jumps from the semicircle of the time-beaters and runs round in a circle, facing its centre, and all the while stamping his feet. The interest and excitement increase among the [533]
audience, who further subsidize the accompaniment with a note, that is produced by a spluttering movement of the lips and sounds like "brr, brr, brr." As the stamping of the performer is accelerated, the clapping quickens with it. All at once he throws up his head and shouts "poop." This solicits an immediate response of "iah" from all others present.

Stationing himself in the centre, he next cuts some wonderfully clever and athletic antics. At the start he stamps the ground vigorously with both feet in alternation; the crowd keeping excellent time with their accompaniment of clapping hands upon their buttocks. As his pace increases, the beats of the hands become sharper and both hands are used (usually when striking the buttocks more posteriorly). While he stamps his feet, the performer, at the same time, vibrates

[1] *Vide* footnotes, H. Basedow, *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 33.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

527 his legs in a remarkable manner; a hyperflexibility in the knee produces,
535 alternately, a temporary valgus- and varus-deformation of the limbs. The arms are thrown straight-outwardly from the shoulders; the hands being dorsally flexed at the wrists. He throws his head from one side to another and occasionally backwards. At times he jumps wildly from one place to another, emitting, with each bound, a loud coarse cry of "poop," which, as before, is followed by a shrill "iah" from all others present. This item being repeated almost to exhaustion, the performer rushes back into the midst of the group while appreciative shrieks of laughter and applause conclude that part.

When the beating of time starts afresh, other performers may repeat the same act and try to excel the performance of their predecessor.

Other items follow, which are imitative in character. A few may be described. It will be understood that the beating of time continues throughout, as do, also, the frequent interjections of "poop" and "iah."

The kangaroo ceremony.—A kangaroo ceremony is started by one or two men jumping into the ring with their legs slightly bent at the knee. Their arms are held forward, bent vertically and at right angles at the elbow, with their hands prone and partly closed. The whole posture is to resemble that of the hopping marsupial of Australia. In jumping round the space, the actor turns his head from side to side, face downwards, as though in search of food. When such is supposed to have been found, his hands may assist to support his body and the hopping ceases. His legs are then bent strongly in the knees, so that his body sinks and the buttocks come to rest immediately above the heels, or, indeed, he may squat entirely upon the ground. Both hands being now placed on the ground between the open thighs, they are held together in the form of a scoop and made to take up a quantity of sand between them. Gently rubbing the hands backwards and forwards they are slowly passed to the level of the mouth and then above it, retaining a horizontal position all the time. This process is repeated several times. Then, at the moment that the sand is dropped to earth, the men rise to their feet with a bound and start running round the ring with the stamping of feet described above and a peculiar hissing noise from their lips. The act is interrupted at frequent intervals by a cry of "poop," which is echoed by the resounding voices of "iah." The hopping recommences. The men occasionally stop and scratch one of their legs with one hand, held in imitation of a claw. Then, while that hand is being held erect, and in a bent position, the opposite hand scratches that limb also. Either arm is now brought into contact with the mouth and licked in precisely the same way as the animals themselves do. The pace of the timekeepers at this stage quickens once more, and the performers furiously scratch all accessible parts of their body with increased zeal. An unexpected cry of "poop," followed by a hearty "iah," terminates this part amid loud shrieks and applause.

It is not long, however, before the two performers again leap into the ring, each armed with a light reed, resembling a spear, in his hand. The above ceremony is partly recapitulated, being, however, slightly modified in that one man, at intervals,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

takes the part of a hunter endeavouring to drive his spear into the enraged kangaroo on the opposite side of the ring. 527 535

Corrobboree of the ship of war.—The next item in the ceremony appeals to us Europeans in a twofold sense. Firstly, the mimicry on the part of the aboriginal in an introduced scene is excellent: its effect being still more enhanced in that his artistic genius has expanded the original impressions by adequate interludes of his own invention and taste. Secondly, the observer's sentiment and appreciation are kindled afresh when he sees this savage folk, who are oft not credited with the possession of anything but vice and immorality, present to a subsequent and younger generation, scenes in living picture, which happened long ago in the days of the naval settlement of Fort Dundas. To us the records are available in the libraries throughout the world; to the aboriginal the events can only be handed down by tradition and such ceremonies as that which is now to be described. 177 527 535 [173 182]

The chorus or semicircular group of men have again started their rhythmical accompaniment by clapping upon the lateral aspect of their thighs with the arched palm of one hand. A performer rushes into the centre of the half-ring and, after going through a few preliminaries, stands with one of his legs placed a short distance in front of the other and slightly flexed at the knee. Throwing his head back and looking upwards, he starts a vigorous hauling action by alternately throwing one arm out in the direction he is looking, closing the fist and making an imaginary pull right down to his loins, while at the same time the opposite arm is thrown out and returned in a similar way. Accurate time is kept by the time-beaters. This act is in imitation of the hauling-in of a sail on a European man-of-war, such as the natives saw at Fort Dundas nearly a century ago. The performer now turns and runs to the opposite corner of the half-ring; the onlookers marking the time by clapping to it in a quickened beat produced with both hands upon their buttocks. The same act is repeated there several times. Next, the same hauling motion is continued, but reversed from below towards the body, in imitation of the hauling-up of an anchor. Several short and harsh interjections suggest the orders of the commanding officers and the whole ceremony, in fact, is reproduced with a suspicion of caricature upon the strictness of naval discipline. During this part of the performance, several cries of "poop" and "iah" are again sounded. The actor now moves about in the semicircle with the familiar stamping of feet and cutting out the most grotesque antics. He first extends his arms straight out on either side, throws his head back and moves his thorax laterally in a pendulous manner from the hips. Then he turns his arms through a right-angle frontwards, so that they project slantingly upwards, whence he again changes them to the former position. Then again he extends his arms downward and bends them so that the elbows project behind and his fists rest against his flanks, from which position they are presently changed to a straight pendulous one. After remaining in that position a short while, he suddenly throws them furiously upwards in front of him; the stamping, which has been

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 continued all the while, is at this stage strengthened. Any of these acts may be
527 interrupted at any moment by changing to the "hauling of sail or anchor" scene
535 and many interjections of "poop" and "iah" accompany them. The performer himself now ceases to stamp with his feet, but in place thereof he bends his legs at the knees and knocks his thighs together while he extends his arms outwards, either in front or at the side of him.

527 *Corrobboree of a fight.*—During several of the corrobborees described, a chant
535 was heard which accompanied the acting in addition to the clapping of hands against the thighs or buttocks. In trying to reproduce the words or syllables of this chant, the nearest analogy I can find is—

[533
539]

"*Tupera monan la jerra*
Tupera monan la jerra,"

and

"*Tupatunan tenakomejona.*"

These chants are muttered uninterruptedly throughout the particular part. The corrobboree of a fight consists in the imitation of a spear duel between two angry blackfellows. They carry the same kind of reed-spears as was described under the "kangaroo ceremony." They first place themselves in defiance of one another at either side of the half-circle and go through all sorts of antics, brandishing their spears, rolling their eyes, and furiously throwing their bodies about. Next they start running about the ring and stamp their feet, throwing up their arms and knocking their thighs together in much the same way as previously described.

Corrobboree of the jungle fowl.—After the usual excessive amount of shouting, jabbering, and excited shrieks of laughter, an old man runs forward into the ring. He bends his arms at the elbow and holds them close against the sides of his body, while the closed fists rest on his chest, an attitude resembling that of a professional runner. This is to resemble the wings of the bird (*Leipoa*). He looks about the ground from side to side as though in search of something. Presently he imitates the bird's call with a shrill penetrating voice which sounds like "he-r-r-r-l." The onlookers' accompaniment consists in producing short spluttering and bubbling noises with their lips that sound like "brrl, brrl, brrl." The performer often interrupts the proceedings by shouting "he," to which all others respond with a loud "yeh." Now he throws up clouds of dust behind him with his feet, in imitation of the way in which the jungle fowl scratch and throw up the earth into the enormous mounds that contain their eggs.

To conclude the ceremony, all performers are led off again by the original leader in Indian file and go through much the same performance as they did in the initiation of the ceremony; the final shouts and shrieks, after the completion of the "trot" in spiral line, being particularly loud and enthusiasic.

114 Captain King[1] was probably the first white man to have witnessed the
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535

[1] *Survey Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

corrobboree of the Melville Islanders, but it appears that he regarded the [114] demonstration as hostile. He writes that "the dance consisted chiefly of the per- 527 formers leaping two on three times successively out of the sea, and then violently 535 moving their legs so as to agitate the water into a foam for some distance around them, all the time shouting loudly and laughing immoderately; then they would run through the water for eight or ten yards and perform again; and this was repeated over and over as long as the dance lasted."

During none of these ceremonies, or indeed anywhere on the island, did I see [171] anything of totemism in the scientific sense of the word. This fact is in accordance [114] with my observations in Central and North Australia, and my negative evidence is amply borne out by the researches of Drs. W. E. Roth and H. Klaatsch and others.

Pastimes.

The sham-fights of youths with small arrow-shaped spears have already been 524 mentioned. Children were observed upon the beach competing in running and long jump. A favourite amusement of the younger folk on a breezy day is to collect the light globular seed-heads of the "spring rolling grass" (*Spinifex hirsutis*), that grow on every sand-hill near the coast, and take them to the beach and there release them on the hardened sand. Driven along by the wind, these seeds travel over the surface at no mean pace. Allowing them to gain a fair start, the children bolt after them and endeavour to overtake them and pick them up from the ground while dashing past them at full speed in "cow-boy" fashion.

Another game is that of hand-ball. The seeds of the zamia (*Cycas media*) take the place of a small ball. Two lads stand facing one another and hit the seed to and fro with the palms of their hands, after the style of a modern game of tennis.

Despite their keenness of sight and quickness of hand, they are, nevertheless, [147] very backward in catching with their hands an object which is thrown at them.

Burial Method.

The aborigines of Bathurst and Melville Islands have a unique and elaborate 764 method of burial; graves have been found on both islands. It appears that the favourite places for burying the dead are there, where a jungle or mangrove-thicket breaks to the ordinary eucalypt-woodland, usually near to the sea-coast or to a native water.

Historically we have to note several observations in this connection.

Sir Gordon Bremer[1] mentions having discovered a grave on Bathurst Island in 1824. "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it

[1] *Imperial Parliamentary Paper*, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, London, March 27th, 1843; also in *The Genesis of Queensland*, by H. S. Russell, Sydney, 1888, p. 34.

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Top to bottom: Timalarna, the canoe maker; Tiwi spears; mourning ceremony around graveposts.

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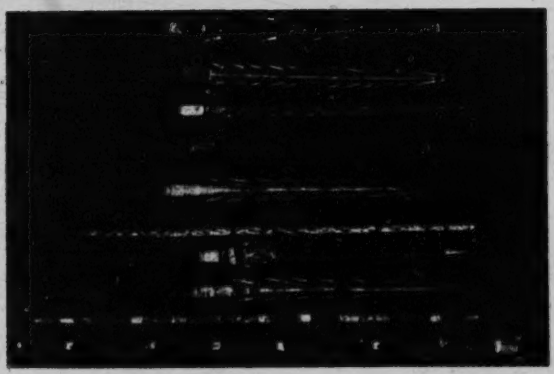

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 609 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human [101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

[173] Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate 171 to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distributional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how [411] isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their [531] wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus- [764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the [511] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

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[177 524] [1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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592 The matter of men traveling to distant camps for ceremonials illumi-
595 nates again, and from a new angle, the great value of elderly widows in the
587 household. Tu'untalumi, during his visit to Malau in August, was able to split his household efficiently by taking a couple of old wives with him to supervise his young wives on the journey and leaving other old wives at home in Tangio to begin storing up food for the grass-burning project which he intended to stage on his return. It will be noticed in the account of his movements that he began issuing invitations to the grass burning on his way home from Malau,
[224 showing his confidence that the elderly wives he had left at home would
251] have the preparations well in hand during his absence. A big man with a big household really needed three or four elderly widows because these enabled him to split his work force in various ways as his various political and social obligations required and to be sure of trustworthy supervision of each of the segments. A man without widows in his household, or with only one, could not do this; in fact, it was hard for a man without widows to attend ceremonials at all, or even to receive a large party of visitors to his household. And, as we have already pointed out, since such a man would probably go hungry very often because he would not dare to send his unsupervised young wives into the bush to gather food, there were practically no such men nor such households. Widows were indispensable to a senior Tiwi, both in his public and in his private life.

Making Things

592 Throughout this chapter we have been stressing the contrast between
887 the dull routine of life in an isolated Tiwi household during the greater part of the year and the sort of life typical on those relatively rare occasions when something special—a festival, a funeral, a fight, a grass burning, a naming ceremony, some collective phase of men's initiation—required the assembling together of several households for joint activity. Before leaving the daily life of the isolated camp, we should mention one other area of activity—namely, the manufacturing activities of the tribe. The Tiwi did not manufacture much,
[32] but spears, throwing sticks, canoes, digging sticks, baskets, bodily ornaments, graveposts, and all the miscellaneous paraphernalia used in ceremonials had to be made in whatever leisure time people could find during the long weeks and months when each of the households lived more or less in isolation from the others. Crude and simple as these artifacts were, their construction required time, and only the older men had the time and the skill based on experience to make the more important of them.

[147] Largely because of their failing eyesight, the older men hunted very little and hence tended to remain in camp all day while the young men were hunting and the women were gathering. There were, of course, some old men who took advantage of this time to do little except doze in the shade, but
182 most of the household heads spent a fairly active day in camp engaged in
511 making things. Here we find another aspect of Tiwi culture that results from
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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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the relatively favorable food supply. Some of the Tiwi artifacts, particularly the highly decorative graveposts and ceremonial spears, are unique among Australian tribes, and the carving and painting of these graveposts and spears were skills possessed only by the senior men. They were provided with the leisure time necessary to develop and use these skills by the efficiency in food production of the large household which all old men were expected to accumulate with age, and which many old men did succeed in accumulating. We said earlier that the bigger the household, the better its members ate. We now add the further correlation that the bigger the household, the more leisure time was provided for its head to engage in manufacturing and artistic production. Tu'untalumi has been cited as an example of a large household head (twelve resident wives and thirteen children at home in 1928-29) who loved ceremonial affairs. It would be wrong to infer from this that Tu'untalumi only loved going to parties. He also loved preparing for them, and this preparation (for him as for all other senior men) included the manufacture of ceremonial spears, the preparation of graveposts, and the composition of songs and dances. In the long dull periods between trips outside his home district, he spent most of the days and many of the nights in the creation of these ceremonial necessities. He was not a full-time specialist in the sense that he made spears or posts to exchange with other men who had neither the time nor the skill—the rules of kinship required that every senior man make his own ceremonial spears and contract for his own posts. Tu'untalumi manufactured his graveposts to meet his own ritual obligations, but he took a more magnanimous view of those obligations than did most men. Put in our terms, we might say that he was wealthy enough (in the size of his household) to be generous with his own productions. One example of this attitude was his attendance at funerals that other men of equal kinship to the deceased did not find it necessary to attend; his frequent contribution of an extra gravepost to those provided by the chief mourners of the deceased was a similar gesture. "Tu'untalumi not only came to our mother's funeral, he also made a gravepost for it" was a very gratifying reflection for an obscure group of mourners to cherish among their memories, and of course it was acts of this sort that made the old man so well liked and admired. The economic point of the matter, however, is that only a man with as large a household as his could afford the gesture of giving away, in a situation where kinship obligations did not demand it, a gravepost that required about a week's full-time work.

It was, however, sad to observe that as an artistic producer Tu'untalumi, like many intellectuals in other cultures, tended to operate in too many media. His work as a composer of songs and dances was universally admired, but his graveposts, while appreciated, were not regarded as being as outstanding, technically speaking, as those of another old man, his crony Timalarua. In personality, Timalarua, a successful household head (eleven living wives, ten children at home), was quiet spoken, placid, and only mildly gregarious, and he is mainly of interest because in his leisure-time activity he paid but routine attention to song and dance compositions and concentrated rather single mindedly on making canoes, ceremonial spears, and graveposts. Fre-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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517 quently, on the banks of some creek or river in Tiklauila territory, a party
887 wanting to cross would scout around and find a canoe hidden in the weeds. Everybody would use it to cross, and the question "Whose canoe is it?" would elicit the reply, "Oh, it's always there and everybody uses it who wishes to cross." But if the question were "Who made it in the first place and put it there?" the answer would be, "Probably Timalarua. He likes making canoes; he makes them all the time." He also liked making spears and posts, though he was not as generous with them as Tu'untalumi. When one of his posts appeared at a funeral, people would point it out admiringly saying, "Timalarua made that one" and the speaker would trace the lines and designs on it with his finger, using much the same gestures as an art critic in a modern gallery. When a post by Tu'untalumi was identified and admired, however, the admiration was for Tu'untalumi the generous person rather than Tu'untalumi the
[554] artist. One was a wonderful craftsman, the other was a wonderful man. But acclaim given to the song and dance performances of the two men was just the reverse: the dances of Timalarua were adequate but not outstanding, those of Tu'untalumi were in a class by themselves.

Comparison of the activities of these two old men illustrates the impossibility of drawing any line, in the simpler cultures at least, between artistic production and technological production. The canoes and the posts manufactured by Timalarua and the posts manufactured and the new dances created by Tu'untalumi were all, so to speak, in the same category, as far as the Tiwi were concerned. The distinction we might make between the canoes as "useful" products and the posts and dances as ceremonial or artistic products never occurred to them. All were objects or products which only successful old men had the required skill and leisure to make. The fact that one old man liked to make canoes and leave them around for other people to use, and another old man liked to compose dances and perform his compositions widely for other people to enjoy, to them merely indicated individual taste and choice; it did not make the first a craftsman and the second an artist. This point has been overlooked in most of the theorizing about primitive art; perhaps a necessary first step in the development of primitive artists is for a society to be able to provide a few men with enough leisure time to be able to cultivate what might perhaps best be called hobbies, since a hobby can equally well be something "useful" to society, like canoe making, or something personally satisfying, like dancing or decorating graveposts.

[411] The huge, heavy, painted spears made by these old Tiwi men were
531 mainly used only for display, and even the oldest men were positive that
556 this had always been the tradition. In fact, they seemed a little shocked at the implication that such beautiful and valuable objects could ever have been used for such mundane purposes as hunting or warfare. The cutting and painting of such spears took time and skill—more time than a gravepost—and no important man went to the smallest gathering without bearing on his shoulder at least half a dozen of these symbols of his importance. If on his way through the bush he sighted a kangaroo, he dropped his painted spears and stalked
[224] the animal with an ordinary spear, or more probably left it to the young men in the party who carried only ordinary ones.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pennant, and the Wanderers, which draws from the permanent native population in Darwin and includes such Tiwi as Bobby Wilson. It is normal for one of these Tiwi players to be considered among the top three in Darwin football circles. 177 526 648

For a while, Edmund, a Tiwi from Bathurst Island Mission, was one of the players on the newly organized St. Mary's basketball team; other Tiwi have played on the Bagot Compound basketball team. Billy Larrakeyah, a Darwin Tiwi, was thought to have Olympic potentialities as a javelin thrower, but strained his arm in the try-outs.[4] Most recently, a group of young Catholic Tiwi has been organized into a water polo team called the Seals. National magazines suggest that they may be the best water polo team in the country, but so far they have not gone south to play any non-Darwin group.

Tiwi carving and painting have had recent popularity in Australian art circles. Traditional Tiwi graveposts are finely carved in geometric designs and painted with precise and complex networks of cross-hatching and other simple, but effective, motifs. The first modern innovation in Tiwi art occurred about 1945 when a native known as Katu (or Short Katu) made his first attempt to carve a human figure atop a mourning post. When Pilling later asked Katu why he had carved this post, he said, "Me see 'm along Darwin. Me savvy." That is, Katu transferred the concept of Western realistic statuary in the round into the Tiwi art form. He carved a second realistic post for presentation to Queen Elizabeth II in 1954. More recently, Tiwi carvers at Snake Bay have taken to realistic carving. Two figurines, both carved by Tiwi at Snake Bay, were given to the Perth Museum in 1958. Sixteen mourning posts from Snake Bay were purchased by the National Art Gallery in Sydney the same year. An art display of Tiwi carving has been held in the United States in Philadelphia. 177 532 322

Tiwi have received recognition in the Northern Territory for other art forms. One of the thirty-year-old female Tiwi at Bathurst Island Mission usually takes first prize for embroidery at the annual Territorial fair. There has also been interest shown by outsiders in the double-barbed ceremonial spears. Male Tiwi skill in dancing has attracted wide attention in Australia. When natives from all over the Territory were sent to dance before Queen Elizabeth in Queensland during her 1954 tour, three Tiwi were among the delegation. The Tiwi contingent, directed by the innovator Short Katu, made every news story covering this part of the Royal Visit. In Darwin, when Bagot Compound needs to raise money for native participation in sports, the Tiwi, usually led by Katu, present a public dance. As a result, Katu's clan under his direction has invented many new dances for white Australian audiences. 177 [531] 177 535 648

Perhaps we may look forward to the day when American television audiences can enjoy such a Tiwi dance, one of Australia's best native products. Yet only sixty years ago, and therefore in the lifetime of many people still living, very few Tiwi had even seen a white man, and white men who set foot on Tiwi soil, like Cooper in his first attempt in 1897, were ferociously chased out.

[4] He was killed in a brawl in Darwin in the spring of 1959.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER I

The Art of the Tiwi

1. THE ART FORMS

ALTHOUGH Melville Island is separated from the mainland of Australia by the Dundas Strait, only fourteen miles in width, the art forms on either side of this swift-running tideway bear little resemblance to each other. That of the mainland, of which the bark and cave paintings of Oenpelli are typical (Mountford, 1956, pp. 112–264; Spencer, 1928, pp. 802–24), is representational, and among the most decorative art forms employed by the Australian aborigines, while that of Melville Island is highly formalized, and cannot be interpreted without the aid of the artist. In this respect (although they employ different motifs) the art of the Melville Islanders resembles that of the aborigines of Central Australia (Mountford, 1937, pp. 84–95). 171 531 [131]

2. MEDIUMS OF EXPRESSION

The aborigines of Melville Island,[5] like those on the mainland (Spencer, 1928, p. 793) painted designs on the inside of the sheets of bark that made up their wet-weather shelters. Basedow (1913, p. 320, Pls. 19–20) figured bark paintings he collected from bark shelters on Melville Island, and Campbell (1834, p. 151), referring to shelters he saw near Fort Dundas (Punata), in Apsley Straits, writes, "Some of them were ornamented with figures drawn in white pipeclay; one, in particular, was neatly and regularly done all over, representing the cross-bars of a cell."[6] 171 353 531

Under normal tribal conditions, however, it is in the carving and painting of the elaborate burial poles and the ceremonial spears, coupled with the decorating of the large bark baskets, that the aborigines of Melville Island find an outlet for their artistic efforts. 531

The effect of the *pukamuni* burial ceremony was evident in many of the bark paintings collected on the expedition. For example, Pl. 3D, Pl. 54F, and Pl. 54A, are essentially the same designs as a Melville Island artist would use to

[5] For the sake of simplicity I will, in future, use the term, Melville Island, or the tribal name, Tiwi, to indicate the Melville and Bathurst Island culture, both of which are part of the same tribal unit. [101]

[6] This would have been a design similar to that on bark painting (Pl. 52D).

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

531 decorate a burial pole; and others, Pl. 2D, Pl. 10C, and Pl. 11A, similar to those he would paint on the ceremonial baskets.

I did not see or hear of figures being made in bark (Mountford, 1956, p. 443, fig. 65C, D); moulded in wax (Elkin and the Berndts, 1950, Pl. 21, Mountford, 1956, Pl. 143) or in the sands of the sea-shore (Mountford, 1956, p. 404, Pl. 91C, D), as is done in north-eastern Arnhem Land. Nevertheless, [532] the men did carve large burial poles in the form of human beings and smaller full-length figures, associated with the *pukamuni* ceremonies. These figures bore some small resemblance to those recorded from north-eastern Arnhem Land (Berndt, 1948, Figs. A, B, Pls. 1, 2; Mountford, 1956, Pls. 130–40).

3. TECHNIQUES

386 (*a*) COLOURS. The pigments used for the decoration of the burial poles and the production of the bark paintings, were red, yellow and white ochres. As there was no suitable black pigment on the islands, the artists used crushed charcoal in its place.

[317] The source of the best ochres is a pit at Imilu on Cape Van Diemen (Fig. 1). This ochre, called *imilu*, is a bright yellow when collected,[7] but, when heated in the fire, it changes to a clear red. A soft white stone is common along the beaches. The ochres are not ground on a stone, as on the mainland (Mountford, 1956, p. 11), but, being friable, are crushed and mixed in a large cockle shell with water and fixative.

The aborigines often spoke of a superior ochre at Numanira, northern Melville Island (Fig. 1), which could be gathered only at low tide. I did not see any of this ochre in use.

(*b*) FIXATIVES. Three different types of fixative are used to ensure that the painted designs, both on the poles and the baskets, were as permanent as [314] possible. They were: the sticky gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids (*Dendrobium* sp.); the wax and honey of the wild bee, well mixed together; [237] and the yolks of the eggs of the sea-going turtle. The fixative was either mixed with the pigments or rubbed on the painting surface.

412 (*c*) BRUSHES. Simple brushes, made of strips of bark of varying widths, square across the bottom, chewed at one end, and held as in Fig. 2A and 2C, were used for the bulk of the work.[8] For making the dots, however, the artists used a

[423] [7] There did not appear to be any restriction on the gathering of this ochre; any aboriginal could go to Imilu and take as much as he wished.

[171] [8] The long flexible brush of the aborigines of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 12, fig. 3), was not used at Melville Island, although the bark brush (Fig. 2B) was often held in a similar manner.

2: Mountford E-ɔ (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

412 short, cylindrical stick, about three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter. This was dipped in the colour and transferred to the painting surface with the brush held as in Fig. 2B.

FIG. 2. *Methods of Holding Brushes*

4. THE ARTISTS

531 As with other aboriginal groups with whom I have worked in Central and
[463] Northern Australia, there is no special artist class; all aboriginal men and
[302] women of the Tiwi, would, on occasions, be required to paint designs on the bodies of one or another of their relatives, or on objects, particularly those associated with the *pukamuni* ceremony.

Some men, however, were looked upon as being more skilled than others in some particular field, i.e., cutting and decorating the burial poles, or the ceremonial spears, painting the large bark baskets, or the bodies of men and women who take part in the *pukamuni* or *kulama* ceremonies.

On Pl. 1 are four men who were regarded as good craftsmen and artists.

Pulanimbuwi (Pl. 1A), hard-working and meticulous in all he did, produced the unusual *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 35); two other poles as human figures (Pl. 37A, B; 37E, F), and a number of bark paintings; Pl. 13B, D, and Pl. 14C, D, being typical.

Inbidjarmeri (Pl. 1B), being fully employed by the Superintendent of the nearby settlement, was unable to make bark paintings for me. He was most expert in carving and painting the beautiful, multi-barked ceremonial spears. Pl. 32B is his work. He was also in great demand for decorating the performers for the *pukamuni* and *kulama* ceremonies. Pl. 28K and Pl. 28R are examples of his craftsmanship in this field.

115 *Tjamalampua* (Pl. 1C) and *Malumerinita* (Pl. 1D) are two men to whom I

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

announced that he had bought enough food from the store at the settlement to feed all the men who were to cut the poles.[61] 765

Following this announcement, the chief woman mourner, *Prupadau*, whose privilege it was to decide on the size of the burial poles, marked with her toe, in the dust of the *milimika*, the length and thickness of a series of oversized poles.

This led to a great deal of discussion between the leader, *Wurarbuti*, and the woman, *Prupadau*, before he finally persuaded her to reduce the dimensions of the poles to a reasonable size. *Prupadau* wanted the poles for her relative to be as many and as large as possible.

This matter settled, the "workers" brought a number of steel axes into the *milimika*. The *alouwia*, painting the handles white and putting red cross lines on the blades, stood the axes in the centre of the dancing ground. Then both the *alouwia* and the other performers walked around the axes singing the telephone song. [177] [531]

A series of traditional dances followed, representing *Jirakati*, the white-headed sea-eagle (Pl. 30j), *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Tjalati*, the jabiru (Pl. 29A).[62] Two women and two young boys performed the shark (*Taduwala*) dance (Pl. 25c), the ritual finishing with the honey and mosquito calls. The "workers" picked up their axes and walked away, accompanied by everyone except *Prupadau*, who remained behind, still chanting the *amburu* song of mourning. 535 765 [825]

(*b*) *The Second Ilanias*

The second series of *ilanias* was performed about halfway between *Wurarbuti's* camp and the burial ground. 765

In this series, we were able to see the traditional pattern of the *ilanias* in operation, including the return and feeding of the "workers" after their day's labour of cutting the poles near the grave site. The songs and dances, too, instead of referring, as in the first *ilanias*, to the goods of the white man, his radio and his telephones, dealt almost exclusively with dances belonging to the locality of Wallu, north-eastern Melville Island, the country of *Waniamperi's* father and the totemic place of fresh water, *Andjalui* (p. 42). [533] [177]

This series of *ilanias* could be divided into five sections,

[61] At the present time, this is just a traditional gesture, reminiscent of the days when it was the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the workers while they cut and painted the poles (Pl. 25B).

[62] In a creation myth, the jabiru is called *Tipuru-undunga*. It is likely that the bird has several names. Hart (1930, p. 280), draws attention to the multiplicity of names among the Tiwi. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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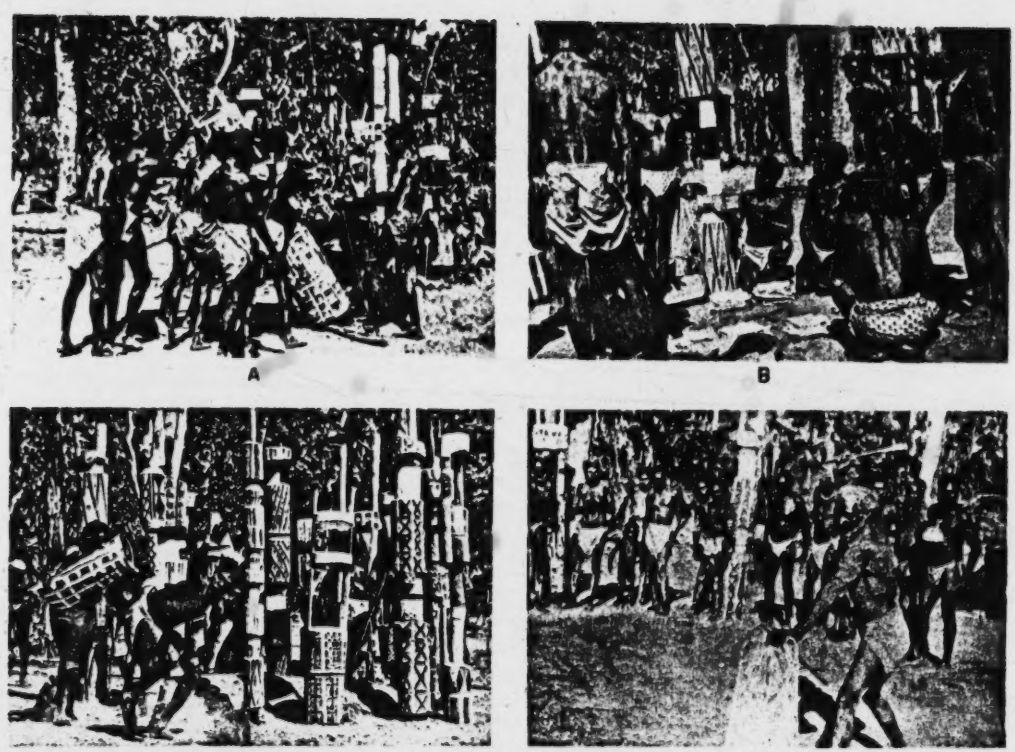

A B C D

PLATE 26. *The Final Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Erecting Poles on Grave; B, Arranging Gifts for Workers; C, The Basket Dance; D, Urumatjina's Dance.

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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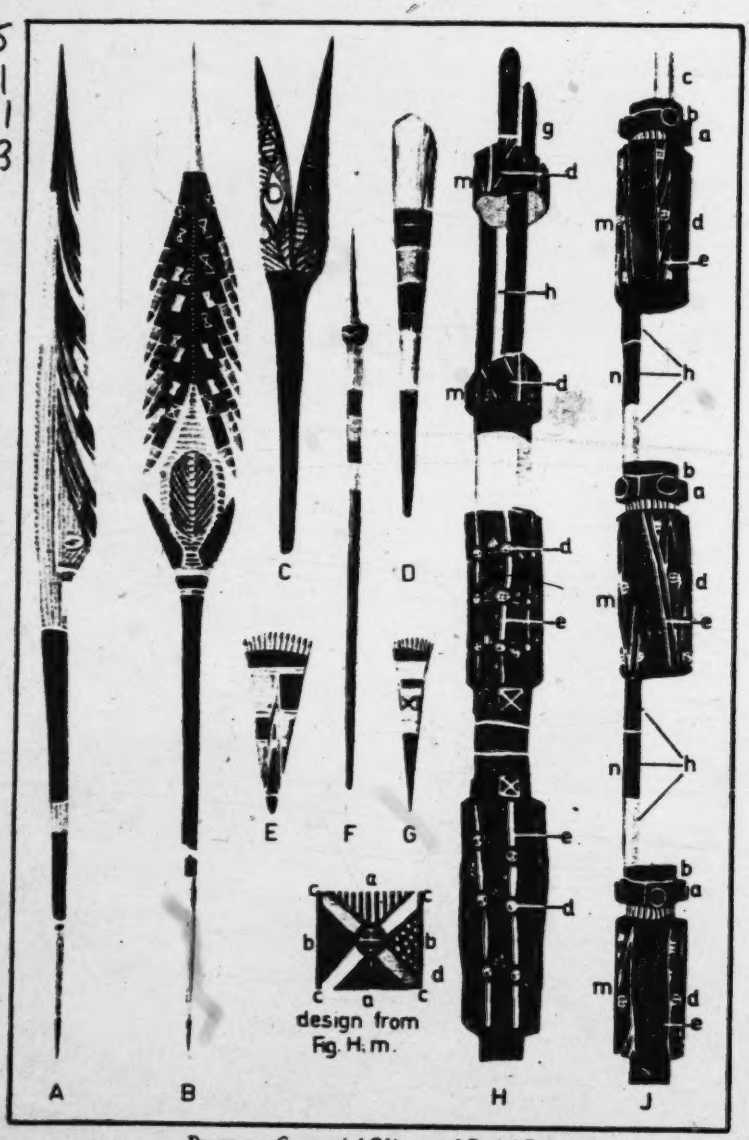

PLATE 32. *Ceremonial Objects and Burial Poles*
A, Male Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaringa; B, Female Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaguni; C, Forked Throwing Stick, Miluanta; D, Plain Throwing Stick, Muruguna; E, G, Tool, Porta, for Body Painting; F, Scratching Stick, Murubunga; H, J, Pukamuni Burial Poles.

[p. 88 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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All the facial designs, about which I was able to find out the meanings (except Pl. 28B), dealt with some totemic creature, or myth. This was in direct contrast to the designs painted on the *tudini* burial poles, where few, if any, were associated with the myths or the totemic places. 302 778 [531]

A Wadjeniati Initiate

Pl. 28A is the facial design of a *Wadjeniati* initiate in the *kulama* ceremony (p. 130). The white dots represent a white edible plum, *murumbatana*, the red dots, a small red fruit, *kupalitju*, and the lines, the limbs of the trees on which the fruit grew. The white around the eyes and on the forehead is symbolical of *Purujikini*, the boobook owl-man (*Ninox novae-zealandiae*), the leader of the second *kulama* ceremony. [881]

The Poisonous Water Snake, Tuluma

Pl. 28B, a facial *pukamuni* design, symbolizes the markings on the skin of a poisonous water snake, *tuluma*. Although I neglected to ask the aborigines whether there was any myth associated with this facial decoration, it is likely that the design refers to an incident in creation times.

The Shark, Tuduwala

At *Purukupali's pukamuni*, the shark-man, *Tuduwala*, represented on Pl. 28C, painted his face so that he would appear as ferocious as possible. The radiating lines round his eyes were supposed to have added greatly to his savage appearance. After the *pukamuni*, *Tuduwala* fought with *Kumuninu*, the salmon man, because the latter, although he had a large number of hair-belts, refused to give any to *Tuduwala*. [773]

Although the shark-man escaped injury in that encounter, he wounded the fish-man a number of times with his throwing sticks, wounds which can still be seen, as parallel lines, on the head of the salmon (see Pl. 28F).

The Fish, Mungumini

Pl. 28D is a facial design, called *Mungumini*, worn at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* by a fish of the same name. The markings on the face are supposed to be similar to those on the head of the present-day fish.

The Thunder-man, Pakadringa

Pl. 28E, a *pukamuni* facial design, refers to the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, and the dangerous *Maratji* (p. 154), both of whom are closely associated in the myths.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama*
778 rituals.

[411] Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known
[531] respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear, *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

[114] At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines
[322] told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville
[412] Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *miluanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *muruguna*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

[302] Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines
[413] of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[88]

[515] Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati*
[413] *kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkita*, are used by the Tiwi
765 for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkitas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

[301] As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in
[302] white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, his chest ornaments,

[88] The lines of dots on *Wurarkuti* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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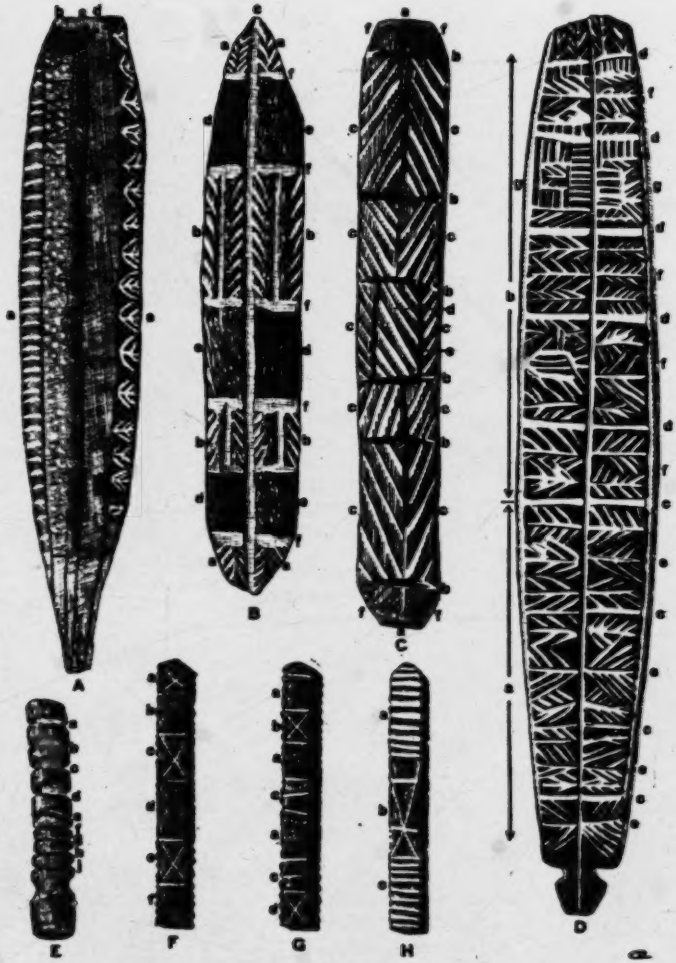

FIG. 5. *The Message Sticks*

A, Numanira; B, Puntubu; C, Murunapi; D, Pirilou; E, Secular; F, G, H, Pukamuni Ceremonial.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Personal Decoration.

Plaited armlets of vegetable fibre are worn on both arms, by both sexes, young and old. They are made of a number of central spiral turns of fibre, around which a single outer layer of flexible vegetable ribbon is plaited from either side and through the centre. The armlet is usually painted over with yellow ochre and is worn above the elbow. 301 [531]

Corrobboree-armlets are constructed in the shape of a flat ring of plaited vegetable fibre, from 10 to 20 centimetres in outside diameter (*vide* Plate XV, Figs. 4 and 6). The ring, which is from 2 to 3 centimetres wide and from a ½ to ¾ centimetre thick, is neatly coloured on the outside with ochre in a regular fashion. From a point on the circumference depends a bundle of from seven to fifteen twisted strings of animal or human hair, 30 centimetres long, which ends in a flat oval mass of beeswax, studded on the outside with red seeds of the "gequirity" or so-called "Northern Territory bean" (*Abrus praecatorius*). A similar mass of beeswax and beans surrounds the point of attachment of this tassel.

Special corrobboree arm-decorations[1] are constructed on rather more elaborate lines. A piece of bark (*Eucalyptus sp.*), about 66 centimetres long and 10 broad, is bent once upon itself into a simple loop and the open end kept together by stitching the edges for a distance of some 12 centimetres down (*vide* Plate VII, Figs. 2 and 4). The united end is fenestrated; one oblong space (measuring 6 by 2 centimetres) is cut out some 3 centimetres from the top, and beneath this, at a similar distance from its lower edge, two squares, whose sides are equivalent in length to the smaller side of the oblong. The top end of the united portion, and the top and bottom edges of the oblong and squares, are hemmed with an overlapping crossstitch. One side edge only of the loop is hemmed with a simple backward and forward "run-on" stitch. The lateral edges of the windows and the septum between the lower squares are fixed by transverse winding. The material used for hemming and winding is a light cane obtained from a creeping plant. It is evident that the different methods of stitching have to do with the fibrous structure of the bark; the cross-thread would tend to keep the stitches from pulling out along the fibres, as would be the case in straight up-and-down stitching. Additional complexity is given the ornament by eight thin sticks (about 15 centimetres long) which are pointed at both ends. One of these is stuck vertically into the bark at either end of the top edge. Two others pierce the bark at right angles, immediately below the lower outer corner of each square window; one of them being just below that corner of each of the squares, respectively. At either end of these transverse pieces, another stick is fixed vertically by binding with vegetable string, at about 3 centimetres from the ends. The ornament is coloured on the outside with red and white earth-paints. The ground colour of the upper half is red; the hem stitches and the affixed sticks are white. The lower half, or looped portion, bears four white transverse bands 301 322 301 531

[1] Apparently also used during mourning ceremonies.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

301 bordered with red. Each of the intervening spaces is again sub-divided into two
531 squares at the centre (and a "half-square" at the sides) by three vertical, white lines bordered with red. The squares and "half-squares" are shaded diagonally with from four to six lines passing downwards and away from the central line in the topmost group, and upwards and away from the centre in the two lower groups of
[171] squares. The combined effect resembles the windmill or "wanningi" pattern common throughout Australia. The shading is all in white on one side, but red and white in alternate squares on the opposite side.

301 In another type of this arm decoration, which is also made of bark, the upper
322 united portion is shorter than in the previous case (*vide* Plate VII, Figs. 1 and 3). The top edge is concave and only one oblong window is cut beneath it. The sides have been united by hem-stitching and by the insertion of a few wooden pins which answer the same purpose as rivets. The edges are thickly plastered with beeswax. As in the previous case, the stitches (and the plaster also) are continued only along one side of the loop. A fairly stout rod of wood projects vertically from either end of the top concave edge. Shorter rods project laterally from either top corner of the loop. To the end of each of these rods a plume of
[237 white is attached with beeswax. Cockatoo feathers have been chosen and they are
531] fastened by their distal ends so that the fluffy portions are exposed. A number of twisted strands of fur and vegetable fibre pass from the extremity of one horizontal rod diagonally upwards to the base of the vertical rod above, along it to the top, thence horizontally across to the top of the other vertical rod, whence it is continued the same way down the other side to the extremity of the opposite horizontal rod. Beeswax retains these strands in position at the rod-tops, while more strands, wound horizontally from the base of one vertical rod to the other, and also round the base of each, make the former strands secure there. The painted design in this
301 case consists of one large cruciform figure on either side of the looped portion, the
531 arms being modified at the base in a manner suggestive of a snake design. One arm of the cross is white, the other yellow, both being bordered with red. The intervening spaces are shaded red and yellow, the constituent lines being parallel and straight up-and-down in the upper segment and crossed in the lower.

532 *Corrobboree-mask.*—An interesting object is what I take to be a corrobboree-mask (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 5). As I did not see it in use and did not receive the specimen until it was too late to make inquiries, I cannot, with certainty, describe it as such. The object represents an oval structure, 15 centimetres long and 8 wide, which encloses two connected circular rims resembling a solid pair of spectacles. The internal framework is made of split cane, bound together with vegetable strands. The oval portion is covered with human hair string, wound around it and knotted along the outer edge after the modern "button-hole-stitch" fashion. The rims are broad and covered with beeswax. A circle of the red beans of *Abrus praecatorius*, embedded in the wax, surrounds the "eye-holes" on the front side. At one of the lateral extremities, a band of five human hair strings emerges from a cylindrical mass of beeswax and is surrounded, at 6 centimetres distance,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

by a similar mass, whence two strings only continue for 40 odd centimetres. 532
The whole length of the band, therefore, amounts to approximately 50 centimetres. Its object is, no doubt, to fasten the mask in position over the face during corroboree ceremonies.

Domestic Utensils.

Food carriers.—The most common form of "mika" or carrier for food and 322
other articles is one made of a single piece of bark of the "stringy bark" eucalypt 415
(*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 3, 4, 5, and 6). An oblong piece of such bark, say 1 metre long by 40 centimetres broad, is freshly cut and folded transversely at its centre. The edges on either side are pared down, then laid flat, one over the other, and sewn or laced together with plain "run-on" stitches, 2 centimetres apart. A row of slanting and overlapping stitches often skirts the open edge at a short distance down; occasionally, too, part of the edge is cross-hemstitched and plastered with beeswax. The object of this procedure is to prevent the bark from tearing by virtue of its fibrous structure. The open mouth of the carrier is nearly circular or oval; in the latter case the long axis of the oval runs at right angles to the base-edge of the implement. These carriers are of various sizes; the largest that came under observation measured 63 centimetres in height and 43 in width at the base. Ordinarily they are unpainted, but on special occasions elaborate designs, consisting 415
of circles, oblong and other figures, with cross-hatched shading, are drawn on the 531
outer surface in red, yellow, white, and black. The designs are best studied by reference to the reproductions (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 5 and 6). Occasionally tassel-shaped appendages are noticed at one of the convex outer surfaces of the mouth of the carrier. These consist of a flattish, egg-shaped mass of beeswax (studded on the surface with the red beans of *Abrus praecatorius*), which is suspended by two twisted fur strings (*vide* Plate VIII, Fig. 6).

Water carriers.—Water is taken to camp from a soakage or spring in simple [312]
structures made out of the bark of the paper-bark tree (*Melaleuca sp.*). An oblong 322
piece of this bark is bent upon itself longitudinally, both its ends folded several 415
times and kept together by binding with cane or by spiking with short pointed wooden pegs (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 1 and 2).

Drinking vessels.—Several natural objects are used for drinking vessels. 415
Among the most common are the discarded tests of mollusca. The species *Melo-* [237]
diadema and *Fusus priceí* were found in use at several native wells (*vide* Plate XIV, Figs. 1 and 2).

But when no such shells are available a piece of bark is torn or cut from a 322
tree (usually from a *Melaleuca*) and folded so as to form a water-tight cup (*vide* 415
Plate XIV, Figs. 3 and 4). This piece of bark, which measures about 30 centimetres by 20, is folded longitudinally at about its middle (*vide* Fig. 3, D). Both ends are then bent upon themselves at right angles to this plane and at about one quarter the whole length from either end. The overturned ends and the inner

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

classification on account of the regularity of the various types, not only as regards the actual cutting of the particular form, but also as regards the way in which they are decorated (*vide* Plate IX, Figs. 1, 2, 3, and 4).

Type 1.—The simplest type seen in use is a stick, 43 or 47 centimetres long, usually more or less curved, thin at the hand-end, gradually thickening upwards and swelling to a club-head at the distal end. The surface is longitudinally furrowed, the result of scraping. The stick is painted on special occasions in various colours, as follows: hand-end red or brown (25 cm.), thence successive circular bands of yellow (·5 cm.), white (1 cm.), red (·25 cm.), black (3 cm.), red (·25 cm.), yellow (1 cm.), white (·25 cm.), red (4 cm.), yellow (·5 cm.); club-head white (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 1).

Type 2.—The second type to be described is somewhat similar. It measures 60 centimetres in length and is usually straight. Whereas in the previous type the club-head is rounded off at its distal end, it ends with a blunt point in the case now before us. The club-head, too, is larger in proportion. The surface is scraped longitudinally and painted in alternate bands of red and white of different breadths. From the hand-end upwards the coloured bands are as follows: red (19 cm.), white (10 cm.), red (8 cm.), white (23 cm.) (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 3).

Type 3.—The third type is slender and thickens very gradually from the hand- to the club-end, whence a sharp spine projects for 2 centimetres. It is scraped longitudinally and painted in rather more elaborate fashion than the two foregoing types. The hand-end is red for a distance of about 30 centimetres; thence follow successively bands of yellow (1 cm.), white (6 cm.), red (1 cm.), black (4 cm.), yellow (1 cm.). The club-head is white with two longitudinal yellow bands at opposite extremes of a diameter, dividing it into two halves vertically. Within each of the white fields thus produced are two intersecting, undulating lines, one of red and one of yellow, running longitudinally and terminating in the spine at the top, which is red (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 2).

Type 4.—This type consists of a stick, circular in section, which increases slightly in diameter from the hand-end upwards, for a distance of 55 centimetres. The diameter at that distance is 3½ centimetres, but immediately beyond, the stick slopes abruptly to a thickness of only 1½ centimetres, whence it tapers to a long pointed end, about 20 centimetres long. The stick is painted in red, yellow, and white, as follows: the hand-end is red for 23 centimetres, thence follow bands of white (1 cm.), yellow (8 cm.), red (1 cm.), white (12 cm.), red (1 cm.), yellow (8 cm.), red (1 cm.). The extreme end of the stick and the long spine are white (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 4).

The two last-described types have, to my knowledge, not been observed in Australia before.

Spears.

In dealing with the spears used on Bathurst Island (and the same holds good for Melville Island), we are brought into contact with types that are unknown on

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Notes on The

They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some of the designs being very pleasing to the eye. Some spears, moreover, have human 411 hair strings wound round the shaft, immediately below the head, for a distance of [531] 10 centimetres or more, and this is kept in place with beeswax.

Canoes.

Elsewhere I have referred to the marked absence among the northern 501 Australian tribes of anything but the most primitive crafts and such innovated forms as have resulted from the contact with the white and yellow races. They are, therefore, not to be considered as truly indigenous canoes. On Bathurst Island, however, conditions are different; due, perhaps, in the first place, to its insularity (as well as the numerous estuaries and rivers that cross [133] the land), and, secondly, to the proximity of Melville Island, which is separated from it by only a narrow stretch of calm water known as Apsley Strait. The latter is barely a mile in width at its narrowest points. Numerous canoes are in use within this Strait, and occasionally, when wind and water are favourable, they venture a short distance out to sea. One type is principally in use, namely, a large bark-canoe measuring about 560 centimetres in length (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). It is made of a single sheet of bark, usually from suitable, straight, clear 396 trunks of the woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*) or the stringy-bark (*E. tetradonta*) 501 (*vide* Plate XII, Fig. 1). It is cut from the tree by chopping transversely at the respective distances from the ground, then slitting it once vertically for the whole length and removing it by forcing the edge of the instrument under the bark and finally levering it off with pointed saplings. The outer side of this oblong piece of bark, which is rough, will become the inside surface of the canoe. At a distance of from 65 to 70 centimetres from either end, transverse cuts are made on the inside to a depth of half the thickness of the bark, and such thickness is removed from the whole of the surface lying away from the centre at either incision. Each end is thus reduced by half its original strength and material thereby becoming more pliable. The cutting is done with the sharp edge of a [237 412] bivalve shell, usually a *Cyrena*. The subtilized ends of the sheet may, or may not, be held over a glowing fire to render them more pliant still. The sheet is folded lengthwise along its middle, and one or both ends kept together by vertical stakes, stuck in the ground and tied together at the top. The bottom corner of the fold is cut away in a very gentle upward slope. The two pieces of the fold are next held firmly together and cut in a more decisive upward direction from a point some 30 to 50 centimetres from the bottom edge end. The two freshly cut edges are neatly sewn with close, overcast stitches, and the same is done along the top horizontal edge for a distance of some 15 or 20 centimetres from the end. From the intervening space between the sewn parts at the top and bottom, an angular or curved segment is cut out in imitation of a fish-tail and its edges laced together in a like manner (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). The thread used for these "run-on" stitches is in the form of strips from the split sheets of the

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

396 501 climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*).[1] Holes are previously pierced through the [237 412] bark with an awl, made out of the leg-bone of a wallaby.

The stitches are made more secure and watertight by plastering them with [237 314] wax from the comb of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*) or with one of the several resins so extensively used by all natives. The inside corners are caulked with plastic clay and fibre, or resin. Two stays or struts of fairly stout timber, cut to the required length and inserted at the points where the bark was reduced to half its thickness, keep the sides of the canoe apart. From these points, therefore, the sides of the canoe converge to the bow at one end and to the stern at the other; while in between they are more or less parallel. The canoe, if there be any difference at all, is wider aft (74 cm.) than it is nearer the bow (55 cm.); the "fish-tail" incision, too, is acute and deep at the bow and more rounded and shallow at the stern (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). Along the top, inner, edge of either side of the canoe, a straight strengthening pole is lashed with distant, unequally-spaced and grouped "run on" stitches of cane-strips. These structures lend considerable rigidity to the gunwale of the canoe; they do not extend throughout the whole length, but, being straight, are more or less parallel one to another, and do not enclose the stern or bow. Major Campbell,[2] in referring to the bark canoes seen by him while at Fort Dundas, states that "the gunwales are strengthened by two small saplings (such as grow in marshy places) fastened together at each end of the canoe." This method is more like that in use on the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria to-day and was not observed on the islands by me. Long shoots of vines and strips of cane are wound crosswise from side to side of the canoe, and at the same time take in the strengthening-poles along the gunwale. Additional circumferential winding binds the separate cords into one thick rope. Four of such ties are spanned at equal distances, from one side to the other, along the straight edges of the canoe. They not only preserve its shape, but afford a ready means by which the craft may be carried.

501 The canoe is not decorated in any way, but smears of various colours are [531] noticed both at the bow and the stern, resulting from the handling by fingers previously occupied in decorative work with ochre. When not in use the canoes are "housed" on a level piece of ground, under the overhanging branches of a shady banyan or guttapercha tree. They are laid in normal upright position (not inverted), and are kept so by short supports of timber stemmed against the sides. The bark thus dries in the required shape and does not become lop-sided.

Each canoe has its recognized place. Where a dense growth of mangroves [487] skirts the foreshore, a regular approach to the water is kept clear by cutting away the trees. The paddles are laid within the canoes.

Quite a large number of natives may be carried in a canoe, if the occasion

[1] Compare narrative of Mr. Carron in MacGillivray's *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* 1852, vol. ii, pp. 125 and 126; also P. P. King: *Narrative Survey Intertropical Western Coasts of Australia*, London, 1827, vol. i, p. 90.

[2] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 156.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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demands it; but usually, when on a simple turtle or dugong hunting expedition, 501
two persons only occupy places in the craft, one near the bow and another near
the stern (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). The boatmen, while propelling the [516]
craft, squat with their buttocks resting upon the heels and with their knees pressed
against the sides. The weight of their body being thus well within the boat, its
stability is thereby considerably increased.

Paddles.—Propulsion is effected by means of paddles which are made of hard 501
wood. They have a single well-shaped blade and a rounded handle (*vide* Plate
XII, Fig. 2). The edges of the blade are parallel or taper slightly towards the end,
which is square or rounded. Apart from the marks left by the tomahawk used in [531]
its making, the implement is without ornamentation. In one case only, a circular
collar was carved around the handle, immediately above the sloping shoulder of the
blade. The longest paddle noted measured 167 centimetres in length, its blade
80; the shortest was 115 centimetres in length and its blade 45. The width
of the blades ranges from 7 to 9 centimetres. Both hands clasp the paddle,
which is dipped alternately on one side or the other as the occasion and the steering
require it.

Balers.—Water that accumulates in the canoe, either by leakage or overwash [415
in a rough sea, is removed by means of a baler which is made out of the melon 824]
shell[1] (*Melo diadema*). The columella of the shell is carefully cut away, leaving
only the large body-whorl, which is used as a scoop (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 3 and 4).
The outer surface of the shell is painted with red and yellow ochre in large cross [531]
pattern, with a fine cross shading.

Dug-outs.—The dug-out canoes to which I have elsewhere referred[2] have, in [175]
all probability, been introduced by Malays from whom the natives obtain them by
barter. Dr. Walter Roth has also proved that the dug-outs met with along the coast of
Queensland are of Papuan origin. The form observed in Apsley Strait is without
outrigger and hollowed out of a single tree trunk. The bow and stern are raised
(*vide* Plate X, Fig. 2).

Corrobborees.

As with all primitive folk, song and dance constitute the ultimate stage of 535
any social intercourse or festivity. The islanders are even more ready than ~~their~~ 527
brothers on the mainland to resort to this means of entertainment. It thus
happened that, wherever we came into contact with the blacks and presented them
with divers small articles, a corrobboree was immediately inaugurated; even though
the encounter happened to occur in the middle of the day. Corrobborees on the

[1] *Cf. Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* vol. ii, p. 17: "the baler (a melon shell) is in constant requisition."

[2] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 53. Among others, note that Major Campbell says of the Port Essington natives that "such of the canoes as I saw were hollowed from the trunks of trees, like those of the Malays and were probably either left by these people or stolen from them," *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 170.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 177 412 When Captain King[1] dropped anchor in Apsley Strait in 1818, and came into contact with natives near Luxmore Head on Melville Island, he noticed that "they repeatedly asked for axes by imitating the action of chopping."

171 764 532 Ethnologically these tomb-posts are of the greatest importance. With the exception of the records left by Jukes and MacGillivray, we know of nothing of the kind existing nowadays on the mainland. That, however, the inhabitants of some of the Torres Strait islands adopt methods of preserving the memory of their dead by means of painted and decorated structures of a different type is an established fact. The Continental Australian certainly, also, has methods of his own to mark a place of burial, but in a decidedly more transitory and less laborious way. The latter leaves already existing belongings of the deceased upon the grave; the islander, in addition, surrounds the spot with specially prepared posts such as have been described herein. Apart from the carvings, the painted designs, alone, are quite superior to anything existing on the mainland. The marked symmetry of the individual patterns and their diversity, when compared with one another, can hardly find a parallel on the mainland. We might look upon these island productions as representing interesting and independent transition stages between the primitive art of the Continental Australian, on the one hand, and the more perfected types of equatorial island tribes to the north of Australia, on the other.

APPENDIX.

NATIVE OCHRE DRAWINGS ON BARK FROM MELVILLE ISLAND, NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA.

531 While visiting Bathurst Island in 1911, I also entered several of the inlets of Melville Island from Apsley Strait. At one point, not far from the southern entrance to the Strait, where some aborigines were living in huts near to Cooper's Buffalo-Shooters Camp, I found the drawings here described. They were upon sheets of bark of the Woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*), used for building their shelters and huts. All drawings are in pipe-clay and red ochre; these materials having been smeared or squirted on to the bark in the form of a thin paste or in aqueous suspension. Typical among the drawings of the aboriginals on the mainland are the negative imprints of hands produced by holding the palm of the hand flat against the surface and squirting a mouthful of pipe-clay or ochre, suspended in water, against the back of the hand and around it. The surrounding surface is thus coloured so that, when the hand is removed, its outline stands out conspicuously by the absence of colour.[2]

[1] *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, pp. 111 and 121.

[2] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, 1907, vol. xxxi, p. 56, Plate XII. Among other references note E. Giles, *Australia Twice Traversed*, 1889, vol. i, p. 78. "The drawing is done

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The first plate reproduced contains a group composed of five imprints of the left hand of a native (Plate XIX, Fig. 1). The fingers are wide apart; the wrists of the two lowest hands seem very narrow in proportion, but that is due to the fact that they did not lie in close contact with the surface when the pigment was squirted against it. 531

In the lower corner on the right of the reproduction stands a single-masted sailing craft, intended to represent a small European pearling or fishing-boat. The former class of boats have long been in the habit of passing through Apsley Strait on account of the shelter afforded and the chances of procuring fresh water close to the shores of either island. 532

Plate XIX, Fig. 2, is the lower continuation of the proceeding. The sailing craft just described is noticed on the right. Below it is the picture of a frog. Special features of this design are firstly the two circular lateral prominences on the head representing the large eyes and, secondly, the inaccuracy in regard to the number of toes. The smear on the left hind leg, resembling a caudal appendage, is accidental.

The fourth design (Plate XX) is that of a double-masted pearling-lugger[1] in full sail. The proportion and neatness of execution of these designs of sailing crafts are excellent indeed. The hulk and sails of the latter figure are drawn in white pipe-clay and its masts in red ochre.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate VII.

Figs. 1 and 3. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with fur strings and cockatoo feathers. ¼ natural size. 301 531

Figs. 2 and 4. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with pointed sticks. ¼ natural size.

Plate VIII.

Figs. 1 and 2. Water-carriers, made of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). ¼ natural size. 415

Figs. 3, 4, 5 and 6. Food-carriers, made of bark; Figs. 5 and 6 with ochre drawings. ¼ natural size. 531

Plate IX.

Figs. 1, 2, 3 and 4. Throwing-sticks and clubs. ¼ natural size. 411

Fig. 5. A collection of spears from Bathurst Island. $\frac{1}{12}$ natural size. 531

by filling the mouth with charcoal powder if the device is to be black, if red with red ochre powder, damping the wall where the mark is to be left, and placing the palm of the hand against it, with fingers stretched out; the charcoal or ochre powder is then blown against the back of the hand; when it is withdrawn, it leaves the space occupied by the hand and fingers clean while the surrounding portions of the wall are all black or red, as the case may be." (Central Australian Natives.)

[1] *Vide* figure in *Report Government Geologist and Staff*, 1905, Adelaide, By authority, p. 14.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE XVII.

Fig. 1. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5a (Plate VIII) shown in plan; modified forms of the human figure are embodied. 532
Fig. 2. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5e (Plate VIII) shown in plan. 764

PLATE XVIII.

Fig. 1. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5c (Plate VIII) shown in plan. 532
Fig. 2. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5d (Plate VIII) shown in plan. 764

PLATE XIX.

Pipe-clay drawings on a sheet of bark of the stringy-barked eucalyptus (*E. tetradonta*), from a native hut on Melville Island. The plate includes negative imprints of hands (Fig. 1), and drawings of a sailing craft (Figs. 1 and 2), and of a frog (Fig. 2). ¼ natural size. 531 532

PLATE XX.

Pipe-clay drawing of pearling lugger in full sail; bark from a native hut on Melville Island. About ¼ natural size. 532

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

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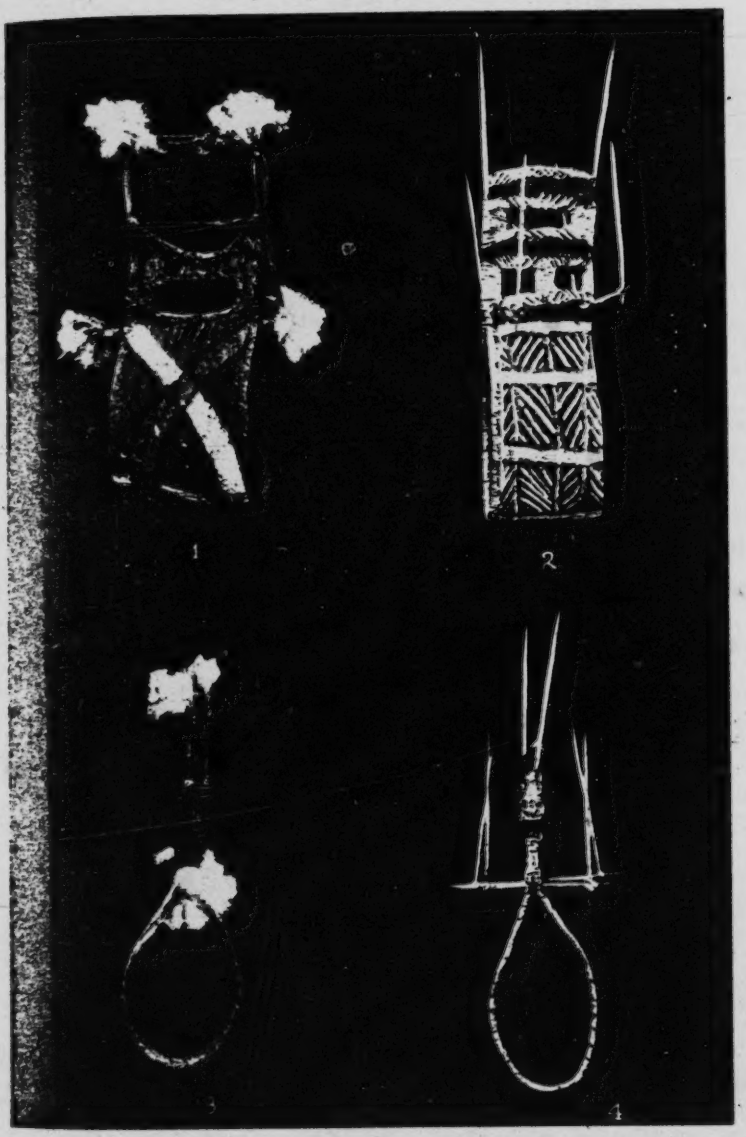

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 1]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 321 - ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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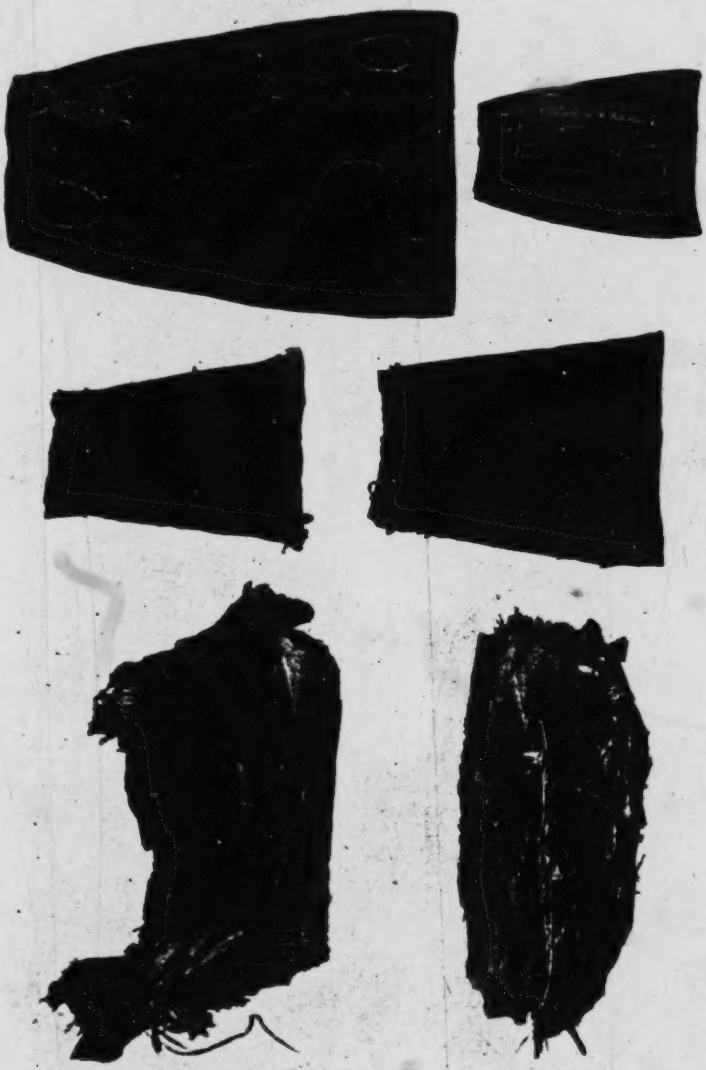

[END PLATE 2]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 321]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate IX.

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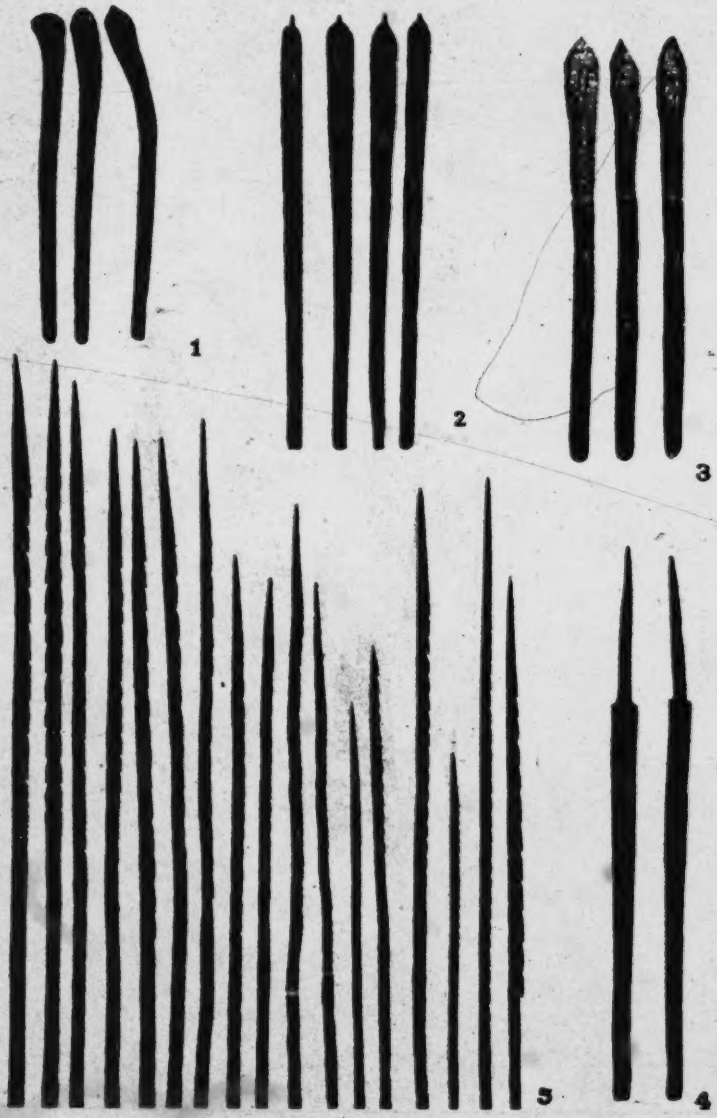

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 3]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 321 - ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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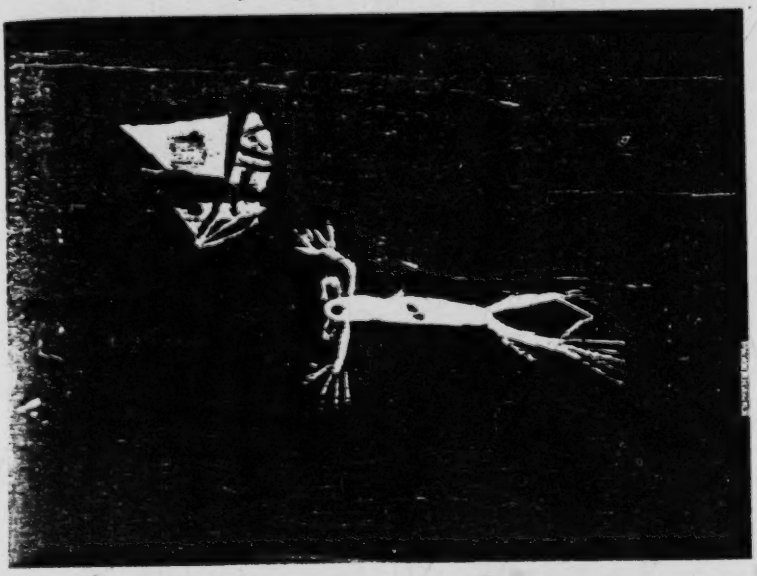

FIG. 2

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 13]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 323 — ANALYST]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pennant, and the Wanderers, which draws from the permanent native population in Darwin and includes such Tiwi as Bobby Wilson. It is normal for one of these Tiwi players to be considered among the top three in Darwin football circles. 177 526 648

For a while, Edmund, a Tiwi from Bathurst Island Mission, was one of the players on the newly organized St. Mary's basketball team; other Tiwi have played on the Bagot Compound basketball team. Billy Larrakeyah, a Darwin Tiwi, was thought to have Olympic potentialities as a javelin thrower, but strained his arm in the try-outs.[4] Most recently, a group of young Catholic Tiwi has been organized into a water polo team called the Seals. National magazines suggest that they may be the best water polo team in the country, but so far they have not gone south to play any non-Darwin group.

Tiwi carving and painting have had recent popularity in Australian art circles. Traditional Tiwi graveposts are finely carved in geometric designs and painted with precise and complex networks of cross-hatching and other simple, but effective, motifs. The first modern innovation in Tiwi art occurred about 1945 when a native known as Katu (or Short Katu) made his first attempt to carve a human figure atop a mourning post. When Pilling later asked Katu why he had carved this post, he said, "Me see 'm along Darwin. Me savvy." That is, Katu transferred the concept of Western realistic statuary in the round into the Tiwi art form. He carved a second realistic post for presentation to Queen Elizabeth II in 1954. More recently, Tiwi carvers at Snake Bay have taken to realistic carving. Two figurines, both carved by Tiwi at Snake Bay, were given to the Perth Museum in 1958. Sixteen mourning posts from Snake Bay were purchased by the National Art Gallery in Sydney the same year. An art display of Tiwi carving has been held in the United States in Philadelphia. 177 532 322

Tiwi have received recognition in the Northern Territory for other art forms. One of the thirty-year-old female Tiwi at Bathurst Island Mission usually takes first prize for embroidery at the annual Territorial fair. There has also been interest shown by outsiders in the double-barbed ceremonial spears. Male Tiwi skill in dancing has attracted wide attention in Australia. When natives from all over the Territory were sent to dance before Queen Elizabeth in Queensland during her 1954 tour, three Tiwi were among the delegation. The Tiwi contingent, directed by the innovator Short Katu, made every news story covering this part of the Royal Visit. In Darwin, when Bagot Compound needs to raise money for native participation in sports, the Tiwi, usually led by Katu, present a public dance. As a result, Katu's clan under his direction has invented many new dances for white Australian audiences. 177 [531] 177 535 648

Perhaps we may look forward to the day when American television audiences can enjoy such a Tiwi dance, one of Australia's best native products. Yet only sixty years ago, and therefore in the lifetime of many people still living, very few Tiwi had even seen a white man, and white men who set foot on Tiwi soil, like Cooper in his first attempt in 1897, were ferociously chased out.

[4] He was killed in a brawl in Darwin in the spring of 1959.

2: Mountford OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[Materials on representational art will be found in category 116, pp. 20, 23, 27, 30-32T, 33-35, 38-44A, 45-59, 63, 108-121, 125-127, 128A-144B, 145-146, 148-154B, 157-169.

Since much art relates to creation myths, totemic deities and sacred places, meteorological phenomena etc. for full explanation of these paintings categories 773, 776, 778, 821 and other 82 categories should be consulted.]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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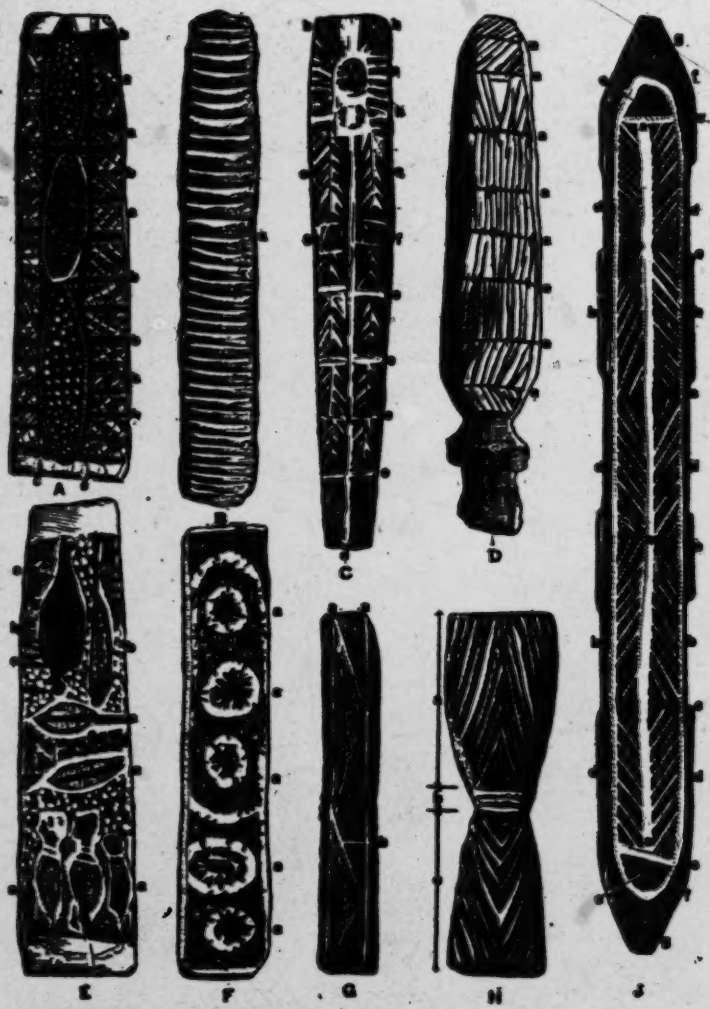

FIG. 6. *The Message Sticks*

A, B, Imilu; B, Ceremonial; C, Wurinpi; D, Secular; E, Kudjatumpi; G, H, Invitation to Secular Ceremony; J, Murumpi.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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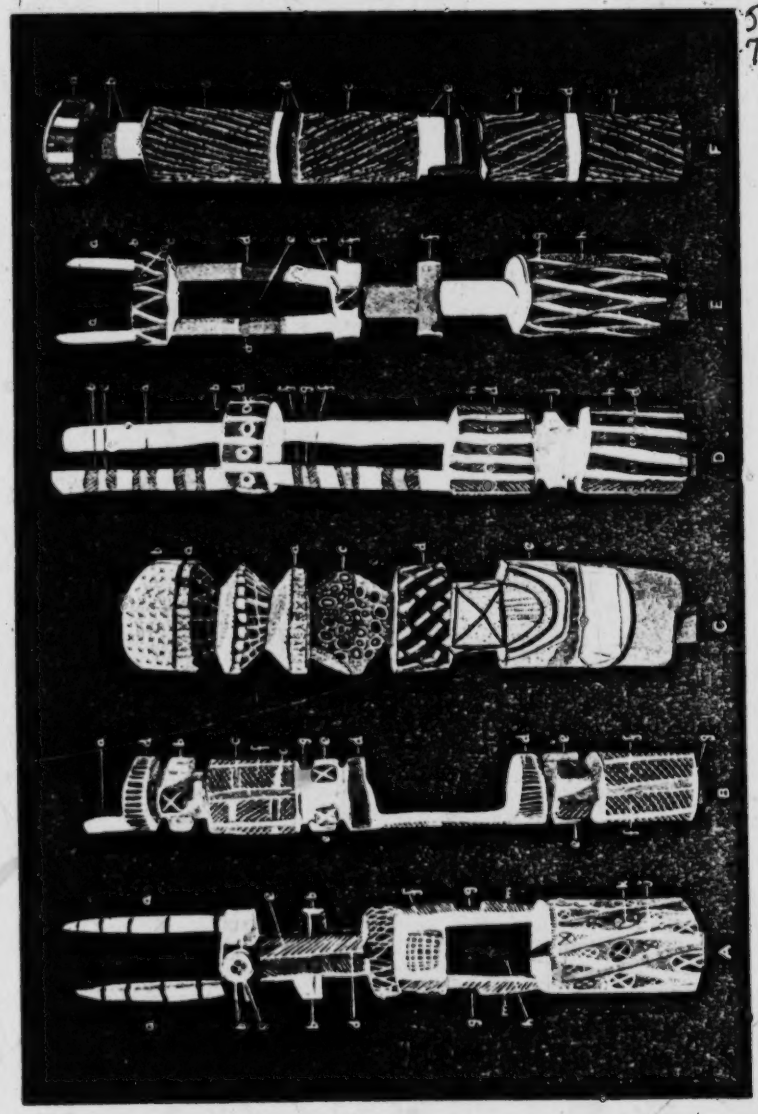


PLATE 37. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

[p. 120 E]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

301 bordered with red. Each of the intervening spaces is again sub-divided into two
531 squares at the centre (and a "half-square" at the sides) by three vertical, white lines bordered with red. The squares and "half-squares" are shaded diagonally with from four to six lines passing downwards and away from the central line in the topmost group, and upwards and away from the centre in the two lower groups of
[171] squares. The combined effect resembles the windmill or "wanningi" pattern common throughout Australia. The shading is all in white on one side, but red and white in alternate squares on the opposite side.

301 In another type of this arm decoration, which is also made of bark, the upper
322 united portion is shorter than in the previous case (*vide* Plate VII, Figs. 1 and 3). The top edge is concave and only one oblong window is cut beneath it. The sides have been united by hem-stitching and by the insertion of a few wooden pins which answer the same purpose as rivets. The edges are thickly plastered with beeswax. As in the previous case, the stitches (and the plaster also) are continued only along one side of the loop. A fairly stout rod of wood projects vertically from either end of the top concave edge. Shorter rods project laterally from either top corner of the loop. To the end of each of these rods a plume of
[237 white is attached with beeswax. Cockatoo feathers have been chosen and they are
531] fastened by their distal ends so that the fluffy portions are exposed. A number of twisted strands of fur and vegetable fibre pass from the extremity of one horizontal rod diagonally upwards to the base of the vertical rod above, along it to the top, thence horizontally across to the top of the other vertical rod, whence it is continued the same way down the other side to the extremity of the opposite horizontal rod. Beeswax retains these strands in position at the rod-tops, while more strands, wound horizontally from the base of one vertical rod to the other, and also round the base of each, make the former strands secure there. The painted design in this
301 case consists of one large cruciform figure on either side of the looped portion, the
531 arms being modified at the base in a manner suggestive of a snake design. One arm of the cross is white, the other yellow, both being bordered with red. The intervening spaces are shaded red and yellow, the constituent lines being parallel and straight up-and-down in the upper segment and crossed in the lower.

532 *Corrobboree-mask.*—An interesting object is what I take to be a corrobboree-mask (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 5). As I did not see it in use and did not receive the specimen until it was too late to make inquiries, I cannot, with certainty, describe it as such. The object represents an oval structure, 15 centimetres long and 8 wide, which encloses two connected circular rims resembling a solid pair of spectacles. The internal framework is made of split cane, bound together with vegetable strands. The oval portion is covered with human hair string, wound around it and knotted along the outer edge after the modern "button-hole-stitch" fashion. The rims are broad and covered with beeswax. A circle of the red beans of *Abrus precatorius*, embedded in the wax, surrounds the "eye-holes" on the front side. At one of the lateral extremities, a band of five human hair strings emerges from a cylindrical mass of beeswax and is surrounded, at 6 centimetres distance,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

by a similar mass, whence two strings only continue for 40 odd centimetres. 532
The whole length of the band, therefore, amounts to approximately 50 centimetres. Its object is, no doubt, to fasten the mask in position over the face during corroboree ceremonies.

Domestic Utensils.

Food carriers.—The most common form of "mika" or carrier for food and 322
other articles is one made of a single piece of bark of the "stringy bark" eucalypt 415
(*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 3, 4, 5, and 6). An oblong piece of such bark, say 1 metre long by 40 centimetres broad, is freshly cut and folded transversely at its centre. The edges on either side are pared down, then laid flat, one over the other, and sewn or laced together with plain "run-on" stitches, 2 centimetres apart. A row of slanting and overlapping stitches often skirts the open edge at a short distance down; occasionally, too, part of the edge is cross-hemstitched and plastered with beeswax. The object of this procedure is to prevent the bark from tearing by virtue of its fibrous structure. The open mouth of the carrier is nearly circular or oval; in the latter case the long axis of the oval runs at right angles to the base-edge of the implement. These carriers are of various sizes; the largest that came under observation measured 63 centimetres in height and 43 in width at the base. Ordinarily they are unpainted, but on special occasions elaborate designs, consisting 415
of circles, oblong and other figures, with cross-hatched shading, are drawn on the 531
outer surface in red, yellow, white, and black. The designs are best studied by reference to the reproductions (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 5 and 6). Occasionally tassel-shaped appendages are noticed at one of the convex outer surfaces of the mouth of the carrier. These consist of a flattish, egg-shaped mass of beeswax (studded on the surface with the red beans of *Abrus praecatorius*), which is suspended by two twisted fur strings (*vide* Plate VIII, Fig. 6).

Water carriers.—Water is taken to camp from a soakage or spring in simple [312]
structures made out of the bark of the paper-bark tree (*Melaleuca sp.*). An oblong 322
piece of this bark is bent upon itself longitudinally, both its ends folded several 415
times and kept together by binding with cane or by spiking with short pointed wooden pegs (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 1 and 2).

Drinking vessels.—Several natural objects are used for drinking vessels. 415
Among the most common are the discarded tests of mollusca. The species *Melo-* [237]
diadema and *Fusus pricei* were found in use at several native wells (*vide* Plate XIV, Figs. 1 and 2).

But when no such shells are available a piece of bark is torn or cut from a 322
tree (usually from a *Melaleuca*) and folded so as to form a water-tight cup (*vide* 415
Plate XIV, Figs. 3 and 4). This piece of bark, which measures about 30 centimetres by 20, is folded longitudinally at about its middle (*vide* Fig. 3, D). Both ends are then bent upon themselves at right angles to this plane and at about one quarter the whole length from either end. The overturned ends and the inner

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

four skirting the north-eastern edge and only one standing on the opposite side, 764
near to the south-eastern end. Before I exhumed the skeleton, the natives informed me that a male infant had been buried there. I am inclined to believe that this information was gathered from the arrangement of the posts and their markings, rather than that they recollected the identity of the child. The grave had apparently stood for some years, for upon digging down to the skeleton, several fair-sized roots of trees, that had grown subsequently, had to be cut through. At a depth of half a metre a layer of decayed pieces of timber, longitudinally laid, was found; under this rested the skeleton. It was, indeed, that of an infant, not many months old. Several men of the local tribe gave me voluntary assistance in the exhumation of the skeleton, and did not in the least object to handle the bones and carry them for me.

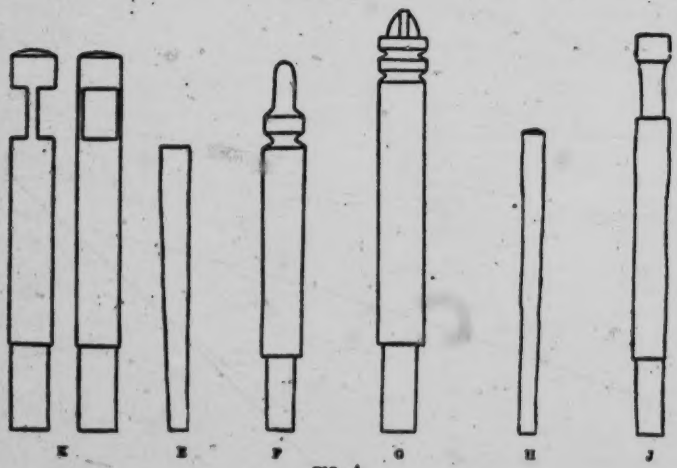


FIG. 4.

The ornamental posts surrounding the little central mound are all of wood, 532
namely the trunks of the heavy iron wood and of a lighter timber (perhaps that 764
of the corkscrew palm or *Pandanus*). They are circular in section and of various diameters and heights. The top ends of the three largest posts are carved in the manner described below. All of them still showed traces of having been painted with ochres in a most elaborate manner. The designs were, however, incomplete, so that I had them freshened up by the natives, who willingly consented to do so and exercised the greatest care to apply the colours in precisely the same positions as they originally occupied. The four posts along the north-eastern edge of the mound stood practically in a straight line, while the remaining one was at the head end of the opposite side. No two of them are alike either in size, method of carving, or colour ornamentation. It is safe to assume that each post has its significance, since the natives could decide the age and sex (and possibly many

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

532 764

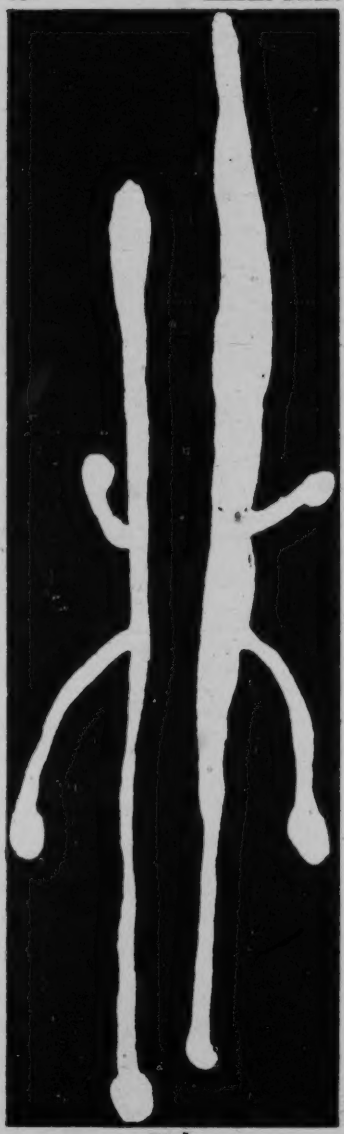


FIG. 5.

things more) of the interred and could reproduce the designs, upon request, with so marked a degree of precision and certainty.

The post that stood alone on the south-western side is no doubt of particular importance (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5b). It stood 123 centimetres above the surface and 11 centimetres in the ground. The circumference at the top, which is flat, is 42 centimetres and the post tapers very slightly downwards (*vide* Fig. 4, E). The post shows no signs of any carving. Its surface is, however, charred, and two simple, but effective, if not grotesque, designs in white pipe-clay have been drawn upon it (*vide* Fig. 5). These, without doubt, are in representation of two crocodiles or lizards, in profile, with their dorsal surfaces opposed but not in contact. I take it that these designs, and consequently this post, represent the family crest of the deceased.

The post at the south-eastern corner (the head end) stood 140 centimetres above and 37 centimetres below the level of the ground, the latter length having been reduced in thickness by about 3 centimetres all round (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5a). The top surface is practically flat. For a distance of 22 centimetres down, the wood has been cut away to a depth of from 3 to 4 centimetres all round (*vide* Fig. 4, F). At that distance it slopes outwards through 3 centimetres of vertical measurement to a collar 7 centimetres in width; it being the same diameter as the main pillar. Below the collar, material has again been cut away circumferentially in a V-shaped fashion; the intervening vertical space between the slopes of this notch measuring but

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

1 centimetre. From this furrow downwards the post has a uniform circumference of 54 centimetres. The colour-ornamentation (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 1) is briefly as follows: the portion of post reduced in thickness at the top is yellow for a quarter of its length and red for the remainder. The collar is divided into nine squares, yellow in outline and on a red background. Yellow lines, drawn from corner to corner, intersect at the middle of each square. Below this, the post is divided by five vertical bands. The one that faced the grave is waved: it is drawn in yellow ochre bordered with red. Upon the side diametrically opposite (*i.e.* the side seen on approaching the grave) are two vertical bands of yellow, about 15 centimetres apart. The spaces on either side of them are again subdivided by two slightly curved vertical bands of white, bordered with yellow. Occupying each of the three longitudinal spaces between these white bands are one elongate-oval figure in the centre and one-half such figure at the top and bottom of each respectively. Connected with the top and bottom ends of these figures are singly, doubly or multiply bent processes; the groups being separated from one another by horizontally laid shields. It is clear that these designs are intended to represent human figures in various artistically modified forms. Strange transformations of the limbs into snakes are visible on the left; while similar forms stand alone in the bottom corner of either side. 532 764

Such transformations are not infrequently met in primitive art, and from such latitude and privileges on the part of the artist there is no doubt all modern ornamental and emblematical designs have originated. The figures are drawn in red, bordered and shaded with yellow bars and crosses. The central, lowest figure is shaded in imitation of the zamia palm leaf, similar to the body ornamentation described above. All the spaces between the limb-like processes are filled in with bunched circlets or simple and criss-cross shading. The last-named method is also found among the designs of mainland natives.[1]

Next to this head-post, along the north-western edge of the mound, at a distance of about 65 centimetres from centre to centre of post, stands the largest, heaviest, and most elaborately decorated post (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5c). Its height above ground was 160 centimetres; its total length is 203 centimetres. The circumference is from 62 to 64 centimetres. For a distance of about 12 centimetres from the top, material has been cut away at two sides diametrically opposite, to a depth of from 4 to 5 centimetres, but at the points of emergence of an axis at right angles to this diameter, a vertical strip of timber has been left intact; the top is rounded off in the direction of this axis, which, moreover, ran parallel to the long axis of the mound (*vide* Fig. 4, G). Beneath this headpiece, two such notches, as described of the last-mentioned post, have been cut; the width of the collars so formed and the furrows, respectively, being each from 4 to 5 centimetres. The thickness of the part that stood in the ground has been reduced by from 1½ to 2 centimetres all

[1] *Vide* for example H. Basedow: *Archiv f. Anthrop.*, vol. vii, parts 2 and 3, 1908, p. 219 (Fig.).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 764 round. The ochre ornamentation is in three colours: white, yellow, and red. The design is quite symmetrical as regards the disposition of its constitutent parts (*vide* Plate XVIII, Fig. 1). In the centre of the post, on the side away from the grave, stands a figure resembling a St. Andrew's Cross, the arm on the left being yellow, bordered with red, that on the right, white, bordered with yellow. On either side of this figure, and at equal distances from it, are vertical bands of white bordered with yellow; in between are various elongate shield-shaped figures, symmetrically placed and enclosing circles or bars. All the remaining spaces are filled in with cross-hatched shading and circlets in the three specified colours. Between the two upper arms of the cross stands a red T-shaped figure, resembling the emu-track of the mainland tribes, but that it is intended to represent such is doubtful, since the emu (*Dromaeius novae hollandiae*) was not observed on either of the islands.

The next post[1] stood 50 centimetres further north-west (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5d). It is the smallest and made of light wood. Its length above ground was 120 centimetres, and the total original length was about 145 centimetres. The last-named measurement could not be taken with accuracy because a dry rot had set in and destroyed part of the timber. The circumference is from 29 centimetres at the top to 26 at the level of the ground. The top surface is rounded off but otherwise the structure is plain (*vide* Fig. 4, H). The colouring (*vide* Plate XVIII, Fig. 2) is as follows: top surface yellow; underneath, for a depth of 10 to 13 centimetres, the post is red, then follow thin alternate horizontal bands of yellow, white and yellow. Below, the surface is subdivided into a number of trapezoid and triangular spaces by two crosses resembling that of the post previously described, the one in white, the other in yellow. Of the intervening spaces, alternate fields are filled in with circlets of red, surrounded by yellow, and arranged in horizontal rows of from one to three, which are separated by horizontal bars of red. The other fields are painted red and are shaded with transverse bands of yellow.

Lastly, the post standing at the foot end of the grave, that is at the north-western corner, was 40 centimetres from the last described. Its total length is 193 centimetres and it stood 156 centimetres above the ground (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5e). The circumference varies from 45 centimetres at the top to 39 centimetres at the ground-level. The top surface is rounded. At a distance of 10 centimetres from the crest, the wood has been cut away circumferentially for a depth of 2 centimetres and a vertical distance of 28 centimetres (*vide* Fig 4, J). From this level to that of the old ground-line the post is plain, but, below the ground-

[1] The posts surrounding the other grave, mentioned in the footnote on p. 314, were apparently of a similar nature. Bush fires had seriously damaged them. One, however, was cut through at a distance of 15 centimetres from the top, leaving only two narrow strips of timber on either side to support the headpiece thus formed. Whether or not a sexual designation was hereby intended I could not definitely ascertain, but presume so. The "spike-like horns at the side" referred to by Mr. Gee (p. 314 above) must be regarded as the remnants of a post of similar type to this whose crown has been destroyed by fire (*vide* Fig. 4, K).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

level, further material has been cut away to reduce its thickness by about 1 centimetre all round. The top portion, which has the appearance of a knob, has been daubed with red ochre; the sunken portion, immediately beneath, is white (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 2). The lower surface of the post bears five vertical bands, three being of white pipe-clay and two of yellow ochre. Two of the former have a border of red, the third one of yellow; and both of the latter (yellow) are bordered with white. Three of the intervening spaces are shaded with inclined lines of white, the remaining two are each filled with a vertical row of white cricoid figures. The original surface upon which the pattern was drawn is charred. 532 764

Having persuaded the natives to repaint the designs on the tomb-posts, in places where they were defective or missing, they set about the work with enthusiasm and did not rest until they had repainted the whole of the surfaces. To accomplish this they leaned the posts against trees and divided themselves into small groups of two to four, each of which undertook part of the work (*vide* Plate XVI, Figs. 1 and 2). Youths were sent to the main camp, whence they soon after returned with lumps of red and yellow ochre and white pipe-clay (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 2). From these they broke off small pieces and crushed them by hand in the strong concave shells of the bivalve mollusc *Cyrena essingtonensis*.[1] To this crumbled pigment sufficient water was added to make a thick paint, more water being added from time to time as required. One might look upon these shells containing the mixed paint as representing primitive palettes (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 1). The paint is applied to the surface by means of crudely made, yet effective, brushes. Short pieces of the creeping calamus are cut with the sharp edge of a shell and one or both of their ends chewed until all the fibres have become separated (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 3); much in the same way as the flower-stalks of the fan-palm are chewed when feeding on honey (*vide* p. 300). Both of these small artists' requisites are highly interesting inasmuch as they show us a decidedly primitive, yet to the present day practically unaltered stage in the evolution of art. [126] 386 [413] 532 [413]

It is evident that the posts have been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk. Captain Flinders[2] as far back as 1803 noticed that the natives on the north coast (Caledon Bay) were familiar with the use of iron instruments and that they tried to steal his axes. He, therefore, suspected that "they had been previously visited by people possessing iron instruments." Later, he was himself able to confirm this supposition when he discovered, near to Cape Wilberforce, a fleet of proas from Macassar, the crew of which were in the habit of visiting the north coast of Australia to collect trepang, which they took to Timor and sold to the Chinese.[2] 412 [322] 177 171

[1] We have before us an interesting analogy, when we recollect that in our own country the shells of fresh-water mussels were, in former days, much used and are still used as a receptacle for mixing water-colours; whence also the name *Unio pictorum*.

[2] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, pp. 213 and 228–231.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 177 412 When Captain King[1] dropped anchor in Apsley Strait in 1818, and came into contact with natives near Luxmore Head on Melville Island, he noticed that "they repeatedly asked for axes by imitating the action of chopping."

171 764 532 Ethnologically these tomb-posts are of the greatest importance. With the exception of the records left by Jukes and MacGillivray, we know of nothing of the kind existing nowadays on the mainland. That, however, the inhabitants of some of the Torres Strait islands adopt methods of preserving the memory of their dead by means of painted and decorated structures of a different type is an established fact. The Continental Australian certainly, also, has methods of his own to mark a place of burial, but in a decidedly more transitory and less laborious way. The latter leaves already existing belongings of the deceased upon the grave; the islander, in addition, surrounds the spot with specially prepared posts such as have been described herein. Apart from the carvings, the painted designs, alone, are quite superior to anything existing on the mainland. The marked symmetry of the individual patterns and their diversity, when compared with one another, can hardly find a parallel on the mainland. We might look upon these island productions as representing interesting and independent transition stages between the primitive art of the Continental Australian, on the one hand, and the more perfected types of equatorial island tribes to the north of Australia, on the other.

APPENDIX.

NATIVE OCHRE DRAWINGS ON BARK FROM MELVILLE ISLAND, NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA.

531 While visiting Bathurst Island in 1911, I also entered several of the inlets of Melville Island from Apsley Strait. At one point, not far from the southern entrance to the Strait, where some aborigines were living in huts near to Cooper's Buffalo-Shooters Camp, I found the drawings here described. They were upon sheets of bark of the Woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*), used for building their shelters and huts. All drawings are in pipe-clay and red ochre; these materials having been smeared or squirted on to the bark in the form of a thin paste or in aqueous suspension. Typical among the drawings of the aboriginals on the mainland are the negative imprints of hands produced by holding the palm of the hand flat against the surface and squirting a mouthful of pipe-clay or ochre, suspended in water, against the back of the hand and around it. The surrounding surface is thus coloured so that, when the hand is removed, its outline stands out conspicuously by the absence of colour.[2]

[1] *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, pp. 111 and 121.

[2] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, 1907, vol. xxxi, p. 56, Plate XII. Among other references note E. Giles, *Australia Twice Traversed*, 1889, vol. i, p. 78. "The drawing is done

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The first plate reproduced contains a group composed of five imprints of the left hand of a native (Plate XIX, Fig. 1). The fingers are wide apart; the wrists of the two lowest hands seem very narrow in proportion, but that is due to the fact that they did not lie in close contact with the surface when the pigment was squirted against it. 531

In the lower corner on the right of the reproduction stands a single-masted sailing craft, intended to represent a small European pearling or fishing-boat. The former class of boats have long been in the habit of passing through Apsley Strait on account of the shelter afforded and the chances of procuring fresh water close to the shores of either island. 532

Plate XIX, Fig. 2, is the lower continuation of the proceeding. The sailing craft just described is noticed on the right. Below it is the picture of a frog. Special features of this design are firstly the two circular lateral prominences on the head representing the large eyes and, secondly, the inaccuracy in regard to the number of toes. The smear on the left hind leg, resembling a caudal appendage, is accidental.

The fourth design (Plate XX) is that of a double-masted pearling-lugger[1] in full sail. The proportion and neatness of execution of these designs of sailing crafts are excellent indeed. The hulk and sails of the latter figure are drawn in white pipe-clay and its masts in red ochre.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate VII.

Figs. 1 and 3. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with fur strings and cockatoo feathers. ¼ natural size. 301 531

Figs. 2 and 4. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with pointed sticks. ¼ natural size.

Plate VIII.

Figs. 1 and 2. Water-carriers, made of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). ¼ natural size. 415

Figs. 3, 4, 5 and 6. Food-carriers, made of bark; Figs. 5 and 6 with ochre drawings. ¼ natural size. 531

Plate IX.

Figs. 1, 2, 3 and 4. Throwing-sticks and clubs. ¼ natural size. 411

Fig. 5. A collection of spears from Bathurst Island. $\frac{1}{12}$ natural size. 531

by filling the mouth with charcoal powder if the device is to be black, if red with red ochre powder, damping the wall where the mark is to be left, and placing the palm of the hand against it, with fingers stretched out; the charcoal or ochre powder is then blown against the back of the hand; when it is withdrawn, it leaves the space occupied by the hand and fingers clean while the surrounding portions of the wall are all black or red, as the case may be." (Central Australian Natives.)

[1] *Vide* figure in *Report Government Geologist and Staff*, 1905, Adelaide, By authority, p. 14.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Balers made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

314 396 137 Fig. 1. Forest scene on Bathurst Island. From the stringy-barked eucalyptus on the left side of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe. Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
501 Fig. 2. Various types of paddles in use on Bathurst Island. About $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.

PLATE XIII.

764 Figs. 1 and 2. Distant and near view of a native grave, surrounded by five carved and painted posts, Bathurst Island. Note the cleared space and the position of grave, viz.: at the junction between open woodland and thicket. A tall Bathurst Islander in seen in Fig. 2.

PLATE XIV.

415 Fig. 1. A melon-shell (*Melo diadema*) used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Fig. 2. A *Fusus pricei* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 764 Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e. Painted and carved posts of native grave shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XV.

415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cypræa exsingtonensis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
317 386 Fig. 2. Lumps of yellow ochre (on the left), white pipe-clay (in the centre), and red ochre (on the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
301 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (?). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 532 764 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

PLATE XVII.

Fig. 1. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5a (Plate VIII) shown in plan; modified forms of the human figure are embodied. 532
Fig. 2. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5e (Plate VIII) shown in plan. 764

PLATE XVIII.

Fig. 1. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5c (Plate VIII) shown in plan. 532
Fig. 2. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5d (Plate VIII) shown in plan. 764

PLATE XIX.

Pipe-clay drawings on a sheet of bark of the stringy-barked eucalyptus (*E. tetrodonta*), from a native hut on Melville Island. The plate includes negative imprints of hands (Fig. 1), and drawings of a sailing craft (Figs. 1 and 2), and of a frog (Fig. 2). ¼ natural size. 531 532

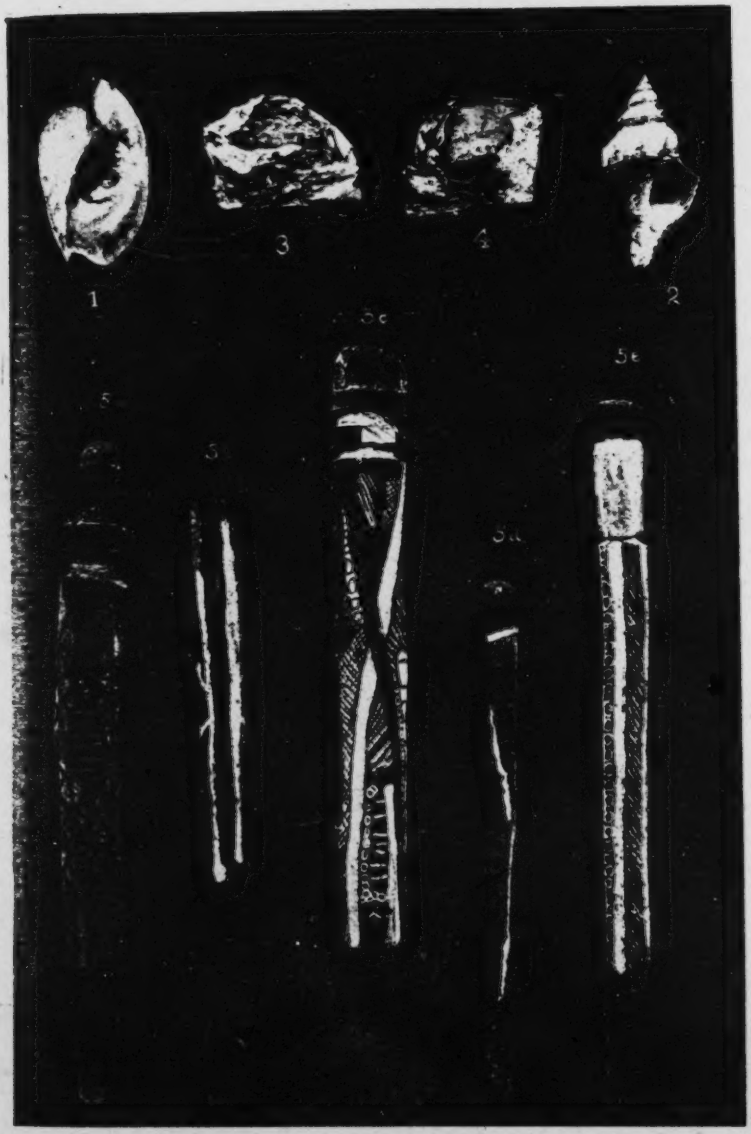
PLATE XX.

Pipe-clay drawing of pearling lugger in full sail; bark from a native hut on Melville Island. About ⅓ natural size. 532

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XIV.

415



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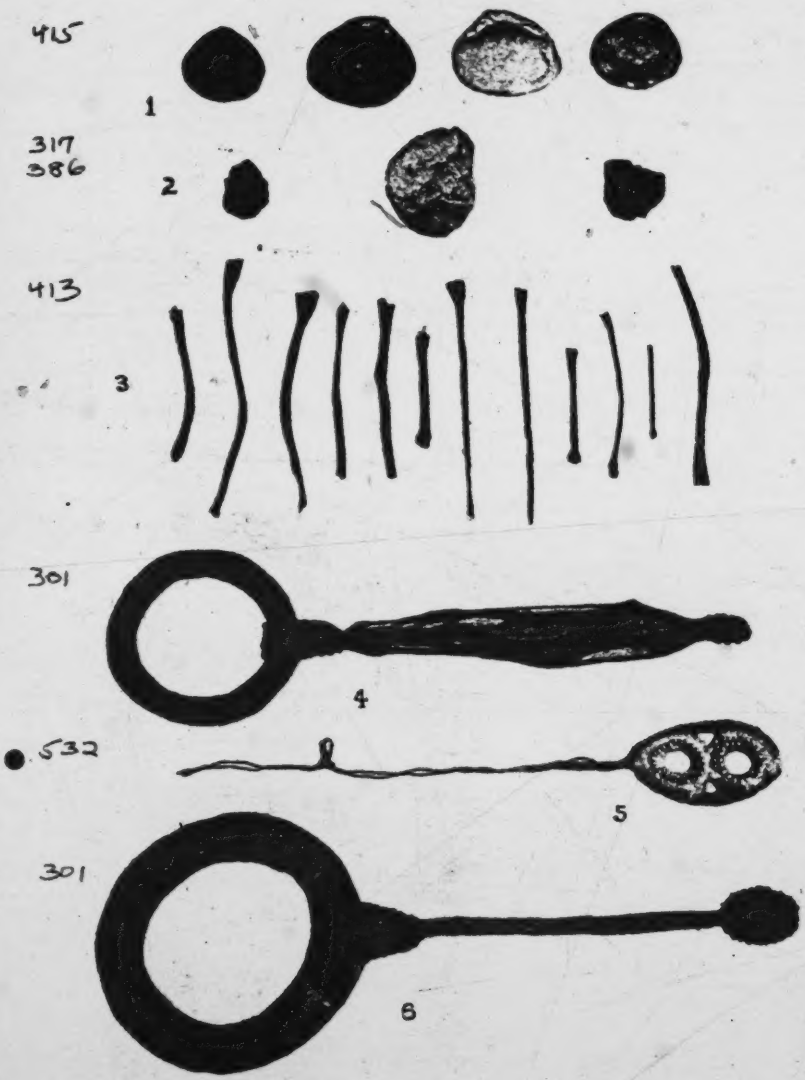
NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 8]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 322 - ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XV.



NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 9]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE P. 322 — ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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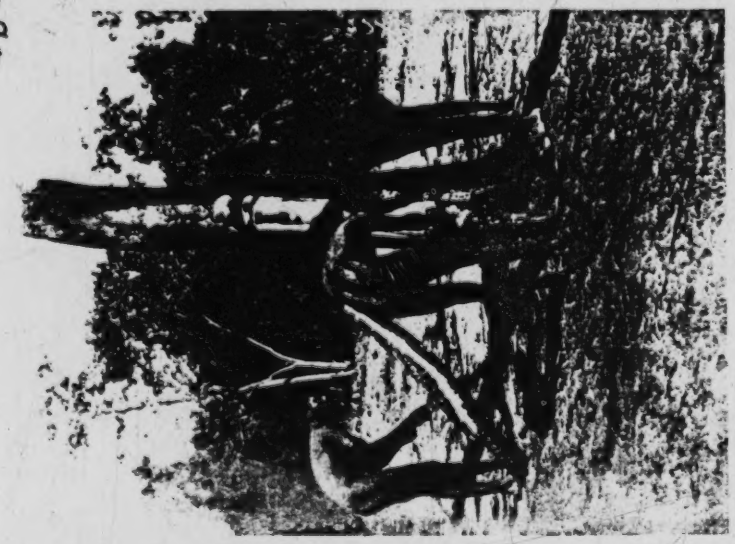

FIG. 2.

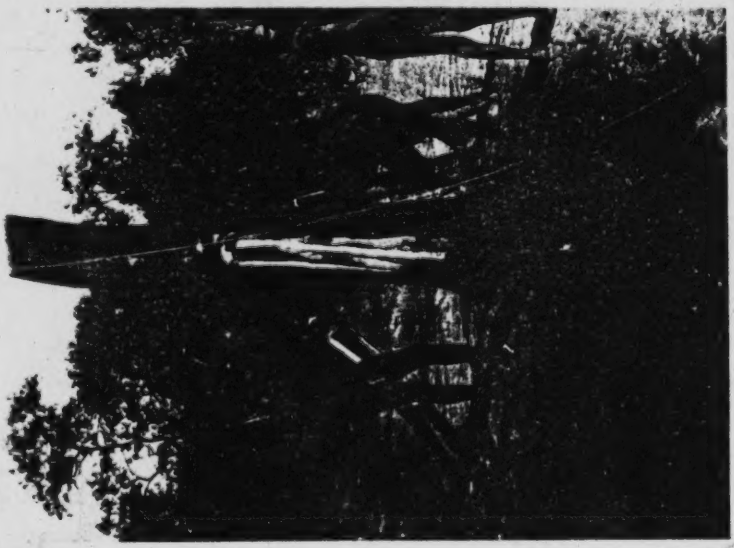

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 10]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 322 - ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XVII.

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FIG. 2. FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

(END PLATE 11)

(FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 323 – ANALYST)

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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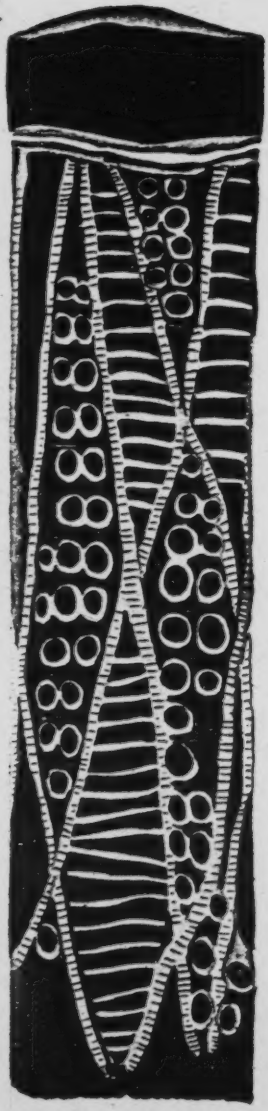

FIG. 2.

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 12]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE P. 323 – ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

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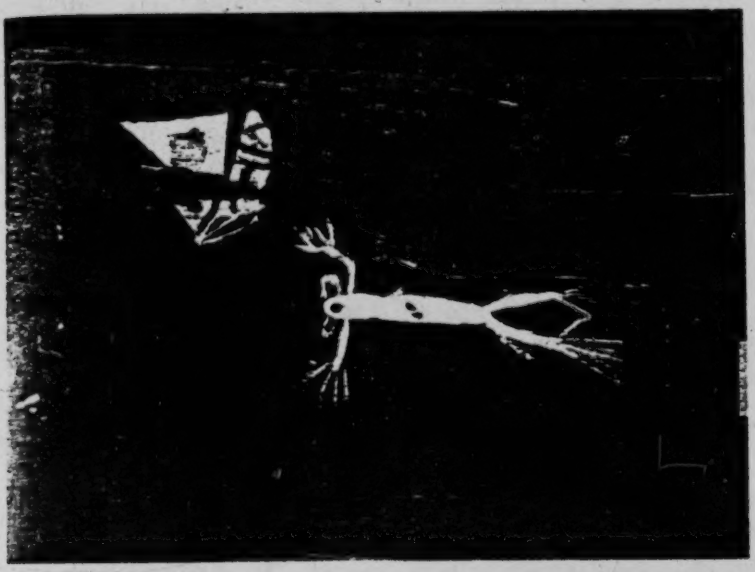

FIG. 2

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 13]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 323 — ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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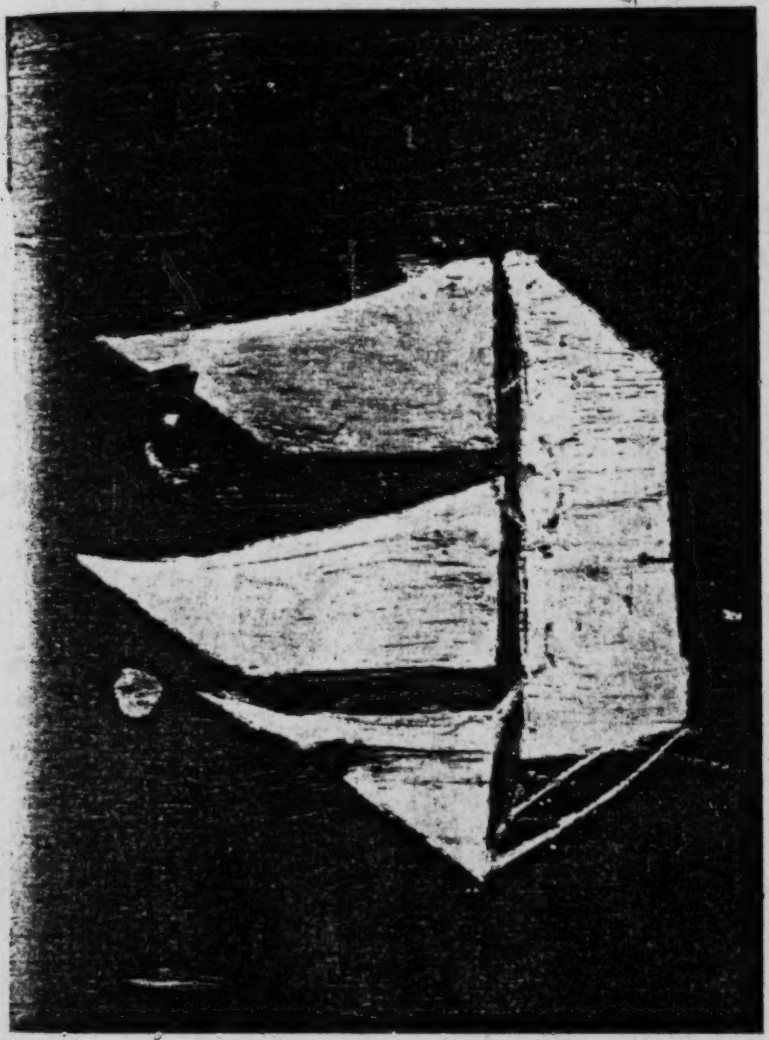

[END PLATE 14]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 323 – ANALYST]

171 boomerang, is unknown to the islanders. Ceremonial customs,
[411] language, origin, and burial rites all differ from those of the mainland tribes, and constitute an interesting study for anthropologists. They are the only aborigines who erect memorials on
764 the graves of the departed, and, in the forest beside the aerodrome, you may see a typical grave surrounded with queerly-
[322 carved ironwood totem-poles. The poles, some eight feet in
532] height, are carved in varying patterns. They had been painted in highly decorative designs with red, yellow, and white ochre, with black bands of charcoal to give sharp and artistic contrast. Each kindred totem to that of the deceased must place a pole at the grave. Failure to erect a pole is supposed to signify that no sorrow is felt for the death, and punishment will follow. Something unpleasant always *does* happen to those who neglect this duty.

797 AFTER these necessary digressions, let us return to my visit to the mission station. We followed the fathers over the stile, up an avenue of palms, and on through the garden, where
[245] pineapples and bananas grow, and there are rows of immense and beautifully shady mango-trees. Sturdy, fuzzy-headed aborigines strode in front (one of them had just come in with
[262] a couple of kangaroos for the larder), and the boys trooped along behind us. The quarters of the fathers are very much those of bachelors, perfectly bare, with guns in the corners and a few native weapons and curios hanging on the walls.

Here two lubras brought us morning tea, and here I learnt much of the foregoing matters. The fathers themselves are entertaining men of the world, and their white cricket shirts and khaki slacks gave no indication of their calling. The boys gathered at the foot of the steps leading up to the quarters,
797 and every now and then black-bearded Father McGrath would
522 banter them in their own language. Like all the native peoples

[p. 15 (B)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

endance and out-sing and out-party most of the men fifty years younger than himself.[6] 159 888

Since Tu'untaluni was a senior Tiwi household head who spent more of his time attending festivals, funerals, fights, and other collective occasions than did most of his contemporaries, it is instructive to examine his movements over a full year. If he had kept an engagement book during 1928-29, it would have looked something like this: 159 887

Early April (end of wet season): Leaves his home base in Tangio where he has spent most of the wet season and visits the Mission station to attend a few small funerals (children who have died at the Mission in the preceding months). During these funerals a series of fights and duels also takes place. Total people present: perhaps fifty or sixty. Time thus spent in helping to wind up public business: five days. Returns home to Tangio and remains there for rest of April. [797]

End of April: Goes to Rangu with a big party of other Tiklauila for a funeral (junior elder). Fairly big funeral, lots of people, lots of disputes. Time away, including leisurely journey to and from Rangu, about two weeks. Gets back home about middle of May. [764 166]

Middle of May—end of June: Lives quietly at home with his household in Tangio.

About July 1st: Goes to Mission for a few days, "visits" with whoever is there. Tries out a new composition of his own (song and dance) on group camped at Mission. Returns home for rest of July. [533 535]

Last week of July: Taking his younger wives and their children with two senior wives in charge of them, sets out for Malau for a big funeral with lots of people and fights. There he performs his new dance; is much consulted on ceremonial matters by the Malauila; gets into a few fights himself but handles them with dignity and honor; remains in Malau two weeks; stops off to visit and attend a small funeral with the Munupula on his way back; has a fight with a Munupula while there; returns to the Mission; stays there a day or two dispensing all the news from Malau and Munupi to those camped there; issues invitations for a grass burning in some sections of Tangio which were not burned in April or May. Goes on home to Tangio where some of his older wives have remained during his absence. Total time away: about three weeks. [166]

End of August: Is joined in Tangio by several other Tiklauila and Rangwila households whom he has invited. Grass burning and joint kangaroo hunting goes on for four or five days. Dancing and partying at night. After five days most of visiting group leave and he and his household remain alone in Tangio until well into October. [224]

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[6] There is no suggestion that Tu'untaluni was in any way an official ritual leader. All old men, by virtue of their years, were to some extent ritual leaders; he had merely worked harder and longer at it than most of them. His tirelessly joyful personality had a good deal to do with his success in the self-established role. In a culture that might be thought likely to make all its men gloomy, anxiety-ridden introverts, he was a warm, happy, dignified old extrovert and he was widely admired. [156]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 604 584

rings with a boy who was willing to become the "worker" of the girl's controller.[8]

From the economic standpoint, the large household has much the same function as before the days of the Mission. The younger women go out together and gather food; the old women stay home with the young children. The younger men bring home choice items, which now are trade goods and money from Darwin. The "boss" of the great household is wealthy; today, he has food, tobacco, clothes, and usually sufficient money to gamble. The composition of the great households has altered, but their function is very much the same. The establishment of the monogamous Catholic Cabbagee is even larger than that of the polygamous old pagan, Ki-in-kumi, described in an earlier chapter; Cabbagee, with only one wife, has more women under his "control" than ever Ki-in-kumi had, despite his list of twenty-one wives. The Tiwi have thus been able to retain their large households even under the Mission-imposed system of monogamy.

177 182 592

The Change from Patriliny to Matriliny

In the pre-Cooper era of feuding, the largest significant units among the Tiwi were the bands; the Tiwi never, in that by-gone day, acted as a tribe, even in their attacks upon such outsiders as the British. In the 1950's, when informants talked of the old days they commonly mentioned that male members of old bands came together as units to go on war parties. These old bands did not have a strict rule of descent. But, as has already been indicated, the majority of the males were regarded all their lives as members of the band to which their father belonged. That is, the major unit of the old Tiwi social structure was patrilineal in emphasis.

621 [611]

There also existed in the old Tiwi pattern a strictly matrilineal clan organization, related primarily to totemism. One of the totemic animals of a clan stood for a member of that clan in the song composed to commemorate his death; for instance, the first line of the mourning song for a deceased male of the Red Paint Clan might be "I am red paint." Occasionally, several members of a clan helped one of their number in a fight, but this was apparently not very common before the Mission era. This clan-organization pattern prevailed among the Tiwi through about 1930. Then major and most unpredictable changes began.

614 [533] [765]

What does one expect to happen when a society which has a patrilineal emphasis, like the old Tiwi one, comes into contact with a European society where, if there is any emphasis, it is a patrilineal one? Although one would ordinarily expect a strengthening of patriliny, such was not the case among the Tiwi. The old social unit which was predominantly patrilineal was a territorial group with its major functions in the system of feuding. When the

177 611 614 621

[8] By 1955, the terms "boss" and "worker" had come into the local Tiwi dialect to indicate superordinate and subordinate status interrelationships.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 of *Pulanimkuni's* wife, *Nulatini*, which I saw, the general pattern was similar. I shall, however, describe both burials, that of *Nulatini* being the more detailed.

(1) *The Burial of Waniamperi*

On the day that *Waniamperi* died, *Marawani*, one of his near relatives, who wanted the dead man buried near his mother, paid a young "worker"[18] a sum of money and two loin cloths to dig the grave.

When the corpse was brought to the burial ground, a number of relatives had a last look at the dead man before he was laid on a series of logs, placed transversely across the bottom of the grave.

This act was a signal for concerted mourning, the women beating themselves with sticks and the men cutting their heads. For personal safety it is [753] imperative that each man and woman show excessive grief, real or feigned, [626] otherwise the *mopaditi*, annoyed at the lack of grief, will make the offending person ill.

After the mourning died down, the "workers" placed boughs on the body and filled in the grave, leaving a small mound on top (Pl. 24c).

[533] While this work was being carried out, the relatives stood on one side of the grave, either singing the *amburu*, the mourning song, or the rain song of Wailu, the totem of *Tiparawilimiri*, *Waniamperi's* father. To the chanting [535] of this song, the men acted the rain dance (Pl. 30a). The aborigines did not stage the totemic dances or chant the songs belonging to the fire totem of Wuriupi (*Waniamperi's* own totem), because, to have done so, would have especially attracted the attention of his *mopaditi*.

The "workers" laid *Waniamperi's* personal belongings at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tied his loin cloth and tobacco to the top of a thin sapling which had been driven into the ground at the head of the grave, made a large fire, and left a container of water.

The aborigines believe that the *mopaditi*, seeing his belongings near at [775] hand, water to drink and fire to warm himself and cook the food he gathers in the surrounding forest, will stay near the grave until the time comes for him to leave the locality.

While the "workers" were engaged on those tasks, the rest of the burial party quietly left, not looking behind, lest the *mopaditi* follow them to their camp.

[767] [18] These "workers" or *wanaras*, being distant relatives of the dead, are in little danger from the *mopaditis*. Therefore, it is safe for them to clean the site, dig the grave, handle the body, and carry out other tasks associated with burial. They are paid for their work by the chief mourners at the final *pukamani* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Parading around the unlit fire in the centre of the *milimika*, the performers
177 chanted a telephone song, the literal translation of which is, "Hallo, that
● 533 telephone there, hallo, yes, yes," some, as they did so, imitating the winding
[539] of the handle of an old-type magneto telephone.

When the fire, which had been started by a young man, was well alight, the men performed the ritual of *wandiasapinda* by jumping through flames and smoke, each shouting "telegraphy".

The men again assembled at the edge of the *milimika*, and, led by the *alowia*, called the localities on Melville Island where the white men had camped. As each name was called the aborigines shouted "*wia*" (yes).

One dancer held his hands high above his head, symbolizing a radio aerial, while his companions chanted the following words to the refrain of the telephone song:

[539] "The Queen sent a radio asking *Wurarbuti* and other men to dance for her."

Then followed songs related to the radio and the telephone. These were usually performed with the traditional steps and gestures, except that, at the end, the actor mimed the ringing up with one hand, and the holding of the
[535] telephone to the ear with the other.[60] As the men danced, the women moved into the *milimika* from the side, performing their own dance, the *amburu* (Pl. 30F), some of them crying and endeavouring to beat themselves. They were, however, restrained by their companions.

765 After a number of dances came the ceremony of appointing the men to carry out the work near the grave.

At the death of any person the tribe divides into two groups: the *puka-*
[616] *munis*, near relatives of the dead, who are forbidden to touch food with their hands (Pl. 24A), or go near the grave, and the distant relatives, who can visit the grave site without fear of attack from the spirit (the *mopaditi*).

At *Waniamperi's* first *ilania*, the ceremonial leader chose, from the latter group, ten men, the *wanaras*, colloquially called the "workers". It was their duty to cut and paint the burial poles (one each), help to clear the grave site and dancing ground of sticks and stones, and to carry out other menial tasks associated with the final rituals. For these tasks, the "workers" were paid on the last day of the rituals.

When "workers" were chosen, the aged brother, *Nalgui*, of the dead man,

[60] This mixture of the ancient and the modern, shows how a living culture gradually absorbs the characteristics of an adjacent people, particularly those from a culture as dominant as our own.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

announced that he had bought enough food from the store at the settlement to feed all the men who were to cut the poles.[61] 765

Following this announcement, the chief woman mourner, *Prupadau*, whose privilege it was to decide on the size of the burial poles, marked with her toe, in the dust of the *milimika*, the length and thickness of a series of oversized poles.

This led to a great deal of discussion between the leader, *Wurarbui*, and the woman, *Prupadau*, before he finally persuaded her to reduce the dimensions of the poles to a reasonable size. *Prupadau* wanted the poles for her relative to be as many and as large as possible.

This matter settled, the "workers" brought a number of steel axes into the *milimika*. The *alawia*, painting the handles white and putting red cross lines on the blades, stood the axes in the centre of the dancing ground. Then both the *alawia* and the other performers walked around the axes singing the telephone song. [177] [531]

A series of traditional dances followed, representing *Jirakati*, the white-headed sea-eagle (Pl. 30j), *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Tjalati*, the jabiru (Pl. 29A).[62] Two women and two young boys performed the shark (*Tadu-wala*) dance (Pl. 25c), the ritual finishing with the honey and mosquito calls. The "workers" picked up their axes and walked away, accompanied by everyone except *Prupadau*, who remained behind, still chanting the *amburu* song of mourning. 535 765 [825]

(*b*) *The Second Ilanias*

The second series of *ilanias* was performed about halfway between *Wurarbui's* camp and the burial ground. 765

In this series, we were able to see the traditional pattern of the *ilanias* in operation, including the return and feeding of the "workers" after their day's labour of cutting the poles near the grave site. The songs and dances, too, instead of referring, as in the first *ilanias*, to the goods of the white man, his radio and his telephones, dealt almost exclusively with dances belonging to the locality of Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island, the country of *Waniampari's* father and the totemic place of fresh water, *Andjalui* (p. 42). [533] [177]

This series of *ilanias* could be divided into five sections,

[61] At the present time, this is just a traditional gesture, reminiscent of the days when it was the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the workers while they cut and painted the poles (Pl. 25B).

[62] In a creation myth, the jabiru is called *Tipuru-undunga*. It is likely that the bird has several names. Hart (1930, p. 280), draws attention to the multiplicity of names among the Tiwi. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 slipped down the tree and jumped clear of the fire, the other participants
372 called his totemic name.

Toward the end of this series of *ilanias*, the "workers" announced that they had finished cutting the poles. The leader, the *alouwia*, hearing this, gave permission for the poles to be "cooked", i.e., burnt in a fire of blazing boughs, to provide a black ground on which to paint the designs. The leader
[202] also ordered that the *purunkiaas* (message sticks, Figs. 5, 6, 7), be sent out to the various totemic groups. These sticks intimated that the final *pukamuni* ceremonies would take place in about twenty days.

765 (c) *The Bathurst Island Ilanias*

About a week before the final burial rituals of *Waniamperi*, a number of aborigines from Bathurst Island, accompanied by their wives and *Kawpi*, the son of the dead man, made their camp and cleared a ceremonial ground not far from the second *milimika* used by the Melville Island people.

The Bathurst Island *ilanias*, under the leadership of an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, followed the traditional form, except that the first two phases were omitted, i.e., the fighting and the feeding of the "workers".

Three groups of songs were chanted to the accompaniment of the appropriate dances.

(i) The *Ningaui* songs and dances.
(ii) The mission lugger songs and dances.
(iii) The jabiru (*Tjalati*) songs and dances.

(i) *The Ningaui Songs and Dances*

533 The leader, *Jibunglialumi*, and his companions chanted the following
539 *Ningaui* songs. These are the literal translations.
765 "I am the head man of the *Ningaui*, I am, Eeh, Eeh."[67]

"I push aside the mangrove branches with my hands, Eeh, Eeh."

"The *Ningauis* are out hunting. The calls of the white cockatoos tell them that someone is coming, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* woman, having just given birth to a child, sings—

"The flies are looking at me, the flies are crawling on my shoulder, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* man, looking at his newly born child, sings—

"Little new-born man lying on the ground, Eeh, Eeh."

[825] [67] This is the call of the *Ningauis* which, the aborigines claim, they hear in the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. It is possibly the call of one of the swamp birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Neither *Jilungfahuni* nor any of the Bathurst Islanders performed spirited 765
dances to these songs. The leader, impersonating a *Ningani*, walked round
the *mifunika* with awkward, bent gait, either beating his music sticks together [534]
or holding his hands tightly against his sides with his fingers outstretched
(Pl. 30E).

Following the *Ningani* songs, the men lit a fire at the base of a eucalyptus tree which *Kanapi*, *Nangrinini*, and several other relatives of the dead man, climbed to perform the rite of *wundiatapinda*. As each man slid down the trunk, the aborigines called the totemic place of Wailu, and the names of rain, thunder and lightning. Later, the men performed the rain dance (Pl. 30B) in [535]
the *mifunika*, while the women, coming in from the side, danced the *amburu* (Pl. 30F).

(ii) *The Mission Lugger Songs and Dances*

765
The dances started with a long *ai*, *ai*, *ai*, which announced that the boat 533
had been sighted. Then, while the men danced the sail of the boat, with their 535
hands held above their heads, the leader chanted— 177

"The waves beat the sides of the boat, but it goes straight on."

With high prancing steps and hands rotating one over the other, the aborigines mimed the engines and the propeller of the lugger.

"The engines spark together as the waves hit the side of the boat."

Other songs, to which the performers danced the relevant actions, were—

"The wake of the lugger."

"The lugger is on the slips ready to be painted."

"We are scrubbing off the old paint and giving it a new coat."

Every time *Kanapi*, the son of the dead man, took part in the dance, the women set up a wail.

At the conclusion of the boat songs, the men and women took part in the 765
punuti, lightly beating each other's spouses and their relatives with boughs.

(iii) *The Jabiru Songs and Dances*

The last series of dances were given by a middle-aged Bathurst Island 765
man, *Nilituma*, who imitated, with humorous gesticulation and much 535
abandon, the antics of the long-legged jabiru, *Tjalati* (Pl. 29A), as it walked, fished and rested in the lagoon.

The words of the *Tjalati* song were— [539]

"When *Tjalati* lifts one leg, he is ready to fly."

At the conclusion of the *Tjalati* dance, the *ilania* ended with the honey [825]
and mosquito calls.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 (2) *The Ilanias of Nulatini*

[123] We were able to see the opening mourning rituals, *iramparini*[66] of *Nulatini* and six of her *ilanias*.

[128] Rather than deal with all of these ceremonies in detail, I will describe the *iramparini* rituals and a typical *ilania*, in which the aborigines carried out all phases of the rituals, with the exception of the appointment of the "workers". Although the rite of *pumuti*, *wandiatapinda*, or feeding the "workers", did not take place at every *ilania*, they will be included in this description.

(a) *The Opening Mourning Ritual, Iramparini of Nulatini*

Ten days after the burial of *Nulatini*, the aborigines of Melville Island performed the ritual of *iramparini*. The function of that ceremony was to express [775] grief over *Nulatini's* death, and to tell her spirit that, as she did not now belong to the same realm as themselves, she must leave her grave and return to her totemic country.

The ceremony was held about thirty yards from the camp of the dead woman. Most of the aborigines were present, but two men, *Pulanimbuwi*, the husband, and *Tupiatira*, *Nulatini's* nearest relative, took the leading parts.

The rituals opened in the late afternoon with *Pulanimbuwi*, painted in [302] white, elaborately decorated and carrying a long stick, walking slowly to- [533] ward the assembled people, singing the *amburu*, the women's song of mourning (Pl. 23A).

Every now and again, the husband stopped, leaned on his stick and looked round (apparently for his wife's *mopaditi*), before continuing on his way to the place of ceremony.

Coming out of the forest in an almost opposite direction was *Tupiatira*, also painted in white, waving green branches in his hands. About fifty yards from the old camp of *Nulatini*, *Tupiatira* called her name loudly, and, after listening for a while, announced that, as she had not answered, she must be dead.

As *Tupiatira* walked forward he continued to call, while *Pulanimbuwi*, now accompanied by his sister, *Kundi*, came in from the opposite direction, both singing the *amburu*. When the men were only a few yards apart the aborigines formed themselves into two lines, facing each other.

At a signal and a loud "*Book, book*" from *Pulanimbuwi*, an old man, [535] *Mahunirinita*, accompanied by six to eight of the men, danced between the

[66] The *iramparini* of *Waniampari* was performed before our arrival.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

lines as flying foxes (the totem of *Nulatini's* father),[60] their arms moving alternately up and down and their little fingers pointed skyward (Pl. 30c). 765 [535]

The dance finished, the assembled men accompanied by *Pulanimbuwi* and *Tupiatira*, with their arms around each other's necks, mourned hysterically for the dead, while the women danced the *amburu* on the outside of the group. Several times, in his grief, *Tupiatira* collapsed to the ground only to be lifted to his feet again by the still mourning husband.

The sounds of mourning continued for some time, gradually becoming less until *Nangrinini* gave the honey and mosquito calls, and the ceremony was over.

(*b*) *The Ilania*

At one end of the *milimika*, which was situated at the camp of the dead woman, was a pole on which *Pulanimbuwi* had tied a piece of printed calico as a flag.

The *ilania* opened when seven of the "workers" giving the honey and mosquito calls, emerged from the forest, and, running toward the *milimika*, cast sticks and pandanus leaves, as spears, at the *pukamuni* men who awaited them. There was general fighting and much laughter before the "workers" were ejected.

In the centre of the *milimika*, as food for the "workers" a woman had placed nine large cooked crabs which the "workers" distributed among themselves. After this was done, the men performed the rite of *wandiatapinda* by either walking through or jumping over the fire which had been lit in the *milimika*. *Nulatini's* husband did not take part in this ritual but, with a flat fighting stick in either hand, wandered about the ceremonial ground, singing the *amburu*. [262]

Following these rituals, the aborigines chanted a number of songs and carried out the following dances, those of the flying fox being totemically related to the dead woman's father. 533 765

(i) The flying foxes and the sea-eagle.
(ii) The crocodile.
(iii) The shark and the stingray.
(iv) The flag songs.

(i) *The flying-fox and sea-eagle songs*

"The flying foxes are out late, eating the blossoms of the stringy-bark and eucalyptus trees." [539]

[60] As mentioned earlier, the totem of the dead person is never referred to in the *pukamuni* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 "The sea-eagle, *Jirakai*, dives upon the flying foxes, catching them in
539 her claws and eating them. The rest fly away."
765 "The flying foxes call to each other, the sea-eagle is attacking us—let us go."

As these songs were being chanted, a number of men clustered in the centre of the *milimika*, like a group of flying foxes in a tree.

With a loud call, *Nangrinini*, his outspread arms symbolical of the wings of the sea-eagle, *Jirakai* (Pl. 30j), "swooped" down, scattering them in all directions.

As *Nangrinini* returned to the outside of the *milimika*, the "flying foxes"
[535] reassembled and, with prancing steps again danced with their little fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30c).

The flying-fox songs continued—

"Cast your throwing sticks where the flying foxes are thickest and break many wings at one time."

"Hit the flying foxes so that they will drop in the mud."

"Cook the black flying foxes and dry them in the sun."[20]

Again the men assembled and danced the flying-fox while *Malumerinita* called the totemic places of the flying fox at Muranapi (p. 56), interspersed with calls of "*Wia*" from his companions. *Pulaimbawi* still wandered.

(ii) *The crocodile songs*

"You cannot cross the river because it is full of crocodiles."

"Beware, the crocodiles are in the mangroves waiting to catch us when we cross the river."

These songs were accompanied by the spirited crocodile dance (Pl. 30e),
[535] while *Malumerinita* called the names of the totemic places of the crocodile, *Jirakupai*, on south-west Bathurst Island.

(iii) *The shark and the stingray song*

"Do not spear the shark, it is chasing a stingray."

To this song several men performed the exhausting shark dance (Pl. 30o).

(iv) *The flag songs*

"The wind blows and the flag moves."

[177] "The Government Administrator gets his flag from the Queen."
535 To these songs, the man danced with their hands, as a flag, moving above
765

[20] This song suggests that the Melville Islanders stored or traded the cooked and dried bodies of these creatures.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

their heads. During these songs, the husband sat quietly at one end of the *milimika*, with his head in his hands (Pl. 23B). 765 [535]

The *ilania* concluded with *Nangrinini* calling *Aluprumani* (a mangrove bird); *Malumerinita* calling *Tjirinini* (the red-backed sea-eagle) and the assembled men, making the honey and mosquito call.

During one of the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, a near relative had his name changed from *Miralipaiwa* to *Tukuwuinganili*.[71] [553]

(3) *The Ilanias of Makapini*

At the same time as the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi* was being performed, an old woman, *Makapini*, was baptized at Bathurst Island by the priest, just as she was dying, and, although she had never accepted Christianity, was buried, against the wishes of her relatives, in the mission cemetery. 797

The aborigines of both Bathurst and Melville Island were distressed over this incident because as *Makapini* had always been a "pagan" (as the mission authorities call the unconverted), her spirit could not go to the white man's "heaven", and, as the *pukamuni* ceremonies were prohibited on Bathurst Island, the spirit of *Makapini* was doomed to wander, lonely and unhappy, for ever. To prevent such a calamity (for lonely *mopaditis* are a danger to the living), the aborigines of Melville Island performed a modified *pukamuni*, called the *aramatruni-nipungari*,[72] so that, at its conclusion, the spirit of old *Makapini* would travel happily to her future home. 765 [775]

The pattern of this ceremony differed somewhat from that of *Waniamperi*. At a *milimika* near the camp of the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, the Melville Island aborigines held five *ilanias* over a period of eight days. The final two days of the *pukamuni* were held among the poles.[73] I will describe a typical *ilania* and later the final *pukamuni* rituals.

The *ilania* opened with one of the "workers", who had been in the forest cutting the burial poles, running toward the *milimika*, stick in hand, giving the honey call. One of the *pukamuni* men rushed out to drive him away, but, after a sham fight with throwing sticks, brought him into the *milimika*.

The predominating songs and dances of this and other *ilanias* of *Makapini* were associated with the mythical wild-honey people[74] of Bathurst Island. 765 533 535

[71] Hart (1930, pp. 280–99) describes how the custom of altering the names of near relatives at death causes rapid changes in the language.

[72] This type of *pukamuni* ceremony is also held when aborigines are drowned at sea and their bodies not recovered. [766]

[73] This was a variation of the previous *pukamuni*, probably because the body was not at the place of ceremony.

[74] Although I did not inquire, it is certain from the songs, that the father or mother of the dead woman belonged to one of the honey totems of Bathurst Island.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Many of them referred to "creation times" when *Tukimbini*, of Muruplanga
● 533 told the honey people of Bathurst Island to be the *pukamuni* men and women
[535] at the burial rituals of *Purukupali* (p. 30).

The following is a selection of the honey songs—

[539] "Let all the men who are *mandalini* (a eucalyptus flower, particularly rich in honey) come to this place (Tapararimi) and dance for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*."

"With all your ornaments, start walking (to Tapararimi)."

"Bring all your ceremonial ornaments to our place (Tapararimi) where we will hold a big ceremony."

Another man chanted a lengthy song describing the death of *Purukupali*, and another, which instructed the performers, at the conclusion of the rituals, to take the cane rings, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H) from their arms and leave them on the grave.

The songs and dances about *Purukupali*, the honey people of Bathurst Island, and their doings at the first *pukamuni*, were followed by another series which related specifically to the collecting of wild honey. In all these
[535] performances, the men carried out the honey dance with high knee action, their hands held above their heads and their fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30D).

One man sang about a fly that lives in the hives of wild bees and about a large hive in a tree with a long snout (entrance) and much honey. Then, accompanied by several others, he mimed the action of bees flying in and out of a hive; the aborigines locating the hive, climbing the tree, cutting off the limb containing the hive, and eating the honey. These dances were followed by the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, calling out the totemic places of honey, most of them on Bathurst Island. As each name was called, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*".

A young man started to sing about a pearling lugger, but was told by old *Tjamalampua* to stop and use only the *palaneri* songs. The same man then
[535] danced the actions of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, to the appropriate song (p. 75), and one relating to the buffalo,[75] to the accompaniment of "*Prr, prr, papringipali*" (go away big eye, prr, prr), then a song of *Aruni*, the poison fish: "*Aruni aruni, drr, drr, drr*", which referred to the sinking of a boat, the *W'anganui*, off south-western Bathurst Island.[76]

[825] [75] The aborigines believe that the buffalo, brought to Fort Dundas in 1824, belong to the *palaneri* (creation) period.

[76] The *aruni* is a spiny poisonous fish (possibly the stone fish), which was supposed to have sunk the *W'anganui* by driving its spines through the ship's bottom. The *drr, drr*, of the song represents the sounds of the spines as they were driven into the ship.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 (c) The payment of the "workers".
(d) The erecting of the poles.
(e) The final mourning rituals.

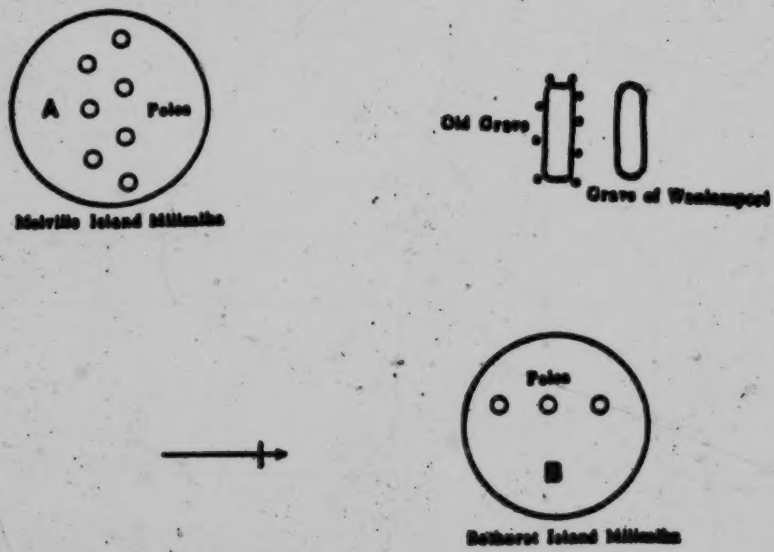

FIG. 4. *Ceremonial Ground, Wanamperi's Pukamani*

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

Early on the first morning, the men, women and children left the main camp and travelled to a temporary ceremonial ground, in the forest, about three hundred yards east of the grave.

The Melville Island group, under *Wurarbuti*, assembled straightaway and performed a small *ilania*, in which some of the men, after the usual honey and mosquito calls, started to chant the rain song of *Tomituka*, whilst others [533] either lit a fire and crouched over it, or sheltered under pandanus trees, shivering as if wet and cold.

As the song changed to the *impok, impok*, of the frog-woman, several men [535] and the woman, *Prupadau*, hopped around the *milimika* in imitation of a frog (Pl. 29D).

When the Melville Islanders dispersed to paint themselves, the Bathurst Island men, under *Jibungliahumi*, performed another *ilania* on the same spot.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The leader started a song describing a fight in which the dead man, *Waniampari*, had taken part. To this refrain, the performers mimed the action of men struggling together, beating each other with throwing sticks, or casting spears.

In the middle of this performance, *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, rushed into the forest beating himself with a throwing stick, followed by his step-mother, *Dominao*, who forcibly disarmed him. At the conclusion of the dance, and when quiet was restored, *Nilituma* carried out the same jabiru dance we had seen at the Bathurst Island *ilania* a few days previously (Pl. 29A). At the conclusion of the jabiru dance the Bathurst Islanders retired to paint themselves for the final rituals. In general, the "workers" painted the leading *pukamuni* men, some husbands painted their wives, their children and themselves.

In the late afternoon, the assembled men, women and children, their faces and bodies painted with the most elaborate designs, and decorated with colourful *pukamuni* ornaments (frontispiece), made their way along the road, calling continuously in the high-pitched mosquito call until within a hundred yards of the grave. At that point the two groups separated. Each group lit a fire and carried out, first the rite of *wandiatapinda*, followed by a basket dance (later to be performed at the grave side (Pl. 26C), then went to their respective *milimikas* (Fig. 4A, B).

Pausing only to assemble at those places, both groups of people rushed across the open space and threw themselves on the bushes covering the grave, wailing heart-brokenly. *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, who fell on the belongings of his father at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tried to cut his head with a knife, but was restrained, as before, by his step-mother, *Dominao*, who led him back to the Bathurst Island *milimika*. This was a signal for everyone to return to their respective *milimikas* and perform the first of a series of dances.

In the Bathurst Island circle, *Nangrinini* danced a canoe dance, paddling and bailing a miniature bark canoe as he pushed it along the ground.

As the Melville Island group were chanting their songs, five men sneaked up to the grave, one of their number peered among the bushes, crawled back to his crouching companions and whispered something to them. At this they all called out loudly, ran back into their *milimika* and carried out a vigorous, almost hysterical dance.

The same performance was repeated, but on the second occasion *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, ran to the grave, speared it in several places,

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 then, with the group, returned quietly to their companions among the poles."

(*b*) *The Songs and Dances*[78]

On the return to *milimika* A (Fig. 4), *Wurarbuti* and his wife mimed, to the accompaniment of appropriate songs, paddling a canoe, with their hands around one of the poles. This was followed by a man and his wife, who acted, with considerable detail, the making of a bark canoe; stripping the bark from [396] the tree; holding the bark over a fire to make it flexible; folding the bark and sewing the ends together, and the final launching.

By the time this act was over, it was dark. The aborigines from both *milimikas* retired to the nearby forest, lit their fires and cooked their food. There were no ceremonies during the evening, except, occasionally, some woman left her camp and wailed among the deserted *pukamuni* poles.

533 About 8 o'clock on the morning of the last day, the *pukamuni* men opened
539 the ceremonies with the honey and mosquito calls. These calls were followed
765 by a number of songs, chanted by *Wurarbuti* and some of his companions, which referred to the mythical boobook owl-man, *Purujikini*, and the instructions he gave to his fellow performers at the first *kulama* ceremony (p. 123). They were:

"Make the *milimika* large and clean for many people and when it is ready, sing first, then dance round the ring."

"You will paint yourself beside the *milimika*."

"When you decorate yourself for the *kulama*, put white on one side of your face, yellow on the other, and red down the middle of your hair. And as you dance, your wives will help you, as my wife, *Pintoma*, the owl-woman, once did for me."

"You sing, *Mikinatrina*[79] (a *kulama* initiate), and we will follow."

"When you sing in a *kulama*, put the cockatoo feathers, *priminiki*, in your hair, and the wind will shake them."

While those songs were being chanted, other men mimed the appropriate action.

[78] Although the aborigines did not explain the ritual, it is likely that the first man looked for and thought he saw the *mopaditi* of *Wanimpari*. On the second occasion, *Marawani*, a near relative, hunted the dead man's spirit away. This ritual, in a modified [114] form, took place at the two other *pukamunis* we witnessed. Spencer (1928, p. 648) mentions the same ritual.

[78] The songs and dances in this series were neither traditional nor totemic. They were composed usually by a number of performers, especially for the occasion, and quite an amount of thought went into their production.

[79] During the initiation of the *Mikinatrina* at the *kulama* ceremony, he performs his first dance amid general applause.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

During this performance an old man, *Nalauri*, *Waniamperi's* brother, reprimanded, in the native tongue, a group of young aborigines for not taking a more active part in the *pukamuni* rituals. 765 626

"Don't hang around there like a mob of whites," he said. "If you're standing while there's a dance, beat your buttocks, or if you're sitting, either clap your hands or beat the ground with a stick."

At the conclusion of the Melville Island performance, the Bathurst Islanders continued the songs and dances in their own *milimika* (Fig. 42), about *Purutjikini* and the first *kulama*. 533 539 765

The leader, *Jibunglialumi*, chanted how, at the first *kulama*, *Purutjikini* said to his companions, "I'll give you the songs, then you'll dance about the things around you." As he did so, *Nangrinini* performed the dance of the turtle. "Then as the next song was being chanted," *Purutjikini* said, "you will cook the *kulama*." Another man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, and, calling "*brr*, *brr*, *brr*" (as they do in the *kulama* ceremonies), emptied the supposed contents on the ground in imitation of pouring out the *kulama* yams preparatory to putting them in the earth oven (p. 137). *Jibunglialumi* then followed with the dance of the owl man, *Purutjikini*, with his hands held around his eyes (Pl. 298), ending his dance with "*Ah*, *oo*, *ah*, *oo*", the call of the present-day boobook owl.

The Melville and Bathurst Island groups then moved from the distant to the grave side of their burial poles (Fig. 4) and performed the *pumuni* rituals. On this occasion, however, only husbands and wives beat each other.

The *pumuni* was followed by *Urumatjina* from Melville Island, chanting a song he had composed for the occasion which described how the dead man, *Waniamperi* had become involved in a fight at a *pukamuni* ceremony.[80]

Some men, listening intently to *Urumatjina*, joined in as soon as they had learned the song, while others performed the dance miming the action of men fighting.

Another part of the same song told how a woman, *Purpurangmio* (since dead) loudly abused the men because so many of them attacked her husband at one time. To add reality to the performance, *Urumatjina* pounded the side of a *pukamuni* basket with a stick to indicate the noise made by the angry woman (Pl. 260).

The theme of the songs then returned to the *kulama* ceremony. As some men chanted, others laid sheets of paper-bark on the ground, and to the *kulama* thunder-call they imitated the actions of rubbing the *kulama* yam on 765

[80] This is the same fight as the one enacted in the Bathurst Island *ilanis* on the previous day (p. 83).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 their bodies (p. 138). Again, a man picked up a *pukamani* basket, symbolized the pouring out of the cooked *kulama* yam on a sheet of bark and passed it to the *kulama* call of "*Brr, brr, brr*". This action completed the dance.

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

431 While other dances, which I did not see, were being performed in the two
765 *milimikas*, the *pukamuni* men and their wives unpacked the gifts for the "workers", and spread them out on the ground (Pl. 26a). There was much good-natured discussion about their equitable distribution before the presents were finally separated into lots and placed one on the top of each pole.

177 *Wurarbuti*, resplendent in his body paint and coloured *pukamuni* orna-
533 ments, mounted one of the larger poles and chanted songs telling how he
765 became possessed of the great wealth which enabled him to buy the presents
[302] for the "workers".

[539] "I am a big Government man," he boasted, "so I was able to get plenty of money."

"I stole the money from the Government to pay for the presents and the police locked me up."

[535] While *Wurarbuti* chanted this song, *Marawani* and the women danced with their hands crossed as if in handcuffs.

As the song continued, *Marawani* ran after *Pulanimbuwi*, dragged him into the *milimika*, and struggled with him in imitation of a policeman making an arrest.

Other songs were chanted ridiculing a Government clerk at Darwin, while one of them "wrote" out an order, passed the "money" to a *pukamuni* man through a window (an opening in a pole) and then demanded, in a loud domineering voice, his thumb-print on a scrap of paper as a receipt.

177 *Wurarbuti*, still seated on the top of a pole, started to distribute the
431 presents, imitating, as he did so, the actions and broken English which the same clerk used when dealing with aborigines.
765 "You a worker," said *Wurarbuti*. "Have you a wife? How many children? You work for me, make proper good pole, I pay you."

The "worker" on accepting his payment, put his thumb-print on a scrap of paper (initialled—with a twig—by another *pukamuni* man), and walked away satisfied[81] with his square of printed calico, pipes and tobacco. As each "worker" received his gift the *pukamuni* men performed a dance.

[81] This is not always so. Sometimes a "worker" becomes so annoyed over inadequate payment that he will not allow his pole to be carried to the grave, preferring to let it rot in the forest. On several occasions we saw a pole which had been left in the forest because its maker was dissatisfied with the payment.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The ceremony opened with the honey call, then, as the men stepped across a fire lit in the centre of the *milimika* (Pl. 24a), a long sustained mosquito call. Following this, the men formed a circle around the fire, and chanted a song which described the bombing of a ship off the coast of Bathurst Island. 765 [533] [177]

Close female relatives, standing in a line facing the poles, sang the *amburu*, while three men, painted white, each carrying a spear, rushed toward the screen of boughs, peered through them, then returned to the *milimika*. Three other men were given spears, one of whom, with a *tokwiange* (goose-feather ball) in his mouth, took a stand as if to throw a spear at the poles, remarking to his companions as he did so, that he was about to spear a *mopaditi*.

As soon as the "workers" removed the boughs which shielded the poles from view, an old woman, *Jikandaui*, ran forward and beat the ground near the poles, while the six men, with spears poised ready, followed and stabbed around the base of the poles. These rituals, the signal for all the participants to rush to the grave poles and (Pl. 27a) mourn, were carried out to frighten the *mopaditis* from the vicinity of the grave.

A young man with his head and shoulders through an opening in one of the poles, and his arm around an old woman, sobbed bitterly (Pl. 27c) while others stood around either crying or singing the *amburu*.

As the sounds of grief became less, a young man, miming a killing which had taken place some time ago, sneaked up with great stealth, and "speared" *Tjamalampua* who was lying on the ground in the *milimika*.[86] Shortly afterwards the ceremony closed with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

(*b*) *Songs and Dances*

The next morning about 10 a.m., the ceremonies started afresh. On this occasion, all of the songs and dances dealt with secular incidents; a crocodile creeping upon a man to kill him, an aboriginal sailing a European racing boat, another paddling a bark canoe, still another spearing an enemy, and so on. 177 765 [533]

Several of the aborigines created much laughter by miming the actions of our physical anthropologist, Dr. Carleton Coon, who had just completed a series of body measurements and observations on the Melville Islanders. [123] [535]

One man, using a short stick, measured the arms, legs and body of old *Tjamalampua* as he lay stretched out full length on the ground; he then danced around the *milimika* with his hands round his head, in imitation of the head callipers; another mimed Dr. Coon weighing an aboriginal, cutting his hair and looking at his teeth.

[86] Spencer, 1928, p. 651, describes a similar episode. No doubt the spearing of Tjamalampua had a much deeper symbolism than appeared at the time.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 533 *Wurarkuti* described, in song and dance, how some aborigines from the northern end of the island had tried to kill his father, but the father, being forewarned, had run into the mangrove swamp for shelter. A spear, however, thrown by his enemies, hit him in the side but did not kill him.

[535] [177] Then followed a long series of songs and dances, made up by *Wurarkuti*, describing how the mechanics from Darwin erected a large steel tank at the nearby settlement. To the chanting of songs and beating of buttocks, the actors "rolled" the tank (actually a small log) along the ground, tilted it on one end, rigged blocks and tackle and lifted the "tank" in place. These dances lasted about a half an hour.

Toward the end of this performance, which finished about mid-day, a woman, *Narlaui*, painted entirely in white, and carrying a throwing stick, called upon the dead woman to fight her because, at one time she, *Narlaui*, had reprimanded her for running after men. The aborigines applauded her when she had finished her song. Emboldened by this, *Narlaui* stood in front of one of the poles and challenged the dead woman to a fight.

[535] [177] The ceremony finished[97] with an aeroplane dance, the men posturing in a similar manner to that of the *Jirakati* dance (Pl. 30j).

About sunset, the rituals started afresh with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

Pulanimbuwi and *Muramajua*, acting the part of little children, struggled with each other in the dust of the *milimika* while one of them sang,

[539] "You can't drink from the same breast as I can because we have different mothers."

Old *Malumerinita*, taking up the same refrain, pushed the two "children" aside as he sang,

[539] "I'm a big man, so I'll drink the milk."

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

765 It was after dark before the three "workers", who had cut and painted the burial poles, received their payment (Pl. 27D). As each *pukamuni* man passed the goods, loin cloths, and tobacco to the "worker", he cut his head with a [535] knife, and started a dance in which even a number of little girls took part (Pl. 25A). They had been told by some of the older women what to do, so [868] that the youngsters would be conversant with the woman's place in the rituals.

[97] This ceremony would have probably, like that of *Wonimpori*, finished at mid-day had not the Superintendent of the settlement insisted on sending the chief woman mourner to a distant locality from which she had been unable to return on time.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

(d) The Final Mourning Rituals

By this time the chief woman mourner, painted entirely in red, had arrived. 765
On reaching the ceremonial ground, she charged against a pole, then leaned [302]
over it, crying heartbrokenly. Another woman, *Dominao*, in paroxysms of grief, threw herself on the ground at the base of another pole, while still another woman, dancing the *amburu* before the third pole, told the *mopaditi* [533]
of the dead woman, in a song "to keep away from me". [775]

The ceremony finished, like that of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*, with concerted wailing around the poles.

(3) *The Pukamuni of Inbidjarmeri's Infant*

This simplified *pukamuni* was held for a premature child of *Inbidjarmeri*. 766
The child died, about a month previously, at the Darwin hospital. The complete rituals, though curtailed, having occupied only two hours, followed the normal pattern with two exceptions. The *pukamuni* group did not employ any "workers" to cut the burial poles, and, as the body had not been brought to Melville Island, the ceremonies were held at the grave of a young child, of the same parents, who had died about two years previously.

A distant relative, appointed by the father of a "worker" had burnt the grass, cleared a space adjacent to the grave as a dancing ground and draped a turtle rope around the old poles in which had been twisted the wing feathers of geese.[88] For these duties he was given two loin cloths.

There were no dances at the first *ilania* which took place about three hundred yards from the burial site, only prolonged honey and mosquito calls.

The *pukamuni* group then moved to within a hundred yards of the grave where, after more honey and mosquito calls, they lit the *wandiatapinda* fire, and walked through its smoke and flames.

At the commencement of the final rituals, most of the group halted behind a rope, stretched between two trees, over which the "worker" had hung bagging and blankets;[89] but others rushed forward, spears in hand, and, as in the two previous *pukamunis*, stabbed at the base of the poles surrounding the grave to drive away the *mopaditis*.

After this, everyone moved to the grave-side of the screen, the men carry- 535
ing out a series of dances while the women, beating themselves with sticks, 765
leaned on the *pukamuni* poles and mourned. 533

While some of the *pukamuni* men chanted a song about the red-fruited eugenia, *binamia*, *Muramajua*, walking around the *milimika*, imitated a

[88] I did not find out the significance of this custom.
[89] This took the place of the screen of boughs used in the normal rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending
535 over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milimika* to the
766 rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first
[177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[80]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten-
[114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and
[775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[81] the fundamental idea
[517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the
[775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[82]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon
[126] drawings[83] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[80] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.

[832] [81] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women were attracted to them.

[82] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.

[83] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 881 of the *kulama* ceremony, became the boobook owl, his wife, *Pinamu*, the barn owl, *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, *Jirakai*, the white-headed sea-eagle, *Tupatupini*, a small owl, and so on.

(2) *The Second Kulama Ceremony*

After the close of *palaneri* times, the *Ningauis*, a spirit people, who had been present at the first *kulama*, performed a second ceremony on the same island, Turiturina, as was used by *Purutjikini* during the creation period. On the second occasion, the *Ningauis* carried out the complete *kulama*, which included not only the preparation of the poisonous *kulama* yam for food, but also the performance of all the grades of initiation from that of the *Marukumuni* to the *Mikingula*.

At its completion, the *Ningauis* decreed that the form of the ceremony with its proceeding and initiation rituals, should always be the same. The [759] aborigines believe that if this form is altered, a mysterious sickness, called *saini* will punish them by making everyone ill.

(3) *The Myth of the Ningauis*

After the second *kulama*, the *Ningauis* made their home in the mangrove swamps of a small island, Imaluna, near Cape Helvetius, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1).

776 The *Ningauis* are somewhat like the present-day aborigines, except that they are small people, about two feet high, with long hair and very short feet, their footmarks resembling those of an oversized dog. The aborigines often see these tracks on the edge of the mangrove swamps of Imaluna (Pl. 22c).

Should an aboriginal, when hunting through the swamps, go too near a home of the *Ningauis*, one of the *Ningauis* by calling, "Eeh", would cause the whole place to be suddenly enveloped in complete darkness. The native could bring the light back again by striking the trunk of a mangrove tree with a stick, but, in the meantime, the *Ningauis*, by taking advantage of the darkness, would have sneaked away. Therefore, no aboriginal has seen a *Ningaui* even though they are often heard in the mangrove swamps calling "Eeh, eeh", to each other.

When the *Ningauis* chant their songs after dark, the mangrove swamps become as brightly lit as in the day-time. There are stories of how aboriginal hunters, lured by the songs and the light, have wandered among the tangled mangroves to see what was going on, but as soon as the *Ningauis* heard the intruders, they finished their song with the word "Eeh",[18] which made the

[533] [18] The *Ningaui* songs chanted by *Jikungkaluni*, as one of the *ilanias* of *Wanimpari* (p. 74), all ended with a long drawn-out "Eeh".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

chanting *kulama* songs. Later, the decorated initiate, now called a *Marukumuni*, is taken to the camp of the man who captured him. It is the duty of this man, now his guardian, to provide the initiate with food. However, he must not be given snakes, for such food would cause his joints to swell and become painful. 881

The guardian takes the food he has collected to the *Marukumuni*'s wife who feeds her husband over a period of four days in the same manner as a *pukamuni* man is fed (Pl. 24A). Neither she, nor any of the food he eats must touch the initiate's body. The food left over from the meal is wrapped in paper-bark and burnt. After four days this taboo is lifted and the *Marukumuni* is free to hunt for and eat all foods, except snake.

(2) *The Eating of the Cycad Fruit*

About August, when the fruit of the cycad (*Cycas media*) is ripe, the *Marukumuni* is decorated with a new design (Pl. 42B). At the same time the leader of the *kulama* ceremony instructs the women of the camp to collect and prepare a considerable quantity of the cycad fruit. As the fruit in its raw state is highly poisonous, it has to be shelled, pounded out flat, and soaked in running water for three days before it is edible. When the fruit is ready for eating, the women, putting it in a number of bark baskets, stand them on either side of a log (Pl. 43D). [302] [252]

Then, while the women walk around the baskets, chanting the songs of the *kulama*, two *Mikingulas* wash the design (Pl. 42B), from the *Marukumuni's* body, and decorate him with a new one (Pl. 42C). This, he must renew continuously until he hears the first sounds of thunder (about mid-November). [533] [302]

As soon as these decorations are completed a member of each family picks up a basket, takes it to their camp, and all have a meal.

The *Marukumuni* initiate, however, is fed by his wife from a separate store of cycad fruit.

At the same time as the *kulama* leader sent the women of the camp to collect and prepare the cycad fruit for the *Marukumuni* rituals, he instructed the women of the *Kilipaniatinga* grade to do the same. However, when the other women of the camp placed their baskets of prepared food beside the log, the *Kilipaniatinga* women poured their cycad fruit on a nearby pad of grass, pushed four sticks into the groupd around the heap and seated themselves on the outside.

The ceremonial activity then centred around the men and women of the *Kilipaniati* grade of initiation, who, from the previous *kulama* until then, 301 881

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

88 | ill. The *Marukumunis* were fed behind their bark shelter and the *Wadjeniatis* in the open camp.

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

After dark, on the day following the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, the fully initiated *kulama* men, and all people above the grade of *Mikinatrina*, prepared for the opening ceremony by clearing an oval about fourteen feet long and six feet wide. The *Marukumuni* initiates were brought from their hiding place, the *Wadjeniatis* from their camp and both were seated just outside the ceremonial ground. Neither of those grades, however, took part in the opening rituals.

[372] [753] In the middle of the ceremonial ground were two smouldering logs, but no flames, for fear of attracting *taini*, the *kulama* sickness. Among the trees outside of the ring, were a number of families of uninitiated men, women and children.

Normally the *kulama* party would have been made up of *Mikinaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, and the songs chanted by the men in that order.

177 533 881 539 On the occasion of our visit the ceremony opened when a *Mikingula*, *Wurarbuti*, seated on the ground, beating his throwing sticks, started to hum a song softly. Becoming more confident, he stood up, and pacing backward and forward still beating his sticks, chanted the following three songs.[88]

(*a*) "My father was king, therefore I am the Prince of Wales. As King George was King, so was the old man on the hill, my (dead) father. I will have warships, money and a flag of red and white." When the singer mentioned his dead father there was a high-pitched wail among the near relatives.

(*b*) The second song dealt with the invitation he had received to dance before the Queen of England. "When the Queen was in England, she said 'I would like to see a black-fellow dance', and so I went up. King Philip watched me a lot while I danced."

(*c*) "My uncle in Darwin said to me 'Why haven't you made a lot of *pukamuni* arm rings. If you don't soon do so, you'll cause a lot of trouble among the *pukamuni* people."

Muramajua also chanted three songs;

(*a*) In the first, of which I did not collect the words, he explained, at length,

[88] This man, who was the ceremonial leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, described earlier, had been invited, only a few months previously, to visit the southern States, and dance before the Queen of England. Naturally, this left such a strong impression on his mind that many of his songs dealt with that remarkable experience.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

how a slow canoe journey had made him late for a recent *pukamani* ceremony. 177

(*b*) "I was sick in the Darwin hospital. Sister Philips said it was because I had had too much grog." 533 539

(*c*) "There was a man at Cockle Point (opposite the Bathurst Island Mission), who wanted to kill me with a spear. So I changed myself into a mullet and he didn't see me." 881

Another singer chanted,

(*a*) "I am a goose and a man cast his throwing stick and hit me." 533

(*b*) "I want that girl from Bathurst Island to wash her with fresh water to make it square for giving away my sister."[86] 539 881

Another *Mikingula*, *Palitara*, aired his differences with a woman, *Batali*, in the following song.

(*a*) "I fed *Batali*, but she did not give her daughter to me as a wife."[87]

(3) *Collecting the Kulama Yam*

Early on the following morning, the *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikintaras*, the *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, went to the ceremonial ground of the previous evening. They first dipped their hands in a bark container filled with water, throwing some over their bodies; then, taking a mouthful, they squirted water into the air in imitation of rain, afterwards calling out "Oom-oom", to symbolize thunderstorms. Taking two small sticks, one in each hand, the men used them to clean the wax from their ears, afterwards standing the sticks upright in the ground.[88] 881 [515]

Placing their palms on a sheet of bark covered with white paint, the men patted their hair, chest, wrists and pubes (Pl. 44c), turning toward the north as they again called out "Oom-oom", in imitation of thunder.

Following this ritual, each *kulama* man painted another with a design in white (Pl. 42a). The leader then picked up the bark basket, held it on his arm, and facing north, south, east and west, again called "Oom-oom", while he made a drum-like sound, symbolical of thunder, by hitting the basket with his hand. After this the men set out to collect the *kulama* yams. They were

[86] I did not find out the significance of this ritual.

[87] When a woman promises her daughter to a man, it is the duty of the future son-in-law to give her continuous presents of food. On this occasion, the woman had accepted *Palitara's* gifts, but when her daughter was old enough, she gave the girl to another man. [584]

Quarrelling at a *kulama* ceremony is forbidden, otherwise *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, will destroy all the participants. This prohibition allows an aboriginal, such as *Palitara*, to air his grievance without causing a quarrel, even though, as on this occasion, the defaulting person was present. [626] [753]

[88] The meaning of this ritual is obscure. According to the aborigines it prevents trouble and quarrelling during the *kulama* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Dry sticks, about three feet in length, were pushed upright into the ground around the *tumarapi* (oven), kindling wood was laid between them, other pieces of dried wood piled cross-wise between the uprights until there was a stack about three feet high (Pl. 45A). 881 [372]

(5) *Placing the Uncooked Yams in Water*

About sunset, the *kulama* men went to the bloodwood tree, the *wuringalete*, where the *Mikinastrinas* had stored the yams in the morning and, on pulling bushes away, revealed some of the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates squatting, holding in their arms a basket of the uncooked *kulama* yams. The *Marukumuni* initiates took the yams to the water, everyone assisting in laying them on a pad of grass in the bed of the stream (Pl. 46B).

Immediately this task was completed, the *kulama* men pushed the *Marukumuni* initiates over,[20] and, holding them by the legs and arms dragged them backward and forward through the now muddy water to wash off their body paint. They were then taken back to camp, seated beside the *milimika* and painted with a different pattern (Pl. 42F). Neither the *Marukumuni* nor the *Wadjeniati* initiates took any further part in the rituals of that day. When, after dark, the *kulama* men entered the *milimika* to chant another series of songs, the camp fires were allowed to burn brightly, because the aborigines said that the yams, being in the water, were now "quiet" so that there was no fear of *taini*, the spirit of *kulama* sickness. [302]

The chanting men walked counter-clockwise around the *milimika* because *Purutjikini* did so at the first *kulama*. To have walked in the opposite direction, even then, would have made the spirit of the *kulama* yam angry. 881

The following are literal translations of a selection of the songs. 533

(*a*) "I had a quarrel with Tom Crow, the Superintendent of Snake Bay Settlement." 539 [177]

(*b*) "My mother-in-law is good to me, she did not take away my promised wife."

(*c*) "The fruit of the *binamia* (*Eugenia* sp.) ripens and falls to the ground."

(*d*) "The little *Pitipituis* (spirit children) are dancing on the beach."

[20] Spencer, 1928, p. 664, describing a similar ritual, states, "Several old men seized the *Wajinyorri* (my *Wadjeniati*), and plunged into the water with him. As many as could get near him gripped him by the legs and arms, and yelling, splashing and churning up the mud, . . . dragged him backward and forward several times, . . . As soon as the *Wajinyorri* were released, the men turned their attention to the *Marukumuni* boys. . . ." Although my informants did not say so it is likely that the *Wadjeniati* initiates were also pushed into the water to remove their body paint in readiness for the second design of a *Mikinastrina* (Pl. 42I). [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (e) "The salt water (sea), brings plenty of drift-wood up on the beach for
539 our fires."
881 (f) "The *nukwali* (shark) killed a stingray."
(g) "The boat sails fast and the waves are beating its sides."

At approximately 8.30 p.m. the chanting ceased and the aborigines retired to their camps.

(6) *The Lighting of the Ceremonial Fire*

About 6.30 the next morning, the *Mikinatrinings* women collected pieces
[137] of termite mound and put them on the top of the sticks for the fire which had been piled over the oven, the *tumarapi*. This fire could be lit by any man above the grade of *Mikinatrina*. Whilst the fire was burning down, the *Mikingulas* walked around it, and sang a few *kulama* songs, only one of which was recorded.

[177] (i) "When I see the shining iron of the new schoolhouse, I think how my children will go to school and wear boots."[51]

By 9.30 a.m. after everyone had had a meal, most of the aborigines, includ-
881 ing several children, painted themselves in red and made their way to the swamp to take part in the ritual of bringing the *kulama* yams from the water, to the *milimika*.

On reaching the swamp, the leader took the yams from the pad of grass under the water, placed them carefully in the basket, with a bundle of rushes plucked from a nearby swamp on top, then, putting the basket on his shoulder, carried it to the *milimika* and stood it beside the fire "to warm up the yams".

881 The *Mikingulas*, walking anti-clockwise as before, chanted another series
533 of songs.
539 (a) "I went to Native Affairs (Darwin), drew out £10 (with which to
[177] gamble) and bought a pack of playing cards."[52]

Striding around the ring with two spears in one hand and a throwing stick in the other, the same man sang.

(b) "I have many spears. If the white people were not here, I would kill you all."

881 At the end of the song, the performer called out the name of his dead
765 father, striking himself on the head with his throwing stick to indicate his sorrow. The people on the outside of the ring cried in sympathy.

[185] [51] A parent's hope in a changing society that his children will live at a higher social level that the one which he himself occupies.

[52] A number of the younger Melville Islanders work for extended terms in Darwin, periodically returning to their homeland to take part in the ceremonies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the previous singer's dead father. 881 765

(*e*) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[83] when I think of you, my uncle." [533] [539]
Some of the women cried when the song was finished.

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants. 252 881

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate it (Pl. 44B), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, goodbye",[84] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purutjikini*, did at the first *kulama*. 881 [533] [539]

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women. 535 881

(*a*) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird). [534]

(*b*) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 30E), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(*c*) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*tokwiangu*) in his mouth to symbolize the prey of the crocodile.

(*d*) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(*e*) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(*f*) The buffalo,

(*g*) The shark (Pl. 30C).

[83] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *imunka* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions. [826] [774]

[84] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the *waringulata* tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten. [824]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(8) *Cutting up the Yams*

881 After the yams had been in the oven for about one and a half hours, the
252 men gathered around the oven, felt it, and, after a short discussion began to scrape the warm sand away from the paper-bark covering. As they did so, they pressed handfuls of the warm sand against their elbows, chest, shoulders and knees, believing that this sand made their joints strong and supple (Pl. 45c).

When the paper-bark, carefully removed strip by strip, exposed the
881 cooked yams, the women, who had been quietly standing on the outside of the *milimika* murmured reverently, "Ah, *kulama*, ah, *kulama*." Taking the hot yams from the oven each man held them against his chest, and his
[827] head. This they said would give them added strength and vitality. The women although they did not participate in this ritual, sent their children into the *milimika* to have the yams pressed against their bodies so that they would grow to healthy and strong adults.

As the men peeled the yams, exposing the soft, yellow flesh, they sang
[177] about preparing and eating various kinds of food belonging to the white
[533] man,[88] "cutting bread for a meal, carving steak from a bullock and roasting it on the coals, cooking the tongue of a bullock, eating corn beef", and so on. When all the yams were peeled they were left on a sheet of bark whilst
[412] everyone had a meal and a sleep. In the late afternoon the *kulama* men started
[177] to slice the yams (cockle shells, *irakapi*, were used before the advent of steel). As they did so, the men mashed up some of the sliced *kulama* between the palms of the hands, mixed this with red ochre, and each rubbed it on his hair, face, whiskers and body. This, they believed, aided by the earlier rituals, would ensure them good health until the next *kulama*.

(9) *Initiation of the Kilipaniatis and Mikinatrinas*

The sliced yams were put in the basket, and stood in the centre of the *milimika*. A *kulama* man walked into the forest, and collected a length of flexible vine. Returning to the *milimika* he bent the vine round the necks of the male *Marukununis* and the female *Marukununingas* in such a way that it could not be removed. These initiates were then *Kilipaniatis* and *Kilipaniatingas* respectively. This neck ornament, which had a number of cords
[801] hanging from it, is called a *mariguani* (Pl. 42a). After these initiates had been further decorated with bark armlets, *tjunguti*[89] (Pl. 42b and c), and cane

[88] No doubt, in times past, they sang about abundant supplies of their own favourite foods.

[89] Spencer, 1928, illustrates the bark armlets, *tjunguti*, on Pl. XI and the belt, *aluriui*, on Pl. IX, No. 1.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

arm rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), they seated themselves outside the *milimika*, but took no part in the subsequent rituals. 881 [301]

Other fully initiated men led initiates of the *Wadjeniati* grade to the *waringalua* tree, where the yams had been stored on the second morning, told them to sit down and erected a low screen of boughs in front so that the initiates could not be seen from the *milimika*.

The *Mikingulas* first painted the bodies of the *Wadjeniati* initiates with yellow paint, then decorated them with many cane rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), on their upper arms, hair-string belts, *ularini*, around their waists and goose-feather balls, *tokwiangas* (Pl. 31B), on their necks, arms and wrists (see Pl. 42J). This ritual admitted them to the grade of *Mikinatrina* and *Mikinatrinings* respectively. 881 302 [301]

After the *Wadjeniati* initiates were decorated, the senior grades of the *kulama* painted their faces, bodies, hair and beards with elaborate designs in red, yellow, black and white. In one design, peculiar to the *kulama*, the aborigines covered one side of their faces with red paint, and the other side with black,[27] the two colours being separated with a line of yellow (Pl. 42M). The men painted a complex design, usually in red and white on their hair and beards.[28] Some of the men also decorated their children.

The leader of the *kulama* then assembled everyone to see the *Mikinatrina* initiates perform their first dance, which they had been quietly practising for some time. 535 881

At a given signal, each *Mikinatrina* stood up in turn and, gaily decorated with body paint and coloured ceremonial ornaments, and holding a flat fighting club, *jurawila*, in either hand, performed his first dance. As each initiate danced, the assembled people applauded, slapping their buttocks in approbation of both the dancing and the appearance of the initiates. [201]

When the *Mikinatrinas* had finished their dance, the female initiates, the *Mikinatrinings*, similarly decorated, but without the clubs, individually performed their dances. Still painted and wearing their decorations, the male and female *Mikinatrinas* seated themselves outside of the *milimika* beside the newly created *Kilipaniatis*.

After the initiates had finished their dances, several of the *Mikingulas* entered the *milimika* and chanted another series of secular songs. [533]

[27] Spencer, 1928, p. 674, who saw a *kulama* ceremony during 1911, refers to this curious form of facial decoration.

[28] The method of colouring the hair with intricate designs is of some interest. The aboriginal, loading his fingers and thumb with wet ground-up ochre, pinched the hair, instead of rubbing the colour into it. By this means, the operator was able to keep sharp well-defined edges to the design, an effect that could not be achieved in any other way.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

177 *Wurarkui* described some of his experiences when he visited Brisbane to
533 dance before the Queen of England.
539 (*a*) "I saw the big boat, Marella, beside the jetty at Brisbane, many motor
881 cars, boats and trains. The boats went under a big bridge over the river, and across that bridge went the motor cars. The ship's flags were flying."

Another man sang.

(*b*) "The *tapalingas* (stars) are like those on the American flag in Darwin. They lifted the flag up in the morning, and let it down at night."

(*c*) "The *tadawali* (shark) swims about the sea looking for stingrays."

[535] The onlookers applauded this song and asked the singer to perform the shark dance (Pl. 300), which he did to the delight of all.

(*d*) "I am a wireless man, and have sent native tucker (food) all over Australia. The Native Affairs branch in Darwin listened in."

(*e*) "Leo Hickey's boat comes quickly to Snake Bay with a cargo of food from Darwin."

Another *Mikingula* chanted a lengthy song describing the making of a wooden canoe, the felling of a tree in the jungle, the length and shape of the craft and the final launching.

After these songs, the *kulama* men rested in the shade, and the initiates sat by the side of the *milimika*, until about sunset.

(10) *Taking the Cooked Yams to Water*

881 The *Mikingulas*, starting from equally spaced positions on the periphery, crawled toward the basket of cooked and sliced yams standing in the centre of the *milimika*, and pretended to fight over it. While this was going on, the women, beating sticks together, called out "Brr-brr", as did the owl-man, *Purutjikini*, at the first *kulama*. Meanwhile two of the *Mikingulas* vigorously
[535] performed the crocodile dance (Pl. 301). Then with a loud cry, one of them picked up the basket containing the yams, and followed by most of the women and children, carried the basket to the water.

With long-drawn-out calls, and the sound "Brr-brr", the men tipped the cut-up yams from the basket on to a grass bed on the bottom of the stream. While the leader patted the surface of the water, the rest of the people called in a high trilling note, similar to the mosquito call of the *pukamani* ceremony,
[821] ending up in a loud *yoi*. These calls, they said, would cause still more thunder storms and heavy rain.

533 It was quite dark (about 7.30 p.m.) when the *kulama* people assembled to
881 hear the *Mikinatrina* initiates sing for the first time. For, at this stage of the ceremony, each male initiate of the *Mikinatrina* grade was invited by the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Mikinguias to enter the *milimika* and chant his first song, known as the *Ai-ipa*, which he had been practising for some time.[39] The female initiates, the *Mikinatrinings* assisted the *Mikinatrinas* by beating the time on the outside of the *milimika* in the same way as *Pinsoma*, the owl-woman, assisted her husband, *Purujikini*, at the first *kulama* ceremony during creation times. 533 881

One *Mikinguia* told me that when he was passing through the *Mikinatrina* grade of initiation, he chanted three songs; one was about a fish, one about a rifle and a third about a crocodile.

When the *Mikinatrina* initiates had finished their songs, the men of the higher initiation grades, the *Mikinataras*, *Mikiatarimas* and the fully initiated *Mikinguias*, entered the ring, one by one, and walking anti-clockwise chanted the following songs:[40]

(*a*) "A big ship brings many things to Darwin." 177

(*b*) "A Japanese plane was flying low over Melville Island. The men on the ground said 'stand-by' and shot it down with a cannon." 533 539

(*c*) "In Darwin, I saw a kite, on a long string, which flew into the sky." 881

(*d*) "The Government plane flew me to Brisbane to see the Queen. It flew through the clouds. I went into the pilot's room in the front of the plane and the wireless told them Brisbane was only seven miles away."

(11) *The Kererijui Songs*

About nine o'clock, the character of the songs changed and all but one dealt with the spirit, *imunka*, of their children.[41] These songs are called *kererijui imunka*. 533 539 881

(*a*) "The spirits of my children have gone to Karsluke Island (Wulrungku), and are playing there." [774]

[39] At the conclusion of the *kulama* ceremony, both the male and female *Mikinatrina* initiates wear their ornaments and keep themselves decorated for a month, and every evening when seated in the camp, they chant the same *Ai-ipa* songs as they did at the *kulama* ceremony.

At the end of a month, the initiates wash the paint from their bodies, discard their ceremonial ornaments, and resume a normal life until the next *kulama*.

Two years later, the *Mikinatrina* becomes a *Mikinatara* retaining that grade for another year, when he enters the grade of a *Mikiatarima*. On the following year, the initiate reaches the full status of a *Mikinguia*.

During the last two stages, i.e., *Mikinatara* and *Mikiatarima*, the initiates are not subject to any special restrictions nor do they have to pass through any special rituals. Their body decorations too, are similar to those of the fully initiated men.

[40] The men did not carry their throwing stick in the same manner as they did in the afternoon performance (Pl. 44A).

[41] The Melville Islanders in common with most aboriginal tribes, believe that their spirit (*imunka*) leaves the body during sleep and wanders around. The songs refer to the spirits of their children, who, during the hours of sleeping, play in the forest and on the sea-shore.

533 (*b*) "The spirits of my children are dancing on a sand-bank beside the sea."
539 (*c*) "My children's spirits are paddling about in a canoe, looking for fish
881 and turtle eggs."

Another man first chanted a secular song, which he had tried to do earlier, but had forgotten the tune.

[177] (*d*) "I saw a tractor pulling big trees out of the ground to make the new aerodrome."

Then he continued with his *Kararitjui* song.

(*e*) "My little children have gone to the island, but they must come back because they are short of tobacco." After a pause he continued, "They're back because someone has just taken the tobacco out of my hand."

(12) *The Ceremonial Eating of the Kulama Yam*

881 On the third day, at early dawn, everybody went to the swamp to eat some of the prepared yams. The leader quietly plucked a bunch of grass from the edge of the water "to waken the *kulama* yam", for should it get a fright the yam would cause much sickness in the camp.

The fully initiated men, the *Mikingulas*, ate the first few pieces "to tame the yam", after which everyone took some to eat. This ritual ensures for all the participants, good health until the next *kulama*. Some of the prepared yam is left in the water for others to eat should they desire it.

This ritual completed the *kulama* ceremony. Everyone returned to his camp, and, except for the initiates of the lower grades, pursued a normal life. The grass ring and the pieces of antbed were left in place but the *kulama* ground and the *milimika* were deserted (Pl. 45D).

784 There are, however, a number of taboos and restrictions associated with
881 the deserted *kulama* ground and oven. For instance, should anyone make
[778] his camp or light a fire in the deserted *milimika*, the spirit of the *kulama* yam would be offended and blind the culprit.

If anyone were so foolish as to toss a piece of the antbed, from the oven, sand from the *milimika* or a fragment of cooked *kulama* yam into the sea, *Maratji*, the rainbow, would be angry and create heavy seas and storms.
[821] The aborigines of the Cape Fourcroy area were convinced that a recent hurricane, which devastated the whole area, was caused by some foolish person throwing a piece of *kulama* into the sea.

On the other hand, if a *kulama* man takes a piece of antbed from the oven,
[224] and throwing it at a tree, hits the mark, his hunting will be successful, until the next *kulama* ceremony. But, if he misses his mark, his hunting will be poor.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

527 mainland, it will be remembered, are with preference postponed until after night-
535 fall. The women were not permitted to take part in the proceedings, but were,
[562] indeed, kept at some considerable distance off. Youths and male children were allowed to join in the ceremonies without apparent restriction. When we met with men, hunting in the bush, and they had been convinced of our *bona fide* intentions, they would approach us in groups of from two to four, and deliver up their long
[200] spears to us. Several of the young men would, in the meantime, run into the woods as messengers to summon others who were as yet unaware of the presence of the strangers in their haunts.

203 A corrobboree[1] having been decided upon, the signal or invitation to take part
527 in the event is sounded by two or three of the older men, who have previously arranged it among themselves. This initial note is a long-drawn, continuous yell resembling the German diphthong ö! Other members immediately fall in with the same note and are joined, at intervals, by others excitedly rushing up to take their stand alongside of those who started the call. The monosyllabic "ö" is kept continuous by the combined efforts of many voices, each of which individually expires for a moment, after the lungs' capacity for air has been completely exhausted. The note is, however, taken up again immediately after a fresh supply of air has been inhaled. The weirdness of the monotone is suddenly broken by the powerful voice of the "master" of the ceremonies, who brings forth a penetrating, but abrupt, order resembling "wahoi." This is instantly and collectively repeated by all others present. A momentary silence follows and allows the sombre trunks of the surrounding forest to reiterate the final word in ringing echoes.

The leader once more gives the note; this time in a slightly modified form resembling a long-continued "ye," that merges imperceptibly into a "yi." A sudden shrill "wahoi-hoi" brings that note also to a stop. A deadly silence prevails.

527 The primary appellation now being over, the performers congregate themselves into a compact group. In the meanwhile much excited vociferation emanes from every mouth, young as well as old. At this stage their eyes make a survey of any
[628] neighbouring encampment and if, by chance, a likely performer is noticed who has not heeded the appeal and is shirking his duty by non-attendance, he is furiously implored, at times abusively, to join the assemblage of performers. The leader now emerges from the group at a walking pace and is followed, in single file, by all participants, each in his turn falling into regular order as though his place had previously been allotted to him. The course taken by the leader is a winding one; walking, at first, some distance away from the point of starting but returning
527 eventually thereto. The musical accompaniment is started afresh, and though not
533 exactly melodious to the European ear, it is certainly a remarkably clever and original production on the part of the aboriginal. The nearest way we might describe it in words is that it is in the form of a trill, produced by a rapidly repeated

[1] Compare also H. Klaatsch, *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, pp. 589 and 590.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on The

"i, i, i, . . . ," changing, it may be, occasionally to a "hi, hi, hi, ..." "That one all-a-same bird," remarked one of my Larrekiya boys, who stood near to me, quite overcome with excitement; and, indeed, I did now recognize the similarity to the trill of the great stone-plover or "curlew" (*Oedicnemus sp.*). The leader having in the interim returned to the starting point and thus completed that part of the performance in which we might be prone to find an analogy with the polonaise of a modern ball, suddenly "doubles" or breaks to a running pace and all the others follow his example. He selects a wide spiral course, gradually nearing the centre and concentrating the body of men to a mass of humanity which to the observer seems to be moving in confusion and disorder. The pace quickens. The men stamp the ground with their feet, at the same time throwing up their arms and keeping them erect from the shoulder. An explosive shriek from the leader is echoed by the voices of all the others. The stamping of feet ceases and the arms of the performers drop to their sides. The leader now steps out to a position in front of his group of men, who, all of them, have turned to face the same way, viz., towards him. Looking to one side and lifting his arm in that direction, the leader emits a high-pitched shriek, which, as his arm is swept downwards on that side, is followed by a combined roaring "hoi" of all the others. This item is repeated several times over; alternately on one side and the other, in succession. This concludes another part of the corrobboree. 527 533 527 535

All performers now form themselves into a semi-circular group. The excitement is intense; forcible argument and debating ensue, accompanied by jocular shouting and laughing, which are repeatedly stimulated by gleeful interjections of "irr," an exclamation common to all Australian tribes.[1] [522]

Having come to some different arrangement among themselves, a "tempo" is set by all members clapping either one or both of their hands upon the sides of their thighs, or their buttocks, producing dull and drum-like sounds by the impact. The latter are in marked unison and rhythmical. A performer now jumps from the semicircle of the time-beaters and runs round in a circle, facing its centre, and all the while stamping his feet. The interest and excitement increase among the audience, who further subsidize the accompaniment with a note, that is produced by a spluttering movement of the lips and sounds like "brr, brr, brr." As the stamping of the performer is accelerated, the clapping quickens with it. All at once he throws up his head and shouts "poop." This solicits an immediate response of "iah" from all others present. [533] [533]

Stationing himself in the centre, he next cuts some wonderfully clever and athletic antics. At the start he stamps the ground vigorously with both feet in alternation; the crowd keeping excellent time with their accompaniment of clapping hands upon their buttocks. As his pace increases, the beats of the hands become sharper and both hands are used (usually when striking the buttocks more posteriorly). While he stamps his feet, the performer, at the same time, vibrates

[1] *Vide* lectures, H. Basedow, *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 33.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

197 continued all the while, is at this stage strengthened. Any of these acts may be
527 interrupted at any moment by changing to the "hauling of sail or anchor" scene
535 and many interjections of "poop" and "ish" accompany them. The performer himself now ceases to stamp with his feet, but in place thereof he bends his legs at the knees and knocks his thighs together while he extends his arms outwards, either in front or at the side of him.

527 *Corrobboree of a fight.*—During several of the corrobborees described, a chant
535 was heard which accompanied the acting in addition to the clapping of hands against the thighs or buttocks. In trying to reproduce the words or syllables of this chant, the nearest analogy I can find is—

[533
539]

"*Tupera monan la jerra*
Tupera monan la jerra,"

and

"*Tupatunan tenakomejona.*"

These chants are muttered uninterruptedly throughout the particular part. The corrobboree of a fight consists in the imitation of a spear duel between two angry blackfellows. They carry the same kind of reed-spears as was described under the "kangaroo ceremony." They first place themselves in defiance of one another at either side of the half-circle and go through all sorts of antics, brandishing their spears, rolling their eyes, and furiously throwing their bodies about. Next they start running about the ring and stamp their feet, throwing up their arms and knocking their thighs together in much the same way as previously described.

Corrobboree of the jungle fowl.—After the usual excessive amount of shouting, jabbering, and excited shrieks of laughter, an old man runs forward into the ring. He bends his arms at the elbow and holds them close against the sides of his body, while the closed fists rest on his chest, an attitude resembling that of a professional runner. This is to resemble the wings of the bird (*Leipoa*). He looks about the ground from side to side as though in search of something. Presently he imitates the bird's call with a shrill penetrating voice which sounds like "he-r-r-r-l." The onlookers' accompaniment consists in producing short spluttering and bubbling noises with their lips that sound like "brrl, brrl, brrl." The performer often interrupts the proceedings by shouting "he," to which all others respond with a loud "yeh." Now he throws up clouds of dust behind him with his feet, in imitation of the way in which the jungle fowl scratch and throw up the earth into the enormous mounds that contain their eggs.

To conclude the ceremony, all performers are led off again by the original leader in Indian file and go through much the same performance as they did in the initiation of the ceremony; the final shouts and shrieks, after the completion of the "trot" in spiral line, being particularly loud and enthusiasic.

114 Captain King[1] was probably the first white man to have witnessed the
527
535

[1] *Survey Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114.

A Bathurst Island Mourning Rite.

Sir :

121 Late in February, 1913, word came to Darwin that a fatal epidemic was prevalent in Bathurst and Melville Islands, and I was instructed to visit the islands and do anything possible to help.

122 I arrived at the Roman Catholic Mission Station at the southern end of Apsley Strait on Bathurst Island on March 2nd, and four days later, with the kindly assistance of Father Coudrean, set off up the Strait in a ten-foot sailing dinghy with a Malay, Matthew Gar, who had a smattering of the native language, two adult islanders, Mari and Dulin, a small native boy, Olinyarra, and stores. On the fourth day at Marinlampi, about two miles from Point Brace, at the northern end of the strait, a native camp was found. There were about thirty natives in the group, variously painted. 765 An old man, later found to be named Kerbo, was sitting chanting beside a small heap of red stones in the centre of a cleared circle about twelve feet in diameter. A pile of cooked yams was beside him and he was [177] scraping them with a mission-given knife. The time of my arrival was about ten in the morning. A small boy squatted beside the old man at times but otherwise the natives lounged about outside the circle indifferently coming and going. It appeared that a death ceremony was in progress. A woman sitting with her three boys under a pandanus palm nearby was pointed out as the mother of the dead man. When all the yams had been peeled the old man walked about in [539] the circle chanting and clacking two sticks together. There was an intermission until about 2 p.m., when the old man resumed his chanting. About 4 p.m. he returned again and proceeded to cut up the yams, placing

[p 79-A]

I was told that

765 the old man had chanted about the *Tarula*,[1]
533 who had planted magic on the beaches to
the north at the beginning of the wet season.
754 The sun heated the magic, and up it went
[648] like smoke and the wind blew it all about.
The magic works on the blackfellow with a
feeling like a snake crawling up the legs.
It moves up to his stomach, and when it
reaches his heart he eats no more and dies.
He also sang that he was an old man, his
wind was short and soon he would die. Later
he sang of a fight he had had with another
tribe. Later he sang of people who came
and fed him while he was sick. When
standing in the water he was calling on the
others to make the ceremony. When he
threw up the stones he called *wei tua*, i.e
"finish."

754 During the next four weeks I visited
tribes in various parts of the islands and
heard the same story. I was shown a
sample of the magic. It was a tightly
woven string bag about the size of a billiard
ball and stuffed with kapok. This was said
to have been "sung" before it was buried.

124 Statistics of the mortality of the epidemic
902 presented a problem. The only words for
numbers which I could obtain with certainty

[1] The *tarula* were mainland blacks in the employ of local white men. They were called *tarula* ("lightning") after the guns carried by their employers.

[p 80-A]

881 while a small trestle had been built of three
[343] upright sticks about 2 ft. 6 in. high in the form of an isosceles triangle, with the apex to the west. Cross sticks were laid across the top of this and the sticks covered with grass. Three old men then took Cooper to a point about twenty yards east of the trestle and faced towards it, two on his right, one on his left. They each held a
[411] flat bladed club, *irrualla*, in the left hand horizontally above the head and beat the
[533] point of it with a light round club with a pointed end, *merkunga*. Cooper held three *merkunga* in the crook of his left arm, one being taken and used by one of the old men. The old men advanced towards the trestle, chanting and beating their clubs in the way described. Cooper was slightly behind them. Young men followed the group. Cooper stood before the trestle as at an altar while the old men chanted for about five minutes. Water was called for, and brought by a woman and given to a visitor from the Mugula tribe. He then poured the water over Cooper's head. Cooper rubbed his belly with his *merkunga*. The visitor then pulled the hair string free from one end of the wooden collar, *aladini*, while Cooper made very wry faces. The collar was removed and the ceremony ended. I was
[439] presented with Cooper's *aladini* and *merkunga* in return for gifts, and I was cheerfully escorted back to the beach where the lugger was waiting for me.

H. K. Fry,
D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.

[p. 168 A]

Il: Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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•533

Tiwi native on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day Kulama ceremony.

[P.10]

are allowed to dig the yam. A special dance area, or ceremonial ring, is cleared on the ground and a special cooking fire is built in its center. On each of the three ceremonial days the participants paint themselves in specified ways with ocher. During the evening of each day, while the yams are soaking or cooking, the male participants, singly or together, walk slowly counterclockwise around the ceremonial fire, beating sticks together as an accompaniment to specially composed songs. At times the wives, who remain outside the ring, sing with the men, or they may join their husbands in traditional dances that imitate various aspects of the natural world around them.

The songs are a vital part of the ritual. They must be newly composed for the occasion and may relate to any event or abstract idea the composer chooses. The songs often deal with injustices the singer has experienced in the past year, about which he wishes to register an "official" complaint:

"There was a funeral,
You went first, I came after.
Old people came in first.
I was late because I had a *Kulama*.
Why didn't you wait for me?"

or

"When Dory have baby girl
The old man said, 'That's for you.'
Dory, my mother-in-law, she burns me.
Dory doesn't know the old people way.
I would like to kill her."

Others may be in the nature of news reports, in which the listeners are informed of anything interesting that may have happened to the singer during the preceding year. For instance, the composer of the following song had just

[text continues on p. 14, (A)—Qualyst]
[p. 13, (B)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954,1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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YAMS TO BE USED in *Kalawa* ceremony are retrieved from a fresh-water pool in which they had been soaked overnight.

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[177]

THE COMPOSER OF THE following song had just returned from Brisbane, where he and a group of eight other aborigines had performed dances in honor of Queen Elizabeth's 1954 visit to Australia:

[539]

"The Queen was talking in England,
'I would like to see a blackfellow dance.'
When I was in Brisbane, the Queen said,
'I would like to meet a black boy!'
And I went up.
King Philip, he had a good look at me.
He was watching a lot as I danced.
I was singing into a loud-speaker."

[173]

Some songs are historic in nature, retelling an event that must be kept alive according to the traditions of the tribe. One such composition recalls the Japanese attack on Darwin during World War II:

[539]

"An enemy plane flies low over Melville Island.
The men on the ground, at the word 'Standby,'
Shoot it down with a cannon."

The children of the singer are often song subjects. This first example describes how the children behaved in one of their father's dreams.

[539]

"My children have gone to the other side
of the island.
But they must come back as they are hard up
for tobacco.
My children have now come back.
I know this for they have taken the tobacco
which I have held in my hand."

or

"My children will wear clothes and shoes.
They will go to school and learn to write."

All the songs have the same chanting tune, which is associated with the *Kalawa* ceremony, and the composer must fit his words to the set meter of the chant. In many cases this requires using archaic words that are no longer a

[P. 14, (A)]

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YOUNG GIRL AND BOY accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

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[181]

part of Tiwi speech. Poetic license in pronunciation and syllabification often occurs. The Tiwi have high regard for the linguistic ability needed to become a good Tiwi composer and singer, and instruction in the art of song composition and delivery is given to the initiates. Each initiate must perform in the *Kulama* before he can be considered a "graduate." According to my Tiwi informants, this requirement is the hardest of all, and it is also the reason for there being no set age for initiation. The old people are said to watch the young, and when the observers consider them mature enough, they *swoop* down upon their choices "like chicken hawks, without warning"—as the Tiwi say—and start the initiates along the path to adulthood.

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[171]

As far as I know, the *Kulama* ceremony has no parallel elsewhere in Australia. And there are many interesting questions that come to mind concerning the origin of the *Kulama* as it exists today. For instance, why is instruction in the preparation of a poisonous yam that is not part of the daily diet considered so important for initiation into adulthood? What is the origin of the idea that a yam has power over good and evil, and health and sickness? Why is such prominence accorded a yam in what is principally a hunting and gathering society?

[362]
[824]

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Any answers to these questions must be highly speculative, for the origin of the ceremony and its development lie in the unrecorded history of the Tiwi. However, I believe the following statements may well be valid.

Instruction in the natural resources of the land was considered vital to becoming an adult. Because the *Kulama* yam is poisonous and is not widely distributed, it was never part of the regular diet, but it could be used in economic emergencies if properly prepared. Instruction in its preparation was therefore extremely important as a potential survival measure. However, since the Tiwi live in a favorable environment, it is highly probable that such emergencies were very rare, so it was considered expedient to hold annual instruction periods. Because knowledge of

[362]

[SEE P. 15 (A) for other part of caption and picture -- ANALYST]

123 501 served as seats except when the mast was mounted in the forward platform.

It took us quite a while to load, but we finally launched out into the bay about mid-morning. In the stern, sat Albert, his knees folded under so that as he lifted and dipped the heavy ironwood paddle only his arms and back supplied the power. He kept in perfect time with Big Jack who sat just in front of him. They would both paddle on the same side for about six strokes and then bringing the paddles overhead would continue on the other side with perfect rhythm. Agnes and Tchuwiunga sat amidships among the rolls of blankets and cartons of food, while I surveyed the scene from the forward seat, clutching my waterproofed KLM overnight bag containing my camera, toothbrush, and change of clothing and the ever-present supply of pencils and "six-penny" notebooks.

The bay was smooth, too smooth, for not a ripple broke the gently rolling surface. We could, however, see and hear breakers on Piriu Point; so, with the promise of some wind to propel the craft, and incidentally break the close, muggy atmosphere, Albert and Big Jack paddled strongly and swiftly so that soon we reached the opposite shore and began to work our way up to the point. [533 837] Although the men were silent, Agnes entertained us with the singing of other women's love songs. All women, regardless of the degree of affection they have for their husband, have lovers and compose long love songs extolling the chosen man's virtues. Agnes, however, only sang her song about her lover, Ginger-Two, when out of audible range of her husband.

About noon the canoe rounded the point and at once a strong easterly wind prompted us to raise the sail. This required little effort as the thin and greatly patched canvas was permanently attached to the 12-foot mast and boom with wire. All that was needed was to drop the mast through a hole in the forward platform and let the boom fall into place. Unfortunately it was soon apparent that the forces of nature and the design of the canoe were against us; the wind was too strong and without a keel the canoe could not head into the wind which was dead against us. The mast was unstepped, the sail furled, and the paddles taken up once more, but now instead of a calm sea we faced large rollers, some of which broke under the force of the wind. It was heavy going; Agnes

settlement work. It seemed the chief advantage was that they 123
received 'money-in-the-finger' from the skins they caught. They 465
didn't understand why they didn't also get paid for the settlement 521
work. I kept silent, but soon they turned to me and said, "You get job; how much you pay?" I told them, and then went on to say that out of that salary I had to pay someone for the food I ate, the clothes I wore, the house I lived in and so on, whereas they did not have to pay for the flour, tea, sugar, meat, blankets, or clothes the welfare people gave them. There was a long silence during which, I believe, each man was figuring how much all these benefits were worth in hard money. Finally Ginger said slowly, "Maybe, this way more better."

Soon the visitors rose and returned to their fires. Someone 123
started a song, a low nasal chant. Another, a woman, began a high- 533
pitched love song, and to this discordant lullaby I soon fell asleep.

As usual, it was barely light when the camp came to life again. 123
After the customary tea breakfast, the various families discussed 512
among themselves the day's plans. Black Joe and Long Peter, their wives and children, were taking the canoe up-river to hunt. Young Brook and his brothers, Danny Brown and Charlie Cook, their wives and children, soon left to hunt in the area back of Minianapi, Charlie Quiet and Roger also left. "Now we go?" I turned in question to Albert. "No, we stay behind. Build house. No good you go bush. Too much grass, plenty big mob cheeky snake. By and by that mob burn grass; then we go bush." It seemed like a logical explanation, but I was disappointed.

The day was already sticky and muggy, and tired of inactivity 123
I started off toward the creek, saying I was going for a swim. Both natives jumped up and said, "No. No. Too much crocodile, more better go along billabong." So with Agnes ahead we started down the path leading away from the creek. Soon we were out of the thick tangle of bushes separating the clearing from the true bush. Now the path led over the rocky, dusty ground, which had but recently been burned. The trunks of the large bloodwood and [137]
stringy-bark trees were blackened for about four feet up from their base. The spiraled trunks of the screwpalm, as well as their lower dried leaves, also had a charred appearance. Except for an occa-

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

123
262 cooked, with that delicious charcoal-broiled flavor so much sought after in our more elite dining establishments or in our backyards.

123
224 Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goose, they brought over to show us an extremely large water [43] snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tre- [513] mendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minianapi in time to meet the geese.
123 All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's
231 hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we
484 reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

123
equally entertaining as she sang some risqué love songs she had 533
picked up around camp.

The evening's goose hunt was even more unsuccessful than the 123
earlier hunts. Two of the men separated and went down river and
killed three geese, but the others, upstream in the usual place, did 223
not even see any, and there was more talk of *mobudities* by everyone
way into the night.

The following day was the last and, as the Assistant Super- 123
intendent was due that evening, feverish work was done by one
and all on the long neglected house. Evidently the arrival of Paul 648
scared off the ghosts, for that evening we almost had a goose per
person, and my final memory of Minianapi is one of flickering fires
in the moonlight and the smell of fresh roasted goose carried on
the gentle breezes.

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Fig. 21. After the return trip the launch's motor gets a much needed overhaul

797 ters, supervising the lubras' work and ordering stores, which are brought from Darwin by the mission's own lugger *St. Francis*. The pleasant lunch we had at the refectory, where wide windows, open all round, admitted every wandering breeze, was due to their efforts, and later I was to see something of the results of their teaching.

797 School, both for boys and for girls, takes up only two and a half hours each day, but the pupils learn quickly, and the more 871 they are taught the more they can absorb. Reading and writing are mastered without any more difficulty than in the case of white children of the same age, though the pupils were very shy and almost inaudible when exhibiting their prowess. Arithmetic they do not take to so kindly, unless they happen to be interested by some problem that has a definitely practical application to their own lives; but drawing comes natural to the islanders, as it does to the blacks of the mainland, where I had already seen very spirited sketches made by aboriginal children. Of the affection of the children, both for the sisters and the mission fathers, there was no doubt. To be as close to them as possible was an honour they were all bent on securing.

797 THE "blackies," as they call the girls, range in age from tiny 562 tots to those who are practically young women. They were all much excited by the novelty of our visit, bubbling over with laughter, whispering and giggling together. The older "blackies" eye a visitor coyly, smiling over their shoulders with a flash of white teeth; and, when the pilot and I came along with one of the sisters to hear them sing the "Magnificat" and "Adeste Fideles," they fled shrieking, only to turn round and giggle again when they thought that they were far enough away.

"No more gammon!" called the sister, and they lined up demurely to sing their hymns right tunefully, with spasms of giggles in the intervals. To hold up a finger is quite sufficient to bring shrieks of delight from these childish, happy creatures. "Georgie," a very little boy with a very big tummy, so young that he was not yet at the boys' school, sang "Georgie Porgie, pudding pie, kissed the girls and made them cry" with much aplomb and gesture. If Georgie was at the girls' school, he did not forget that he was a man. He spoke man's language, not woman's [198 516] talk such as women by custom must use on Bathurst Island, and he sat down like a man with knees wide apart, not together as a woman must.

535 Then, while the older "blackies" formed a circle, chanting in their own language and clapping their hands in time, little girls, [562] two by two, performed women's dances, which again differ from those of the men. There were buffalo, bullock, and lugger dances, when they imitated the animals with arms widespread or bent slightly at the elbows to represent the horns, or held at angles such as those at which sails are set on a lugger, while, now and then, two little fists beaten together faithfully copied the "put-put" of Diesel engines.

More ambitious and complicated was the dance of the overseas mail 'plane that flies from Singapore to Darwin, when whirling arms represented the propellers and stamping feet the beat of [198 533 768] the engines. There is, by the way, a sacred language used for songs, and it is only in this language that the name of the dead can be mentioned. If by chance anyone should mention a dead man's name in the ordinary language, every one within hearing will spit with vigour. If defenceless, the maker of such a faux pas will be hit about the head.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Neither *Jilungilakani* nor any of the Bathurst Islanders performed spirited 765
dances to these songs. The leader, impersonating a *Ningaui*, walked round [534]
the *milimiba* with awkward, bent gait, either beating his music sticks together or holding his hands tightly against his sides with his fingers outstretched (Pl. 30E).

Following the *Ningaui* songs, the men lit a fire at the base of a eucalyptus tree which *Katapi*, *Nangrinini*, and several other relatives of the dead man, climbed to perform the rite of *wandiatapinda*. As each man slid down the trunk, the aborigines called the totemic place of Wailu, and the names of rain, thunder and lightning. Later, the men performed the rain dance (Pl. 30B) in [535]
the *milimiba*, while the women, coming in from the side, danced the *amburu* (Pl. 30F).

(ii) *The Mission Lugger Songs and Dances*

The dances started with a long *ai, ai, ai*, which announced that the boat 765
had been sighted. Then, while the men danced the sail of the boat, with their 533
hands held above their heads, the leader chanted— 535
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"The waves beat the sides of the boat, but it goes straight on."

With high prancing steps and hands rotating one over the other, the aborigines mimed the engines and the propeller of the lugger.

"The engines spark together as the waves hit the side of the boat."

Other songs, to which the performers danced the relevant actions, were—

"The wake of the lugger."

"The lugger is on the slips ready to be painted."

"We are scrubbing off the old paint and giving it a new coat."

Every time *Katapi*, the son of the dead man, took part in the dance, the women set up a wail.

At the conclusion of the boat songs, the men and women took part in the 765
pumuti, lightly beating each other's spouses and their relatives with boughs.

(iii) *The Jabiru Songs and Dances*

The last series of dances were given by a middle-aged Bathurst Island 765
man, *Nilitauna*, who imitated, with humorous gesticulation and much 535
abandon, the antics of the long-legged jabiru, *Tjalati* (Pl. 29A), as it walked, fished and rested in the lagoon.

The words of the *Tjalati* song were— [539]

"When *Tjalati* lifts one leg, he is ready to fly."

At the conclusion of the *Tjalati* dance, the *ilania* ended with the honey [825]
and mosquito calls.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the previous singer's dead father. 881 765

(e) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[33] when I think of you, my uncle." [533] Some of the women cried when the song was finished. [539]

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *asini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants. 252 881

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate it (Pl. 442), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, goodbye",[34] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purujikini*, did at the first *kulama*. 881 [533] [539]

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women. 535 881

(a) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird). [534]

(b) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 302), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(c) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*tokwiangu*) in his mouth to symbolize the prey of the crocodile.

(d) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(e) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(f) The buffalo,

(g) The shark (Pl. 300).

[33] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *imunta* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions. [826] [774]

[34] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the swringalma tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten. [824]

884 are allowed to dig the yam. A special dance area, or cere-
[460] monial ring, is cleared on the ground and a special cook-
[535] ing fire is built in its center. On each of the three ceremonial
[305] days the participants paint themselves in specified ways
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are soaking or cooking, the male participants, singly or
884 together, walk slowly counterclockwise around the cere-
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The songs are a vital part of the ritual. They must be newly composed for the occasion and may relate to any event or abstract idea the composer chooses. The songs
[154] often deal with injustices the singer has experienced in the past year, about which he wishes to register an "official" complaint:

[539]

"There was a funeral,
You went first, I came after.
Old people came in first.
I was late because I had a *Kulama*.
Why didn't you wait for me?"

or

"When Dory have baby girl
The old man said, 'That's for you.'
Dory, my mother-in-law, she burns me.
Dory doesn't know the old people way.
I would like to kill her."

Others may be in the nature of news reports, in which the listeners are informed of anything interesting that may have happened to the singer during the preceding year.
CE20 For instance, the composer of the following song had just

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 14, (A)--Qual 45T]

[P. 13, (B)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

outdance and out-sing and out-party most of the men fifty years younger than himself.[6] 159 888

Since Tu'untalumi was a senior Tiwi household head who spent more of his time attending festivals, funerals, fights, and other collective occasions than did most of his contemporaries, it is instructive to examine his movements over a full year. If he had kept an engagement book during 1928-29, it would have looked something like this: 159 887

Early April (end of wet season): Leaves his home base in Tangio where he has spent most of the wet season and visits the Mission station to attend a few small funerals (children who have died at the Mission in the preceding months). During these funerals a series of fights and duels also takes place. Total people present: perhaps fifty or sixty. Time thus spent in helping to wind up public business: five days. Returns home to Tangio and remains there for rest of April. [797]

End of April: Goes to Rangu with a big party of other Tiklauila for a funeral (junior elder). Fairly big funeral, lots of people, lots of disputes. Time away, including leisurely journey to and from Rangu, about two weeks. Gets back home about middle of May. [764 166]

Middle of May—end of June: Lives quietly at home with his household in Tangio.

About July 1st: Goes to Mission for a few days, "visits" with whoever is there. Tries out a new composition of his own (song and dance) on group camped at Mission. Returns home for rest of July. [533 535]

Last week of July: Taking his younger wives and their children with two senior wives in charge of them, sets out for Malau for a big funeral with lots of people and fights. There he performs his new dance; is much consulted on ceremonial matters by the Malauila; gets into a few fights himself but handles them with dignity and honor; remains in Malau two weeks; stops off to visit and attend a small funeral with the Munupula on his way back; has a fight with a Munupula while there; returns to the Mission; stays there a day or two dispensing all the news from Malau and Munupi to those camped there; issues invitations for a grass burning in some sections of Tangio which were not burned in April or May. Goes on home to Tangio where some of his older wives have remained during his absence. Total time away: about three weeks. [166]

End of August: Is joined in Tangio by several other Tiklauila and Rangwila households whom he has invited. Grass burning and joint kangaroo hunting goes on for four or five days. Dancing and partying at night. After five days most of visiting group leave and he and his household remain alone in Tangio until well into October. [224]

[6] There is no suggestion that Tu'untalumi was in any way an official ritual leader. All old men, by virtue of their years, were to some extent ritual leaders; he had merely worked harder and longer at it than most of them. His tirelessly joyful personality had a good deal to do with his success in the self-established role. In a culture that might be thought likely to make all its men gloomy, anxiety-ridden introverts, he was a warm, happy, dignified old extrovert and he was widely admired. [156]

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission, automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their opponents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were economically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as 765
ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a
sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own 535
dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major
chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out 765
again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus.
Most of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually [424]
owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to
death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial
occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special 765
to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony,
when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts
and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive
the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners'
state of *pukimani*.

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has 182
been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions 557
of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious
occasions. The connecting link was the state of *pukimani* in which death put 571
the relatives. Men in a state of *pukimani* were at a disadvantage in social and 765
political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things
for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not [577]
afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they
would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the
spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for
the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts
came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and
thus their own *pukimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to
them for many months, came to an end.

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, 881
which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females 571
there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and
elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the
status of *Marukumarni*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and
did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the
ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than
himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for
the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring
it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests.
The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials
or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems;
indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the
beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who 881
were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation 607
of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely [605]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

permanent, and the Wanderers, which draws from the permanent native population in Darwin and includes such Tiwi as Bobby Wilson. It is normal for one of these Tiwi players to be considered among the top three in Darwin football circles. 177 526 648

For a while, Edmund, a Tiwi from Bathurst Island Mission, was one of the players on the newly organized St. Mary's basketball team; other Tiwi have played on the Bagot Compound basketball team. Billy Larrakeyah, a Darwin Tiwi, was thought to have Olympic potentialities as a javelin thrower, but strained his arm in the try-outs.[6] Most recently, a group of young Catholic Tiwi has been organized into a water polo team called the Seals. National magazines suggest that they may be the best water polo team in the country, but so far they have not gone south to play any non-Darwin group.

Tiwi carving and painting have had recent popularity in Australian art circles. Traditional Tiwi graveposts are finely carved in geometric designs and painted with precise and complex networks of cross-hatching and other simple, but effective, motifs. The first modern innovation in Tiwi art occurred about 1945 when a native known as Katu (or Short Katu) made his first attempt to carve a human figure atop a mourning post. When Pilling later asked Katu why he had carved this post, he said, "Me see 'm along Darwin. Me savvy." That is, Katu transferred the concept of Western realistic statuary in the round into the Tiwi art form. He carved a second realistic post for presentation to Queen Elizabeth II in 1954. More recently, Tiwi carvers at Snake Bay have taken to realistic carving. Two figurines, both carved by Tiwi at Snake Bay, were given to the Perth Museum in 1958. Sixteen mourning posts from Snake Bay were purchased by the National Art Gallery in Sydney the same year. An art display of Tiwi carving has been held in the United States in Philadelphia. 177 532 322

Tiwi have received recognition in the Northern Territory for other art forms. One of the thirty-year-old female Tiwi at Bathurst Island Mission usually takes first prize for embroidery at the annual Territorial fair. There has also been interest shown by outsiders in the double-barbed ceremonial spears. Male Tiwi skill in dancing has attracted wide attention in Australia. When natives from all over the Territory were sent to dance before Queen Elizabeth in Queensland during her 1954 tour, three Tiwi were among the delegation. The Tiwi contingent, directed by the innovator Short Katu, made every news story covering this part of the Royal Visit. In Darwin, when Bagot Compound needs to raise money for native participation in sports, the Tiwi, usually led by Katu, present a public dance. As a result, Katu's clan under his direction has invented many new dances for white Australian audiences. 177 [531] 177 535 648

Perhaps we may look forward to the day when American television audiences can enjoy such a Tiwi dance, one of Australia's best native products. Yet only sixty years ago, and therefore in the lifetime of many people still living, very few Tiwi had even seen a white man, and white men who set foot on Tiwi soil, like Cooper in his first attempt in 1897, were ferociously chased out.

[6] He was killed in a brawl in Darwin in the spring of 1959.

2: Mountford E.-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 of *Pulaninkuwi's* wife, *Nulatini*, which I saw, the general pattern was similar. I shall, however, describe both burials, that of *Nulatini* being the more detailed.

(1) *The Burial of Waniamperi*

On the day that *Waniamperi* died, *Murawani*, one of his near relatives, who wanted the dead man buried near his mother, paid a young "worker"[88] a sum of money and two loin cloths to dig the grave.

When the corpse was brought to the burial ground, a number of relatives had a last look at the dead man before he was laid on a series of logs, placed transversely across the bottom of the grave.

This act was a signal for concerted mourning, the women beating themselves with sticks and the men cutting their heads. For personal safety it is [753] imperative that each man and woman show excessive grief, real or feigned, [626] otherwise the *mopaditi*, annoyed at the lack of grief, will make the offending person ill.

After the mourning died down, the "workers" placed boughs on the body and filled in the grave, leaving a small mound on top (Pl. 24c).

[533] While this work was being carried out, the relatives stood on one side of the grave, either singing the *amburu*, the mourning song, or the rain song of Wailu, the totem of *Tiparawilimiri*, *Waniamperi's* father. To the chanting [535] of this song, the men acted the rain dance (Pl. 30B). The aborigines did not stage the totemic dances or chant the songs belonging to the fire totem of Wuriupi (*Waniamperi's* own totem), because, to have done so, would have especially attracted the attention of his *mopaditi*.

The "workers" laid *Waniamperi's* personal belongings at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tied his loin cloth and tobacco to the top of a thin sapling which had been driven into the ground at the head of the grave, made a large fire, and left a container of water.

The aborigines believe that the *mopaditi*, seeing his belongings near at [775] hand, water to drink and fire to warm himself and cook the food he gathers in the surrounding forest, will stay near the grave until the time comes for him to leave the locality.

While the "workers" were engaged on those tasks, the rest of the burial party quietly left, not looking behind, lest the *mopaditi* follow them to their camp.

[88] These "workers" or *wanaras*, being distant relatives of the dead, are in little danger [767] from the *mopaditis*. Therefore, it is safe for them to clean the site, dig the grave, handle the body, and carry out other tasks associated with burial. They are paid for their work by the chief mourners at the final *pukamani* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 and dug the grave, which was about six feet long and five feet six inches deep. But when, in the middle of the afternoon, four men appeared, carrying the body, in a fully extended position, and placed it beside the unfinished grave, a number of women, painted all over in white, sat beside the corpse and cried heart-brokenly until the grave was finished. There was a chorus of wailing [302] from both men and women when one of the "workers" painted *Pulanimbuwi's* body entirely in white (Pl. 23A), as additional camouflage to confuse [751] his wife's *mopaditi*.

The ceremonials associated with the burial started when first the husband, then a near relative, dancing astride the corpse, called out loudly, "*Yook, yook*". This ritual, called *wuramu*, was first introduced by the pelican-man at *Purukupali's* ceremony. At the present time it is performed by close relatives [775] of the dead, its object being to scare the *mopaditi* into the grave where it will not be a menace to the living.

After this ritual, two other men entered the grave and, standing, one either end, took the dead body from those above. Amid the sounds of wailing women and the clapping of men's hands on their buttocks, the corpse was gently laid on a bed of transverse logs on the bottom. Other "workers" cut green branches and placed them across the top of the grave.

The husband, carrying a lighted firestick, then entered the grave, burnt the hair on his legs and left immediately. The aborigines believe that the [775] *mopaditi*, smelling the burnt hair of her husband, and thinking he was beside her, stayed quietly in the grave.

The bushes were thrown into the grave, logs, about five feet long,[66] laid on top, and the hole was filled in, leaving a small mound which was covered with sheets of paper-bark (Pl. 24C). Short sticks were driven into the ground at the head and foot of the grave, on one of which the husband hung the meagre belongings of his wife.

764 Both men and women then performed a series of dances, the men danced 535 the flying fox, shark and crocodile, while both the elder and younger women moved in a line toward the grave, holding large green leaves in their hands, palm upward, symbolizing the dead woman when a small child, being carried by her mother.

A woman, holding her breasts, impersonated *Nulatini's* mother feeding her, while a near male relative mimed the mother carrying *Nulatini* as an infant.

764 At the conclusion, *Pulanimbuwi* seated himself at the head of the grave,

[825] [66] The aborigines explained that the logs kept the dogs from unearthing the body, but as, at the present time, the body is over five feet underground, this does not appear to be the reason. It may be that, when tools were more primitive and graves not so deep, these precautions were necessary.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Parading around the unlit fire in the centre of the *milinika*, the performers
177 chanted a telephone song, the literal translation of which is, "Hallo, that
533 telephone there, hallo, yes, yes," some, as they did so, imitating the winding
[539] of the handle of an old-type magneto telephone.

When the fire, which had been started by a young man, was well alight, the men performed the ritual of *wundiatapinda* by jumping through flames and smoke, each shouting "telegraphy".

The men again assembled at the edge of the *milinika*, and, led by the *alowia*, called the localities on Melville Island where the white men had camped. As each name was called the aborigines shouted "*wia*" (yes).

One dancer held his hands high above his head, symbolizing a radio aerial, while his companions chanted the following words to the refrain of the telephone song:

[539] "The Queen sent a radio asking *Wurarbui* and other men to dance for her."

Then followed songs related to the radio and the telephone. These were usually performed with the traditional steps and gestures, except that, at the end, the actor mimed the ringing up with one hand, and the holding of the [535] telephone to the ear with the other.[60] As the men danced, the women moved into the *milinika* from the side, performing their own dance, the *ambaru* (Pl. 30F), some of them crying and endeavouring to beat themselves. They were, however, restrained by their companions.

765 After a number of dances came the ceremony of appointing the men to carry out the work near the grave.

At the death of any person the tribe divides into two groups: the *pulu-*
[616] *munis*, near relatives of the dead, who are forbidden to touch food with their hands (Pl. 24A), or go near the grave, and the distant relatives, who can visit the grave site without fear of attack from the spirit (the *mapaditi*).

At *Wanimperi's* first *ilania*, the ceremonial leader chose, from the latter group, ten men, the *wanaras*, colloquially called the "workers". It was their duty to cut and paint the burial poles (one each), help to clear the grave site and dancing ground of sticks and stones, and to carry out other menial tasks associated with the final rituals. For these tasks, the "workers" were paid on the last day of the rituals.

When "workers" were chosen, the aged brother, *Nalgui*, of the dead man,

[60] This mixture of the ancient and the modern, shows how a living culture gradually absorbs the characteristics of an adjacent people, particularly those from a culture as dominant as our own.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

announced that he had bought enough food from the store at the settlement to feed all the men who were to cut the poles.[61] 765

Following this announcement, the chief woman mourner, *Prupadau*, whose privilege it was to decide on the size of the burial poles, marked with her toe, in the dust of the *milimika*, the length and thickness of a series of oversized poles.

This led to a great deal of discussion between the leader, *Wurarbui*, and the woman, *Prupadau*, before he finally persuaded her to reduce the dimensions of the poles to a reasonable size. *Prupadau* wanted the poles for her relative to be as many and as large as possible.

This matter settled, the "workers" brought a number of steel axes into the *milimika*. The *ebuwia*, painting the handles white and putting red cross lines on the blades, stood the axes in the centre of the dancing ground. Then both the *ebuwia* and the other performers walked around the axes singing the telephone song. [177] [531]

A series of traditional dances followed, representing *Jirakati*, the white-headed sea-eagle (Pl. 30), *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Tjalati*, the jabiru (Pl. 29A).[62] Two women and two young boys performed the shark (*Taduwale*) dance (Pl. 25C), the ritual finishing with the honey and mosquito calls. The "workers" picked up their axes and walked away, accompanied by everyone except *Prupadau*, who remained behind, still chanting the *amburu* song of mourning. 535 765 [825]

(b) *The Second Ilanias*

The second series of *ilanias* was performed about halfway between *Wurarbui's* camp and the burial ground. 765

In this series, we were able to see the traditional pattern of the *ilanias* in operation, including the return and feeding of the "workers" after their day's labour of cutting the poles near the grave site. The songs and dances, too, instead of referring, as in the first *ilanias*, to the goods of the white man, his radio and his telephones, dealt almost exclusively with dances belonging to the locality of Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island, the country of *Waniampari's* father and the totemic place of fresh water, *Andjalui* (p. 42). [533] [177]

This series of *ilanias* could be divided into five sections,

[61] At the present time, this is just a traditional gesture, reminiscent of the days when it was the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the workers while they cut and painted the poles (Pl. 25B).

[62] In a creation myth, the jabiru is called *Tipuru-undunga*. It is likely that the bird has several names. Hart (1930, p. 280), draws attention to the multiplicity of names among the Tiwi. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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PLATE 25. *The Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Young Girls and Men Dancing; B, Feeding Pukamuni Workers; C, Women and Boys Dancing; D, Ceremonial Fight at Ilanla.

Cp. 72 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

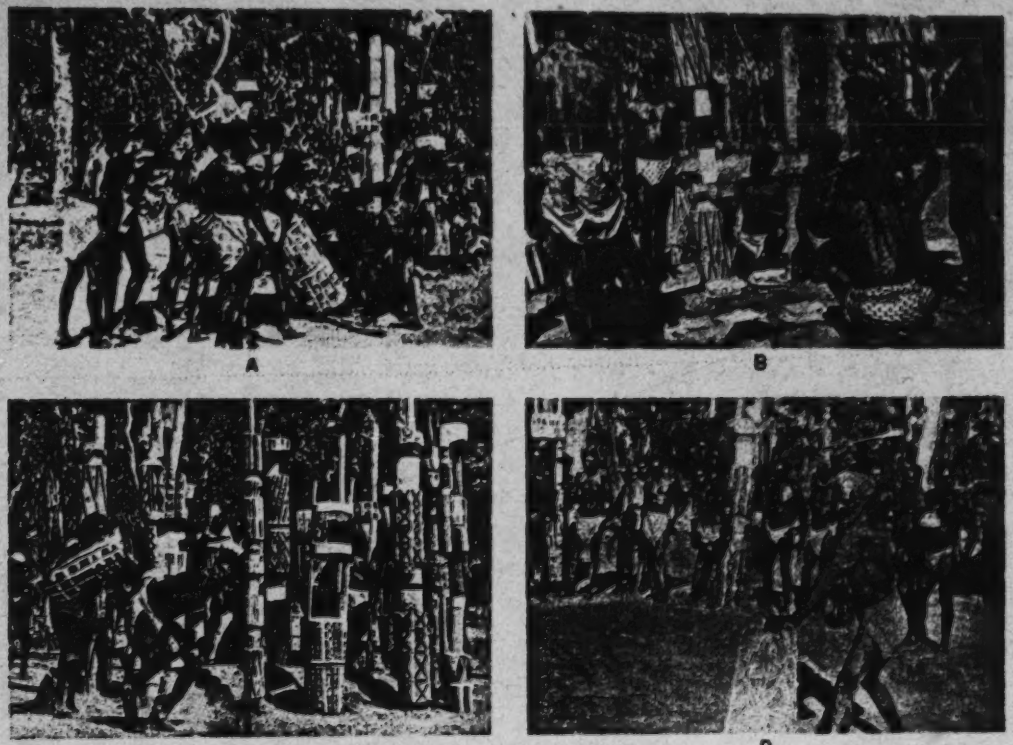

PLATE 26. *The Final Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Erecting Poles on Grave; B, Arranging Gifts for Workers; C, The Basket Dance; D, Urumatjina's Dance.

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[p. 72 c]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(iii) *The Totemic Songs and Dances.* At the completion of the meal, both the "workers" and the *pukamuni* men and women performed a series of dances to the accompaniment of traditional totemic songs. 765

Almost without exception, these songs and dances belonged to the totemic beings of Wailu, the country of *Tiparawilimiri*, the father of the dead man, *Wanimperi*.

These rituals were opened by the leader, who, standing in the centre of the *milimiku*, called out the names of the totemic beings of Wailu, *Andjahui* (fresh water), *Pukadringa* (thunderstorm), *Tomituka* (rain), and *Bumerali* (lightning). As before, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*" after each name was called.

The men then chanted the rain song, "The heavy rain falls and the frog calls, *poki, poki, puturaka*", while the men danced, with their fingers pointing to the ground, symbolizing falling rain (Pl. 30a), and the woman, *Prupadau*, hopped along the ground in imitation of the frog-woman,[65] *Kwouk-kwouk*. As the dance proceeded, the men and *Prupadau* all imitated the actions of the frog-woman by hopping along the ground on their hands and knees. [539] 765 535

While the dance was in progress, the leader called out "*Tomituka*" (rain). *Prupadau*, picking up a sheet of paper-bark, held it over her head and shivered, and the men, their hands clasped tightly over their heads, shouted, "*Batua, batua*" (rain finish). This completed the dance. *Pulanimbiwi* danced the white-headed sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), before the *pumuti* began.

(iv) *The Pumuti.*[66] The *pumuti* rituals, which are always carried out with much goodwill, friendliness and laughter, were performed at most, if not all, of the *ilanias*, and, in a restricted form, at the final *pukamuni*. 765

At some stage, usually toward the end of the *ilania*, sometimes more than once, each man and woman, taking a bunch of leaves, or a roll of paper-bark and calling softly "*Ooh, ooh, ooh*", beat the wife, or husband, sisters, brothers, and all the near relatives of that particular spouse.

(v) *The Rite of Fire-jumping and the sending out of the Message Sticks.* The rite of fire-jumping, or *wandiatapinda*, carried out in the second series of *ilanias*, differed from that in the first series. Instead of the participants stepping over a fire (Pl. 24a), a number of the close relatives climbed a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and leaves (Pl. 23c). As each man 765 372

[65] The frog-woman, whose totemic place is Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island, is the mother of *Pukadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*.

[66] This ritual would tend to reduce tensions between the spouse and his, or her, relatives, which is considerable in some communities. [593] [578]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

Neither *Jilungilakani* nor any of the Bathurst Islanders performed spirited 765
dances to these songs. The leader, impersonating a *Ningani*, walked round
the *milimilu* with awkward, bent gait, either beating his music sticks together [534]
or holding his hands tightly against his sides with his fingers outstretched
(Pl. 30E).

Following the *Ningani* songs, the men lit a fire at the base of a eucalyptus tree which *Kasapi*, *Nangrinini*, and several other relatives of the dead man, climbed to perform the rite of *wandatapinda*. As each man slid down the trunk, the aborigines called the totemic place of Wailu, and the names of rain, thunder and lightning. Later, the men performed the rain dance (Pl. 30B) in [535]
the *milimilu*, while the women, coming in from the side, danced the *amburu* (Pl. 30F).

(ii) *The Mission Lugger Songs and Dances*

The dances started with a long *ai, ai, ai*, which announced that the boat 765
had been sighted. Then, while the men danced the sail of the boat, with their 533
hands held above their heads, the leader chanted— 535
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"The waves beat the sides of the boat, but it goes straight on."

With high prancing steps and hands rotating one over the other, the aborigines mimed the engines and the propeller of the lugger.

"The engines spark together as the waves hit the side of the boat."

Other songs, to which the performers danced the relevant actions, were—

"The wake of the lugger."

"The lugger is on the slips ready to be painted."

"We are scrubbing off the old paint and giving it a new coat."

Every time *Kasapi*, the son of the dead man, took part in the dance, the women set up a wail.

At the conclusion of the boat songs, the men and women took part in the 765
pumai, lightly beating each other's spouses and their relatives with boughs.

(iii) *The Jabiru Songs and Dances*

The last series of dances were given by a middle-aged Bathurst Island 765
man, *Nilimma*, who imitated, with humorous gesticulation and much 535
abandon, the antics of the long-legged jabiru, *Tjalati* (Pl. 29A), as it walked, fished and rested in the lagoon.

The words of the *Tjalati* song were— [539]

"When *Tjalati* lifts one leg, he is ready to fly."

At the conclusion of the *Tjalati* dance, the *ilania* ended with the honey [825]
and mosquito calls.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 (2) *The Ilanias of Nulatini*

[123] We were able to see the opening mourning rituals, *iramparini*[24] of *Nulatini* and six of her *ilanias*.

[128] Rather than deal with all of these ceremonies in detail, I will describe the *iramparini* rituals and a typical *ilania*, in which the aborigines carried out all phases of the rituals, with the exception of the appointment of the "workers". Although the rite of *punuti*, *wandiatapinda*, or feeding the "workers", did not take place at every *ilania*, they will be included in this description.

(a) *The Opening Mourning Ritual, Iramparini of Nulatini*

Ten days after the burial of *Nulatini*, the aborigines of Melville Island performed the ritual of *iramparini*. The function of that ceremony was to express [775] grief over *Nulatini's* death, and to tell her spirit that, as she did not now belong to the same realm as themselves, she must leave her grave and return to her totemic country.

The ceremony was held about thirty yards from the camp of the dead woman. Most of the aborigines were present, but two men, *Pulanimbuwi*, the husband, and *Tupiatira*, *Nulatini's* nearest relative, took the leading parts.

The rituals opened in the late afternoon with *Pulanimbuwi*, painted in [902] white, elaborately decorated and carrying a long stick, walking slowly to- [533] ward the assembled people, singing the *amburu*, the women's song of mourning (Pl. 23A).

Every now and again, the husband stopped, leaned on his stick and looked round (apparently for his wife's *mapadia*), before continuing on his way to the place of ceremony.

Coming out of the forest in an almost opposite direction was *Tupiatira*, also painted in white, waving green branches in his hands. About fifty yards from the old camp of *Nulatini*, *Tupiatira* called her name loudly, and, after listening for a while, announced that, as she had not answered, she must be dead.

As *Tupiatira* walked forward he continued to call, while *Pulanimbuwi*, now accompanied by his sister, *Kundi*, came in from the opposite direction, both singing the *amburu*. When the men were only a few yards apart the aborigines formed themselves into two lines, facing each other.

At a signal and a loud "*Book, book*" from *Pulanimbuwi*, an old man, [535] *Mahmerinita*, accompanied by six to eight of the men, danced between the

[24] The *iramparini* of *Waniampari* was performed before our arrival.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

lines as flying foxes (the totem of *Nulatini's* father),[60] their arms moving 765
alternately up and down and their little fingers pointed skyward (Pl. 30c). [535]

The dance finished, the assembled men accompanied by *Pulanimbuwi* and *Tupiasira*, with their arms around each other's necks, mourned hysterically for the dead, while the women danced the *amburu* on the outside of the group. Several times, in his grief, *Tupiasira* collapsed to the ground only to be lifted to his feet again by the still mourning husband.

The sounds of mourning continued for some time, gradually becoming less until *Nangrinini* gave the honey and mosquito calls, and the ceremony was over.

(*b*) *The Ilania*

At one end of the *milimika*, which was situated at the camp of the dead woman, was a pole on which *Pulanimbuwi* had tied a piece of printed calico as a flag.

The *ilania* opened when seven of the "workers" giving the honey and mosquito calls, emerged from the forest, and, running toward the *milimika*, cast sticks and pandanus leaves, as spears, at the *pukamuni* men who awaited them. There was general fighting and much laughter before the "workers" were ejected.

In the centre of the *milimika*, as food for the "workers" a woman had [262]
placed nine large cooked crabs which the "workers" distributed among themselves. After this was done, the men performed the rite of *wandiatapinda* by either walking through or jumping over the fire which had been lit in the *milimika*. *Nulatini's* husband did not take part in this ritual but, with a flat fighting stick in either hand, wandered about the ceremonial ground, singing the *amburu*.

Following these rituals, the aborigines chanted a number of songs and 533
carried out the following dances, those of the flying fox being totemically 765
related to the dead woman's father.

(i) The flying foxes and the sea-eagle.
(ii) The crocodile.
(iii) The shark and the stingray.
(iv) The flag songs.

(i) *The flying-fox and sea-eagle songs*

"The flying foxes are out late, eating the blossoms of the stringy-bark [539]
and eucalyptus trees."

[60] As mentioned earlier, the totem of the dead person is never referred to in the *pukamuni* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

533 "The sea-eagle, *Jirakati*, dives upon the flying foxes, catching them in
539 her claws and eating them. The rest fly away."
765 "The flying foxes call to each other, the sea-eagle is attacking us—let us go."

As these songs were being chanted, a number of men clustered in the centre of the *milimika*, like a group of flying foxes in a tree.

With a loud call, *Nangrinini*, his outspread arms symbolical of the wings of the sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), "swooped" down, scattering them in all directions.

As *Nangrinini* returned to the outside of the *milimika*, the "flying foxes"
[535] reassembled and, with prancing steps again danced with their little fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30c).

The flying-fox songs continued—

"Cast your throwing sticks where the flying foxes are thickest and break many wings at one time."

"Hit the flying foxes so that they will drop in the mud."

"Cook the black flying foxes and dry them in the sun."[20]

Again the men assembled and danced the flying-fox while *Malumerinita* called the totemic places of the flying fox at Muranapi (p. 56), interspersed with calls of "*Wia*" from his companions. *Pulanimbuwi* still wandered.

(ii) *The crocodile songs*

"You cannot cross the river because it is full of crocodiles."

"Beware, the crocodiles are in the mangroves waiting to catch us when we cross the river."

These songs were accompanied by the spirited crocodile dance (Pl. 30g),
[535] while *Malumerinita* called the names of the totemic places of the crocodile, *Jirakupai*, on south-west Bathurst Island.

(iii) *The shark and the stingray song*

"Do not spear the shark, it is chasing a stingray."

To this song several men performed the exhausting shark dance (Pl. 30o).

(iv) *The flag songs*

"The wind blows and the flag moves."

[177] "The Government Administrator gets his flag from the Queen."
535 To these songs, the man danced with their hands, as a flag, moving above
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[20] This song suggests that the Melville Islanders stored or traded the cooked and dried bodies of these creatures.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

their heads. During these songs, the husband sat quietly at one end of the *milimika*, with his head in his hands (Pl. 232). 765 [535]

The *ilania* concluded with *Nangrinini* calling *Aluprumani* (a mangrove bird); *Malumerinita* calling *Tjirinini* (the red-backed sea-eagle) and the assembled men, making the honey and mosquito call.

During one of the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, a near relative had his name changed from *Miralipaiwa* to *Tukuwuinganili*.[71] [533]

(3) *The Ilanias of Makapini*

At the same time as the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi* was being performed, an old woman, *Makapini*, was baptized at Bathurst Island by the priest, just as she was dying, and, although she had never accepted Christianity, was buried, against the wishes of her relatives, in the mission cemetery. 797

The aborigines of both Bathurst and Melville Island were distressed over this incident because as *Makapini* had always been a "pagan" (as the mission authorities call the unconverted), her spirit could not go to the white man's "heaven", and, as the *pukamuni* ceremonies were prohibited on Bathurst Island, the spirit of *Makapini* was doomed to wander, lonely and unhappy, for ever. To prevent such a calamity (for lonely *mopaditis* are a danger to the living), the aborigines of Melville Island performed a modified *pukamuni*, called the *aramatruni-nipungari*,[72] so that, at its conclusion, the spirit of old *Makapini* would travel happily to her future home. 765 [775]

The pattern of this ceremony differed somewhat from that of *Waniamperi*. At a *milimika* near the camp of the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, the Melville Island aborigines held five *ilanias* over a period of eight days. The final two days of the *pukamuni* were held among the poles.[73] I will describe a typical *ilania* and later the final *pukamuni* rituals.

The *ilania* opened with one of the "workers", who had been in the forest cutting the burial poles, running toward the *milimika*, stick in hand, giving the honey call. One of the *pukamuni* men rushed out to drive him away, but, after a sham fight with throwing sticks, brought him into the *milimika*.

The predominating songs and dances of this and other *ilanias* of *Makapini* were associated with the mythical wild-honey people[74] of Bathurst Island. 765 533 535

[71] Hart (1930, pp. 280–99) describes how the custom of altering the names of near relatives at death causes rapid changes in the language.

[72] This type of *pukamuni* ceremony is also held when aborigines are drowned at sea and their bodies not recovered. [766]

[73] This was a variation of the previous *pukamuni*, probably because the body was not at the place of ceremony.

[74] Although I did not inquire, it is certain from the songs, that the father or mother of the dead woman belonged to one of the honey totems of Bathurst Island.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Many of them referred to "creation times" when *Tukimbini*, of Muruplanga
533 told the honey people of Bathurst Island to be the *pukamani* men and women
[535] at the burial rituals of *Purukupali* (p. 30).

The following is a selection of the honey songs—

[539] "Let all the men who are *mandalini* (a eucalyptus flower, particularly rich in honey) come to this place (Tapararimi) and dance for the *pukamani* of *Purukupali*."

"With all your ornaments, start walking (to Tapararimi)."

"Bring all your ceremonial ornaments to our place (Tapararimi) where we will hold a big ceremony."

Another man chanted a lengthy song describing the death of *Purukupali*, and another, which instructed the performers, at the conclusion of the rituals, to take the cane rings, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H) from their arms and leave them on the grave.

The songs and dances about *Purukupali*, the honey people of Bathurst Island, and their doings at the first *pukamani*, were followed by another series which related specifically to the collecting of wild honey. In all these [535] performances, the men carried out the honey dance with high knee action, their hands held above their heads and their fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30D).

One man sang about a fly that lives in the hives of wild bees and about a large hive in a tree with a long snout (entrance) and much honey. Then, accompanied by several others, he mimed the action of bees flying in and out of a hive; the aborigines locating the hive, climbing the tree, cutting off the limb containing the hive, and eating the honey. These dances were followed by the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, calling out the totemic places of honey, most of them on Bathurst Island. As each name was called, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*".

A young man started to sing about a pearling lugger, but was told by old *Tjamalampua* to stop and use only the *palaneri* songs. The same man then [535] danced the actions of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, to the appropriate song (p. 75), and one relating to the buffalo,[75] to the accompaniment of "*Prr, prr, papringipali*" (go away big eye, prr, prr), then a song of *Aruni*, the poison fish: "*Aruni aruni, drr, drr, drr*", which referred to the sinking of a boat, the *W'anganui*, off south-western Bathurst Island.[76].

[825] [75] The aborigines believe that the buffalo, brought to Fort Dundas in 1824, belong to the *palaneri* (creation) period.

[76] The *aruni* is a spiny poisonous fish (possibly the stone fish), which was supposed to have sunk the *W'anganui* by driving its spines through the ship's bottom. The *drr, drr*, of the song represents the sounds of the spines as they were driven into the ship.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 (c) The payment of the "workers".
(d) The erecting of the poles.
(e) The final mourning rituals.

Melville Island Milimika

Bathurst Island Milimika

FIG. 4. *Ceremonial Ground, Wanimpori: Pukamani*

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

Early on the first morning, the men, women and children left the main camp and travelled to a temporary ceremonial ground, in the forest, about three hundred yards east of the grave.

The Melville Island group, under *Wurarbusi*, assembled straightaway and performed a small *ilania*, in which some of the men, after the usual honey and mosquito calls, started to chant the rain song of *Tomituka*, whilst others [533] either lit a fire and crouched over it, or sheltered under pandanus trees, shivering as if wet and cold.

As the song changed to the *impok, impok*, of the frog-woman, several men [535] and the woman, *Prupadau*, hopped around the *milimika* in imitation of a frog (Pl. 250).

When the Melville Islanders dispersed to paint themselves, the Bathurst Island men, under *Jibunglialuni*, performed another *ilania* on the same spot.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The leader started a song describing a fight in which the dead man, *Wandampori*, had taken part. To this refrain, the performers mimed the action of men struggling together, beating each other with throwing sticks, or casting spears. 765 [539] [535]

In the middle of this performance, *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, rushed into the forest beating himself with a throwing stick, followed by his step-mother, *Dominao*, who forcibly disarmed him. At the conclusion of the dance, and when quiet was restored, *Nilituma* carried out the same jabiru dance we had seen at the Bathurst Island *ilania* a few days previously (Pl. 29A). At the conclusion of the jabiru dance the Bathurst Islanders retired to paint themselves for the final rituals. In general, the "workers" painted the leading *pukamuni* men, some husbands painted their wives, their children and themselves. [535]

In the late afternoon, the assembled men, women and children, their faces and bodies painted with the most elaborate designs, and decorated with colourful *pukamuni* ornaments (frontispiece), made their way along the road, calling continuously in the high-pitched mosquito call until within a hundred yards of the grave. At that point the two groups separated. Each group lit a fire and carried out, first the rite of *wandiatapinda*, followed by a basket dance (later to be performed at the grave side (Pl. 26C), then went to their respective *milimikas* (Fig. 4A, B). [302]

Pausing only to assemble at those places, both groups of people rushed across the open space and threw themselves on the bushes covering the grave, wailing heart-brokenly. *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, who fell on the belongings of his father at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tried to cut his head with a knife, but was restrained, as before, by his step-mother, *Dominao*, who led him back to the Bathurst Island *milimika*. This was a signal for everyone to return to their respective *milimikas* and perform the first of a series of dances.

In the Bathurst Island circle, *Nangrinini* danced a canoe dance, paddling and bailing a miniature bark canoe as he pushed it along the ground. [535]

As the Melville Island group were chanting their songs, five men sneaked up to the grave, one of their number peered among the bushes, crawled back to his crouching companions and whispered something to them. At this they all called out loudly, ran back into their *milimika* and carried out a vigorous, almost hysterical dance. [535]

The same performance was repeated, but on the second occasion *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, ran to the grave, speared it in several places,

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 their bodies (p. 138). Again, a man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, symbolised the pouring out of the cooked *kulama* yam on a sheet of bark and patted it to the *kulama* call of "*Brr, brr, brr*". This action completed the dance.

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

431 While other dances, which I did not see, were being performed in the two
765 *milimikas*, the *pukamuni* men and their wives unpacked the gifts for the "workers", and spread them out on the ground (Pl. 26a). There was much good-natured discussion about their equitable distribution before the presents were finally separated into lots and placed one on the top of each pole.

177 *Wurarbuti*, resplendent in his body paint and coloured *pukamuni* orna-
533 ments, mounted one of the larger poles and chanted songs telling how he
765 became possessed of the great wealth which enabled him to buy the presents
[302] for the "workers".

"I am a big Government man," he boasted, "so I was able to get plenty
[539] of money."

"I stole the money from the Government to pay for the presents and the police locked me up."

[535] While *Wurarbuti* chanted this song, *Marawani* and the women danced with their hands crossed as if in handcuffs.

As the song continued, *Marawani* ran after *Pulanimbwi*, dragged him into the *milimika*, and struggled with him in imitation of a policeman making an arrest.

Other songs were chanted ridiculing a Government clerk at Darwin, while one of them "wrote" out an order, passed the "money" to a *pukamuni* man through a window (an opening in a pole) and then demanded, in a loud domineering voice, his thumb-print on a scrap of paper as a receipt.

177 *Wurarbuti*, still seated on the top of a pole, started to distribute the
431 presents, imitating, as he did so, the actions and broken English which the same clerk used when dealing with aborigines.
765 "You a worker," said *Wurarbuti*. "Have you a wife? How many children? You work for me, make proper good pole, I pay you."

The "worker" on accepting his payment, put his thumb-print on a scrap of paper (initialled—with a twig—by another *pukamuni* man), and walked away satisfied[81] with his square of printed calico, pipes and tobacco. As each "worker" received his gift the *pukamuni* men performed a dance.

[81] This is not always so. Sometimes a "worker" becomes so annoyed over inadequate payment that he will not allow his pole to be carried to the grave, preferring to let it rot in the forest. On several occasions we saw a pole which had been left in the forest because its maker was dissatisfied with the payment.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

When all the "workers" had been paid, *Wurarbui* called my name and presented me with a number of *pukamuni* arm and chest ornaments (Pl. 31), which normally would have been left on the grave. 431 765 123

These ornaments, *Wurarbui* explained, were a gift from the dead man, *Wanimpari*, because I had assisted in making his *pukamuni* a success.[86]

In the Bathurst Island *milimika* the three "workers" were also receiving their payments. 765

Jilungfiahuni, although he did not have as good a story to tell as *Wurarbui*, danced around the poles with some of the presents in his hand, singing, "Here I come in an expensive motor-car, with lots of money to pay the 'workers' for cutting such beautiful poles."[88] [535] [539] [177]

(d) *Erecting the Poles around the Graves*

The distribution of the last of the presents was a signal for the "workers" to carry the poles from the respective *milimikas* to the grave. 765

Some of the poles were both large and heavy; in particular that illustrated on Pl. 34D, which was eighteen feet long, and so heavy that it took seven "workers" to carry it from the *milimika* and up-end it in the hole prepared for it at the grave (Pl. 26A).

As the poles were carried past the Bathurst Island ceremonial ground, *Jilungfiahuni* threw short sticks over them to commemorate the time when the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, took part in a spear-throwing contest at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* (p. 33).

While the "workers" nonchalantly carried the poles to the grave, the women, with tears running down their cheeks, beat themselves with sticks (until someone restrained them), and the close male relatives, mourning loudly, hysterically cut their heads with steel knives. 765 785

Katopi, the son of the dead man, had washed the painted decorations from his body, and was about to cut his head when he was stopped by his step-mother, *Daminao*. On seeing this, *Marawani*, one of the chief *pukamuni* men, took the knife from the woman and gave it to *Katopi*, who gashed his head two or three times, and, with blood pouring down his face, threw himself on the ground in a paroxysm of grief.

[86] To help them in their payments I had given the *pukamuni* men some printed calico.

[88] Although these stories about great wealth to pay the "workers" are much Europeanised, they are probably following a traditional pattern, when, instead of referring to money and the goods of the white man, the ceremonial leaders exaggerated the number of spears, ornaments, and other goods they had collected to pay the "workers".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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(c) *The Final Mourning Rituals*

765 As soon as the poles were in place the "workers" pulled away the bushes covering the grave. This was a signal for the closing phases of the final rituals. Everyone, men and women, from both Melville and Bathurst Islands, rushed forward and threw themselves on top of one another at the base of the burial poles, until the ground, and even the grave itself, was covered with a mass of human beings, each mourning heartbrokenly.

After a period of mourning, *Jibungliatumi* and *Wurarkuti* rose to their [302] feet, cut off the beards they had grown for the occasion,[84] and washed the painted decorations from their bodies, while the mourners, assembling close [535] to the poles, impersonated, in almost hysterical dance and song, the shark, the rain-woman, the jabiru, and many other mythical heroes of creation times.

Nangrinini, assisted by his wife, first performed the basket dance (Pl. 26c),[85] then once more the dance of the bark canoe. *Pulanimbuwi*, who danced beside him, acted the part of *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), the sea-eagle, swooping down on its prey.

The return of the ceremonial leaders to the grave was the signal for another exhibition of mass hysteria. Weeping women, beating themselves with sticks, threw themselves on the top of the grave, while men, leaning over the burial poles, mourned continuously in high-pitched wails.

Gradually the sounds of lamentation became less. One by one the mourners left, until there remained only the crouching body of *Waniamperi's* widow, painted entirely in black, a little wizened woman, whose span of life was almost spent.

(2) *The Final Pukamuni of Makapini*

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

[302] A little before sunset, the Melville Island men and women assembled to decorate themselves for the final rituals, while *Kitapipatu* (Pl. 27A), a sister of the dead woman, *Makapini*, carrying a long stick, and painted entirely in white, wandered among the *pukamuni* people, crying the *amburu* song.

[184] The body decorations finished, which neither took as long, nor were as elaborate as at the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*, the performers assembled about twenty yards from the three burial poles (Pl. 34A, B, F), which the "workers" had hidden from view by a screen of boughs.

[177] [84] Before the days of the white man, the Tiwi men did not cut their beards at the final *pukamuni*, but plucked them out in handfuls. Spencer, 1928, p. 673, Fig. 467, both illustrates and records having seen this curious ritual in the *kulama* ceremony.

[85] Mountford, 1956, p. 434.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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PLATE 29. *Totemic Dances*

A, Jabiru, Tjalati; B, Owl, Pintoma; C, Lizard, Kilpuruni; D, Frog, Kwouk-kwouk.

[p. 88 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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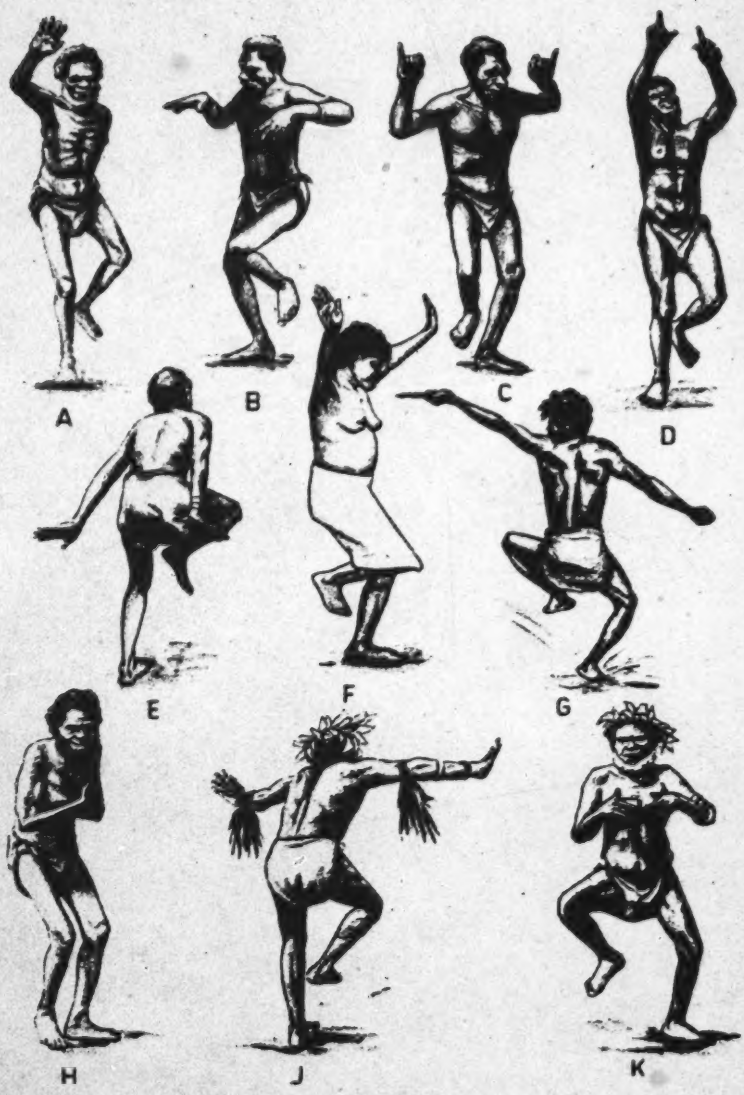

PLATE 30. *Totemic Dances*
A, Moon; B, Rain; C, Flying Fox; D, Wild Honey; E, Crocodile; F, Amburu; G, Shark; H, Skinny Fish; J, Sea-eagle; K, Ningaui.

[p. 88 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

The ceremony opened with the honey call, then, as the men stepped across a fire lit in the centre of the *milimika* (Pl. 24B), a long sustained mosquito call. Following this, the men formed a circle around the fire, and chanted a song which described the bombing of a ship off the coast of Bathurst Island. 765 [533] [177]

Close female relatives, standing in a line facing the poles, sang the *amburu*, while three men, painted white, each carrying a spear, rushed toward the screen of boughs, peered through them, then returned to the *milimika*. Three other men were given spears, one of whom, with a *tokwiange* (goose-feather ball) in his mouth, took a stand as if to throw a spear at the poles, remarking to his companions as he did so, that he was about to spear a *mopaditi*.

As soon as the "workers" removed the boughs which shielded the poles from view, an old woman, *Jibandui*, ran forward and beat the ground near the poles, while the six men, with spears poised ready, followed and stabbed around the base of the poles. These rituals, the signal for all the participants to rush to the grave poles and (Pl. 27B) mourn, were carried out to frighten the *mopaditis* from the vicinity of the grave.

A young man with his head and shoulders through an opening in one of the poles, and his arm around an old woman, sobbed bitterly (Pl. 27C) while others stood around either crying or singing the *amburu*.

As the sounds of grief became less, a young man, miming a killing which had taken place some time ago, sneaked up with great stealth, and "speared" *Tjamalampua* who was lying on the ground in the *milimika*.[84] Shortly afterwards the ceremony closed with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

(*b*) *Songs and Dances*

The next morning about 10 a.m., the ceremonies started afresh. On this occasion, all of the songs and dances dealt with secular incidents; a crocodile creeping upon a man to kill him, an aboriginal sailing a European racing boat, another paddling a bark canoe, still another spearing an enemy, and so on. 177 765 [533]

Several of the aborigines created much laughter by miming the actions of our physical anthropologist, Dr. Carleton Coon, who had just completed a series of body measurements and observations on the Melville Islanders. [123] [535]

One man, using a short stick, measured the arms, legs and body of old *Tjamalampua* as he lay stretched out full length on the ground; he then danced around the *milimika* with his hands round his head, in imitation of the head callipers; another mimed Dr. Coon weighing an aboriginal, cutting his hair and looking at his teeth.

[84] Spencer, 1928, p. 651, describes a similar episode. No doubt the spearing of Tjamalampua had a much deeper symbolism than appeared at the time.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 533 *Wurarbuti* described, in song and dance, how some aborigines from the northern end of the island had tried to kill his father, but the father, being forewarned, had run into the mangrove swamp for shelter. A spear, however, thrown by his enemies, hit him in the side but did not kill him.

[535] [177] Then followed a long series of songs and dances, made up by *Wurarbuti*, describing how the mechanics from Darwin erected a large steel tank at the nearby settlement. To the chanting of songs and beating of buttocks, the actors "rolled" the tank (actually a small log) along the ground, tilted it on one end, rigged blocks and tackle and lifted the "tank" in place. These dances lasted about a half an hour.

Toward the end of this performance, which finished about mid-day, a woman, *Narlaui*, painted entirely in white, and carrying a throwing stick, called upon the dead woman to fight her because, at one time she, *Narlaui*, had reprimanded her for running after men. The aborigines applauded her when she had finished her song. Emboldened by this, *Narlaui* stood in front of one of the poles and challenged the dead woman to a fight.

[535] [177] The ceremony finished[87] with an aeroplane dance, the men posturing in a similar manner to that of the *Jirakati* dance (Pl. 30J).

About sunset, the rituals started afresh with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

Pulanimbuwi and *Muramajua*, acting the part of little children, struggled with each other in the dust of the *milimika* while one of them sang,

[539] "You can't drink from the same breast as I can because we have different mothers."

Old *Malumerinita*, taking up the same refrain, pushed the two "children" aside as he sang,

[539] "I'm a big man, so I'll drink the milk."

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

765 It was after dark before the three "workers", who had cut and painted the burial poles, received their payment (Pl. 27D). As each *pukamuni* man passed the goods, loin cloths, and tobacco to the "worker", he cut his head with a [535] knife, and started a dance in which even a number of little girls took part (Pl. 25A). They had been told by some of the older women what to do, so [868] that the youngsters would be conversant with the woman's place in the rituals.

[87] This ceremony would have probably, like that of *Waniampori*, finished at mid-day had not the Superintendent of the settlement insisted on sending the chief woman mourner to a distant locality from which she had been unable to return on time.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(d) The Final Mourning Rituals

By this time the chief woman mourner, painted entirely in red, had arrived. 765
On reaching the ceremonial ground, she charged against a pole, then leaned [302]
over it, crying heartbrokenly. Another woman, *Dominee*, in paroxysms of grief, threw herself on the ground at the base of another pole, while still another woman, dancing the *amburu* before the third pole, told the *mopaditi* [533] of the dead woman, in a song "to keep away from me". [775]

The ceremony finished, like that of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*, with concerted wailing around the poles.

(3) *The Pukamuni of Inbidjarmeri's Infant*

This simplified *pukamuni* was held for a premature child of *Inbidjarmeri*. 766
The child died, about a month previously, at the Darwin hospital. The complete rituals, though curtailed, having occupied only two hours, followed the normal pattern with two exceptions. The *pukamuni* group did not employ any "workers" to cut the burial poles, and, as the body had not been brought to Melville Island, the ceremonies were held at the grave of a young child, of the same parents, who had died about two years previously.

A distant relative, appointed by the father of a "worker" had burnt the grass, cleared a space adjacent to the grave as a dancing ground and draped a turtle rope around the old poles in which had been twisted the wing feathers of geese.[88] For these duties he was given two loin cloths.

There were no dances at the first *ilania* which took place about three hundred yards from the burial site, only prolonged honey and mosquito calls.

The *pukamuni* group then moved to within a hundred yards of the grave where, after more honey and mosquito calls, they lit the *wandiatapinda* fire, and walked through its smoke and flames.

At the commencement of the final rituals, most of the group halted behind a rope, stretched between two trees, over which the "worker" had hung bagging and blankets;[89] but others rushed forward, spears in hand, and, as in the two previous *pukamunis*, stabbed at the base of the poles surrounding the grave to drive away the *mopaditis*.

After this, everyone moved to the grave-side of the screen, the men carrying out a series of dances while the women, beating themselves with sticks, 535 765 leaned on the *pukamuni* poles and mourned. 533

While some of the *pukamuni* men chanted a song about the red-fruited eugenia, *binamia*, *Muramajua*, walking around the *milimika*, imitated a

[88] I did not find out the significance of this custom.
[89] This took the place of the screen of boughs used in the normal rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending
535 over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milimiha* to the
766 rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first
[177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[80]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten-
[114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and
[775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[81] the fundamental idea
[517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the
[775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[82]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon
[126] drawings[83] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[80] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.
[832] [81] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women were attracted to them.
[82] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.
[83] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

Unidentified

The designs on Pl. 28r are the same as those painted on the face of the chief mourner, *Kasapi*, at *Waniamperi's* final *pukamuni*. I did not ask about their meanings. 302 778

Although I did not learn the meanings of the facial designs on the remaining faces on Pl. 28, it is reasonable to suppose they all referred to some mythological story, probably associated with the totem of the aboriginal who wore them.

7. THE PUKAMUNI DANCES

A number of the dances we saw at the *ilanias* and final *pukamuni* rituals belonged exclusively to certain Tiwi totemic groups. They were so constant in form that, in no time, we could recognise the dance and the totem to which it belonged. [794] 765 535

Many of these dances are more strenuous than any belonging to the mainland; some of them, indeed, so strenuous, i.e., the crocodile (Pl. 30z), the shark (Pl. 30a), or the sea-eagle (Pl. 30j), that they seldom lasted more than a minute. [171]

Although I recorded only fourteen of these totemic dances (illustrated on Pls. 29 and 30), I feel sure that these represent but a small proportion of those performed by the Tiwi. For instance, none of the totemic dances belonging to the dead person would have been performed at the burial rituals we witnessed.

Pl. 29A is the dance of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, which was performed with such skill and abandon by *Nilitumu* at the Bathurst Island *ilania* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* ceremony.

Pl. 29B is the dance of the boobook owl, *Purujikini*, who with his wife, the barn-owl, *Pissama*, organized the second *kulama* ceremony on Turiturina Island, western Bathurst Island. The dancer is indicating the large eyes of the boobook owl.

Pl. 29C is the dance of the blanket-lizard, *Kilpuruni*, who was punished by *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, because the former seduced *Jurumu's* wife. The dancer walked around the ceremonial ground with an awkward gait, in imitation of the blanket-lizard's curious method of locomotion.

Pl. 29D pictures the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, who is the mother of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, the woman of the monsoon rain, *Tomiuka*, and the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. The frog dance was performed many times at the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi*, the frog being the totem of his father.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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765

Pl. 30A is the moon-man, *Tjapera*, who fought with *Purukupali* during the creation period. The bent, upraised arm of the dancer symbolizes the crescent moon.

Pl. 30B is the dance of the rain-woman, *Tomituka*, who lives at Wailu with her brother, sister and her mother, the frog-woman, *Kwuk-kwuk*. The fingers pointing downward symbolize the falling rain.

Pl. 30C illustrates the dance of the flying-fox, *Murungimpili*, whose totemic place is at Kaialili lagoon, southern Melville Island. This dance was frequently performed at the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, her father being a flying-fox man. The dancer, with high steps, moved his arms alternately up and down, with the little fingers pointing upward.

Pl. 30D is the dance of wild honey. In this dance the performer, dancing vigorously around the ceremonial ground, pointed upward, as if to indicate the position of a hive of wild bees.

Pl. 30E is the spirited dance of the crocodile, *Jirakupai*, who, during creation times, transformed himself into a crocodile to escape his enemies. This was not often performed in the burial ceremonies we witnessed.

Pl. 30F is the *amburu*, the women's dance of mourning. When the men are performing in the ceremonial circle, the women come in from the left-hand side performing the *amburu*. I did not collect any specific myth about this dance, except that it has been performed by the women ever since the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*.

Pl. 30G is the dance of the shark, *Tukwala*, probably the most strenuous dance in aboriginal Australia. It is performed only by young men, women and children, the older men claiming that its performance requires too much effort.

Pl. 30H illustrates the dance of the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, who injured his spine while taking part in a spear-throwing contest held during the final *pukamuni* rituals of *Purukupali*. The dancer is miming the pain that *Pipinjawari* suffered on account of his injury.

Pl. 30J is an attractive and graceful dance symbolizing the sea-eagle, *Jirakai*, swooping down on its prey, with its wings outspread. This dance was performed many times at the *ilanias* of the woman, *Nulatini*.

Pl. 30K, the *Ningaui* dance, symbolizes the awkward gait and curious actions of these dwarf spirit people who live in the swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. This dance was performed with considerable skill and artistry by the leader of the Bathurst Island group, *Jibunglialumi*, at one of the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the 881
previous singer's dead father. 765

(*e*) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[35] when I think of you, my uncle." [533]
Some of the women cried when the song was finished. [539]

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the 252
fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the 881
glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants.

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate 881
it (Pl. 442), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, [533]
goodbye",[36] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purutjikini*, did at the first [539]
kulama.

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the 535
following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women. 881

(*a*) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird). [534]

(*b*) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 301), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(*c*) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*tokwiangu*) in his mouth to symbolise the prey of the crocodile.

(*d*) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(*e*) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(*f*) The buffalo,

(*g*) The shark (Pl. 300).

[35] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *imunka* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions. [826] [774]

[36] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the *wuringalua* tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten. [824]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

arm rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), they seated themselves outside the *milimika*, but took no part in the subsequent rituals. 881 [301]

Other fully initiated men led initiates of the *Wadjeniati* grade to the *wuringalata* tree, where the yams had been stored on the second morning, told them to sit down and erected a low screen of boughs in front so that the initiates could not be seen from the *milimika*.

The *Mikingulas* first painted the bodies of the *Wadjeniati* initiates with yellow paint, then decorated them with many cane rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), on their upper arms, hair-string belts, *ularimi*, around their waists and goose-feather balls, *tokwiangas* (Pl. 31B), on their necks, arms and wrists (see Pl. 42J). This ritual admitted them to the grade of *Mikinatrina* and *Mikinatrinings* respectively. 881 302 [301]

After the *Wadjeniati* initiates were decorated, the senior grades of the *kulama* painted their faces, bodies, hair and beards with elaborate designs in red, yellow, black and white. In one design, peculiar to the *kulama*, the aborigines covered one side of their faces with red paint, and the other side with black,[87] the two colours being separated with a line of yellow (Pl. 42M). The men painted a complex design, usually in red and white on their hair and beards.[88] Some of the men also decorated their children.

The leader of the *kulama* then assembled everyone to see the *Mikinatrina* initiates perform their first dance, which they had been quietly practising for some time. 535 881

At a given signal, each *Mikinatrina* stood up in turn and, gaily decorated with body paint and coloured ceremonial ornaments, and holding a flat fighting club, *juruwila*, in either hand, performed his first dance. As each initiate danced, the assembled people applauded, slapping their buttocks in approbation of both the dancing and the appearance of the initiates. [201]

When the *Mikinatrinas* had finished their dance, the female initiates, the *Mikinatriningas*, similarly decorated, but without the clubs, individually performed their dances. Still painted and wearing their decorations, the male and female *Mikinatrinas* seated themselves outside of the *milimika* beside the newly created *Kilipaniatis*.

After the initiates had finished their dances, several of the *Mikingulas* entered the *milimika* and chanted another series of secular songs. [533]

[87] Spencer, 1928, p. 674, who saw a *kulama* ceremony during 1911, refers to this curious form of facial decoration.

[88] The method of colouring the hair with intricate designs is of some interest. The aboriginal, loading his fingers and thumb with wet ground-up ochre, pinched the hair, instead of rubbing the colour into it. By this means, the operator was able to keep sharp well-defined edges to the design, an effect that could not be achieved in any other way.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 *Wurarkui* described some of his experiences when he visited Brisbane to
533 dance before the Queen of England.
539 (a) "I saw the big boat, Marella, beside the jetty at Brisbane, many motor
881 cars, boats and trains. The boats went under a big bridge over the river, and across that bridge went the motor cars. The ship's flags were flying."

Another man sang.

(b) "The *tapalingas* (stars) are like those on the American flag in Darwin. They lifted the flag up in the morning, and let it down at night."

(c) "The *tadiwali* (shark) swims about the sea looking for stingrays."

[535] The onlookers applauded this song and asked the singer to perform the shark dance (Pl. 300), which he did to the delight of all.

(d) "I am a wireless man, and have sent native tucker (food) all over Australia. The Native Affairs branch in Darwin listened in."

(e) "Leo Hickey's boat comes quickly to Snake Bay with a cargo of food from Darwin."

Another *Mikingula* chanted a lengthy song describing the making of a wooden canoe, the felling of a tree in the jungle, the length and shape of the craft and the final launching.

After these songs, the *kulama* men rested in the shade, and the initiates sat by the side of the *milimika*, until about sunset.

(10) *Taking the Cooked Yams to Water*

881 The *Mikingulas*, starting from equally spaced positions on the periphery, crawled toward the basket of cooked and sliced yams standing in the centre of the *milimika*, and pretended to fight over it. While this was going on, the women, beating sticks together, called out "Brr-brr", as did the owl-man, *Purutjikini*, at the first *kulama*. Meanwhile two of the *Mikingulas* vigorously
[535] performed the crocodile dance (Pl. 308). Then with a loud cry, one of them picked up the basket containing the yams, and followed by most of the women and children, carried the basket to the water.

With long-drawn-out calls, and the sound "Brr-brr", the men tipped the cut-up yams from the basket on to a grass bed on the bottom of the stream. While the leader patted the surface of the water, the rest of the people called in a high trilling note, similar to the mosquito call of the *pukamuni* ceremony,
[821] ending up in a loud *yoi*. These calls, they said, would cause still more thunder storms and heavy rain.

533 It was quite dark (about 7.30 p.m.) when the *kulama* people assembled to
881 hear the *Mikinatrina* initiates sing for the first time. For, at this stage of the ceremony, each male initiate of the *Mikinatrina* grade was invited by the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

without quarrels. Again, there is no comparable ceremony on the mainland. 171 [881]

(c) Throughout the mainland of Australia, women occupy a low social status within the tribal framework. They are rigidly excluded from almost all aspects of the ceremonial life, and of initiation; they also are ignorant of most of the creation myths, the procedures of the secret rituals, and even the existence of the sacred objects. 171 562

These restrictions do not apply to the women of the Tiwi. They are initiated, side by side, with the men, and take similar though not identical parts in the ritual. They also participate in all phases of the burial ceremonies, at which they usually perform their own dance, the *Amburu*, but occasionally take part in dances which are performed by the men (Pl. 25c). A woman even has the right to cut and paint a burial pole, if her husband, who has been allotted the task, is unavoidably absent. In short, I was unable to find any aspect of Tiwi ceremonial life in which women could not take their part if they so desired.

(d) Although the creation story of the Tiwi is basically similar to that of the aborigines elsewhere in Australia, it is not as elaborate as, say, the travels of the Wawalik and the Djunkgao Sisters of Arnhem Land, recorded by Warner (1937), nor those of Central Australia, described by Spencer and Gillen (1899). I did not witness, nor did I hear of any specific Tiwi ceremony that commemorated the myths of the creation period. The dances in the *ilanias*, and the final rituals of the burial ceremony, usually referred to the various creatures or the elements, but seldom to an incident in the creation myth. 171 773 [535]

(e) There are also important differences between many of the myths of the Tiwi and those of the mainland people. For instance, in northern Australia, it is the moon man who brings death to mankind; in Melville Island the same moon-man endeavours to prevent death from coming to the world. I have already pointed out other wide differences between the astronomical myths of the mainland and those of the adjacent Melville Island.

On Arnhem Land, in fact, as far as South Australia, the aborigines, almost without exception, believe that their spirits go to a distant land not visible to human eyes, where there is continuous good weather, and an abundance of easily gathered food. 171 775

On the other hand, the Tiwi believe that at the close of the burial rituals the spirits of their dead return to their separate birthplaces, where each one hunts for food in the same manner as its living relatives, suffering, as they do, from exposure if the weather is inclement, and from hunger if the food supplies are limited.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

demands it; but usually, when on a simple turtle or dugong hunting expedition, 501
two persons only occupy places in the craft, one near the bow and another near
the stern (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). The boatmen, while propelling the [516]
craft, squat with their buttocks resting upon the heels and with their knees pressed
against the sides. The weight of their body being thus well within the boat, its
stability is thereby considerably increased.

Paddles.—Propulsion is effected by means of paddles which are made of hard 501
wood. They have a single well-shaped blade and a rounded handle (*vide* Plate
XII, Fig. 2). The edges of the blade are parallel or taper slightly towards the end,
which is square or rounded. Apart from the marks left by the tomahawk used in [531]
its making, the implement is without ornamentation. In one case only, a circular
collar was carved around the handle, immediately above the sloping shoulder of the
blade. The longest paddle noted measured 167 centimetres in length, its blade
80; the shortest was 115 centimetres in length and its blade 45. The width
of the blades ranges from 7 to 9 centimetres. Both hands clasp the paddle,
which is dipped alternately on one side or the other as the occasion and the steering
require it.

Balers.—Water that accumulates in the canoe, either by leakage or overwash [415
in a rough sea, is removed by means of a baler which is made out of the melon 824]
shell[1] (*Melo diadema*). The columella of the shell is carefully cut away, leaving
only the large body-whorl, which is used as a scoop (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 3 and 4).
The outer surface of the shell is painted with red and yellow ochre in large cross [531]
pattern, with a fine cross shading.

Dug-outs.—The dug-out canoes to which I have elsewhere referred[2] have, in [175]
all probability, been introduced by Malays from whom the natives obtain them by
barter. Dr. Walter Roth has also proved that the dug-outs met with along the coast of
Queensland are of Papuan origin. The form observed in Apsley Strait is without
outrigger and hollowed out of a single tree trunk. The bow and stern are raised
(*vide* Plate X, Fig. 2).

Corrobborees.

As with all primitive folk, song and dance constitute the ultimate stage of 535
any social intercourse or festivity. The islanders are even more ready than ~~their~~ 527
brothers on the mainland to resort to this means of entertainment. It thus
happened that, wherever we came into contact with the blacks and presented them
with divers small articles, a corrobboree was immediately inaugurated; even though
the encounter happened to occur in the middle of the day. Corrobborees on the

[1] *Cf. Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* vol. ii, p. 17: "the baler (a melon shell) is in constant requisition."

[2] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 53. Among others, note that Major Campbell says of the Port Essington natives that "such of the canoes as I saw were hollowed from the trunks of trees, like those of the Malays and were probably either left by these people or stolen from them," *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 170.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

527 mainland, it will be remembered, are with preference postponed until after night-
535 fall. The women were not permitted to take part in the proceedings, but were,
[562] indeed, kept at some considerable distance off. Youths and male children were allowed to join in the ceremonies without apparent restriction. When we met with men, hunting in the bush, and they had been convinced of our *bona fide* intentions, they would approach us in groups of from two to four, and deliver up their long
[200] spears to us. Several of the young men would, in the meantime, run into the woods as messengers to summon others who were as yet unaware of the presence of the strangers in their haunts.

203 A corrobboree[1] having been decided upon, the signal or invitation to take part
527 in the event is sounded by two or three of the older men, who have previously arranged it among themselves. This initial note is a long-drawn, continuous yell resembling the German diphthong ö! Other members immediately fall in with the same note and are joined, at intervals, by others excitedly rushing up to take their stand alongside of those who started the call. The monosyllabic "ö" is kept continuous by the combined efforts of many voices, each of which individually expires for a moment, after the lungs' capacity for air has been completely exhausted. The note is, however, taken up again immediately after a fresh supply of air has been inhaled. The weirdness of the monotone is suddenly broken by the powerful voice of the "master" of the ceremonies, who brings forth a penetrating, but abrupt, order resembling "wahoi." This is instantly and collectively repeated by all others present. A momentary silence follows and allows the sombre trunks of the surrounding forest to reiterate the final word in ringing echoes.

The leader once more gives the note; this time in a slightly modified form resembling a long-continued "ye," that merges imperceptibly into a "yi." A sudden shrill "wahoi-hoi" brings that note also to a stop. A deadly silence prevails.

527 The primary appellation now being over, the performers congregate themselves into a compact group. In the meanwhile much excited vociferation ensues from every mouth, young as well as old. At this stage their eyes make a survey of any
[628] neighbouring encampment and if, by chance, a likely performer is noticed who has not heeded the appeal and is shirking his duty by non-attendance, he is furiously implored, at times abusively, to join the assemblage of performers. The leader now emerges from the group at a walking pace and is followed, in single file, by all participants, each in his turn falling into regular order as though his place had previously been allotted to him. The course taken by the leader is a winding one; walking, at first, some distance away from the point of starting but returning
527 eventually thereto. The musical accompaniment is started afresh, and though not
533 exactly melodious to the European ear, it is certainly a remarkably clever and original production on the part of the aboriginal. The nearest way we might describe it in words is that it is in the form of a trill, produced by a rapidly repeated

Compare also H. Klaatsch, *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, pp. 589 and 590.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

"i, i, i, . . . ," changing, it may be, occasionally to a "hi, hi, hi, ..." "That one 527
all-a-same bird," remarked one of my Larrekiya boys, who stood near to me, quite 533
overcome with excitement; and, indeed, I did now recognize the similarity to the trill of the great stone-plover or "curlew" (*Oedicnemus sp.*). The leader having in 527
the interim returned to the starting point and thus completed that part of the 535
performance in which we might be prone to find an analogy with the polonaise of a modern ball, suddenly "doubles" or breaks to a running pace and all the others follow his example. He selects a wide spiral course, gradually nearing the centre and concentrating the body of men to a mass of humanity which to the observer seems to be moving in confusion and disorder. The pace quickens. The men stamp the ground with their feet, at the same time throwing up their arms and keeping them erect from the shoulder. An explosive shriek from the leader is echoed by the voices of all the others. The stamping of feet ceases and the arms of the performers drop to their sides. The leader now steps out to a position in front of his group of men, who, all of them, have turned to face the same way, viz., towards him. Looking to one side and lifting his arm in that direction, the leader emits a high-pitched shriek, which, as his arm is swept downwards on that side, is followed by a combined roaring "hoi" of all the others. This item is repeated several times over; alternately on one side and the other, in succession. This concludes another part of the corrobboree.

All performers now form themselves into a semi-circular group. The excite- [532]
ment is intense; forcible argument and debating ensue, accompanied by jocular shouting and laughing, which are repeatedly stimulated by gleeful interjections of "irr," an exclamation common to all Australian tribes.[1]

Having come to some different arrangement among themselves, a "tempo" is [533]
set by all members clapping either one or both of their hands upon the sides of their thighs, or their buttocks, producing dull and drum-like sounds by the impact. The latter are in marked unison and rhythmical. A performer now jumps from the semicircle of the time-beaters and runs round in a circle, facing its centre, and all the while stamping his feet. The interest and excitement increase among the [533]
audience, who further subsidize the accompaniment with a note, that is produced by a spluttering movement of the lips and sounds like "brr, brr, brr." As the stamping of the performer is accelerated, the clapping quickens with it. All at once he throws up his head and shouts "poop." This solicits an immediate response of "iah" from all others present.

Stationing himself in the centre, he next cuts some wonderfully clever and athletic antics. At the start he stamps the ground vigorously with both feet in alternation; the crowd keeping excellent time with their accompaniment of clapping hands upon their buttocks. As his pace increases, the beats of the hands become sharper and both hands are used (usually when striking the buttocks more posteriorly). While he stamps his feet, the performer, at the same time, vibrates

[1] *Vide* footnotes, H. Basedow, *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 33.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

527 his legs in a remarkable manner; a hyperflexibility in the knee produces,
535 alternately, a temporary valgus- and varus-deformation of the limbs. The arms are thrown straight-outwardly from the shoulders; the hands being dorsally flexed at the wrists. He throws his head from one side to another and occasionally backwards. At times he jumps wildly from one place to another, emitting, with each bound, a loud coarse cry of "poop," which, as before, is followed by a shrill "iah" from all others present. This item being repeated almost to exhaustion, the performer rushes back into the midst of the group while appreciative shrieks of laughter and applause conclude that part.

When the beating of time starts afresh, other performers may repeat the same act and try to excel the performance of their predecessor.

Other items follow, which are imitative in character. A few may be described. It will be understood that the beating of time continues throughout, as do, also, the frequent interjections of "poop" and "iah."

The kangaroo ceremony.—A kangaroo ceremony is started by one or two men jumping into the ring with their legs slightly bent at the knee. Their arms are held forward, bent vertically and at right angles at the elbow, with their hands prone and partly closed. The whole posture is to resemble that of the hopping marsupial of Australia. In jumping round the space, the actor turns his head from side to side, face downwards, as though in search of food. When such is supposed to have been found, his hands may assist to support his body and the hopping ceases. His legs are then bent strongly in the knees, so that his body sinks and the buttocks come to rest immediately above the heels, or, indeed, he may squat entirely upon the ground. Both hands being now placed on the ground between the open thighs, they are held together in the form of a scoop and made to take up a quantity of sand between them. Gently rubbing the hands backwards and forwards they are slowly passed to the level of the mouth and then above it, retaining a horizontal position all the time. This process is repeated several times. Then, at the moment that the sand is dropped to earth, the men rise to their feet with a bound and start running round the ring with the stamping of feet described above and a peculiar hissing noise from their lips. The act is interrupted at frequent intervals by a cry of "poop," which is echoed by the resounding voices of "iah." The hopping recommences. The men occasionally stop and scratch one of their legs with one hand, held in imitation of a claw. Then, while that hand is being held erect, and in a bent position, the opposite hand scratches that limb also. Either arm is now brought into contact with the mouth and licked in precisely the same way as the animals themselves do. The pace of the timekeepers at this stage quickens once more, and the performers furiously scratch all accessible parts of their body with increased zeal. An unexpected cry of "poop," followed by a hearty "iah," terminates this part amid loud shrieks and applause.

It is not long, however, before the two performers again leap into the ring, each armed with a light reed, resembling a spear, in his hand. The above ceremony is partly recapitulated, being, however, slightly modified in that one man, at intervals,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on The

takes the part of a hunter endeavouring to drive his spear into the enraged kangaroo on the opposite side of the ring. 527 535

Corrobboree of the ship of war.—The next item in the ceremony appeals to us Europeans in a twofold sense. Firstly, the mimicry on the part of the aboriginal in an introduced scene is excellent: its effect being still more enhanced in that his artistic genius has expanded the original impressions by adequate interludes of his own invention and taste. Secondly, the observer's sentiment and appreciation are kindled afresh when he sees this savage folk, who are oft not credited with the possession of anything but vice and immorality, present to a subsequent and younger generation, scenes in living picture, which happened long ago in the days of the naval settlement of Fort Dundas. To us the records are available in the libraries throughout the world; to the aboriginal the events can only be handed down by tradition and such ceremonies as that which is now to be described. 177 527 535 [173 182]

The chorus or semicircular group of men have again started their rhythmical accompaniment by clapping upon the lateral aspect of their thighs with the arched palm of one hand. A performer rushes into the centre of the half-ring and, after going through a few preliminaries, stands with one of his legs placed a short distance in front of the other and slightly flexed at the knee. Throwing his head back and looking upwards, he starts a vigorous hauling action by alternately throwing one arm out in the direction he is looking, closing the fist and making an imaginary pull right down to his loins, while at the same time the opposite arm is thrown out and returned in a similar way. Accurate time is kept by the time-beaters. This act is in imitation of the hauling-in of a sail on a European man-of-war, such as the natives saw at Fort Dundas nearly a century ago. The performer now turns and runs to the opposite corner of the half-ring; the onlookers marking the time by clapping to it in a quickened beat produced with both hands upon their buttocks. The same act is repeated there several times. Next, the same hauling motion is continued, but reversed from below towards the body, in imitation of the hauling-up of an anchor. Several short and harsh interjections suggest the orders of the commanding officers and the whole ceremony, in fact, is reproduced with a suspicion of caricature upon the strictness of naval discipline. During this part of the performance, several cries of "poop" and "ish" are again sounded. The actor now moves about in the semicircle with the familiar stamping of feet and cutting out the most grotesque antics. He first extends his arms straight out on either side, throws his head back and moves his thorax laterally in a pendulous manner from the hips. Then he turns his arms through a right-angle frontwards, so that they project slantingly upwards, whence he again changes them to the former position. Then again he extends his arms downward and bends them so that the elbows project behind and his fists rest against his flanks, from which position they are presently changed to a straight pendulous one. After remaining in that position a short while, he suddenly throws them furiously upwards in front of him; the stamping, which has been

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 continued all the while, is at this stage strengthened. Any of these acts may be
527 interrupted at any moment by changing to the "hauling of sail or anchor" scene
535 and many interjections of "poop" and "iah" accompany them. The performer himself now ceases to stamp with his feet, but in place thereof he bends his legs at the knees and knocks his thighs together while he extends his arms outwards, either in front or at the side of him.

527 *Corrobboree of a fight.*—During several of the corrobborees described, a chant
535 was heard which accompanied the acting in addition to the clapping of hands against the thighs or buttocks. In trying to reproduce the words or syllables of this chant, the nearest analogy I can find is—

[533
539]

"*Tupera monan la jerra*
Tupera monan la jerra,"

and

"*Tupatunan tenakomejona.*"

These chants are muttered uninterruptedly throughout the particular part. The corrobboree of a fight consists in the imitation of a spear duel between two angry blackfellows. They carry the same kind of reed-spears as was described under the "kangaroo ceremony." They first place themselves in defiance of one another at either side of the half-circle and go through all sorts of antics, brandishing their spears, rolling their eyes, and furiously throwing their bodies about. Next they start running about the ring and stamp their feet, throwing up their arms and knocking their thighs together in much the same way as previously described.

Corrobboree of the jungle fowl.—After the usual excessive amount of shouting, jabbering, and excited shrieks of laughter, an old man runs forward into the ring. He bends his arms at the elbow and holds them close against the sides of his body, while the closed fists rest on his chest, an attitude resembling that of a professional runner. This is to resemble the wings of the bird (*Leipoa*). He looks about the ground from side to side as though in search of something. Presently he imitates the bird's call with a shrill penetrating voice which sounds like "he-r-r-r-l." The onlookers' accompaniment consists in producing short spluttering and bubbling noises with their lips that sound like "brrl, brrl, brrl." The performer often interrupts the proceedings by shouting "he," to which all others respond with a loud "yeh." Now he throws up clouds of dust behind him with his feet, in imitation of the way in which the jungle fowl scratch and throw up the earth into the enormous mounds that contain their eggs.

To conclude the ceremony, all performers are led off again by the original leader in Indian file and go through much the same performance as they did in the initiation of the ceremony; the final shouts and shrieks, after the completion of the "trot" in spiral line, being particularly loud and enthusiasic.

114 Captain King[1] was probably the first white man to have witnessed the
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[1] *Survey Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

corrobboree of the Melville Islanders, but it appears that he regarded the [114] demonstration as hostile. He writes that "the dance consisted chiefly of the per- 527 formers leaping two or three times successively out of the sea, and then violently 535 moving their legs so as to agitate the water into foam for some distance around them, all the time shouting loudly and laughing immoderately; then they would run through the water for eight or ten yards and perform again; and this was repeated over and over as long as the dance lasted."

During none of these ceremonies, or indeed anywhere on the island, did I see [771] anything of totemism in the scientific sense of the word. This fact is in accordance [114] with my observations in Central and North Australia, and my negative evidence is amply borne out by the researches of Drs. W. E. Roth and H. Klaatsch and others.

Pastimes.

The sham-fights of youths with small arrow-shaped spears have already been 524 mentioned. Children were observed upon the beach competing in running and long jump. A favourite amusement of the younger folk on a breezy day is to collect the light globular seed-heads of the "spring rolling grass" (*Spinifex hirsutis*), that grow on every sand-hill near the coast, and take them to the beach and there release them on the hardened sand. Driven along by the wind, these seeds travel over the surface at no mean pace. Allowing them to gain a fair start, the children bolt after them and endeavour to overtake them and pick them up from the ground while dashing past them at full speed in "cow-boy" fashion.

Another game is that of hand-ball. The seeds of the zamia (*Cycas media*) take the place of a small ball. Two lads stand facing one another and hit the seed to and fro with the palms of their hands, after the style of a modern game of tennis.

Despite their keenness of sight and quickness of hand, they are, nevertheless, [147] very backward in catching with their hands an object which is thrown at them.

Burial Method.

The aborigines of Bathurst and Melville Islands have a unique and elaborate 764 method of burial; graves have been found on both islands. It appears that the favourite places for burying the dead are there, where a jungle or mangrove-thicket breaks to the ordinary eucalypt-woodland, usually near to the sea-coast or to a native water.

Historically we have to note several observations in this connection.

Sir Gordon Bremer[1] mentions having discovered a grave on Bathurst Island in 1824. "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it

[1] *Imperial Parliamentary Paper*, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, London, March 27th, 1843; also in *The Genesis of Queensland*, by H. S. Russell, Sydney, 1888, p. 34.

765 the pieces in a bark bag, with intervals of walking and chanting. The crowd had now invaded his circle and his walking was confined to a small sector of the circle. Once he washed his hands, head and beard with water and retired to eat. When he had finished, the small boy brought a bark bag of water, which he emptied into the bag containing the cut-up yams. After dark, about 7.30, the old man began to chant again [535] within the circle. He was joined by a number of men, and they shuffled around chanting, slapping their buttocks, and dragging one foot. Finally they shouted and then moved off in single file to a small water channel in the grass nearby. The grass was trodden down and the old man tipped the yams into the water, while the chorus beat their buttocks and cried "Broop." A shout was given and they then dispersed.

During the night the old man chanted at intervals. At sunrise he was seen standing beneath a palm rubbing himself with ochre, and the small boy attending him. He chanted and others joined him. They filed down to the creek, where a shout like "R-r-r-r-p" was given. The old man started to eat the yams and others followed. They then returned to the circle and cleared it by scraping outwards with their feet, tufts of grass and pieces of bark being thrown away. The stones from the central pile were placed round the edge of the circle. The old man took three small stones from the centre and threw them a few feet into the air, with the shout of "R-r-r-r-p." The ceremony was finished.

The language difficulty was formidable, but I learned that I had broken in on the third day of the ceremony. On the first day palm nuts (*kuwuhs*) had been gathered and eaten. On the second day yams had been collected and had been cooked at sunrise on the third day. I was told that

[p 79-B]

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SHARK DANCE is among traditional, imitative figures that are performed during ritual preparation of toxic *Kulama* yams.

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868 ceived additional instruction in spear-fishing and birding, while girls were taught more intensively to locate and identify edible plants. The children, as a result, were generally independent economically in their early teens, by
587 which time the girls were already married. Young males
[883] contributed to their parents' larder and to other households, but did not marry and acquire households until they
[183] were more than thirty years old. Even now, this late marriage age obtains in theory, but not always in practice.

885 THUS, to the Tiwi, economic independence and/or marriage did not alone signify adulthood. The Tiwi adult was intellectually, rather than physiologically, a mature individual who was expected to join actively in the non-economic affairs of the community. An adult was also expected to be almost entirely responsible for his own health, wealth, and future prospects. This included attaining success in hunting and in war and, for the men, in wife-collecting. If an adult became ill or was injured or, as a Tiwi would say, was unlucky in the pursuit of life's benefits, he alone was responsible for not behaving as an adult should.

884 The annual *Kulama* ceremony, held by each community in April at the end of the rainy season, was a most important event to insure individual success. Although a collec-

[P. 11, (c)]

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 12(c)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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BEFORE SINGING YAMS, the ritual participants dip hands into white paint and pat it around eyes to insure acute vision.

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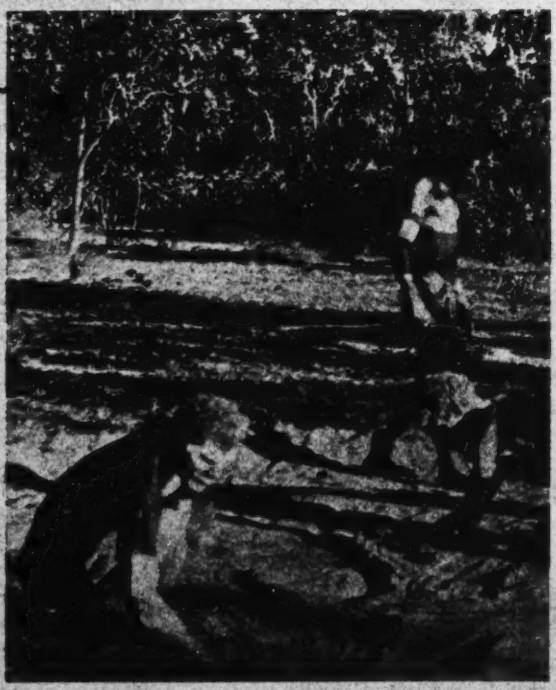

CEREMONIAL RING is prepared by clearing ground of grass, sticks, and stones. Participants will sing and dance there.

[P. 12, (B)]

are allowed to dig the yam. A special dance area, or ceremonial ring, is cleared on the ground and a special cooking fire is built in its center. On each of the three ceremonial days the participants paint themselves in specified ways with ocher. During the evening of each day, while the yams are soaking or cooking, the male participants, singly or together, walk slowly counterclockwise around the ceremonial fire, beating sticks together as an accompaniment to specially composed songs. At times the wives, who remain outside the ring, sing with the men, or they may join their husbands in traditional dances that imitate various aspects of the natural world around them.

The songs are a vital part of the ritual. They must be newly composed for the occasion and may relate to any event or abstract idea the composer chooses. The songs often deal with injustices the singer has experienced in the past year, about which he wishes to register an "official" complaint:

> "There was a funeral,
> You went first, I came after.
> Old people came in first.
> I was late because I had a *Kulama*.
> Why didn't you wait for me?"
>
> or
>
> "When Dory have baby girl
> The old man said, 'That's for you.'
> Dory, my mother-in-law, she burns me.
> Dory doesn't know the old people way.
> I would like to kill her."

Others may be in the nature of news reports, in which the listeners are informed of anything interesting that may have happened to the singer during the preceding year. For instance, the composer of the following song had just

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P.14,(A)--ANALYST]
[P.13,(B)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca.1939)1939 OL20 Tiwi OL20

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BATHURST ISLAND NATIVES PRACTISING A CORROBOREE DANCE.

[p. 12]

797 ters, supervising the lubras' work and ordering stores, which are brought from Darwin by the mission's own lugger *St. Francis*. The pleasant lunch we had at the refectory, where wide windows, open all round, admitted every wandering breeze, was due to their efforts, and later I was to see something of the results of their teaching.

797 School, both for boys and for girls, takes up only two and a half hours each day, but the pupils learn quickly, and the more 871 they are taught the more they can absorb. Reading and writing are mastered without any more difficulty than in the case of white children of the same age, though the pupils were very shy and almost inaudible when exhibiting their prowess. Arithmetic they do not take to so kindly, unless they happen to be interested by some problem that has a definitely practical application to their own lives; but drawing comes natural to the islanders, as it does to the blacks of the mainland, where I had already seen very spirited sketches made by aboriginal children. Of the affection of the children, both for the sisters and the mission fathers, there was no doubt. To be as close to them as possible was an honour they were all bent on securing.

797 THE "blackies," as they call the girls, range in age from tiny 562 tots to those who are practically young women. They were all much excited by the novelty of our visit, bubbling over with laughter, whispering and giggling together. The older "blackies" eye a visitor coyly, smiling over their shoulders with a flash of white teeth; and, when the pilot and I came along with one of the sisters to hear them sing the "Magnificat" and "Adeste Fideles," they fled shrieking, only to turn round and giggle again when they thought that they were far enough away.

"No more gammon!" called the sister, and they lined up demurely to sing their hymns right tunefully, with spasms of giggles in the intervals. To hold up a finger is quite sufficient to bring shrieks of delight from these childish, happy creatures. "Georgie," a very little boy with a very big tummy, so young that he was not yet at the boys' school, sang "Georgie Porgie, puddiny pie, kissed the girls and made them cry" with much aplomb and gesture. If Georgie was at the girls' school, he did not forget that he was a man. He spoke man's language, not woman's [198 516] talk such as women by custom must use on Bathurst Island, and he sat down like a man with knees wide apart, not together as a woman must.

● 535 Then, while the older "blackies" formed a circle, chanting in their own language and clapping their hands in time, little girls, [562] two by two, performed women's dances, which again differ from those of the men. There were buffalo, bullock, and lugger dances, when they imitated the animals with arms widespread or bent slightly at the elbows to represent the horns, or held at angles such as those at which sails are set on a lugger, while, now and then, two little feet beaten together faithfully copied the "put-put" of Diesel engines.

More ambitious and complicated was the dance of the overseas mail 'plane that flies from Singapore to Darwin, when whirling arms represented the propellers and stamping feet the beat of [198 533 768] the engines. There is, by the way, a sacred language used for songs, and it is only in this language that the name of the dead can be mentioned. If by chance anyone should mention a dead man's name in the ordinary language, every one within hearing will spit with vigour. If defecation, the maker of such a faux pas will be hit about the head.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

other. At the opposite end stood the defendant, with little or no paint on him, perhaps holding a hunting spear or two in his hand (a sign of insolence), perhaps holding only throwing sticks (less defiant, since the stick was an inferior weapon more appropriate to young men), or perhaps entirely weaponless (a sign of proper humility and the deference to his seniors that all bachelors ought to show in such situations). The accuser, with many gestures, particularly with much stamping of the feet and chewing of the beard, told the young man in detail precisely what he and all right-minded members of the community thought of him. This angry, loud harangue went into minute detail, not only about the actual offense, but the whole life career of the defendant, and paid particular attention to occasions in the past when the old man even remotely, or some of his relatives, even more remotely, had performed kindnesses toward either the young man or some of his relatives. It is difficult to summarize briefly one of these harangues, but the general formula, subject to much variation by each individual accuser, appeared to be the building up of as much contrast as possible between the criminal or antisocial character of the young man's actions and the fact that he was a member of a network of interpersonal relationships in which mutual aid and reciprocal obligations were essential. The Tiwi orators, of course, did not put the matter in such abstract terms. They listed the long catalogue of people who had done things for the young man since his birth, and for his ancestors and relatives, until the catalogue took in practically the whole tribe—past, present, and future. And what had he done to repay his obligations to all these people? "Why, the miserable, ungrateful wretch spends his time hanging around my camp, etc., etc. And not only my camp, but last year it was widely believed that he was indulging in similar actions around the camp of my esteemed fellow-elder, So and So." We do not think that we are overintellectualizing the content of these harangues if we say that they involved the old man's reminding the young man of his debt to society, and his attempting to convey the idea that social life needed mutual aid and trust between all its members.

After twenty minutes or so of this sociological abuse and blame pinning, the old man threw aside his ceremonial spears and began to throw his hunting spears at the defendant. This active phase of the duel conformed to a stereotyped pattern which in some respects resembled baseball. The old man stood about ten feet farther away from the young man than the pitcher stands from the plate. The young man had to avoid being hit by the spears. To do this he was permitted to jump from side to side or into the air, or to duck, but he was expected always to land on approximately the same spot as he had been standing on when the first spear was thrown. Thus there was no marked strike zone, but an implied one. If the accused jumped well away from the strike zone, he was jeered by the crowd. If the old man was wild, he was jeered too, but more respectfully. Under such rules a modern baseball hitter, having no bat in his hand to worry about, would almost never be hit by a pitched ball, and the Tiwi young men were similarly never likely to be hit by an old man's spears. The main danger was the spear that pitched in the dirt. Although clearly outside the strike zone and hence an indication that the old man was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

628 of nondelivery of bestowed daughters, or other types of broken promises. Some of these cases had been going on for years, and settlement of them at the level of the individual duel had failed. The aggrieved individuals in the two Bathurst Island bands therefore pooled their grievances, persuaded many of their relatives and friends who were not aggrieved to join them, and a large party of men of all ages set off for the Mandiimbula territory.

This party, comprising about thirty fighting men all heavily armed and [302] all wearing the white paint indicative of anger and hostile intent, was a "war" party, and its coming to their territory was recognized as such by the Mandiimbula. On arrival at the place where the latter, duly warned of its approach, had gathered, the war party announced its presence. Both sides then exchanged a few insults and agreed to meet formally the next day in an open space where there was plenty of room. After a night mostly spent by both sides in individual visiting and renewing old acquaintances, the two armies met next morning in battle array, with the thirty Tiklauila-Rangwila warriors drawn up at one end of the clearing, and about sixty local warriors at the other end. Immediately the familiar patterns of the duel imposed themselves. 537 628 A senior individual on one side began a harangue directed at an individual on the other. When he ran out of breath, another individual began his complaint. Since each accused Mandiimbula replied individually to the charges made against him, the whole proceeding remained at the level of mutual charges and replies between pairs of individuals. Angry old men on both sides often seemed to be trying to find a basis that would justify or provoke a general attack by one group upon the other, but always failed to find it because of the particularity of the charges. The rules of Tiwi procedure compelled the [619] accuser to specify the sources of his charges and his anger, and these always turned out to be directed not at the Mandiimbula band, but at one, or at most two or three, individual members of that band. And when another old man took the center of attention, his anger would be directed at quite different 628 individuals. Hence when spears began to be thrown, they were thrown by individuals at individuals for reasons based on individual disputes. Unlike the seduction duels, however, these duels occurred mostly between two senior men, and the danger of a direct hit was much reduced because of the poor marksmanship of both parties. On the other hand, the danger of somebody getting hurt was increased because a fight between two old men was likely to spread as other old men were drawn into it to support one or the other side—in which case, a wild melee occurred with badly thrown spears flying in all directions. This was probably a good thing, because soon somebody was bound to be hit, thus ending the fight. Not infrequently the person hit was some innocent [147] noncombatant or one of the screaming old women who weaved through the fighting men, yelling obscenities at everybody, and whose reflexes for dodging spears were not as fast as those of the men.

As soon as somebody was wounded, even a seemingly irrelevant crone, fighting stopped immediately until the implications of this new incident could be assessed by both sides. For the crone was never really irrelevant; she was somebody's mother and somebody else's wife and somebody else's sister and

123 For a while we all stretched our legs walking up the sandy bank of the river until mangrove roots stopped our progress.

Once back in the canoe, Albert took over my place in the bow [226] and with his fish-spear poised he kept a watchful eye on the deep green waters. Once he spied a barramundi and cautiously directed Big Jack to paddle towards the large fish, but it glided out of reach.

About a half mile up the river we came upon the shaded glen of casuarinas, another camping spot with its fresh-water well, named Anderaningo. Here instead of Black Joe's mob we found the Superintendent, Bill Grimster, his son Billy, and two natives, Billy-Two and Brownie. Black Joe's mob had arrived the afternoon before and had been ferried the ten miles up river to the next camping spot in the motor launch. Bill Grimster, having been told by Black Joe that he had seen our smoke near Piriu, knew that we had camped there, and he came back down river with an invitation for me to join them for a night of crocodile hunting before they returned to Snake Bay.

225 For many people in this area, hunting the large salt-water crocodile is a profession or a sought-after sport. In both cases it is dangerous, for this particular species of crocodile is intimidated by nothing and frequently will attack men or beasts without provocation. The crocodiles, which often measure twenty feet in length, occupy a prominent place in the myths, legends, and art of the [773] Tiwi, and many are the true-life tales of people who have lost their [538] lives in battling these beasts, which are hunted by the natives for their meat and valuable skins. When one considers the size of the animals and the size of the canoes, it is no wonder that Bill had discouraged any requests of mine to accompany them. So this invitation was a most welcome and pleasant surprise.

123 I transferred to the launch for the up-river camp so that I would be in time to leave on the hunt at dusk. For the first six miles the river wound seemingly aimlessly through the deep, dank, and mysterious mangrove swamps. At times the branches almost met across the water, brightly colored birds flitted from branch to branch and a subdued splash indicated a crocodile disturbed from his after- [776] noon slumber on the muddy bank. Adding to this almost evil atmosphere were strange clacking and sucking noises emanating from

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Parading around the unlit fire in the centre of the *milimika*, the performers
177 chanted a telephone song, the literal translation of which is, "Hallo, that
533 telephone there, hallo, yes, yes," some, as they did so, imitating the winding
[539] of the handle of an old-type magneto telephone.

When the fire, which had been started by a young man, was well alight, the men performed the ritual of *wandiatapinda* by jumping through flames and smoke, each shouting "telegraphy".

The men again assembled at the edge of the *milimika*, and, led by the *alouwia*, called the localities on Melville Island where the white men had camped. As each name was called the aborigines shouted "*wia*" (yes).

One dancer held his hands high above his head, symbolizing a radio aerial, while his companions chanted the following words to the refrain of the telephone song:

[539] "The Queen sent a radio asking *Wurarbuti* and other men to dance for her."

Then followed songs related to the radio and the telephone. These were usually performed with the traditional steps and gestures, except that, at the end, the actor mimed the ringing up with one hand, and the holding of the
[535] telephone to the ear with the other.[60] As the men danced, the women moved into the *milimika* from the side, performing their own dance, the *amburu* (Pl. 30F), some of them crying and endeavouring to beat themselves. They were, however, restrained by their companions.

765 After a number of dances came the ceremony of appointing the men to carry out the work near the grave.

At the death of any person the tribe divides into two groups: the *puka-*
[616] *munis*, near relatives of the dead, who are forbidden to touch food with their hands (Pl. 24A), or go near the grave, and the distant relatives, who can visit the grave site without fear of attack from the spirit (the *mopaditi*).

At *Waniamperi's* first *ilania*, the ceremonial leader chose, from the latter group, ten men, the *wanaras*, colloquially called the "workers". It was their duty to cut and paint the burial poles (one each), help to clear the grave site and dancing ground of sticks and stones, and to carry out other menial tasks associated with the final rituals. For these tasks, the "workers" were paid on the last day of the rituals.

When "workers" were chosen, the aged brother, *Nalgui*, of the dead man,

[60] This mixture of the ancient and the modern, shows how a living culture gradually absorbs the characteristics of an adjacent people, particularly those from a culture as dominant as our own.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(iii) *The Totemic Songs and Dances.* At the completion of the meal, both the "workers" and the *pukamuni* men and women performed a series of dances to the accompaniment of traditional totemic songs. 765

Almost without exception, these songs and dances belonged to the totemic beings of Wailu, the country of *Tiparawilimiri*, the father of the dead man, *Wanimpari*.

These rituals were opened by the leader, who, standing in the centre of the *milimika*, called out the names of the totemic beings of Wailu, *Andjahui* (fresh water), *Pakadringa* (thunderstorm), *Tomituka* (rain), and *Bumerali* (lightning). As before, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*" after each name was called.

The men then chanted the rain song, "The heavy rain falls and the frog calls, *poki, poki, puturaka*", while the men danced, with their fingers pointing to the ground, symbolizing falling rain (Pl. 30B), and the woman, *Prupadau*, hopped along the ground in imitation of the frog-woman,[66] *Kwouk-kwouk*. As the dance proceeded, the men and *Prupadau* all imitated the actions of the frog-woman by hopping along the ground on their hands and knees. [539] 765 535

While the dance was in progress, the leader called out "*Tomituka*" (rain). *Prupadau*, picking up a sheet of paper-bark, held it over her head and shivered, and the men, their hands clasped tightly over their heads, shouted, "*Batua, batua*" (rain finish). This completed the dance. *Pulanimbwi* danced the white-headed sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30J), before the *pumuti* began.

(iv) *The Pumuti.*[66] The *pumuti* rituals, which are always carried out with much goodwill, friendliness and laughter, were performed at most, if not all, of the *ilanias*, and, in a restricted form, at the final *pukamuni*. 765

At some stage, usually toward the end of the *ilania*, sometimes more than once, each man and woman, taking a bunch of leaves, or a roll of paper-bark and calling softly "*Ooh, ooh, ooh*", beat the wife, or husband, sisters, brothers, and all the near relatives of that particular spouse.

(v) *The Rite of Fire-jumping and the sending out of the Message Sticks.* The rite of fire-jumping, or *wandiatapinda*, carried out in the second series of *ilanias*, differed from that in the first series. Instead of the participants stepping over a fire (Pl. 24B), a number of the close relatives climbed a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and leaves (Pl. 23C). As each man 765 372

[66] The frog-woman, whose totemic place is Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island, is the mother of *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*.

[66] This ritual would tend to reduce tensions between the spouse and his, or her, relatives, which is considerable in some communities. [593] [578]

765 slipped down the tree and jumped clear of the fire, the other participants
372 called his totemic name.

Toward the end of this series of *ilanias*, the "workers" announced that they had finished cutting the poles. The leader, the *alouwia*, hearing this, gave permission for the poles to be "cooked", i.e., burnt in a fire of blazing boughs, to provide a black ground on which to paint the designs. The leader
[202] also ordered that the *purunkinas* (message sticks, Figs. 5, 6, 7), be sent out to the various totemic groups. These sticks intimated that the final *pukamuni* ceremonies would take place in about twenty days.

(c) *The Bathurst Island Ilanias*

765 About a week before the final burial rituals of *Waniamperi*, a number of aborigines from Bathurst Island, accompanied by their wives and *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, made their camp and cleared a ceremonial ground not far from the second *milimika* used by the Melville Island people.

The Bathurst Island *ilanias*, under the leadership of an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, followed the traditional form, except that the first two phases were omitted, i.e., the fighting and the feeding of the "workers".

Three groups of songs were chanted to the accompaniment of the appropriate dances.

(i) The *Ningaui* songs and dances.
(ii) The mission lugger songs and dances.
(iii) The jabiru (*Tjalati*) songs and dances.

(i) *The Ningaui Songs and Dances*

533 The leader, *Jibunglialumi*, and his companions chanted the following
● 539 *Ningaui* songs. These are the literal translations.
765 "I am the head man of the *Ningaui*, I am, Eeh, Eeh."[67]
"I push aside the mangrove branches with my hands, Eeh, Eeh."
"The *Ningauis* are out hunting. The calls of the white cockatoos tell them that someone is coming, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* woman, having just given birth to a child, sings—
"The flies are looking at me, the flies are crawling on my shoulder, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* man, looking at his newly born child, sings—
"Little new-born man lying on the ground, Eeh, Eeh."

[825] [67] This is the call of the *Ningauis* which, the aborigines claim, they hear in the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. It is possibly the call of one of the swamp birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Neither *Jilungliahuni* nor any of the Bathurst Islanders performed spirited 765
dances to these songs. The leader, impersonating a *Ningaui*, walked round [534]
the *milimika* with awkward, bent gait, either beating his music sticks together or holding his hands tightly against his sides with his fingers outstretched (Pl. 30E).

Following the *Ningaui* songs, the men lit a fire at the base of a eucalyptus tree which *Katapi*, *Nangrinini*, and several other relatives of the dead man, climbed to perform the rite of *wandiatapinda*. As each man slid down the trunk, the aborigines called the totemic place of Wailu, and the names of rain, thunder and lightning. Later, the men performed the rain dance (Pl. 30B) in [535]
the *milimika*, while the women, coming in from the side, danced the *amburu* (Pl. 30F).

(ii) *The Mission Lugger Songs and Dances*

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The dances started with a long *ai, ai, ai*, which announced that the boat had been sighted. Then, while the men danced the sail of the boat, with their hands held above their heads, the leader chanted—

"The waves beat the sides of the boat, but it goes straight on."

With high prancing steps and hands rotating one over the other, the aborigines mimed the engines and the propeller of the lugger.

"The engines spark together as the waves hit the side of the boat."

Other songs, to which the performers danced the relevant actions, were—

"The wake of the lugger."

"The lugger is on the slips ready to be painted."

"We are scrubbing off the old paint and giving it a new coat."

Every time *Katapi*, the son of the dead man, took part in the dance, the women set up a wail.

At the conclusion of the boat songs, the men and women took part in the 765
pumuti, lightly beating each other's spouses and their relatives with boughs.

(iii) *The Jabiru Songs and Dances*

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The last series of dances were given by a middle-aged Bathurst Island man, *Nilinuma*, who imitated, with humorous gesticulation and much abandon, the antics of the long-legged jabiru, *Tjalati* (Pl. 29A), as it walked, fished and rested in the lagoon.

The words of the *Tjalati* song were— [539]

"When *Tjalati* lifts one leg, he is ready to fly."

At the conclusion of the *Tjalati* dance, the *ilania* ended with the honey [825]
and mosquito calls.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

lines as flying foxes (the totem of *Nulatini's* father),[68] their arms moving 765
alternately up and down and their little fingers pointed skyward (Pl. 30c). [535]

The dance finished, the assembled men accompanied by *Pulanimbuwi* and *Tupiatira*, with their arms around each other's necks, mourned hysterically for the dead, while the women danced the *amburu* on the outside of the group. Several times, in his grief, *Tupiatira* collapsed to the ground only to be lifted to his feet again by the still mourning husband.

The sounds of mourning continued for some time, gradually becoming less until *Nangrinini* gave the honey and mosquito calls, and the ceremony was over.

(*b*) *The Ilania*

At one end of the *milimika*, which was situated at the camp of the dead woman, was a pole on which *Pulanimbuwi* had tied a piece of printed calico as a flag.

The *ilania* opened when seven of the "workers" giving the honey and mosquito calls, emerged from the forest, and, running toward the *milimika*, cast sticks and pandanus leaves, as spears, at the *pukamuni* men who awaited them. There was general fighting and much laughter before the "workers" were ejected.

In the centre of the *milimika*, as food for the "workers" a woman had placed nine large cooked crabs which the "workers" distributed among [262] themselves. After this was done, the men performed the rite of *wandiatapinda* by either walking through or jumping over the fire which had been lit in the *milimika*. *Nulatini's* husband did not take part in this ritual but, with a flat fighting stick in either hand, wandered about the ceremonial ground, singing the *amburu*.

Following these rituals, the aborigines chanted a number of songs and 533
carried out the following dances, those of the flying fox being totemically 765
related to the dead woman's father.

(i) The flying foxes and the sea-eagle.
(ii) The crocodile.
(iii) The shark and the stingray.
(iv) The flag songs.

(i) *The flying-fox and sea-eagle songs*

"The flying foxes are out late, eating the blossoms of the stringy-bark [539]
and eucalyptus trees."

[68] As mentioned earlier, the totem of the dead person is never referred to in the *pukamuni* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 "The sea-eagle, *Jirakati*, dives upon the flying foxes, catching them in
●539 her claws and eating them. The rest fly away."
765 "The flying foxes call to each other, the sea-eagle is attacking us—let us go."

As these songs were being chanted, a number of men clustered in the centre of the *milimika*, like a group of flying foxes in a tree.

With a loud call, *Nangrinini*, his outspread arms symbolical of the wings of the sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), "swooped" down, scattering them in all directions.

As *Nangrinini* returned to the outside of the *milimika*, the "flying foxes"
[535] reassembled and, with prancing steps again danced with their little fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30c).

The flying-fox songs continued—

"Cast your throwing sticks where the flying foxes are thickest and break many wings at one time."

"Hit the flying foxes so that they will drop in the mud."

"Cook the black flying foxes and dry them in the sun."[9]

Again the men assembled and danced the flying-fox while *Malumerinita* called the totemic places of the flying fox at Muranapi (p. 56), interspersed with calls of "*Wia*" from his companions. *Pulanimbuwi* still wandered.

(ii) *The crocodile songs*

"You cannot cross the river because it is full of crocodiles."

"Beware, the crocodiles are in the mangroves waiting to catch us when we cross the river."

These songs were accompanied by the spirited crocodile dance (Pl. 30g),
[535] while *Malumerinita* called the names of the totemic places of the crocodile, *Jirakupai*, on south-west Bathurst Island.

(iii) *The shark and the stingray song*

"Do not spear the shark, it is chasing a stingray."

To this song several men performed the exhausting shark dance (Pl. 30o).

(iv) *The flag songs*

"The wind blows and the flag moves."

[177] "The Government Administrator gets his flag from the Queen."

535 To these songs, the man danced with their hands, as a flag, moving above
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[9] This song suggests that the Melville Islanders stored or traded the cooked and dried bodies of these creatures.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Many of them referred to "creation times" when *Tukimbini*, of Murupiangа
533 told the honey people of Bathurst Island to be the *pukamuni* men and women
[535] at the burial rituals of *Purukupali* (p. 30).

The following is a selection of the honey songs—

[539] "Let all the men who are *mandalini* (a eucalyptus flower, particularly rich in honey) come to this place (Tapararimi) and dance for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*."

"With all your ornaments, start walking (to Tapararimi)."

"Bring all your ceremonial ornaments to our place (Tapararimi) where we will hold a big ceremony."

Another man chanted a lengthy song describing the death of *Purukupali*, and another, which instructed the performers, at the conclusion of the rituals, to take the cane rings, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H) from their arms and leave them on the grave.

The songs and dances about *Purukupali*, the honey people of Bathurst Island, and their doings at the first *pukamuni*, were followed by another series which related specifically to the collecting of wild honey. In all these
[535] performances, the men carried out the honey dance with high knee action, their hands held above their heads and their fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30D).

One man sang about a fly that lives in the hives of wild bees and about a large hive in a tree with a long snout (entrance) and much honey. Then, accompanied by several others, he mimed the action of bees flying in and out of a hive; the aborigines locating the hive, climbing the tree, cutting off the limb containing the hive, and eating the honey. These dances were followed by the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, calling out the totemic places of honey, most of them on Bathurst Island. As each name was called, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*".

A young man started to sing about a pearling lugger, but was told by old *Tjamalampua* to stop and use only the *palaneri* songs. The same man then
[535] danced the actions of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, to the appropriate song (p. 75), and one relating to the buffalo,[75] to the accompaniment of "*Prr, prr, papringipali*" (go away big eye, prr, prr), then a song of *Aruni*, the poison fish: "*Aruni aruni, drr, drr, drr*", which referred to the sinking of a boat, the *Wanganui*, off south-western Bathurst Island.[76]

[825] [75] The aborigines believe that the buffalo, brought to Fort Dundas in 1824, belong to the *palaneri* (creation) period.

[76] The *aruni* is a spiny poisonous fish (possibly the stone fish), which was supposed to have sunk the *Wanganui* by driving its spines through the ship's bottom. The *drr, drr*, of the song represents the sounds of the spines as they were driven into the ship.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

765 then, with the group, returned quietly to their companions among the poles."

(b) The Songs and Dances[78]

On the return to *milimika* A (Fig. 4), *Wurarbuti* and his wife mimed, to the accompaniment of appropriate songs, paddling a canoe, with their hands around one of the poles. This was followed by a man and his wife, who acted, with considerable detail, the making of a bark canoe; stripping the bark from [396] the tree; holding the bark over a fire to make it flexible; folding the bark and sewing the ends together, and the final launching.

By the time this act was over, it was dark. The aborigines from both *milimikas* retired to the nearby forest, lit their fires and cooked their food. There were no ceremonies during the evening, except, occasionally, some woman left her camp and wailed among the deserted *pukamuni* poles.

533 About 8 o'clock on the morning of the last day, the *pukamuni* men opened ●539 the ceremonies with the honey and mosquito calls. These calls were followed 765 by a number of songs, chanted by *Wurarbui* and some of his companions, which referred to the mythical boobook owl-man, *Purutjikini*, and the instructions he gave to his fellow performers at the first *kulama* ceremony (p. 123). They were:

"Make the *milimika* large and clean for many people and when it is ready, sing first, then dance round the ring."

"You will paint yourself beside the *milimika*."

"When you decorate yourself for the *kulama*, put white on one side of your face, yellow on the other, and red down the middle of your hair. And as you dance, your wives will help you, as my wife, *Pinsoma*, the owl-woman, once did for me."

"You sing, *Mikinatrina*[79] (a *kulama* initiate), and we will follow."

"When you sing in a *kulama*, put the cockatoo feathers, *primitiki*, in your hair, and the wind will shake them."

While those songs were being chanted, other men mimed the appropriate action.

[78] Although the aborigines did not explain the ritual, it is likely that the first man looked for and thought he saw the *mapaditi* of *Wanimpori*. On the second occasion, *Matumani*, a near relative, hunted the dead man's spirit away. This ritual, in a modified [114] form, took place at the two other *pukamunis* we witnessed. Spencer (1928, p. 648) mentions the same ritual.

[78] The songs and dances in this series were neither traditional nor totemic. They were composed usually by a number of performers, especially for the occasion, and quite an amount of thought went into their production.

[79] During the initiation of the *Mikinatrina* at the *kulama* ceremony, he performs his first dance amid general applause.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

During this performance an old man, *Nalauri*, *Waniamperi's* brother, reprimanded, in the native tongue, a group of young aborigines for not taking a more active part in the *pukamuni* rituals. 765 626

"Don't hang around there like a mob of whites," he said. "If you're standing while there's a dance, beat your buttocks, or if you're sitting, either clap your hands or beat the ground with a stick."

At the conclusion of the Melville Island performance, the Bathurst Islanders continued the songs and dances in their own *milimika* (Fig. 42), about *Purutjikini* and the first *kulama*. 533 539 765

The leader, *Jibungliahumi*, chanted how, at the first *kulama*, *Purutjikini* said to his companions, "I'll give you the songs, then you'll dance about the things around you." As he did so, *Nangrinini* performed the dance of the turtle. "Then as the next song was being chanted," *Purutjikini* said, "you will cook the *kulama*." Another man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, and, calling "*brr*, *brr*, *brr*" (as they do in the *kulama* ceremonies), emptied the supposed contents on the ground in imitation of pouring out the *kulama* yams preparatory to putting them in the earth oven (p. 137). *Jibungliahumi* then followed with the dance of the owl man, *Purutjikini*, with his hands held around his eyes (Pl. 292), ending his dance with "*Ah*, *oo*, *ah*, *oo*", the call of the present-day boobook owl.

The Melville and Bathurst Island groups then moved from the distant to the grave side of their burial poles (Fig. 4) and performed the *pumuti* rituals. On this occasion, however, only husbands and wives beat each other.

The *pumuti* was followed by *Urumatjina* from Melville Island, chanting a song he had composed for the occasion which described how the dead man, *Waniamperi* had become involved in a fight at a *pukamuni* ceremony.[80]

Some men, listening intently to *Urumatjina*, joined in as soon as they had learned the song, while others performed the dance miming the action of men fighting.

Another part of the same song told how a woman, *Purpurangmio* (since dead) loudly abused the men because so many of them attacked her husband at one time. To add reality to the performance, *Urumatjina* pounded the side of a *pukamuni* basket with a stick to indicate the noise made by the angry woman (Pl. 260).

The theme of the songs then returned to the *kulama* ceremony. As some men chanted, others laid sheets of paper-bark on the ground, and to the *kulama* thunder-call they imitated the actions of rubbing the *kulama* yam on 765

[80] This is the same fight as the one enacted in the Bathurst Island *ilanis* on the previous day (p. 83).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 their bodies (p. 138). Again, a man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, symbolised the pouring out of the cooked *kulama* yam on a sheet of bark and patted it to the *kulama* call of "*Brr, brr, brr*". This action completed the dance.

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

431 While other dances, which I did not see, were being performed in the two
765 *milimikas*, the *pukamuni* men and their wives unpacked the gifts for the "workers", and spread them out on the ground (Pl. 26a). There was much good-natured discussion about their equitable distribution before the presents were finally separated into lots and placed one on the top of each pole.

177 *Wurarbuti*, resplendent in his body paint and coloured *pukamuni* orna-
533 ments, mounted one of the larger poles and chanted songs telling how he
765 became possessed of the great wealth which enabled him to buy the presents
[302] for the "workers".

"I am a big Government man," he boasted, "so I was able to get plenty
●[539] of money."

"I stole the money from the Government to pay for the presents and the police locked me up."

[535] While *Wurarbuti* chanted this song, *Marawani* and the women danced with their hands crossed as if in handcuffs.

As the song continued, *Marawani* ran after *Pulanimbuwi*, dragged him into the *milimika*, and struggled with him in imitation of a policeman making an arrest.

Other songs were chanted ridiculing a Government clerk at Darwin, while one of them "wrote" out an order, passed the "money" to a *pukamuni* man through a window (an opening in a pole) and then demanded, in a loud domineering voice, his thumb-print on a scrap of paper as a receipt.

177 *Wurarbuti*, still seated on the top of a pole, started to distribute the
431 presents, imitating, as he did so, the actions and broken English which the
765 same clerk used when dealing with aborigines.

"You a worker," said *Wurarbuti*. "Have you a wife? How many children? You work for me, make proper good pole, I pay you."

The "worker" on accepting his payment, put his thumb-print on a scrap of paper (initialled—with a twig—by another *pukamuni* man), and walked away satisfied[81] with his square of printed calico, pipes and tobacco. As each "worker" received his gift the *pukamuni* men performed a dance.

[81] This is not always so. Sometimes a "worker" becomes so annoyed over inadequate payment that he will not allow his pole to be carried to the grave, preferring to let it rot in the forest. On several occasions we saw a pole which had been left in the forest because its maker was dissatisfied with the payment.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

When all the "workers" had been paid, *Wurarbui* called my name and presented me with a number of *pukamuni* arm and chest ornaments (Pl. 31), which normally would have been left on the grave. 431 765 123

These ornaments, *Wurarbui* explained, were a gift from the dead man, *Waniamperi*, because I had assisted in making his *pukamuni* a success.[88]

In the Bathurst Island *milimika* the three "workers" were also receiving their payments. 765

Jibunglialumi, although he did not have as good a story to tell as *Wurarbui*, danced around the poles with some of the presents in his hand, singing, "Here I come in an expensive motor-car, with lots of money to pay the 'workers' for cutting such beautiful poles."[89] [535] [539] [177]

(*d*) *Erecting the Poles around the Graves*

The distribution of the last of the presents was a signal for the "workers" to carry the poles from the respective *milimikas* to the grave. 765

Some of the poles were both large and heavy; in particular that illustrated on Pl. 34D, which was eighteen feet long, and so heavy that it took seven "workers" to carry it from the *milimika* and up-end it in the hole prepared for it at the grave (Pl. 26A).

As the poles were carried past the Bathurst Island ceremonial ground, *Jibunglialumi* threw short sticks over them to commemorate the time when the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, took part in a spear-throwing contest at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* (p. 33).

While the "workers" nonchalantly carried the poles to the grave, the women, with tears running down their cheeks, beat themselves with sticks (until someone restrained them), and the close male relatives, mourning loudly, hysterically cut their heads with steel knives. 765 785

Katopi, the son of the dead man, had washed the painted decorations from his body, and was about to cut his head when he was stopped by his stepmother, *Dominao*. On seeing this, *Marawani*, one of the chief *pukamuni* men, took the knife from the woman and gave it to *Katopi*, who gashed his head two or three times, and, with blood pouring down his face, threw himself on the ground in a paroxysm of grief.

[88] To help them in their payments I had given the *pukamuni* men some printed calico.

[89] Although these stories about great wealth to pay the "workers" are much Europeanised, they are probably following a traditional pattern, when, instead of referring to money and the goods of the white man, the ceremonial leaders exaggerated the number of spears, ornaments, and other goods they had collected to pay the "workers".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

765 533 *Wurarbui* described, in song and dance, how some aborigines from the northern end of the island had tried to kill his father, but the father, being forewarned, had run into the mangrove swamp for shelter. A spear, however, thrown by his enemies, hit him in the side but did not kill him.

[535] [177] Then followed a long series of songs and dances, made up by *Wurarbui*, describing how the mechanics from Darwin erected a large steel tank at the nearby settlement. To the chanting of songs and beating of buttocks, the actors "rolled" the tank (actually a small log) along the ground, tilted it on one end, rigged blocks and tackle and lifted the "tank" in place. These dances lasted about a half an hour.

Toward the end of this performance, which finished about mid-day, a woman, *Narlaui*, painted entirely in white, and carrying a throwing stick, called upon the dead woman to fight her because, at one time she, *Narlaui*, had reprimanded her for running after men. The aborigines applauded her when she had finished her song. Emboldened by this, *Narlaui* stood in front of one of the poles and challenged the dead woman to a fight.

[535] [177] The ceremony finished[67] with an aeroplane dance, the men posturing in a similar manner to that of the *Jirakati* dance (Pl. 30j).

About sunset, the rituals started afresh with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

Pulanimbuwi and *Muramajua*, acting the part of little children, struggled with each other in the dust of the *milimika* while one of them sang,

[539] "You can't drink from the same breast as I can because we have different mothers."

Old *Malumerinita*, taking up the same refrain, pushed the two "children" aside as he sang,

[539] "I'm a big man, so I'll drink the milk."

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

765 It was after dark before the three "workers", who had cut and painted the burial poles, received their payment (Pl. 27D). As each *pukamuni* man passed the goods, loin cloths, and tobacco to the "worker", he cut his head with a [535] knife, and started a dance in which even a number of little girls took part (Pl. 25A). They had been told by some of the older women what to do, so [868] that the youngsters would be conversant with the woman's place in the rituals.

[67] This ceremony would have probably, like that of *Wanimpori*, finished at mid-day had not the Superintendent of the settlement insisted on sending the chief woman mourner to a distant locality from which she had been unable to return on time.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

88 ill. The *Marukumunis* were fed behind their bark shelter and the *Wadjeniatis* in the open camp.

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

After dark, on the day following the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, the fully initiated *kulama* men, and all people above the grade of *Mikinatrina*, prepared for the opening ceremony by clearing an oval about fourteen feet long and six feet wide. The *Marukumuni* initiates were brought from their hiding place, the *Wadjeniatis* from their camp and both were seated just outside the ceremonial ground. Neither of those grades, however, took part in the opening rituals.

[372] [758] In the middle of the ceremonial ground were two smouldering logs, but no flames, for fear of attracting *taini*, the *kulama* sickness. Among the trees outside of the ring, were a number of families of uninitiated men, women and children.

Normally the *kulama* party would have been made up of *Mikintaras*, *Mikiaturimas* and *Mikingulas*, and the songs chanted by the men in that order.

177 533 881 539 On the occasion of our visit the ceremony opened when a *Mikingula*, *Wurarbuti*, seated on the ground, beating his throwing sticks, started to hum a song softly. Becoming more confident, he stood up, and pacing backward and forward still beating his sticks, chanted the following three songs.[26]

(a) "My father was king, therefore I am the Prince of Wales. As King George was King, so was the old man on the hill, my (dead) father. I will have warships, money and a flag of red and white." When the singer mentioned his dead father there was a high-pitched wail among the near relatives.

(b) The second song dealt with the invitation he had received to dance before the Queen of England. "When the Queen was in England, she said 'I would like to see a black-fellow dance', and so I went up. King Philip watched me a lot while I danced."

(c) "My uncle in Darwin said to me 'Why haven't you made a lot of *pukamuni* arm rings. If you don't soon do so, you'll cause a lot of trouble among the *pukamuni* people."

Muramajua also chanted three songs;

(a) In the first, of which I did not collect the words, he explained, at length,

[26] This man, who was the ceremonial leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, described earlier, had been invited, only a few months previously, to visit the southern States, and dance before the Queen of England. Naturally, this left such a strong impression on his mind that many of his songs dealt with that remarkable experience.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

how a slow canoe journey had made him late for a recent *pukamani* ceremony. 177

(*b*) "I was sick in the Darwin hospital. Sister Philips said it was because I had had too much grog." 533 539

(*c*) "There was a man at Cockle Point (opposite the Bathurst Island Mission), who wanted to kill me with a spear. So I changed myself into a mullet and he didn't see me." 881

Another singer chanted,

(*a*) "I am a goose and a man cast his throwing stick and hit me." 533

(*b*) "I want that girl from Bathurst Island to wash her with fresh water to make it square for giving away my sister."[86] 539 881

Another *Mikingula*, *Pulitara*, aired his differences with a woman, *Batali*, in the following song.

(*a*) "I fed *Batali*, but she did not give her daughter to me as a wife."[87]

(3) *Collecting the Kulama Yam*

Early on the following morning, the *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinataras*, the *Mikinatarinas* and *Mikingulas*, went to the ceremonial ground of the previous evening. They first dipped their hands in a bark container filled with water, throwing some over their bodies; then, taking a mouthful, they squirted water into the air in imitation of rain, afterwards calling out "Oom-oom", to symbolize thunderstorms. Taking two small sticks, one in each hand, the men used them to clean the wax from their ears, afterwards standing the sticks upright in the ground.[88] 881 [515]

Placing their palms on a sheet of bark covered with white paint, the men patted their hair, chest, wrists and pubes (Pl. 44c), turning toward the north as they again called out "Oom-oom", in imitation of thunder.

Following this ritual, each *kulama* man painted another with a design in white (Pl. 42L). The leader then picked up the bark basket, held it on his arm, and facing north, south, east and west, again called "Oom-oom", while he made a drum-like sound, symbolical of thunder, by hitting the basket with his hand. After this the men set out to collect the *kulama* yams. They were

[86] I did not find out the significance of this ritual.

[87] When a woman promises her daughter to a man, it is the duty of the future son-in-law to give her continuous presents of food. On this occasion, the woman had accepted *Pulitara's* gifts, but when her daughter was old enough, she gave the girl to another man. [584]

Quarrelling at a *kulama* ceremony is forbidden, otherwise *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, will destroy all the participants. This prohibition allows an aboriginal, such as *Pulitara*, to air his grievance without causing a quarrel, even though, as on this occasion, the defaulting person was present. [676] [753]

[88] The meaning of this ritual is obscure. According to the aborigines it prevents trouble and quarrelling during the *kulama* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Dry sticks, about three feet in length, were pushed upright into the ground around the *tumarapi* (oven), kindling wood was laid between them, other pieces of dried wood piled cross-wise between the uprights until there was a stack about three feet high (Pl. 45A). 88 [372]

(5) *Placing the Uncooked Yams in Water*

About sunset, the *kulama* men went to the bloodwood tree, the *wuringalua*, where the *Mikinarinas* had stored the yams in the morning and, on pulling bushes away, revealed some of the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates squatting, holding in their arms a basket of the uncooked *kulama* yams. The *Marukumuni* initiates took the yams to the water, everyone assisting in laying them on a pad of grass in the bed of the stream (Pl. 46B).

Immediately this task was completed, the *kulama* men pushed the *Marukumuni* initiates over,[88] and, holding them by the legs and arms dragged them backward and forward through the now muddy water to wash off their body paint. They were then taken back to camp, seated beside the *milimika* and painted with a different pattern (Pl. 42F). Neither the *Marukumuni* nor the *Wafjuniui* initiates took any further part in the rituals of that day. When, after dark, the *kulama* men entered the *milimika* to chant another series of songs, the camp fires were allowed to burn brightly, because the aborigines said that the yams, being in the water, were now "quiet" so that there was no fear of *tsini*, the spirit of *kulama* sickness. [302]

The chanting men walked counter-clockwise around the *milimika* because *Purujikini* did so at the first *kulama*. To have walked in the opposite direction, even then, would have made the spirit of the *kulama* yam angry. 881

The following are literal translations of a selection of the songs. 533

(*a*) "I had a quarrel with Tom Crow, the Superintendent of Snake Bay Settlement." 539 [177]

(*b*) "My mother-in-law is good to me, she did not take away my promised wife."

(*c*) "The fruit of the *binamia* (*Eugenia* sp.) ripens and falls to the ground."

(*d*) "The little *Pitipituis* (spirit children) are dancing on the beach."

[88] Spencer, 1928, p. 664, describing a similar ritual, states, "Several old men seized the *Wafinyeri* (my *Wafjuniui*), and plunged into the water with him. As many as could get near him gripped him by the legs and arms, and yelling, splashing and churning up the mud, . . . dragged him backward and forward several times, . . . As soon as the *Wafinyeri* were released, the men turned their attention to the *Marukumuni* boys. . . ." Although my informants did not say so it is likely that the *Wafjuniui* initiates were also pushed into the water to remove their body paint in readiness for the second design of a *Milimarina* (Pl. 42J). [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (e) "The salt water (sea), brings plenty of drift-wood up on the beach for
539 our fires."
881 (f) "The *tudawell* (shark) killed a stingray."
(g) "The boat sails fast and the waves are beating its sides."

At approximately 8.30 p.m. the chanting ceased and the aborigines retired to their camps.

(6) *The Lighting of the Ceremonial Fire*

About 6.30 the next morning, the *Mikinastrinings* women collected pieces
[137] of termite mound and put them on the top of the sticks for the fire which had been piled over the oven, the *tumarapi*. This fire could be lit by any man above the grade of *Mikinastrina*. Whilst the fire was burning down, the *Mikingulas* walked around it, and sang a few *kulama* songs, only one of which was recorded.

[177] (1) "When I see the shining iron of the new schoolhouse, I think how my children will go to school and wear boots."[81]

881 By 9.30 a.m. after everyone had had a meal, most of the aborigines, including several children, painted themselves in red and made their way to the swamp to take part in the ritual of bringing the *kulama* yams from the water, to the *milimika*.

On reaching the swamp, the leader took the yams from the pad of grass under the water, placed them carefully in the basket, with a bundle of rushes plucked from a nearby swamp on top, then, putting the basket on his shoulder, carried it to the *milimika* and stood it beside the fire "to warm up the yams".

881 The *Mikingulas*, walking anti-clockwise as before, chanted another series
533 of songs.
539 (a) "I went to Native Affairs (Darwin), drew out £10 (with which to
[177] gamble) and bought a pack of playing cards."[82]

Striding around the ring with two spears in one hand and a throwing stick in the other, the same man sang.

(b) "I have many spears. If the white people were not here, I would kill you all."

881 At the end of the song, the performer called out the name of his dead
765 father, striking himself on the head with his throwing stick to indicate his sorrow. The people on the outside of the ring cried in sympathy.

[185] [81] A parent's hope in a changing society that his children will live at a higher social level that the one which he himself occupies.

[82] A number of the younger Melville Islanders work for extended terms in Darwin, periodically returning to their homeland to take part in the ceremonies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the previous singer's dead father. 881 765

(*e*) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[86] when I think of you, my uncle." [533] Some of the women cried when the song was finished. [539]

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *aini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants. 252 881

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate it (Pl. 442), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, goodbye",[87] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purujikini*, did at the first *kulama*. 881 [533] [539]

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women. 535 881

(*a*) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird). [534]

(*b*) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 302), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(*c*) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*tokwiangu*) in his mouth to symbolize the prey of the crocodile.

(*d*) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(*e*) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(*f*) The buffalo,

(*g*) The shark (Pl. 300).

[86] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *kumaka* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions. [826] [774]

[87] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the waringulma tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten. [824]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 533 ●539 881 *Wurarkui* described some of his experiences when he visited Brisbane to dance before the Queen of England.

(*a*) "I saw the big boat, Marella, beside the jetty at Brisbane, many motor cars, boats and trains. The boats went under a big bridge over the river, and across that bridge went the motor cars. The ship's flags were flying."

Another man sang.

(*b*) "The *tapalingas* (stars) are like those on the American flag in Darwin. They lifted the flag up in the morning, and let it down at night."

(*c*) "The *tadawali* (shark) swims about the sea looking for stingrays."

[535] The onlookers applauded this song and asked the singer to perform the shark dance (Pl. 300), which he did to the delight of all.

(*d*) "I am a wireless man, and have sent native tucker (food) all over Australia. The Native Affairs branch in Darwin listened in."

(*e*) "Leo Hickey's boat comes quickly to Snake Bay with a cargo of food from Darwin."

Another *Mikingula* chanted a lengthy song describing the making of a wooden canoe, the felling of a tree in the jungle, the length and shape of the craft and the final launching.

After these songs, the *kulama* men rested in the shade, and the initiates sat by the side of the *milimika*, until about sunset.

(10) *Taking the Cooked Yams to Water*

881 The *Mikingulas*, starting from equally spaced positions on the periphery, crawled toward the basket of cooked and sliced yams standing in the centre of the *milimika*, and pretended to fight over it. While this was going on, the women, beating sticks together, called out "Brr-brr", as did the owl-man, *Purutjikini*, at the first *kulama*. Meanwhile two of the *Mikingulas* vigorously [535] performed the crocodile dance (Pl. 308). Then with a loud cry, one of them picked up the basket containing the yams, and followed by most of the women and children, carried the basket to the water.

With long-drawn-out calls, and the sound "Brr-brr", the men tipped the cut-up yams from the basket on to a grass bed on the bottom of the stream. While the leader patted the surface of the water, the rest of the people called in a high trilling note, similar to the mosquito call of the *pukamuni* ceremony, ending up in a loud *yoi*. These calls, they said, would cause still more thunder [821] storms and heavy rain.

533 881 It was quite dark (about 7.30 p.m.) when the *kulama* people assembled to hear the *Mikinatrina* initiates sing for the first time. For, at this stage of the ceremony, each male initiate of the *Mikinatrina* grade was invited by the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Mikingulas to enter the *milimika* and chant his first song, known as the *Ai-ipa*, which he had been practising for some time.[40] The female initiates, the *Mikinastringas* assisted the *Mikinastrinas* by beating the time on the outside of the *milimika* in the same way as *Pinsoma*, the owl-woman, assisted her husband, *Purutjikini*, at the first *kulama* ceremony during creation times. 533 881

One *Mikingula* told me that when he was passing through the *Mikinastrina* grade of initiation, he chanted three songs; one was about a fish, one about a rifle and a third about a crocodile.

When the *Mikinastrina* initiates had finished their songs, the men of the higher initiation grades, the *Mikintaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and the fully initiated *Mikingulas*, entered the ring, one by one, and walking anti-clockwise chanted the following songs:[40]

(*a*) "A big ship brings many things to Darwin." 177

(*b*) "A Japanese plane was flying low over Melville Island. The men on the ground said 'stand-by' and shot it down with a cannon." 533 539 881

(*c*) "In Darwin, I saw a kite, on a long string, which flew into the sky."

(*d*) "The Government plane flew me to Brisbane to see the Queen. It flew through the clouds. I went into the pilot's room in the front of the plane and the wireless told them Brisbane was only seven miles away."

(11) *The Kararitjui Songs*

About nine o'clock, the character of the songs changed and all but one dealt with the spirit, *imunka*, of their children.[41] These songs are called *kararitjui imunka*. 533 539 881

(*a*) "The spirits of my children have gone to Karuluka Island (Wurungku), and are playing there." [774]

[40] At the conclusion of the *kulama* ceremony, both the male and female *Mikinastrina* initiates wear their ornaments and keep themselves decorated for a month, and every evening when seated in the camp, they chant the same *Ai-ipa* songs as they did at the *kulama* ceremony.

At the end of a month, the initiates wash the paint from their bodies, discard their ceremonial ornaments, and resume a normal life until the next *kulama*.

Two years later, the *Mikinastrina* becomes a *Mikintara* retaining that grade for another year, when he enters the grade of a *Mikiatarima*. On the following year, the initiate reaches the full status of a *Mikingula*.

During the last two stages, i.e., *Mikintara* and *Mikiatarima*, the initiates are not subject to any special restrictions nor do they have to pass through any special rituals. Their body decorations too, are similar to those of the fully initiated men.

[40] The men did not carry their throwing stick in the same manner as they did in the afternoon performance (Pl. 44A).

[41] The Melville Islanders in common with most aboriginal tribes, believe that their spirit (*imunka*) leaves the body during sleep and wanders around. The songs refer to the spirits of their children, who, during the hours of sleeping, play in the forest and on the sea-shore.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (*b*) "The spirits of my children are dancing on a sand-bank beside the sea."
539 (*c*) "My children's spirits are paddling about in a canoe, looking for fish
881 and turtle eggs."

Another man first chanted a secular song, which he had tried to do earlier, but had forgotten the tune.

[177] (*d*) "I saw a tractor pulling big trees out of the ground to make the new aerodrome."

Then he continued with his *Kararinjui* song.

(*e*) "My little children have gone to the island, but they must come back because they are short of tobacco." After a pause he continued, "They're back because someone has just taken the tobacco out of my hand."

(12) *The Ceremonial Eating of the Kulama Yam*

881 On the third day, at early dawn, everybody went to the swamp to eat some of the prepared yams. The leader quietly plucked a bunch of grass from the edge of the water "to waken the *kulama* yam", for should it get a fright the yam would cause much sickness in the camp.

The fully initiated men, the *Mikingulas*, ate the first few pieces "to tame the yam", after which everyone took some to eat. This ritual ensures for all the participants, good health until the next *kulama*. Some of the prepared yam is left in the water for others to eat should they desire it.

This ritual completed the *kulama* ceremony. Everyone returned to his camp, and, except for the initiates of the lower grades, pursued a normal life. The grass ring and the pieces of antbed were left in place but the *kulama* ground and the *milimika* were deserted (Pl. 45D).

784 There are, however, a number of taboos and restrictions associated with
881 the deserted *kulama* ground and oven. For instance, should anyone make
[778] his camp or light a fire in the deserted *milimika*, the spirit of the *kulama* yam would be offended and blind the culprit.

If anyone were so foolish as to toss a piece of the antbed, from the oven, sand from the *milimika* or a fragment of cooked *kulama* yam into the sea, *Marsiji*, the rainbow, would be angry and create heavy seas and storms.
[821] The aborigines of the Cape Fourcroy area were convinced that a recent hurricane, which devastated the whole area, was caused by some foolish person throwing a piece of *kulama* into the sea.

On the other hand, if a *kulama* man takes a piece of antbed from the oven,
[224] and throwing it at a tree, hits the mark, his hunting will be successful, until the next *kulama* ceremony. But, if he misses his mark, his hunting will be poor.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

197 continued all the while, is at this stage strengthened. Any of these acts may be
527 interrupted at any moment by changing to the "hauling of sail or anchor" scene
535 and many interjections of "poop" and "iah" accompany them. The performer himself now ceases to stamp with his feet, but in place thereof he bends his legs at the knees and knocks his thighs together while he extends his arms outwards, either in front or at the side of him.

527 *Corrobboree of a fight.*—During several of the corrobborees described, a chant
535 was heard which accompanied the acting in addition to the clapping of hands against the thighs or buttocks. In trying to reproduce the words or syllables of this chant, the nearest analogy I can find is—

[533
539]

"*Tupera monan la jerra*
Tupera monan la jerra,"

and

"*Tupatunan tenakoncjona.*"

These chants are muttered uninterruptedly throughout the particular part. The corrobboree of a fight consists in the imitation of a spear duel between two angry blackfellows. They carry the same kind of reed-spears as was described under the "kangaroo ceremony." They first place themselves in defiance of one another at either side of the half-circle and go through all sorts of antics, brandishing their spears, rolling their eyes, and furiously throwing their bodies about. Next they start running about the ring and stamp their feet, throwing up their arms and knocking their thighs together in much the same way as previously described.

Corrobboree of the jungle fowl.—After the usual excessive amount of shouting, jabbering, and excited shrieks of laughter, an old man runs forward into the ring. He bends his arms at the elbow and holds them close against the sides of his body, while the closed fists rest on his chest, an attitude resembling that of a professional runner. This is to resemble the wings of the bird (*Leipoa*). He looks about the ground from side to side as though in search of something. Presently he imitates the bird's call with a shrill penetrating voice which sounds like "he-r-r-r-l." The onlookers' accompaniment consists in producing short spluttering and bubbling noises with their lips that sound like "brrl, brrl, brrl." The performer often interrupts the proceedings by shouting "he," to which all others respond with a loud "yeh." Now he throws up clouds of dust behind him with his feet, in imitation of the way in which the jungle fowl scratch and throw up the earth into the enormous mounds that contain their eggs.

To conclude the ceremony, all performers are led off again by the original leader in Indian file and go through much the same performance as they did in the initiation of the ceremony; the final shouts and shrieks, after the completion of the "trot" in spiral line, being particularly loud and enthusiastic.

114 Captain King[1] was probably the first white man to have witnessed the
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[1] *Survey Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114.

884 are allowed to dig the yam. A special dance area, or cere-
[460] monial ring, is cleared on the ground and a special cook-
ing fire is built in its center. On each of the three ceremonial
[535] days the participants paint themselves in specified ways
[305] with ocher. During the evening of each day, while the yams
are soaking or cooking, the male participants, singly or
884 together, walk slowly counterclockwise around the cere-
533 monial fire, beating sticks together as an accompaniment
[534] to specially composed songs. At times the wives, who re-
main outside the ring, sing with the men, or they may join
[535] their husbands in traditional dances that imitate various
aspects of the natural world around them.

The songs are a vital part of the ritual. They must be newly composed for the occasion and may relate to any event or abstract idea the composer chooses. The songs
[154] often deal with injustices the singer has experienced in the past year, about which he wishes to register an "official" complaint:

[539] "There was a funeral,
You went first, I came after.
Old people came in first.
I was late because I had a *Kulama*.
Why didn't you wait for me?"

or

"When Dory have baby girl
The old man said, 'That's for you.'
Dory, my mother-in-law, she burns me.
Dory doesn't know the old people way.
I would like to kill her."

Others may be in the nature of news reports, in which the listeners are informed of anything interesting that may have happened to the singer during the preceding year.
CBD For instance, the composer of the following song had just

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 14, (A)--Analyst]
[P. 13, (B)]

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YAMS TO BE USED in *Kalame* ceremony are retrieved from a fresh-water pool in which they had been soaked overnight.

884
533
[177]

For instance, THE COMPOSER OF THE following song had just returned from Brisbane, where he and a group of eight other aborigines had performed dances in honor of Queen Elizabeth's 1954 visit to Australia:

[539]

"The Queen was talking in England,
'I would like to see a blackfellow dance.'
When I was in Brisbane, the Queen said,
'I would like to meet a black boy!'
And I went up.
King Philip, he had a good look at me.
He was watching a lot as I danced.
I was singing into a loud-speaker."

[173]

Some songs are historic in nature, retelling an event that must be kept alive according to the traditions of the tribe. One such composition recalls the Japanese attack on Darwin during World War II:

[539]

"An enemy plane flies low over Melville Island.
The men on the ground, at the word 'Standby,'
Shoot it down with a cannon."

The children of the singer are often song subjects. This first example describes how the children behaved in one of their father's dreams.

[539]

"My children have gone to the other side
of the island.
But they must come back as they are hard up
for tobacco.
My children have now come back.
I know this for they have taken the tobacco
which I have held in my hand."

or

"My children will wear clothes and shoes.
They will go to school and learn to write."

All the songs have the same chanting tune, which is associated with the *Kalame* ceremony, and the composer must fit his words to the set meter of the chant. In many cases this requires using archaic words that are no longer a

[P. 14, (1)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 887 [166] *Middle of October*: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[7] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing. [578 764]

[881 574] *End of October*: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

[881] *End of January*: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

End of February: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, 571 even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

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[7] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeimpi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.' [177] [548]

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

were words like "insecure" and "uneasy." He was not particularly aggressive nor particularly submissive, but he fluctuated between the two attitudes. One got the impression after associating with him that he was never sure of what was expected of him and acted therefore in contradictory ways according to what *he thought* was expected of him. Or to put the same impression another way, there seemed a constant discrepancy between what people expected of Antonio and what he wanted to do if left alone. In tribal fights, for instance, he acted fiercely and aggressively and with the air of swaggering braggadocio that that all important men are expected to show in fighting, yet at the earliest possible moment he melted into the crowd with visible relief at being able to quit the center of the stage and without a trace of rancor or ill will toward any of the people whom he had been abusing or had been abused by a few minutes before. In council meetings of senior men he was always listened to with respect yet always had to be prodded into speaking at all. He never initiated a policy or offered his opinion until pressure was put upon him to state what he thought, and while his opinion when given was listened to with attention it was always a paraphrase of some opinion already given, usually the majority opinion of the group. He expressed what he thought the group wanted him to say, never an "opinion of his own." In this respect Antonio had many of the characteristics of a "yes-man" and like his counterparts in more civilized societies he seldom took the unpopular side and seldom stood up to opposition.

Two burning political issues agitating the Tiwi in 1928-30 were the issues of (1) plural marriage and (2) the visits of the Japanese pearling luggers. The Catholic missionaries had taken a strong stand on plural marriages and were bringing all the economic and moral pressure they could exert on the younger Tiwi to induce them to restrict themselves to one wife. Failure to bow to Mission pressure resulted in the recalcitrant's being cut off from the European food, tobacco, clothes, etc. which could only be obtained through the Mission. But beginning in the middle 1920's Japanese pearling boats in ever increasing numbers had carried on the practice of anchoring on the further side of Melville Island during the period of high tide (when diving for pearl shell was impossible) and inviting the natives to provide their women as prostitutes for the use of the crews during their stay on the beaches. The Japanese captains paid lavishly in European goods for any women thus provided and the subtribes on the southeast side of Melville, in particular the subtribe called the Yeimpi, proved very susceptible to the Japanese temptations.

These two issues of plural marriage and prostitution for the Japanese rather neatly complemented each other at two points. Not only did the Japanese rival the Mission station as a source of supply for European goods; the possession of a large number of wives was a condition that made a man very unpopular with the missionaries, but, if he were disposed to rent out some of them, made the same man very popular with the Japanese. The plural marriage issue, if alone, would clearly have divided the tribe into the conservatives, staunchly upholding plural marriage as the Tiwi way, and the radicals abandoning it in return for Mission favor. But such an alignment was cut right across

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

548 by the Japanese issue, since it tempted the conservative with several wives to
595 violate all the old tribal sanctions by renting out his wives, and it provided
648 the Mission adherent radicals with a grand opportunity to pose as the real de-
668 fenders of the old culture and to charge the old polygamists with being the real
797 renegades from the ancient ways.

It can be easily guessed how high feelings ran on these issues and how hotly
159 they were debated when a number of Tiwi gathered together. But on neither
177 of these issues or on any aspect of them did Antonio show any signs of leader-
797 ship. He accumulated wives but always apologized in a rather deprecating and apple-polishing way when he met the missionaries, and spent part of his time hanging around the Mission despite the contemptuous attitude which the missionaries adopted toward him. He thus contrasted very unfavorably with some of his contemporaries, notably one Dooley who, having been for years a one-wife man and a Mission favorite, inherited a second wife at around the age of forty. Dooley's decision was clear-cut and highly spectacular. He accepted the second wife, shook the dust of the Mission station from his feet and never set foot near it again, taking up again the traditional life of a Tiwi elder, deep in the bush, with his two wives and later additions, ignoring all white innovations, even tobacco.[4] Dooley's uncompromising behavior was greatly admired by the tribe but few had the strength of character to emulate him, certainly not Antonio.

159 On the Japanese issue Antonio was just as vacillating. Prodded by others to make a statement he would in ringing tones denounce as disgraceful and scandalous the behavior of the Yeimpi wife-renters, but on his visits to the Yeimpi country—ostensibly "to see for himself what was going on"—he shared eagerly in the proceeds of vice which his friends there offered him and was even heard on a few occasions to wonder aloud why the Japanese always went to the Yeimpi country when there were plenty of secluded beaches in Tiklauila country. Instantly challenged, "Would you want the Japanese to come here?" "Would you rent your wives to them if they did?" poor Antonio quickly turned it into a feeble joke, saying deprecatingly, "Oh no, no, no. I just wondered why they always go to those ugly Yeimpi women?"

In summary we might say that Antonio's personal behavior appeared to be that of a man pushed into a position rather too big for him to fill. He was not by nature particularly aggressive or domineering, but as the eldest son of
[554] Turimpi he was constantly being pushed by public opinion onto the center of
[626] the stage, whereas he would have been much happier if public opinion had left him alone to be an ordinary, average member of the crowd. The role he was called on by his status position to play seemed to give him little or no pleasure, little or no personal satisfaction. Such a view of his "personality" is supported by the fact that when alone in the bush with his own family and away from the society of his peers Antonio was relaxed and at ease. As Durk-
159 heim pointed out, the basic factor in Australian social psychology is that men
571 spend a great part of their lives hunting and collecting in the bush, completely out of physical contact with all people except members of their own households,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

portunities for cultural comparison he at the same time acquired an acute insight into his own culture and into the psychology of his fellow tribesmen. For the anthropologist he was a magnificent informant and a continuous pain in the neck. As increasing years gave him increasing tribal seniority, Mariano became increasingly domineering and touchy about his own importance and increasingly recognized by the younger men as the man who voiced the "promission" and hence "pro-white" point of view in tribal arguments. However, it would be a mistake to think of him as the "detribalized" native of the literature (as another Benelong, e.g., in the magnificent study of culture contact given by the Australian novelist Eleanor Dark, 1941). On the contrary the tough old unacculturated natives who lived deep in the bush and who tried to act much of the time as if white men didn't exist not only accepted Mariano but respected him and paid deep attention to his arguments. The reasons why they did this are, I think, all considerations of "personality," that is, they respected Mariano despite his collaboration with the Mission largely because Mariano was the kind of man he was. He was forceful and determined; he was sincere, he was consistent both in word and in deed, he was intelligent and knew both the psychology of his audience and how to marshal his arguments so as to obtain maximum impact from his material. And he had supreme confidence in his own righteousness. Time and again one was struck by the contrast between him and his elder brother Antonio. When Antonio spoke (always after being prompted or coerced into giving his opinion), people listened hoping to hear wisdom and force and cogency; instead they heard only hackneyed phrases and inconsistent arguments which left them dissatisfied and unconvinced. When Mariano spoke (always without invitation and frequently ahead of many of his seniors), he laid down, in vehement tones, a definite policy, and even though his policy was unacceptable to his hearers as it frequently was, they listened with close attention and voiced their approval at the end, not so much of the policy he outlined as the directness and clearness of the delivery and the logic of his position.

The difference between the two men is well illustrated by their attitudes toward the Japanese wife-renting on the Yeimpi beaches. On this, the burning issue of the day, Antonio never took a stand but shilly-shallied on all sides of it, despite the fact—frequently drawn to his attention—that his small daughter was betrothed to an old Yeimpi who was a notorious wife-renter and he, therefore, in a very short time would be faced with the decision of whether to hand the girl over to her promised husband or not. Mariano on the contrary seized upon the Japanese issue from its first appearance as proof of the essential soundness of the Mission campaign against plural marriages. His speeches were clear-cut and definite. "It all goes to show that the priests are right when they say that having a lot of wives is a bad thing. These old Yeimpi have too many wives. If they had only one each, like white men (and inferentially like Mariano himself), they would not be doing this disgusting thing of renting out their wives to Japanese, they would want to keep their one wife to themselves like decent Tiwi." Most of his hearers (a) considered themselves decent Tiwi, but

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 (b) had each a number of wives at home, (c) had not rented any to the Japanese
548 as yet (mainly because of lack of opportunity), but (d) were all suspecting each
595 other of contemplating an early trip to the Yeimpi country and therefore were
668 in chronic indecision on the whole matter. Hence Mariano's arguments were
797 greeted with the applause that any group of people caught among a complicated set of moral alternatives will give to one of their number who has solved for himself the conflicts that beset them and has solved them moreover in a way perfectly consistent with all his previous attitudes. It was the applause and approval that is expressed in our culture by some such phrase as "I may not agree with him but at least he is sincere and you always know where he stands."

159 But like similar people elsewhere Mariano inspired no close intimate
593 loyalty. Nobody felt warmly toward him. The missionaries used him but didn't like him, the anthropologist found him invaluable as an informant but intensely irritating in his self-importance and his belief in his own indispensability; among the natives he had no intimates and no close friends. His relations with his wife were much more formal and distant than was usual among monogamous couples and she frequently criticized him both in public and in private for what she called his "failure to talk to her"—undoubtedly the Tiwi equivalent of the American wife's complaint against her husband's absorption in business or politics. He was fond of his children but played with them little and then in a silent, brooding sort of way, confining his caresses to tickling and squeezing them, unlike Antonio whose play with his children was always carried on in an endless flow of chatter and two-way conversations. Child-talk, one surmises, was beneath Mariano's dignity.

All in all, Mariano was a forceful, domineering, self-important, introverted
177 man, pursuing his dedicated way as the leader of a cause—collaboration with
159 and imitation of the whites—but having personality traits which prevented him from inspiring any of the affection or warm devotion that other types of leaders inspire. There were many Tiwi, especially among the younger men, who were ready and willing to adopt at least the easier aspects of white culture such as clothes, work in Darwin, disrespect for tribal laws, violation of taboos, but in no sense can they be described as Mariano's followers, still less his admirers. Everyone respected Mariano, everybody consulted him, everybody made use of him and listened to him, but nobody warmed to him. He was as sound, as domineering, as aggressive, as humorless, as dedicated, as admirable as one of the Old Testament prophets—and just as difficult to like.

LOUIS

159 Of the five sons of Turimpi, it may be that the two who were most similar in whatever it is that is called personality were the second and third sons, Mariano and Louis. Both were "lonely ones," both had about them a kind of gloomy, inward-focused aura which inhibited warm friendly relations with
[522] others. Among a people to whom laughter and gaiety come easily, both were completely devoid of humor. Both were men dedicated to a cause, but in the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

fifty was likely to be left a widow by him within the next fifteen years, and 587
even if she remarried a man of the same age as her first husband, she could easily be widowed for the second time while still herself a comparatively young woman. There were several different patterns, most of them intermingled in the same household, for a female matrimonial career, but the situation may be illustrated by the concrete case of one of Turimpi's widows, an ancient crone (in 1930) named Bongdadu. Born about 1865, she was betrothed at birth to a powerful old man named Walitaumi who was at least the same age as her father, if not older. Not unnaturally, he died while she was still a child and well before she was old enough to join his household. Her betrothal was then reassigned, so to speak, to Walitaumi's half-brother, Turimpi, then in his early forties. About seven years later, she joined Turimpi's household as a blushing bride of fourteen, her husband then being close to fifty. In the next twenty years she became Turimpi's most prolific wife and bore numerous children, three of whom, Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, all born between 1883 and 1900, were men of importance in Tiwi politics in 1930, and one of whom, Louis, is still alive today.[6] Around 1900, when Bongdadu was still only about thirty-five, she passed to M., a middle-aged Tiklauila, and was his wife until his death around 1925. By this date, Bongdadu was over sixty and had borne ten children, four of whom died young. Not unnaturally, she was beginning to approach the hag or crone stage of Tiwi womanhood. Nonetheless, she had to remarry, but by now all of the people who might have claimed any rights of bestowal in her were long since dead, her eldest sons were adult men of some importance and able to protect their mother's interests, and clearly she was unlikely to produce any more children.[7] Her chief value was as a food producer and housekeeper and female politician, roles for which she had been well trained in her long years as wife of Turimpi and M.

Old women in Bongdadu's position had to remarry, but they were in 587
a good position to exercise some choice of their own as to whom they re- 888
married, especially if they had strong influential sons to support them in their wishes. There was a frequent pattern in such cases for the widow, aided and abetted (or perhaps even forced) by her sons, to arrange a marriage of convenience with some obscure nonentity much younger than herself and usually a friend or contemporary of her sons. In 1925, then, Bongdadu, widowed
three times already, married as her fourth husband one Dominico, a man of [554]
no importance whatever, as was shown by the fact that at this time he was
nearly forty and had not been able to attract even one bestowed wife. He had, 587
however, already married one widow, so that his marriage to Bongdadu gave 595

[6] Tiwi personal names are polysyllabic and hard for the reader to remember; hence, wherever possible, we have used "whiteman names" for individuals. The frequency of Spanish names among these "whiteman names," such as Mariano or Dominico, derives from the fact that the original buildings for the Mission Station were built by a number of Filipino workmen whom the priests brought with them. [551] [128] [797]

[7] The Tiwi saw no inconsistency between believing in spirit impregnation and believing at the same time that an old woman was unlikely to bear children. It was to them a matter of probabilities, and of course with them as with us, occasionally an elderly lady did—disconcertingly—have a baby, proving the logic of their position. [842]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

right of her clansmen and more specifically her sons (in consultation with her own wishes) to arrange her remarriage became restored as a sort of residual or reanimated right. Moreover, as we shall see, it was in line with their own political interests for the sons to insist on exercising such a right. 584 587 614

Naming Rules

Such a way of integrating the two forms of marriage is supported by the Tiwi rules for naming children, which are very relevant to the issue. We mentioned earlier that the right to bestow a daughter was vested, strictly speaking, not in the actual father, but in the man who named her. Personal names were important in the Tiwi value system[8] and were given to every child a few weeks after its birth by its father or the man currently married to its mother. But whenever a husband died and the widows remarried, all the personal names given to their children by the dead man became strictly taboo, and the new husbands of the widows had the duty (or right) of providing all the children with new names. Since most women were widowed several times in their lives, most children were thus renamed several times in *their* lives, and the names given them by the earlier husbands of their mother dropped completely out of use.[9] Logically under this system nobody would get a permanent name until his or her mother was dead, since as long as she were alive she would remarry and her new husband would rename all her children, no matter how aged they might be. The Tiwi insisted that logically this was how the naming system was supposed to work, and, in fact, the personal names of even prominent senior men did become taboo whenever their mothers' current husbands died. But convenience proved stronger than logic and the personal names of most men and women became well established in their early adulthood as people became used to them. While such names did become taboo when the man who had given them died, the taboo in such cases was temporary rather than permanent, and after a decent interval the name would creep back into use replacing some new and unfamiliar one which might be bestowed by the widow's new husband. In general, the name which thus became permanently or irrevocably attached to a person was the name which a person held when he or she first emerged into tribal prominence or first began to get talked about. For a male, this was most usually the name he was bearing in his late twenties and early thirties; for a female, the name she was known by in her early adolescence when she first left her father's household to take up residence with her earliest husband. 553 768 587 [183] [551]

That convenience thus overbore logic in the Tiwi naming system by

[8] See Hart 1931.

[9] It can easily be seen what headaches this naming system created for an anthropologist trying to collect genealogies. Individuals would occur in one genealogy under one name and in another under another name, making the task of cross-indexing and cross-checking enormously difficult. [124]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

3

The Prestige and Influence System

To become a really big man, or even a minor figure among the elders, a Tiwi had to devote all his adult life to that goal. Careers were built up and influential positions gained not by executing spectacular coups at any one time, but by slow, devious maneuvering and dealing in influence throughout adulthood. Men in their early thirties invested their very small assets in the hope of large returns twenty years later, and if the anthropologist witnessed the initial investment he was not around to witness the final return; or if he witnessed the return he found it difficult to reconstruct all the relevant details of the initial investment. A man in 1928 bestowed his daughter in a certain direction because of some deal back in 1900, arranged by men many of whom were now dead. And the bestowal in 1928 was done in such a way as to bind the hands of men negotiating in 1960, some of whom were infants in 1928.[1] 557

The Tiwi influence and career patterns can best be compared to a sort of nonstop bridge game wherein the scores were never totaled up nor a new game ever started on a clean slate.[2] Whenever an observer came in, he always

[1] A typical illustration of this situation arose during the writing of this book. In 1928-29 Hart had observed Padimo beginning to acquire a number of bestowed wives. Being interested in the status of Padimo twenty-five years later, he included Padimo in a list of inquiries to Pilling. Pilling's reply: "Re Padimo. I am almost certain that he was the 'Paddy' who died leaving several widows, in February, 1953, about three months before I got to the Islands. The natives did not like to talk much about him while I was there (because of the taboo on dead men's names) and his widows were still being fought over. The fights over his widows did not end until the week I left (if they really did then)." Thus the deals which Hart saw in 1928-29 were having delayed repercussions when Pilling was there in 1953-54. 124 768 551 578

[2] We use bridge rather than poker as our analogy because nobody ever "went broke" in Tiwi influence competition and nobody ever "won the pot," because there was no pot to win. The scoring was always, so to speak, on a comparative basis and everybody, even the most unsuccessful man, had some score relative to his competitors.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Politics of Widow Remarriage

Ki-in-kumi's large establishment was the sort of set-up that every Tiwi sought to achieve but few accomplished. An establishment such as his meant wealth, power, prestige, and influence for its head, and, in Malau, Ki-in-kumi was the only man with such a household. With eleven males, many of them food producing; sixteen women, all of them food producing; and several of the girls under fourteen able to assist the older women, the amount of food this unit could collect in a day provided an ample food surplus for the establishment. A man whose household was a surplus food producer was a successful man. Moreover, since the large work force that produced the food surplus contained numerous young wives who (usually) could be relied upon also to produce numerous female babies, he was doubly blessed with both the requisites—surplus food and surplus daughters—necessary to increase his influence and make more people beholden to him or dependent on him. Of the thirty-five married women in Malau, sixteen, or over 45 percent, were in this one establishment.

By comparison, the other old men of Malau were less successful.[8] Through pooling their work forces, Enquirio and Merapanui had achieved an establishment (Unit II) almost as big as that of Ki-in-kumi, and probably its members ate almost as well as the members of his, but their effort was a shared effort and their influence and prestige had to be divided between them. They had been lucky with daughters but, divided between the two fathers, the eleven daughters in their establishment were less impressive than Ki-in-kumi's eight, and the total of seven young wives between them was quite overshadowed by Ki-in-kumi's nine. The two old brothers were successful men and headed a successful operation, but their prestige and success must be rated at least one whole degree below that of Ki-in-kumi.

Another pair of elderly brothers, White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua, had also joined forces (Unit III), but the results can be judged as only fair. They were at least the best off of their age group, the 45- to 55-year-olds, but the competition in that age group was weak, as can be seen by comparison of their establishment with Units IV and V, the households of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai. Perhaps the best indication of the respective success in life of the seven oldest men is that given in the column of Table III headed "young wives." Of the twenty-three such women in the band, eighteen were in the establishments[9] of the three oldest men (Units I and II); the next five men in age shared the remaining five (Units III, IV, and V).

It might be thought that the small establishments of the unsuccessful junior elders like White Man, Ku-nai-u-ua, Pingirimini, and Tipiperna-gerai could be expected to increase sharply in size and these men to grow in relative prestige and influence when death removed the three old men at the heads

[8] It will be noticed that as we move into the older group of men we have to use their native names, since most of them had no "whiteman" names.

[9] Two of these eighteen were of course actually married to Padimo, but still part of the establishment of their father, Ki-in-kumi, since Padimo's wives all lived with Ki-in-kumi's wives.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he still had six years to go after that, not finishing the final grade of *Mikingula* until somewhere past the age of 24 or 25.

In contrast with the mainland initiation ceremonies, we think the most interesting point about Tiwi initiation resides not in the formal ceremonies but in the removal from the food-production units, for long periods of the year, of all the young males between the ages of 14 and 25. It is true that they did not spend *all* their time in seclusion and that after the age of twenty they remained mostly in their household camps, where they contributed to the household food production. Nonetheless, it remains clear that only a very well-off tribe could afford to allow so much time off from food production to all its young hunters. Tiwi fathers, it would seem, in arranging for the initiation of their sons to begin just when they were becoming productive hunters, were willing to sacrifice that productivity for less tangible advantages. The youths, secluded and guarded in the bush while getting an education, were not only out of the work force but were also out of the predatory-bachelor force. A Tiwi elder made sacrifices to "send his sons to college" but he breathed easier to know that the sons of the other elders were all there too.

All males without exception had to go through the full initiation cycle, and from the time of their first forcible seizure at the age of 14-15 to their final graduation at 24-26, they were in a state of *pukimani* and their personal names were strictly taboo to everybody in the tribe. Each youth was referred to only by his grade name, *Marukumarni* for the first year, *Mikingula* for the last four years, and so on. And here we return finally to a point which was mentioned much earlier—namely, the complete unimportance in tribal eyes of all males below the age of twenty-five. Until they had completed the final stage of initiation, Tiwi males were still boys; they did not even have names. Occasionally, when collecting genealogies and coming upon a reference to a young man, the innocent anthropologist would ask, "Is he married?" In tones of the deepest contempt the informant would reply, "That kid, how could he be married? He's still *Mikingula*." Though *Mikingula* was the stage typically reached by a man at about 20-21 and lasted for the next four years, to the Tiwi it was still a stage in the life of a boy. Not until he had finished as *Mikingula* could he step out into the world and life of men. How he spent the years immediately after finishing initiation decided how soon some senior man would think sufficiently highly of him to aid him in acquiring his first ancient widow.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Thus Cooper with his well-armed retinue of mainlanders had made the islands safe for white men and introduced a desire for white men's goods, particularly tobacco. His retirement from Melville Island left the newly established Mission on Bathurst Island as the only source of supply for these goods. After World War I, however, another influence began to grow in importance. Large numbers of Japanese pearling boats came and anchored off the coasts of southern and southeastern Melville Island, where they traded with the local bands—the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula. These bands got tobacco and European-type food (flour, rice, tea, sugar) from the Japanese in quantities which the Catholic missionaries could not afford to provide; all the Japanese asked in return was access to young native women. Men who controlled many women—as fathers, as husbands, or as brothers—were thus in a favorable position to profit by the traffic with the Japanese.

Whereas the demands made by the Japanese on the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula for women were quite straightforward and uncomplicated, Father Gsell's demands on the bands of south Bathurst Island were somewhat more complex in their consequences. Many aspects of the old pattern of Tiwi life had to be abandoned to make them into Christians. To the missionaries, polygamy was sinful and could not be part of the new Tiwi life. Prenatal and infant bestowal had to be abolished. Marriages should be between agemates and should be arranged freely and solely by the couple involved. Such changes were the crux of Father Gsell's program, and the story of how he went about it has run in many a Sunday supplement in the cities of Australia under the title "The Bishop With 150 Wives."[6] Father Gsell did not try to convert or drastically change the behavior of the older Tiwi; he believed that they were too set in their ways. Rather, he built toward a distant day by working among the younger generation. When infant girls became widows, he purchased them from their fathers. Men with young widowed daughters and those with spare young wives sold such girls for axes, flour, tobacco, cloth, and trinkets. Such "Blackies," as they became affectionately called,[7] lived in the convent with the French (and later Australian) sisters. When such a girl reached the age of about 18, she was asked to choose one of the young single men for her husband. For his part in this excellent deal which provided him with a wife long before he would get one under the old tribal system, the young man had only to promise that he would never take another wife. Such a wedding was not a Mass, for neither party was Catholic. However, the children born of this new union were baptized and reared as Catholics. Later, a few of the girls who had been sold to Father Gsell before they were ten went through confirmation as did their youthful fiances. The first nuptial Mass between two such Tiwi took place in 1928.

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[6] Father Gsell became Bishop of Darwin in 1938. He lived on in retirement to 1958, having seen in his lifetime the fulfilment of his dream of the Tiwi as a Catholic tribe.

[7] The Tiwi today strongly resent being called "African," "Negro," or "nigger," but they do not seem to mind being called "Blacks." The term "Blackie" for a young female is in general use by Mission school girls for themselves; it is in no sense derogatory.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 0120 Tiwi 0120

PERSONAL NAMES AMONG THE TIWI[1]

By C. W. M. HART

[171] 551 THE Tiwi, who inhabit Melville and Bathurst Islands in North Australia, are in many respects unlike the other Australian peoples. So little is known, however, about the subject of personal names among Australian tribes that it is impossible to say whether in this respect also [121] they are atypical. Among the Tiwi at any rate personal names and the customs attaching to them play a very important part in the life of the tribe, and in this paper an attempt is made to describe this element of their culture and to explain it.

Every member of the Tiwi has not one name but many, each of which belongs to him or her alone and each having an equal validity as a term of address or of description, though naturally some are used more frequently than others. This is to say, although a man with five different names may be addressed or referred to by any one of those five names, nevertheless the normal thing is for one name to be much more generally used than any of the others, it being for a native, as for us, much easier to think of a person by a single name than by several.

553 602 The multiplicity of names is accounted for by the fact that quite a number of the relatives have the right to bestow names upon a new-born child and a certain proportion of them will always exercise that right. The father may always bestow names upon his own children, and the father's brothers, who are of course the classificatory fathers of the child, have the same power. The mother's brothers may also bestow names upon a child, should they so desire, and less frequently children will be found bearing names given to them by the older men of their own totem clan, that is not only the mother's brothers but also other

[122] [1] This paper, which was presented to Section F, Anthropology, of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science at the Brisbane Meeting, May 1930, contains part of the results of research carried out in 1928 and 1929 as Science Research Scholar of Sydney University, and with the aid of a grant from the Australian National Research Council.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

relatives of the mother, such as the mother's mother's brother. The Tiwi have matrilineal totemic clans. 553 602

Names are seldom bestowed upon an individual by women; the only female relative having that power is the actual mother's mother. A mother is never in any circumstances allowed to name her own child. The reason for this is fairly obvious. The naming of children is a ritual affair, and as such is more or less forbidden to the women, for although their exclusion is not nearly so strict as in some other parts of Australia, they do not, among the Tiwi, take very much part in ritual affairs. The mother's mother, however, stands in a rather privileged position to her daughter's child. She is of the same totem and is normally a very old woman, and to a certain extent appears to become a symbol of the clan for her daughter's son. A boy, for example, will strongly resent and often endeavour to revenge any insult to his mother's mother, even if it means taking up arms against his own father. For example, during my stay a boy of twelve abused his father and quitted his father's camp for over a month because in a fight between hordes his father had injured the boy's mother's mother's brother. There was no particular respect or regard for the latter individual on the part of the boy, but the injury was a grave insult to his mother's mother. [603] [562] 603

It must also be understood that it is impossible for any two people to have the same name. Should a father inadvertently bestow upon his child a name already in use he is guilty of a gross breach of etiquette, and to prevent such a possibility a man will refrain for a long time from coining a name until he is fairly certain that the one he decides upon is neither already in use nor was held by any person recently dead. Although the Tiwi number nearly eleven hundred people at the present time, and each one of these has on an average three names, a careful study of these three thousand three hundred names fails to reveal any two as being identical. 551 [161]

By the time that a child reaches puberty he is the possessor of several names since by then some at least of the people entitled to bestow names upon him will have exercised that privilege. In exceptional cases he may have six or seven names though sometimes only one. All of these will have been known at some time or other to the tribe at large, though it is usually possible to get a full list of a person's names only from that individual himself or his father or mother.

It is not at all unusual in primitive societies for the death of a man to

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 render his name tabu. This is the case among the Tiwi. All the names of a dead man become strictly *pukimani* (=tabu) immediately upon his death. Anyone in the tribe who uses a name of a dead person at any time for years after his death but especially in the period—usually about five to six months—that always elapses between the death and the funeral corroboree, violates one of the strictest social sanctions the tribe possesses.

192 And this prohibition extends to all words in the ordinary language—
551 though curiously enough not in the sacred language—which bear any
765 resemblance in sound to any one of the names of the dead man. It applies equally to English names in use by the tribe with resemblances to native or English words and to native words which resemble either English or native words. Thus a boy named *Tipuki* having died "tobacco," "baccy," *Tiparkitimiri* all equally became *pukimani*. Similarly when *Mulankina*, one of the Mandeimbula horde died, *mulikina*, one of the commonest words in the language, meaning "plenty," "full," "enough," was dropped completely from the language.

551 Nor does the *pukimani* stop here. Not only is the use of any of the
553 names of the dead man prohibited, but there is an equally strong rule against the use of any of the personal names he has bestowed upon other people, be they his own children or the children of others. A young child may only have one name, that given him by his father, but should his father die he must become nameless until he gets a new name from somewhere. This aspect of the *pukimani* does not extend to similar words in either the ordinary or the sacred language. For instance although
[192 765] *Tambu*, a proper name bestowed by an old man became *pukimani* on the latter's death, the ordinary word *tamu* (imperative form of verb 'to sit down') was not affected.

582 On account chiefly of the extreme form of polygyny practised by the
595 Tiwi whereby most of the girls and young women belong to a comparatively few old men, the father of a family is almost invariably much older than his wife. While a woman goes to live with her husband at about the age of 13, a man is lucky to get his first wife under the age of 35. It follows that in the great majority of cases the father of children dies
587 long before the mother. Therefore as a woman without a husband is unknown amongst the Tiwi, a woman passes through the possession of quite a number of different men during her lifetime and does not remain in an unmarried state for more than a day or two. A widow

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

normally gets a new husband as soon as her previous husband is dead, 587
frequently on the same day. Certainly she does not remain single for more than a week, save in exceptional circumstances as when the man to whom by common consent of the horde she is to pass, is absent. She will then remain with her brothers or with the other wives of her husband-elect until his return.

It can now be seen whence the people with tabued names derive their 553
new names. A child who is nameless because his father has died and there- 587
by rendered *pukimani* those names which he has given the child, gets a new name immediately from the new husband of his mother. It is important to notice that this new husband renames not only the children of the recently dead man by his new wife, but all her children no matter who may have been their father.[1]

These newly acquired names then become the ordinary names of the individuals concerned and are retained until the new husband in turn dies, when once more the names are changed by the next husband of the mother. Thus it is literally true that no one has a permanent name until the death of his mother.

The names themselves are rather interesting. With a few exceptions 551
they can be classified into groups by their endings. A full list of these groups is hardly important enough to warrant inclusion here, and a few examples will suffice. The commonest ending of all is *-miri* as in such names as *Timatalotimiri*, *Pripanyimiri*, *Tipilamberaŋitimiri*. This is distinctly a masculine ending. There is a corresponding feminine suffix *-mo*, *Kidjiboŋkimo*, *Muŋilatimo* being examples.

These suffixes *-miri* and *-mo* are the only two with a definite signification of sex; the others are indeterminate. For example, *Ilimatirimiiŋi* is a man while *Puŋilantamiiŋi* is a woman. Similarly with *Pripanyimirli* who is a man and *U-lau-undimirli* who is a woman.

To understand the coining of the names it must be understood that 198
amongst the Tiwi there are two languages, one the ordinary language in 192
everyday use, the other a sacred language used only in ceremonies, songs and ritual formulae. The latter is composed entirely of words that

[1] Thus A marries B who has children M and N by the recently dead X, and older children P and Q by T who died years before. When X married B he renamed P and Q, and now on X's death A proceeds not only to rename M and N but also to rename P and Q once more.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

198 apparently were once part of the ordinary language but by reason of their
192 becoming *pukimani* by one of the methods mentioned above have been dropped completely from everyday use and retained only in the memory of the older people until they are brought out again in some new song or substituted in the ordinary language for some word newly prohibited. The meaning then has to be explained to the younger people who have been born since the word formed part of the ordinary language.

It can easily be understood that in this mass of words handed down orally for centuries there are a number retained of which the meanings have been lost. For example it is quite impossible to obtain a word for word translation of any initiation song of the Tiwi, numbers of words being introduced which are totally meaningless alike to the singer, the maker of the song and to the audience. These words correspond to some extent to the "tra-la-la" or other nonsense syllables frequently found in modern American popular songs, being introduced to provide the correct rhythm or metre, to echo the sense of the song or for some conventional reason, certain meaningless words being exclusively found associated with other words, the meaning of which is known.

551 One of the favourite methods of coining names is to select one of these meaningless words and add one of the nominal suffixes mentioned above to it. Thus *matirandjiŋili* is a word frequently used in songs, the meaning of which is obscure. *Materandjiŋimirli* is, however, a proper name.

Place names are sometimes added to by a suffix or otherwise changed to become proper names. Thus *Pripanyimili*, a district of South Bathurst, gives *Pripantimiri* a masculine name; *Poru*, the district opposite the mission station, gives rise to *Porutimiri* a male name and *Porutimiu* a female name. (It should be noted that there is no connection between such a name and the district of origin or residence of the person bearing the name.)

428 The commonest method of all is for the name to descend in the direct
553 male line. That is, after the death of the father one of his sons (usually but not invariably the eldest) disregarding the name bestowed upon him by his mother's new husband, allows a sufficient time to elapse for the tabu to lose its efficacy and then assumes his father's name. This is done either of his own volition or by the older men of his horde who were the contemporaries of his father adopting the practice of using his

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

father's name towards him and thus implying their approval of his taking 428
that name. To select one example—there is at present in the Tiklowila 553
horde a man *Pwandjilora* whose father was also a *Pwandjilora* who died about fifteen years ago. His father in turn was also a *Pwandjilora*, who is only remembered by the very old people of the horde.

This succession of names also takes place though to a very much lesser degree in the female line, that is from mother to daughter.

It must not be thought, however, that there is any such thing as 424
private ownership of names by a family. A man but distantly related to 553
Pwandjilora II would be quite at liberty to bestow that name upon one of his children were it not already in use and had a sufficient time elapsed since his death. An example is a famous warrior of the last generation called *Walitoami*. This name has recently been bestowed by one of the Tiklowila upon his son though neither he, the child, nor the mother of the child is closely related to the first *Walitoami*. As a matter of fact the child is the mother's brother's son's daughter's son of *Walitoami I*.

One or two other aspects of this subject may be dismissed briefly 551 ●
as they are more important in a study of kinship or ceremonial, than in a 422
study of names as such.

A man may not in any circumstances use the name of the wife of another man, even the names of his brother's wives, without giving the husband a *casus belli*. A woman is a man's own property and the use of her name is an infringement of his property rights. In the same way a man's own name is his own property and cannot be used with impunity, at least in the presence of the owner of the name. In calling out to a person for instance, he will always be addressed by a kinship term, never by a personal name. This also is the manner by which the news of a death is 551
carried to distant camps and the name of the dead man avoided, "your [196
mother's brother at *Wilraygu* of the *Tjilarui* totem and the son of so and so 203]
is dead at *Brega*" being an example of how a relative is informed. The dead man is thenceforward referred to as "he who died recently at *Brega*."

There is another prohibition against the use by a husband of his own 551
wife's name whilst she is in childbirth. For a couple of weeks before the 843
birth and for a couple of weeks afterwards the husband must not look upon his wife, he cannot use any of her names, nor can any others of the tribe mention her either by name or by implication to him. Even such an

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 expression as *int'abominaiiya* (=your wife) is forbidden, nor for example
843 can one of the woman's brothers enquire the whereabouts of his sister from the woman's husband. There is no such prohibition, however, against the use of her name nor against references to her by the rest of the tribe provided always the husband is not within hearing.

551 None of the names of a person passing through any stage of initiation
561 can be used by anyone at all. Such a person is always alluded to or
881 addressed as *Watyinyirti* or *Mikinyirtiya* or whatever degree of initiation he or she has reached. As the normal initiation ceremonies are carried out continuously from the age of seventeen to the age of about twenty-six for a man and from ten to nineteen for a girl, for those periods of their lives personal names are seldom used.

I propose to call these names "initiation-grade names," since they are applied to an individual according to the grade of initiation he has reached. A full list of them is as follows :—

Initiation-Grade Names (Male).

Average Age.		Duration of Grade.	
15-17	..	1 year	*Maru-kumarni*
15-17	..	6 months	*Kilipirni-ati*
16-18	..	6 months	*Watyinyirti*
18-20	..	2 years	*Mikin yirtiya*
19-21	..	1 year	*Mikin djira*
20-22	..	1 year	*Mikadjirima*
24-26	..	4 years	*Mikin gula*

Initiation-Grade Names (Female)[8].

10-12	..	1 year	*Maru-kumarniya*
15-17	..	6 months	*Kilipirni-atiya*
11-13	..	6 months	*Watyinyirtiya*
13-15	..	2 years	*Mikin yirtiyiya*
14-16	..	1 year	*Mikin djiriya*
15-17	..	1 year	*Mikadjiriniya*
19-21	..	4 years	*Mikin guliya*

551 In addition to these initiation-grade names there is also a series of
561 names which I propose to call "age-grade names." These are more

[8] In actual practice the female names are not nearly as commonly used as the male.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

strictly descriptive rather than terms of address, yet quite frequently they are used in both ways. They refer to the state of life the person has reached and are often used as substitute names during the period in which an individual is nameless on account of his name being tabu. Names such as baby, young man, etc., are of course found in every language; it is their occasional use as terms of address that makes them interesting among the Tiwi, and also the fact that Spencer has confused them with the initiation-grade names. These names are:—

Age-Grade Names (Male).

Male baby	(Birth to about 11)	*Kiritini*
Boy approaching puberty	(12-14)	*Mala-kuniya*
Uninitiated boy or young man		*Tatiŋ-ati*
Young man during initiation		(Initiation Grade Term)
Initiated man		*Mikingula*
Old man	(over 60)	*Irula or Palini*

Age-Grade Names (Female).

Female baby	(Birth to about 6)	*Kiritiya*
Girl approaching puberty	(7 to 11)	*Aliiya*
Girl beginning to menstruate	(12-14)	*Muru-kibura*
Girl at first pregnancy		*Miriŋaladja*
Shortly before birth of child		*Poporŋanti*
Mother of male child		*Ari-aui*
Mother of female child		*Pirnambili*
Mother of several children		*Nurau-rika*
Old women with children		*Pirimariya*
Barren woman		*Timiriya*

If these two lists are compared with Spencer,[4] it will be found that all the names which he gives as "status terms" are included in one or other of my two lists with the exception of "Gunmurdi" which Spencer gives as "very old man," and which I was quite unable to trace at all. I have adopted the division into age-grade names and initiation-grade names and rejected "status terms" altogether as the two groups of names are quite distinct, one depending on age, the other on advancement in initiation.

[4] *Native Tribes of Northern Australia*, 1914, p. 84.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 To sum up then the main points in the customs of the Tiwi connected with personal names, the outstanding features are these :—

(1) Multiplicity of personal names.
(2) Death renders tabu the names of the dead man.
(3) Death renders tabu similar words in the language.
(4) Death renders tabu names bestowed upon others by the dead man.
(5) Method of coining names.
(6) Tabu on names at certain times (*e.g.*, childbirth, initiation).

551 It is fairly evident from the facts cited in this paper that among the
424 Tiwi at any rate a personal name is the absolute property of the person
775 possessing it. Further than that, it is so identified with his personality
198 that even the use of it by anyone else in resented by the owner. There is no space here to describe the theology of the Tiwi, but it must be pointed out that after the death of a man his spirit does not go with his body to the region of the dead, but wanders about the world in a form both invisible and malignant. Just as an individual when alive would resent the use of his name so too will his spirit and will be much more dangerous an enemy on account of his supernatural form. Spirits are not only malignant, they are also unreasonable, and whereas a live man would not quarrel with you for using an ordinary word resembling his name, his ghost is quite likely not to appreciate the difference. Hence the prohibition against similar words. While in touch with the unseen world it pays to be careful. But in dealing with the unseen world the Tiwi have a special language. This body of words has a sacredness of its own, it is a part of the spirit world itself. Therefore you may incur the enmity of a spirit by using his mundane name or some similar mundane word, but the use of a similar word in the sacred language cannot do any harm ; the spirit will not get annoyed with you for using a spirit word, especially as you can only use it in any case on sacred occasions. Hence there is no tabu on similar words in the sacred language.

551 This principle of the sacred language for use when in touch with
844 supernatural situations also helps us to understand several other things. The birth of a child is, to a native, a most mysterious affair and the woman is regarded as being intimately in touch with the spirit world. Hence her name as part of herself is invested with a ghostly character and this is expressed by the tribe in treating her husband as if she did not exist, as if

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

she were dead in fact and for the time being no longer his wife. She 551
is in touch with the spirits and the result will be a child for her husband. 844
Since he is too close to the mystery for comfort they abstain from mentioning it in his presence.

The result of the childbirth is a child and that child was recently a spirit. Therefore the name must come from the sacred language.

Initiation ceremonies also involve a very close contact with the spirit 553
world. Initiation is a sacred rite and sacred names must be taken when 881
passing through its various stages. When *Timalaŋkumi* is seized by men of his sister's husband's totem and yellow grease is smeared on his chest he ceases to be *Timalaŋkumi* and becomes *Maru-kumani*, a person in touch with unseen forces, and he therefore must have a sacred name. His previous name came from the sacred language, but this is a change of status and is expressed by giving him a new name, one that is only used on such occasions.

The fact that death renders sacred all the concepts closely associated 553
with the dead man does no doubt play a large part in causing the tabu 587
on names he has bestowed upon other people. There is I think another 768
factor which is even more important in the causation of this particular 593
tabu. When a man marries a widow he becomes to the tribe not the foster father of her children but the actual father. It cannot be pointed out too often that the Australian blackfellow does not distinguish physiological and social fatherhood. The new husband is married to the widow, he therefore must be the father of her children. Her children change their position in the tribe, and the function of the changing of their names is to show this change and the new social relationships that have been imposed upon them by it. It will be remembered in this connection that the husband changes the names of *all* the woman's children whether of her last husband or not, and also that words in either the sacred or the ordinary language which are similar in sound to the former names of the children do not become tabu. That is, it is a social not a sacred change of name.

It might be argued that the widow changes her status also, yet her 587
name is not changed. But in point of fact she does not alter her status; 768
her new husband is usually of the same clan as her last one, and frequently 553
he is an actual brother of the dead man. In any case her new husband cannot change her name as she is not one of the people he can bestow names upon. Nor does her name mean to the tribe any relation to her

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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previous husband; he did not bestow it, therefore there is no necessity for her successor to change it.

In conclusion it seems almost superfluous to point out the necessity in such a society for a large number of personal names for the individual. When such a number of tabu on names exist a man with only one name would be constantly having to live for long periods nameless, but with multiple names it is almost a certainty at any particular time that some of them will be free from any of the prevailing tabu.

C. W. M. HART.

7:Fry D-5 (1913) 1949 OI20 Tiwi OI20

124 802 were *yadi*, *irrara*, *irradroma*, *arkwawi* and *inalti*, respectively one, two, three, few and many. Some natives had a vague idea of five and ten. A nominal roll of the dead [551] was impossible, as the names of the dead are *ardjidit*, "unlawful," "taboo." A method was arranged whereby flat sticks were used and notched. Separate sticks were taken for males and for females. A group would sit about and the dead identified by relationship with the living. A big notch in the sticks would be made for each adult, a smaller notch for a child, and a tiny notch for a baby. Records obtained in this way 165 showed that at least 56 men, 87 women, 17 boys, 25 girls and one male and one female infant had died. The population of the islands, before the epidemic, was estimated as a result of general enquiries to be about 650, so the known death roll of 187 indicates a high mortality rate.

The original rumour suggested that the natives were dying of measles, as someone had diagnosed some illnesses at the Mission about Christmas time as measles. The extremely low number of infant deaths was entirely against measles being the cause of the holocaust, and supports the native diagnosis of magic.

H. K. Fry,
D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.

[p. 80-B]

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Sickness is cured by beating the ground around the victim to hunt the evil spirit 755
away. Likewise, a song, Upripu, is sung by the wives of the sick man to make him
better. The *Kurewa*, a pointed bone, or sometimes a tomahawk is used to stab a 754
person's urine or an article his body has touched (e.g. a bark he has lain upon to sleep)
and so cause him to die. Blood thrown into the sea will cause a violent wind and a [821]
big tide. The Kulama rite will bring about the same result. No instance has been 775
found of magic being used to entice the spirit from a person's body, yet if a person
failed to show sympathy for the dead, the dead person's "shade" would cause that
person to die and then run away with his "shade." To mention the name of the 784
newly dead is taboo. If a person accidentally does this he must immediately hit his
mouth and spit to cleanse it of the evil.

Names. The names given to the women and men are of three types; the first 551
is the actual name and is given to a person at the Kulama rite; this is an ordinary
word such as "honey nest," etc., but it is always in a different language from the
ordinary one which is used everyday. The child also receives the name of his father,
father's brother or father's sister; this is a traditional name. Then, in the case of a
male, come the terms denoting his initiation grade in the Kulama. First stage—
Murakmani; second stage—*Wadjaneta*; third stage—*Migingartiya*=first song
and *Midjintera*=second song; fourth stage—*Mekearterima*=third song; and finally,
Mahagala, which denotes that the man is qualified to conduct a Kulama. Likewise,
both sexes have grade names denoting their status in the Pukamane death ritual.
Male terms: first stage—*waniati*; second stage—*warunerera*; third stage—
wanerterima; fourth stage—*wanderara*. With girls and women these names are
the same except for the ending denoting the sex.

In the case of women there are terms denoting age or condition. *Kudjine*— 551
child; *alinga*—girl; *miriyaleta*—puberty; *murogarbra*—breasts developed; *pira-* 561
muruha—first sign of pregnancy; *paprungata*—pregnant woman; *wanantaka*—
woman who has a child dead, and *umparu*—widow. Other terms are *pitukwen*—
widower; *mentuygini* and *padrubayga*—boy and girl respectively, whose mother is
pregnant; *indjula*— a woman whose breasts have fallen; and as on the mainland, a
mother is always called by the sex of the child she carries in her arms: *oriowri* if a
boy, *kudjine* if a girl.

Language. The language is peculiar. In many instances, owing to the masculine 193
and feminine endings of the words, the women seem to speak a different language to
the men. In addition, another language, or set of words, which is very rarely spoken, 192
seems to obtrude itself. Thus one article will have many names. This is brought 551
about by the strong death-taboo on names; as soon as a native dies, his names and
his son's names are taboo and others are substituted. In this way every year new 192
words are coined. Only recently at a Kulama two new ones appeared as a conse-
quence of this taboo. *Purinteriya*, new name for tree, and *alepwa*, new name for
coconut. Or a Kulama name may be given as, say, *wilinkurauwa*, the meaning of
which will be given as honey nest; and yet numerous words for honey are nothing

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

right of her clansmen and more specifically her sons (in consultation with her own wishes) to arrange her remarriage became restored as a sort of residual or reanimated right. Moreover, as we shall see, it was in line with their own political interests for the sons to insist on exercising such a right. 584 587 614

Naming Rules

Such a way of integrating the two forms of marriage is supported by the Tiwi rules for naming children, which are very relevant to the issue. We mentioned earlier that the right to bestow a daughter was vested, strictly speaking, not in the actual father, but in the man who named her. Personal names were important in the Tiwi value system[8] and were given to every child a few weeks after its birth by its father or the man currently married to its mother. But whenever a husband died and the widows remarried, all the personal names given to their children by the dead man became strictly taboo, and the new husbands of the widows had the duty (or right) of providing all the children with new names. Since most women were widowed several times in their lives, most children were thus renamed several times in *their* lives, and the names given them by the earlier husbands of their mother dropped completely out of use.[9] Logically under this system nobody would get a permanent name until his or her mother was dead, since as long as she were alive she would remarry and her new husband would rename all her children, no matter how aged they might be. The Tiwi insisted that logically this was how the naming system was supposed to work, and, in fact, the personal names of even prominent senior men did become taboo whenever their mothers' current husbands died. But convenience proved stronger than logic and the personal names of most men and women became well established in their early adulthood as people became used to them. While such names did become taboo when the man who had given them died, the taboo in such cases was temporary rather than permanent, and after a decent interval the name would creep back into use replacing some new and unfamiliar one which might be bestowed by the widow's new husband. In general, the name which thus became permanently or irrevocably attached to a person was the name which a person held when he or she first emerged into tribal prominence or first began to get talked about. For a male, this was most usually the name he was bearing in his late twenties and early thirties; for a female, the name she was known by in her early adolescence when she first left her father's household to take up residence with her earliest husband. 553 768 587 [183] [551]

That convenience thus overbore logic in the Tiwi naming system by

[8] See Hart 1931.

[9] It can easily be seen what headaches this naming system created for an anthropologist trying to collect genealogies. Individuals would occur in one genealogy under one name and in another under another name, making the task of cross-indexing and cross-checking enormously difficult. [124]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

553 attaching some one semipermanent name to a person despite the rules of
768 name taboo should not cause us to overlook the importance of these rules.
587 In theory, at least, every new husband renamed all his wives' children by all their previous marriages—thus, at least symbolically, canceling out the signs of title of all the previous "fatherhoods" in those children and asserting his own fatherhood right as a new and exclusive one. A widow's new husband was the new household head for all her children, and he took over this position by renaming them all, thus becoming their legal father. If we can stop thinking of "father" as a biological or kin relationship, and think of the word as meaning only "head of the household," the Tiwi concept will become understandable. We will also realize that there is no contradiction or illogic involved in the Tiwi beliefs that male parents were not necessary for conception, but that every child born must be born to a woman with a husband. All they meant was that every child must be born into a household with a male at its head who belonged to a different clan from its mother—in other words, a "father," in Tiwi context.

584 The renaming of the children by the new household head was not, of
592 course, sufficient to wipe out the commitments made by previous titleholders.
768 Although the new father could and did change his step-daughters' names, he could not change their bestowals. The men upon whom the daughters had been bestowed by the previous father made sure of this. The new father was compelled to carry out the marriage arrangements for the daughters made by his predecessors in the fatherhood role, and there was sure to be a terrific row if he tried to alter them. Nevertheless, he acquired some power over the future of the daughters. The man to whom one of them had been promised by the previous father might die, thus making redisposal of the girl possible for him, or some new deal might be arrangeable in which he could use his new assets—for these new step-daughters were assets, regardless of the fact that their immediate matrimonial future was already settled. The new father could delay his decision as to whether they were yet old enough to join their betrothed husband or even drop a few hints that he did not think the betrothed husband's right to them was quite as certain as was generally believed. Such actions, of course, were liable to lead to violent reprisals by the betrothed husband, but there was always a chance that he would be open to a deal; for example, by giving an option on one of the women in whom he had an interest, he would seek to hasten the appearance of the girl in his own household or seek to clear whatever shadow upon his title to her the step-father sought to cast. Even the last husband of an elderly widow who had already passed through the hands of six or eight husbands and all of whose daughters were grown up and married two or three times already, gained some shadowy rights in the future remarriages of those daughters by marrying their ancient mother. And the validation of these shadowy rights was the fact that as their mother's new husband he had renamed the daughters and he who named them could bestow them. The only catch was, that while he could wipe out all the names bestowed by his predecessors, he could not equally readily wipe out their commitments. All he could do was maneuver within the network created by their

As mechanisms validating this success of fathers rights

584 against clan rights there existed two rules: he who bestowed the name had
592 the right to dispose in marriage; and all names given by a woman's previous
614 husband were cancelled by his death and a new set of names given to all her
[553] children by her new husband. Strictly and universally enforced, such rules
would put *all* control over the marriages of *all* women, of every age, in the
hands of their mother's husbands—that is, men from outside the clan of the
women being disposed of, in other words, fathers in the Tiwi sense. But the
Tiwi system failed to achieve such a result though their rules are pointed
toward it. They achieved something close to it as far as infant or even young
girls were concerned, since the fellow clansmen of such girls were either (as
brothers) too young and unimportant to have any power to resist this alien
control over their sisters' hands, or (as mothers' brothers and hence older
men) too involved and absorbed in their own activities *as fathers* to take any
581 position asserting clan rights as against fathers' rights. To be successful in
557 tribal life, an ambitious young Tiwi male was best advised to forget his mother
584 and his sisters' daughters (all members of his clan) and concentrate on getting
[614] wives for himself. Only by getting wives could he have daughters, and only
by having daughters could he build alliances and obtain influence, power, and
more wives. To get wives for himself, he could not use his mother or his
sisters or his sisters' daughters, since their disposal was in the hands of the men
who had named them—that is, their fathers. But there came a time in the life
of an older man when his mother was old, and *her* mother was dead, and there-
fore the rights of the last man to name his mother had lapsed. And a similar
situation would arise in the case of his sisters when their mother's last husband
died. By this age, a man so situated was likely to be powerful enough and
skilled enough in the rules of the game to exert some control over the late
remarriages of his elderly sisters and even of his mother, were she still alive.
592 Whenever this occurred, although the resulting situation might have the super-
584 ficial appearance of clan solidarity—with sons, mothers, brothers, and sisters
587 all acting and planning together as a partnership—such a surface appearance
was illusory. The motivations involved in it were scarcely altruistic desires on
the part of the brothers to look after their mothers and elderly sisters, but
rather efforts by the brothers to use to advantage, in their intricate political
schemes, some women of their own clan (their mothers and elderly sisters).
Earlier in life these men had been prevented from such manipulation by the
control over those women exercised by nonclansmen (their husbands or fath-
ers) through the naming rules. Put another way, we might say that Tiwi men
as a group had acquiesced to the system wherein "the father" had control over
all marriages of his "daughters," because every Tiwi man hoped to be a
"father" himself; but having acquiesced, every Tiwi male tried to beat the
system, especially as he became older and more influential, by intriguing in the
remarriages of his mother and elderly sisters—matters in which, according to
the strict letter of the law, he had no right to interfere, since bestowal rights
resided with the "father" or "fathers" of these women. One factor which
[582 greatly contributed to the setting aside of the rights involved in the naming
582] system was the fact that since, on the whole, old men married young women

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

Women were, however, a form of capital that possessed the power of talking back to the investors. As daughters or as wives they were quite thoroughly subordinate to the wishes of their fathers or husbands, and Tiwi wives were as frequently and as brutally beaten by their husbands as wives in any other savage society. But as mothers and as sisters the women were not coerced by their sons and their brothers. On the contrary, sons or brothers wishing to use their mothers or their sisters in their political schemes (typically when those mothers or sisters became or were about to become widows) could only do so with the active collaboration of the women concerned. Tough-minded young widows could drive a hard bargain with their brothers as to where they remarried, since each needed the other to make the remarriage acceptable to the tribe at large and to beat down the other competitors (the dead husbands' brothers, for example) who wished to control the remarriage of the widows. Young girls thus had no bargaining power but young widows had a good deal. Old mothers with influential senior sons were extremely powerful. Any affront to an old woman was an affront to her sons, and some of the strongest influence networks were alliances of several senior brothers, in which their old mother seemed to be the mastermind and the senior sons largely the enforcers of what the old mother and her middle-aged daughters (their sisters) had decided among themselves.

562 593 [587]

Thus, for women, as for men, age and political skill were the crucial factors in determining their position. Young girls were chattels and as such were passed around from husband to husband. But with increasing age, smart young women, especially in alliance with their smart young brothers, could control their own fate with some firmness, and if they and their brothers had a shrewd old mother (also with powerful senior brothers still alive) to advise them and support them, then the decisions of such a group as to where the girls remarried were very difficult decisions for anybody else to combat or oppose. Not as independent operators, but as behind-the-scenes allies of their sons and brothers, Tiwi mothers and sisters enjoyed much more essential freedom in their own careers as often-remarried widows than would appear at first sight in a culture which ostensibly treated all women as currency in the political careers of the men. No matter how males, both old and young, might connive, they were constantly aware that no remarriage of a widow could ever be arranged and made to stick unless the widow herself was agreeable.

562 888 553 [587]

In the limited space available, all we can offer are a few samples of how the influence game was played by a few selected individuals of various ages. Age was of great importance in Tiwi careers and therefore we select our samples from all the adult male age-groups. We have selected them all from the same band—the Malauila—so as to show as clearly as possible the interplay between one career and another for men of the same band. And finally we select men of the Malauila band for our examples because in 1928-29 it was a band little affected as yet by the outside influences—Catholic missionaries and Japanese pearl divers—which were beginning to modify Tiwi marriage customs among some of the other bands.

557 888 [177 797 121]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

their heads. During these songs, the husband sat quietly at one end of the *milimika*, with his head in his hands (Pl. 232). 765 [535]

The *ilania* concluded with *Nangrinini* calling *Aluprumani* (a mangrove bird); *Malumerinita* calling *Tjirinini* (the red-backed sea-eagle) and the assembled men, making the honey and mosquito call.

During one of the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, a near relative had his name changed from *Miralipaiwe* to *Tukuwuinganili*.[71] [533]

(3) *The Ilanias of Makapini*

At the same time as the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi* was being performed, an old woman, *Makapini*, was baptized at Bathurst Island by the priest, just as she was dying, and, although she had never accepted Christianity, was buried, against the wishes of her relatives, in the mission cemetery. 797

The aborigines of both Bathurst and Melville Island were distressed over this incident because as *Makapini* had always been a "pagan" (as the mission authorities call the unconverted), her spirit could not go to the white man's "heaven", and, as the *pukamuni* ceremonies were prohibited on Bathurst Island, the spirit of *Makapini* was doomed to wander, lonely and unhappy, for ever. To prevent such a calamity (for lonely *mopaditis* are a danger to the living), the aborigines of Melville Island performed a modified *pukamuni*, called the *aramatruni-nipungari*,[72] so that, at its conclusion, the spirit of old *Makapini* would travel happily to her future home. 765 [775]

The pattern of this ceremony differed somewhat from that of *Waniamperi*. At a *milimika* near the camp of the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, the Melville Island aborigines held five *ilanias* over a period of eight days. The final two days of the *pukamuni* were held among the poles.[73] I will describe a typical *ilania* and later the final *pukamuni* rituals.

The *ilania* opened with one of the "workers", who had been in the forest cutting the burial poles, running toward the *milimika*, stick in hand, giving the honey call. One of the *pukamuni* men rushed out to drive him away, but, after a sham fight with throwing sticks, brought him into the *milimika*.

The predominating songs and dances of this and other *ilanias* of *Makapini* were associated with the mythical wild-honey people[74] of Bathurst Island. 765 533 535

[71] Hart (1930, pp. 280–99) describes how the custom of altering the names of near relatives at death causes rapid changes in the language.

[72] This type of *pukamuni* ceremony is also held when aborigines are drowned at sea and their bodies not recovered. [766]

[73] This was a variation of the previous *pukamuni*, probably because the body was not at the place of ceremony.

[74] Although I did not inquire, it is certain from the songs, that the father or mother of the dead woman belonged to one of the honey totems of Bathurst Island.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 0120 Tiwi 0120

PERSONAL NAMES AMONG THE TIWI[1]

By C. W. M. HART

[171] 551 THE Tiwi, who inhabit Melville and Bathurst Islands in North Australia, are in many respects unlike the other Australian peoples. So little is known, however, about the subject of personal names among Australian tribes that it is impossible to say whether in this respect also [121] they are atypical. Among the Tiwi at any rate personal names and the customs attaching to them play a very important part in the life of the tribe, and in this paper an attempt is made to describe this element of their culture and to explain it.

Every member of the Tiwi has not one name but many, each of which belongs to him or her alone and each having an equal validity as a term of address or of description, though naturally some are used more frequently than others. This is to say, although a man with five different names may be addressed or referred to by any one of those five names, nevertheless the normal thing is for one name to be much more generally used than any of the others, it being for a native, as for us, much easier to think of a person by a single name than by several.

553 602 The multiplicity of names is accounted for by the fact that quite a number of the relatives have the right to bestow names upon a new-born child and a certain proportion of them will always exercise that right. The father may always bestow names upon his own children, and the father's brothers, who are of course the classificatory fathers of the child, have the same power. The mother's brothers may also bestow names upon a child, should they so desire, and less frequently children will be found bearing names given to them by the older men of their own totem clan, that is not only the mother's brothers but also other

[122] [1] This paper, which was presented to Section F, Anthropology, of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science at the Brisbane Meeting, May 1930, contains part of the results of research carried out in 1928 and 1929 as Science Research Scholar of Sydney University, and with the aid of a grant from the Australian National Research Council.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

relatives of the mother, such as the mother's mother's brother. The Tiwi have matrilineal totemic clans. 553 602

Names are seldom bestowed upon an individual by women; the only female relative having that power is the actual mother's mother. A mother is never in any circumstances allowed to name her own child. The reason for this is fairly obvious. The naming of children is a ritual affair, and as such is more or less forbidden to the women, for although their exclusion is not nearly so strict as in some other parts of Australia, they do not, among the Tiwi, take very much part in ritual affairs. The mother's mother, however, stands in a rather privileged position to her daughter's child. She is of the same totem and is normally a very old woman, and to a certain extent appears to become a symbol of the clan for her daughter's son. A boy, for example, will strongly resent and often endeavour to revenge any insult to his mother's mother, even if it means taking up arms against his own father. For example, during my stay a boy of twelve abused his father and quitted his father's camp for over a month because in a fight between hordes his father had injured the boy's mother's mother's brother. There was no particular respect or regard for the latter individual on the part of the boy, but the injury was a grave insult to his mother's mother. [603] [562] 603

It must also be understood that it is impossible for any two people to have the same name. Should a father inadvertently bestow upon his child a name already in use he is guilty of a gross breach of etiquette, and to prevent such a possibility a man will refrain for a long time from coining a name until he is fairly certain that the one he decides upon is neither already in use nor was held by any person recently dead. Although the Tiwi number nearly eleven hundred people at the present time, and each one of these has on an average three names, a careful study of these three thousand three hundred names fails to reveal any two as being identical. 551 [161]

By the time that a child reaches puberty he is the possessor of several names since by then some at least of the people entitled to bestow names upon him will have exercised that privilege. In exceptional cases he may have six or seven names though sometimes only one. All of these will have been known at some time or other to the tribe at large, though it is usually possible to get a full list of a person's names only from that individual himself or his father or mother.

It is not at all unusual in primitive societies for the death of a man to

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 render his name tabu. This is the case among the Tiwi. All the names of a dead man become strictly *pukimani* (=tabu) immediately upon his death. Anyone in the tribe who uses a name of a dead person at any time for years after his death but especially in the period—usually about five to six months—that always elapses between the death and the funeral corroboree, violates one of the strictest social sanctions the tribe possesses.

192 And this prohibition extends to all words in the ordinary language—
551 though curiously enough not in the sacred language—which bear any
765 resemblance in sound to any one of the names of the dead man. It applies equally to English names in use by the tribe with resemblances to native or English words and to native words which resemble either English or native words. Thus a boy named *Tipuki* having died "tobacco," "baccy," *Tiparkitimiri* all equally became *pukimani*. Similarly when *Mulankina*, one of the Mandeimbula horde died, *mulikina*, one of the commonest words in the language, meaning "plenty," "full," "enough," was dropped completely from the language.

551 Nor does the *pukimani* stop here. Not only is the use of any of the
553 names of the dead man prohibited, but there is an equally strong rule against the use of any of the personal names he has bestowed upon other people, be they his own children or the children of others. A young child may only have one name, that given him by his father, but should his father die he must become nameless until he gets a new name from somewhere. This aspect of the *pukimani* does not extend to similar words in either the ordinary or the sacred language. For instance although
[192 765] *Tambu*, a proper name bestowed by an old man became *pukimani* on the latter's death, the ordinary word *tamu* (imperative form of verb 'to sit down') was not affected.

582 On account chiefly of the extreme form of polygyny practised by the
595 Tiwi whereby most of the girls and young women belong to a comparatively few old men, the father of a family is almost invariably much older than his wife. While a woman goes to live with her husband at about the age of 13, a man is lucky to get his first wife under the age of 35. It follows that in the great majority of cases the father of children dies
587 long before the mother. Therefore as a woman without a husband is unknown amongst the Tiwi, a woman passes through the possession of quite a number of different men during her lifetime and does not remain in an unmarried state for more than a day or two. A widow

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

normally gets a new husband as soon as her previous husband is dead, 587
frequently on the same day. Certainly she does not remain single for more than a week, save in exceptional circumstances as when the man to whom by common consent of the horde she is to pass, is absent. She will then remain with her brothers or with the other wives of her husband-elect until his return.

It can now be seen whence the people with tabued names derive their 553
new names. A child who is nameless because his father has died and there- 587
by rendered *pukimani* those names which he has given the child, gets a new name immediately from the new husband of his mother. It is important to notice that this new husband renames not only the children of the recently dead man by his new wife, but all her children no matter who may have been their father.[8]

These newly acquired names then become the ordinary names of the individuals concerned and are retained until the new husband in turn dies, when once more the names are changed by the next husband of the mother. Thus it is literally true that no one has a permanent name until the death of his mother.

The names themselves are rather interesting. With a few exceptions 551
they can be classified into groups by their endings. A full list of these groups is hardly important enough to warrant inclusion here, and a few examples will suffice. The commonest ending of all is *-miri* as in such names as *Timatalotimiri*, *Pripanyimiri*, *Tipilamberanjitimiri*. This is distinctly a masculine ending. There is a corresponding feminine suffix *-mo*, *Kidjibonkimo*, *Munjilatimo* being examples.

These suffixes *-miri* and *-mó* are the only two with a definite signification of sex; the others are indeterminate. For example, *Ilimatirimiini* is a man while *Punjilantamiini* is a woman. Similarly with *Pripanyimirli* who is a man and *U-law-undimirli* who is a woman.

To understand the coining of the names it must be understood that 198
amongst the Tiwi there are two languages, one the ordinary language in 192
everyday use, the other a sacred language used only in ceremonies, songs and ritual formulae. The latter is composed entirely of words that

[8] Thus A marries B who has children M and N by the recently dead X, and older children P and Q by T who died years before. When X married B he renamed P and Q, and now on X's death A proceeds not only to rename M and N but also to rename P and Q once more.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

198 apparently were once part of the ordinary language but by reason of their
192 becoming *pukimani* by one of the methods mentioned above have been dropped completely from everyday use and retained only in the memory of the older people until they are brought out again in some new song or substituted in the ordinary language for some word newly prohibited. The meaning then has to be explained to the younger people who have been born since the word formed part of the ordinary language.

It can easily be understood that in this mass of words handed down orally for centuries there are a number retained of which the meanings have been lost. For example it is quite impossible to obtain a word for word translation of any initiation song of the Tiwi, numbers of words being introduced which are totally meaningless alike to the singer, the maker of the song and to the audience. These words correspond to some extent to the "tra-la-la" or other nonsense syllables frequently found in modern American popular songs, being introduced to provide the correct rhythm or metre, to echo the sense of the song or for some conventional reason, certain meaningless words being exclusively found associated with other words, the meaning of which is known.

551 One of the favourite methods of coining names is to select one of these meaningless words and add one of the nominal suffixes mentioned above to it. Thus *matirandjiyili* is a word frequently used in songs, the meaning of which is obscure. *Materandjiyimirli* is, however, a proper name.

Place names are sometimes added to by a suffix or otherwise changed to become proper names. Thus *Pripanyimili*, a district of South Bathurst, gives *Pripantimiri* a masculine name; *Poru*, the district opposite the mission station, gives rise to *Porutimiri* a male name and *Porutimiu* a female name. (It should be noted that there is no connection between such a name and the district of origin or residence of the person bearing the name.)

428 The commonest method of all is for the name to descend in the direct
553 male line. That is, after the death of the father one of his sons (usually but not invariably the eldest) disregarding the name bestowed upon him by his mother's new husband, allows a sufficient time to elapse for the tabu to lose its efficacy and then assumes his father's name. This is done either of his own volition or by the older men of his horde who were the contemporaries of his father adopting the practice of using his

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

father's name towards him and thus implying their approval of his taking 428
that name. To select one example—there is at present in the Tiklowila 553
horde a man *Pwandjilora* whose father was also a *Pwandjilora* who died about fifteen years ago. His father in turn was also a *Pwandjilora*, who is only remembered by the very old people of the horde.

This succession of names also takes place though to a very much lesser degree in the female line, that is from mother to daughter.

It must not be thought, however, that there is any such thing as 424
private ownership of names by a family. A man but distantly related to 553
Pwandjilora II would be quite at liberty to bestow that name upon one of his children were it not already in use and had a sufficient time elapsed since his death. An example is a famous warrior of the last generation called *Walitoami*. This name has recently been bestowed by one of the Tiklowila upon his son though neither he, the child, nor the mother of the child is closely related to the first *Walitoami*. As a matter of fact the child is the mother's brother's son's daughter's son of *Walitoami I*.

One or two other aspects of this subject may be dismissed briefly 551
as they are more important in a study of kinship or ceremonial, than in a 422
study of names as such.

A man may not in any circumstances use the name of the wife of another man, even the names of his brother's wives, without giving the husband a *casus belli*. A woman is a man's own property and the use of her name is an infringement of his property rights. In the same way a man's own name is his own property and cannot be used with impunity, at least in the presence of the owner of the name. In calling out to a person for instance, he will always be addressed by a kinship term, never by a personal name. This also is the manner by which the news of a death is 551
carried to distant camps and the name of the dead man avoided, "your [196
mother's brother at *Wilraŋgu* of the *Tjilarui* totem and the son of so and so 203]
is dead at *Brega*" being an example of how a relative is informed. The dead man is thenceforward referred to as "he who died recently at *Brega*."

There is another prohibition against the use by a husband of his own 551
wife's name whilst she is in childbirth. For a couple of weeks before the 843
birth and for a couple of weeks afterwards the husband must not look upon his wife, he cannot use any of her names, nor can any others of the tribe mention her either by name or by implication to him. Even such an

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

she were dead in fact and for the time being no longer his wife. She 551
is in touch with the spirits and the result will be a child for her husband. 844
Since he is too close to the mystery for comfort they abstain from mentioning it in his presence.

The result of the childbirth is a child and that child was recently a spirit. Therefore the name must come from the sacred language.

Initiation ceremonies also involve a very close contact with the spirit 553
world. Initiation is a sacred rite and sacred names must be taken when 881
passing through its various stages. When *Timalaŋkumi* is seized by men of his sister's husband's totem and yellow grease is smeared on his chest he ceases to be *Timalaŋkumi* and becomes *Maru-kumani*, a person in touch with unseen forces, and he therefore must have a sacred name. His previous name came from the sacred language, but this is a change of status and is expressed by giving him a new name, one that is only used on such occasions.

The fact that death renders sacred all the concepts closely associated 553
with the dead man does no doubt play a large part in causing the tabu 587
on names he has bestowed upon other people. There is I think another 768
factor which is even more important in the causation of this particular 593
tabu. When a man marries a widow he becomes to the tribe not the foster father of her children but the actual father. It cannot be pointed out too often that the Australian blackfellow does not distinguish physiological and social fatherhood. The new husband is married to the widow, he therefore must be the father of her children. Her children change their position in the tribe, and the function of the changing of their names is to show this change and the new social relationships that have been imposed upon them by it. It will be remembered in this connection that the husband changes the names of *all* the woman's children whether of her last husband or not, and also that words in either the sacred or the ordinary language which are similar in sound to the former names of the children do not become tabu. That is, it is a social not a sacred change of name.

It might be argued that the widow changes her status also, yet her 587
name is not changed. But in point of fact she does not alter her status; 768
her new husband is usually of the same clan as her last one, and frequently 553
he is an actual brother of the dead man. In any case her new husband cannot change her name as she is not one of the people he can bestow names upon. Nor does her name mean to the tribe any relation to her

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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previous husband; he did not bestow it, therefore there is no necessity for her successor to change it.

In conclusion it seems almost superfluous to point out the necessity in such a society for a large number of personal names for the individual. When such a number of tabu on names exist a man with only one name would be constantly having to live for long periods nameless, but with multiple names it is almost a certainty at any particular time that some of them will be free from any of the prevailing tabu.

C. W. M. HART.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

fifty was likely to be left a widow by him within the next fifteen years, and 587
even if she remarried a man of the same age as her first husband, she could easily be widowed for the second time while still herself a comparatively young woman. There were several different patterns, most of them intermingled in the same household, for a female matrimonial career, but the situation may be illustrated by the concrete case of one of Turimpi's widows, an ancient crone (in 1930) named Bongdadu. Born about 1865, she was betrothed at birth to a powerful old man named Walitaumi who was at least the same age as her father, if not older. Not unnaturally, he died while she was still a child and well before she was old enough to join his household. Her betrothal was then reassigned, so to speak, to Walitaumi's half-brother, Turimpi, then in his early forties. About seven years later, she joined Turimpi's household as a blushing bride of fourteen, her husband then being close to fifty. In the next twenty years she became Turimpi's most prolific wife and bore numerous children, three of whom, Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, all born between 1883 and 1900, were men of importance in Tiwi politics in 1930, and one of whom, Louis, is still alive today.[6] Around 1900, when Bongdadu was still only about thirty-five, she passed to M., a middle-aged Tiklauila, and was his wife until his death around 1925. By this date, Bongdadu was over sixty and had borne ten children, four of whom died young. Not unnaturally, she was beginning to approach the hag or crone stage of Tiwi womanhood. Nonetheless, she had to remarry, but by now all of the people who might have claimed any rights of bestowal in her were long since dead, her eldest sons were adult men of some importance and able to protect their mother's interests, and clearly she was unlikely to produce any more children.[7] Her chief value was as a food producer and housekeeper and female politician, roles for which she had been well trained in her long years as wife of Turimpi and M.

Old women in Bongdadu's position had to remarry, but they were in 587
a good position to exercise some choice of their own as to whom they re- 888
married, especially if they had strong influential sons to support them in their wishes. There was a frequent pattern in such cases for the widow, aided and abetted (or perhaps even forced) by her sons, to arrange a marriage of convenience with some obscure nonentity much younger than herself and usually a friend or contemporary of her sons. In 1925, then, Bongdadu, widowed three times already, married as her fourth husband one Dominico, a man of [554] ●
no importance whatever, as was shown by the fact that at this time he was nearly forty and had not been able to attract even one bestowed wife. He had, 587
however, already married one widow, so that his marriage to Bongdadu gave 595

[6] Tiwi personal names are polysyllabic and hard for the reader to remember; hence, wherever possible, we have used "whiteman names" for individuals. The frequency of Spanish names among these "whiteman names," such as Mariano or Dominico, derives from the fact that the original buildings for the Mission Station were built by a number of Filipino workmen whom the priests brought with them. [551 128 797]

[7] The Tiwi saw no inconsistency between believing in spirit impregnation and believing at the same time that an old woman was unlikely to bear children. It was to them a matter of probabilities, and of course with them as with us, occasionally an elderly lady did—disconcertingly—have a baby, proving the logic of their position. [842]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to at least reside in some household and had at least a nominal current husband at any given moment of time, all we need to note about them at this point is that in any listing of a man's wives we have to include "disputed" wives in addition to all the other categories of wives mentioned previously. 588

The Household: An Overview

In the discussion so far we have selected only those aspects of the Tiwi family complex that had close bearing on the nature of the household. These aspects can be briefly summarized as follows: 582 592

1. the high number of wives per husband that a successful man was likely to acquire if he lived long enough.

2. the two distinct mechanisms by which wives were acquired—infant bestowal and widow remarriage.

3. the operation of the bestowal system in such a way as to prevent even the most promising young man from achieving coresidence with a bestowed wife until he was at least nearly forty years old.

4. the tendency for success to lead to more success, whereby *some* astute men received into their households a number of young wives in rapid succession after the age of forty. [554 595]

5. the tendency of younger men and of nonbetrothed younger men in particular to marry elderly widows while waiting for betrothed wives to grow up or, in the case of those with no bestowals in sight, to enable them to start a household of their own.

6. as a result of the integrated operation of all these customs, the strong tendency in Tiwi households for husbands to be very much older than their wives (as a result of infant bestowal) or very much younger than their wives (as a result of widow remarriage) or—what was commonest of all in the bigger households—some combination of both. Hence many a Tiwi husband had some wives much older than himself, including some already dead (but still counted), and some very much younger than himself, including some who were still babies in their mothers' wombs (with their sex still undetermined). All these dead wives, current wives, nominal wives, "disputed" wives, not-yet-joined-the-household wives, and not-yet-born wives were still counted in a husband's list, and the length of his list was a measure of his influence, power, and importance as a household head. [554 595]

It is now perhaps clear why we chose to begin our account of Tiwi culture with some discussion of Tiwi marriage. Compulsory marriage for all females, carried out through the twin mechanisms of infant bestowal and widow remarriage, resulted in a very unusual type of household, in which old successful men had twenty wives each, while men under thirty had no wives at all and men under forty were married mostly to elderly crones. This unusual household structure was the focal point of Tiwi culture. It linked together in an explicable unity the kinship system, the food-gathering system, the political 592 182 592

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

578 quietly slipped away to some other camp and was not seen the following
684 morning. The matter might then die, depending largely on whether the old husband wanted to carry it further or was content to drop it. If the young
[627] man was still in camp the following day, the old man might insist on a duel then and there, but it would take place only if the camp were large, since Tiwi duels were essentially legal actions and as such needed a sizable audience for their correct staging. Disputes between men, of which old men accusing young men of seduction were by far the most common type, usually remained at the verbal level until a large body of spectators was available. Since such large
[527 concentrations of many households were necessary for the performance of the
627] main collective ceremonials, it was at the time of these ceremonials that most verbal arguments were pushed by the aggrieved party to the action level.

●554 During the dry season (April to November) when travel was easy, the
764 only collective ceremonials sufficiently important to draw together a large number of households were those held for the funerals of big men. In the wet season (November to March) when the grass and bush were high and travel was difficult, the main collective phases of the male initiation ceremonies were
[881] held (see Chapter 4), and these brought together for a few weeks at a time large numbers of households. The funeral ceremonies for adults were always held some considerable time after the death and burial of the deceased. How long a period elapsed between the death and the funeral ceremonies depended on the expected size of the gathering, and this figure correlated, at least roughly, with the importance of the deceased. Here again the overriding considera-
574 tion was food supply, since the chief mourners (that is, the deceased's closer
764 relatives) had to feed everybody who came to the funeral while the ceremonies
433 lasted, which might be almost a week. The more important the dead person the bigger the crowd at his funeral, and hence the greater the amount of time
182 needed by the mourners to arrange the catering. As much as a year might elapse between the death and the time when the mourners felt that the funeral arrangements—especially the food supply, but also the ceremonial preparation—were sufficiently well in hand to permit them to set a date and send out invitations for the funeral ceremonies. Funerals, therefore, were not held at regular times but were individually scheduled at times fixed by the chief mourners. They were always held in the dry season, however (except those of
[627] young children, to which nobody came in any case), and therefore an old man who had a dispute to settle or a case to try publicly could always depend on a few big funerals being held in the not very distant future which would provide the large audience necessary to make the settlement of the dispute legal. During the wet season the *kolema* phases of the initiation ceremonial
[881] always drew a large attendance; the annual time of these was pretty definitely fixed by the ripening of the *kolema* yams.

578 Hence the verbal wrangles in the small scattered encampments at night,
684 about seduction during the day, could have any one of three outcomes, depending largely upon the determination of the old man-accuser and the demeanor
627 of the young man-accused. If by the following morning the young man had disappeared and showed no further interest in the old man's menage, the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

221 so high and rank that the hunters were unable to get near the kangaroo. In
224 this event, a senior man of the district might decide to convene a grass-
[554] burning posse. To it he invited more or less whom he pleased, so long as he included other household heads of the same band and other senior men from outside it whose ancestry gave them some claim to be invited. At the appointed time the hunters assembled, perhaps ten or fifteen adult men, with younger ones doing the actual hunting and the older ones supervising. The women and children acted as beaters; the grass was set on fire over a big area, and the kangaroos rounded up and killed while dazed by the smoke and the noise. The bag of animals killed in such a concerted hunt sometimes ran higher than one kangaroo per participant, so that every man, woman, and child present was able to gorge himself on kangaroo meat for a day or two. This sudden glut of meat was not, however, the main object of the burning, but a dividend. Even though few kangaroos were caught in the smoke and confusion, the burned-over area would provide good visibility for kangaroo hunting during the rest of the dry season, since the new tender shoots that sprang from the burned-over grass were a favorite food of the kangaroo and served to lure them out of the denser scrub areas and the mangrove swamps where hunting them was always difficult.

224 These occasional joint hunts, like the occasional small fights and the
571 funerals of unimportant people, usually brought together only the members
619 of households who lived relatively close to one another, so that while they are included in the list of events which interrupted household isolation, they did not, as a rule, involve any interaction between members of any wider group than the neighboring households. Perhaps the whole matter of activity beyond the household and the band can be illustrated best by an actual case.
159 We have already mentioned the venerable Tu'untalumi, an old man resident
888 among the Tiklauila, who as late as 1929, and despite the fact that by then the Tiklauila were the band most subject to mission influence, nonetheless had a list of twenty-one wives. In other ways besides his record of polygamy, Tu'untalumi was a pillar of the old culture. Though past seventy and much too old to hunt, he was a most enthusiastic and indefatigable song and dance composer, and in his zest for ceremonial he made a point of attending every big festival and as many smaller ones as he could get to. The whole tribe respected Tu'untalumi as a big man, liked him as a person, admired him for his steadfast support of Tiwi traditions, and most of all accepted him as a sort of leading authority on ritual matters. When dubious or disputed points of ceremonial were submitted to him, his decision, given clearly and firmly and with much citation of precedent and the distant past, was accepted without demur. His presence at a gathering located outside his own district was always a source of gratification to the household which had convened the gathering. The fact that Tu'untalumi had seen fit to attend not only made that household feel important but also provided its members with a technical guide and arbiter for unofficial help in running the rituals. The old man loved going to parties—and he was always a welcome guest—and years of such activity had given him such a sturdy, wiry constitution that despite his near-seventy-five years he could

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

517 quently, on the banks of some creek or river in Tiklauila territory, a party
887 wanting to cross would scout around and find a canoe hidden in the weeds. Everybody would use it to cross, and the question "Whose canoe is it?" would elicit the reply, "Oh, it's always there and everybody uses it who wishes to cross." But if the question were "Who made it in the first place and put it there?" the answer would be, "Probably Timalarua. He likes making canoes; he makes them all the time." He also liked making spears and posts, though he was not as generous with them as Tu'untalumi. When one of his posts appeared at a funeral, people would point it out admiringly saying, "Timalarua made that one" and the speaker would trace the lines and designs on it with his finger, using much the same gestures as an art critic in a modern gallery. When a post by Tu'untalumi was identified and admired, however, the admiration was for Tu'untalumi the generous person rather than Tu'untalumi the
[554] artist. One was a wonderful craftsman, the other was a wonderful man. But acclaim given to the song and dance performances of the two men was just the reverse: the dances of Timalarua were adequate but not outstanding, those of Tu'untalumi were in a class by themselves.

Comparison of the activities of these two old men illustrates the impossibility of drawing any line, in the simpler cultures at least, between artistic production and technological production. The canoes and the posts manufactured by Timalarua and the posts manufactured and the new dances created by Tu'untalumi were all, so to speak, in the same category, as far as the Tiwi were concerned. The distinction we might make between the canoes as "useful" products and the posts and dances as ceremonial or artistic products never occurred to them. All were objects or products which only successful old men had the required skill and leisure to make. The fact that one old man liked to make canoes and leave them around for other people to use, and another old man liked to compose dances and perform his compositions widely for other people to enjoy, to them merely indicated individual taste and choice; it did not make the first a craftsman and the second an artist. This point has been overlooked in most of the theorizing about primitive art; perhaps a necessary first step in the development of primitive artists is for a society to be able to provide a few men with enough leisure time to be able to cultivate what might perhaps best be called hobbies, since a hobby can equally well be something "useful" to society, like canoe making, or something personally satisfying, like dancing or decorating graveposts.

[411] The huge, heavy, painted spears made by these old Tiwi men were
531 mainly used only for display, and even the oldest men were positive that
556 this had always been the tradition. In fact, they seemed a little shocked at the implication that such beautiful and valuable objects could ever have been used for such mundane purposes as hunting or warfare. The cutting and painting of such spears took time and skill—more time than a gravepost—and no important man went to the smallest gathering without bearing on his shoulder at least half a dozen of these symbols of his importance. If on his way through the bush he sighted a kangaroo, he dropped his painted spears and stalked
[224] the animal with an ordinary spear, or more probably left it to the young men in the party who carried only ordinary ones.

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The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

162 [621] The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

561 [858 882] [591] Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

561 589 884 The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married [582] to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was [177] in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

561 884 557 [582] The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

159 554 [589] In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was still a bachelor and why Banana had acted so impulsively and thereby gotten himself in the bad graces of the elders. The two men were the eldest of four brothers without any full sisters and as such they were necessarily handicapped in their career struggle. Elders seeking satellites or contemporaries seeking allies looked askance at men without sisters, for such men could have no sisters' daughters to use in the marriage-arrangements struggle. The mother of Tiberun and Banana was dead, but even were she still alive, few men would have been interested in marrying a widow whose only living children were sons. Widows without daughters and bachelors without sisters rated very low in the scale of desirable assets sought either by elders or by contemporaries. 159 554 [557] [562 581]

Tiberun was thus the only bachelor in the 30-42 age group. Of the remainder we select Teapot as an example of another man who failed to get started. Teapot was at least 35, and about seven years previously he had "stolen" a wife from an elder. This wife was no ancient and shop-worn widow like the wife Banana had "stolen," but a young girl who had been betrothed in due form to an elder by her father. How Teapot had managed to get away with her is too complicated an incident to unravel here, and in any case it hadn't done Teapot much good. After presenting Teapot with a baby boy the young woman died, and Teapot, with a now six-year-old son, was more or less an outcast among the Malauila. No elder wanted him as a satellite and none of his contemporaries wanted him as an ally. His mother was dead and his only sister was married to a Munupula elder. This sister in Munupi was his only asset and one which a different man might have used as a means to better himself. But Teapot, instead of using this small asset to get started on a career, had chosen to defy the rules and "steal" an elder's bestowed wife. "Stealing" an old widow was reprehensible conduct in the eyes of the elders; stealing a young bestowed wife was unforgivable. Hence Teapot, since his crime, had received no bestowal, had been able to marry no widow, and was wanted by no one as an ally. 159 554 626

A complete contrast to these two unsuccessful men in their thirties was provided by the case of Gitjara, who was about the same age as Tiberun. Gitjara, it is true, had sisters, and that was always a help. Using his sisters (already married and bearing children to an elder) as bait, Gitjara when he was about 28 proposed an alliance to L. F. B., a rather feeble man about five years older than himself, who was not doing very well in the influence race. The gist of the proposal was that, since both their mothers were still alive and each married to an old man who could not last much longer, Gitjara should marry the ancient mother of L. F. B. when she became a widow, and L. F. B. should marry Gitjara's mother when that old lady became a widow. Perhaps the idea originated with the two old women rather than with either of the young men. Since such arrangements were essentially plots or schemes, it is impossible to determine who conceived them in the first place—old women ambitious to aid their sons or young men ready to use their mothers as long-term gambits to ultimately provide themselves with young wives. Mother-exchange operations were probably first conceived at high-level strategy con- 159 557 562 584

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 [562] ferences in which smart mothers and dull mothers, smart sons and dull sons were all present, and the final plan emerged from consensus.

In this case the former husbands of the two old women both died conveniently soon and within about three years of each other and, according to plan, there came into existence a household of two men in their thirties each married to the elderly mother of the other. Gitjara and L. F. B. thus set up jointly the foundations of their households and began their careers as a joint enterprise.

Gitjara had two sisters, both married to White Man, an elder, and already the mothers of daughters to him. By marrying Gitjara's mother, L. F. B. automatically became the nominal father of these women, and in the event of White Man's death would have, as such, some say in where they remarried. But the right of the step-father to redispose widowed step-daughters was always disputed by the brothers (or even sons) of the step-daughters, provided those brothers (or sons) were old enough or influential enough for their wishes to be taken seriously. Thus we may say that in putting L. F. B. into position as his own step-father, Gitjara's main object had been to get a satellite or henchman of his own into the position of step-father of his sisters (the wives of White Man) so that when they became widows there would be no conflict between the wishes of their brother and the wishes of their step-father as to whom they should remarry. L. F. B. as step-father was, so to speak, a stooge for Gitjara the brother.

Conversely, L. F. B. had two sisters both married to Ki-in-kumi, the most powerful elder in Malau. By marrying the mother of L. F. B., Gitjara [606] became the step-father of two of Ki-in-kumi's wives, thus immediately (despite his youth) becoming technically the father-in-law of that powerful old man, and a man with some say in where those two wives of Ki-in-kumi would remarry on Ki-in-kumi's death. As step-father of such widows, Gitjara would have to make his wishes prevail as against the wishes of their brothers, but the only brother was L. F. B. and his vote was obviously in Gitjara's pocket.

By engineering this double shuffle of two elderly widows, each with daughters, Gitjara had launched his career as a marriage manipulator. Almost before it was concluded he became involved in another widow operation. We will omit the intricate details, but can say that he emerged from this with a second wife for himself, this one (naturally) also a widow but quite a young widow. This woman had already borne four sons and one daughter to her previous husband but was still young enough when Gitjara took her over in 1926 to bear him a son (her last) in 1927. In Tiwi terms the acquisition of this widow by Gitjara was a real achievement for the young man, not because of her comparative youth nor because of the son she bore him but because among the children by her previous marriage was a daughter aged about nine [554] at the time she remarried Gitjara. To become the step-father of such a young girl was a real asset for the young operator. Her dead father had bestowed this child on Summit, another of the same Malauila age group of 30-year-olds and hence one of Gitjara's rivals and competitors in the influence struggle.

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159 593 [587] Some years later, when Boya had reached a reasonable age like 30, Ki-in-kumi had arranged for him to marry a very ancient and childless widow (*palimaringa*) more than twenty years older than himself. This was all that Ki-in-kumi considered he needed to do for his step-son, and in Tiwi terms it was almost a gesture of contempt and an open indication that Ki-in-kumi, by providing him with an old woman who was childless but could cook, was not interested in helping Boya toward a career. Since the joining up of Boya to [768] the crone took place shortly after the death of Boya's mother, who had lived with her sons in Ki-in-kumi's household, Ki-in-kumi by producing the old widow for Boya was telling him in effect to get out and start his own household now that his mother was dead.

159 584 593 [592] In 1928 we found Boya aged about 42 married to the crone of 65. But he, she, and Boya's younger brother of 24 were still living in Ki-in-kumi's household. Ki-in-kumi's detestation of him was notorious and yet Boya had by now no less than four young bestowed child-wives growing up elsewhere. No one of these bestowals had come from Malau but were bestowals from different fathers of baby girls in other bands. At first sight this presented a curious situation. Within his own band Boya appeared a complete failure, suffering [554] so severely from Ki-in-kumi's hostility that he had received no bestowals and at age 42 did not even have a separate household of his own. But how could this judgment be squared with the four bestowals from elders of other bands? Clearly none of the causes of success so far analyzed fitted the case of Boya.

159 591 592 Further research into who lived with whom as distinct from who was married to whom revealed that not only was "the household" of Boya, his elderly wife, and his younger brother an integral part of the Ki-in-kumi "establishment," but also that Padimo with his "household" was part of that establishment. Padimo, like Boya, had one elderly wife but he also had five bestowed wives, all daughters of Ki-in-kumi. We said above that the two eldest of these five girls being now aged 20 and 17 respectively were in residence with their husband, while the three youngest, not having reached puberty, were still "with their father." Actual observation showed that this was an academic distinction, since the households of Padimo, the son-in-law, and Ki-in-kumi, the father-in-law, were parts of the same establishment. When one of Ki-in-kumi's daughters bestowed on Padimo became old enough to "leave her father and join her husband," she did not have to move her residence or even change her daily work routines. She merely sat at night around the campfire of her older sisters (Padimo's wives) instead of around the campfire of her younger sisters (Ki-in-kumi's daughters). She remained part of the same establishment.

Padimo, it will be remembered, was the young man whom Ki-in-kumi had attracted from Rangu to Malau by liberally bestowing him with child-wives. Padimo had thus moved into the northern band and by 1928 had moved right into Ki-in-kumi's camp, where he functioned as a sort of executive officer and heir apparent to the old man. In the same camp, though in a very different capacity, was Boya, the 42-year-old despised step-son. Many roads thus 592 led to Ki-in-kumi's household, but before discussing the large establishment

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

of that wealthy elder, we will first summarize, in Table I, the marital conditions of the eight young men we have been discussing. 592

TABLE I
THE MALAUILA YOUNG MEN IN 1928-29

Name	Age	Resident Old Wives (Ex-widows)	Resident Young Wives (Bestowals)	Promised Wives (Under 14)	Own Children
Tiberun	33	0	0	0	0
Banana	28	1	0	0	0
Teapot	35	0[a]	0	0	1
Gitjara	33	2	0	2	1
L. F. B.	38	1	0	1	0
Summit	36	1	0	3	0
Padimo	36	1	2	3	0[b]
Boya	42	1	0	4	0

[a] Teapot's "stolen" wife was dead.
[b] Padimo's first child, born in 1929, lived only a few days.

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This table presents a summary of many of our earlier attempts at generalization. The only Malauila under the age of 43 who had a bestowed young wife old enough to live with him was Padimo, who was thus exceptionally lucky. Leaving out young Banana, five of the seven men between the ages of 30 and 42 had young females promised to them, but these were mostly babies or children who would not come into residence for several years. Six of the seven had married widows, mostly elderly widows, well in advance of the arrival of young wives and before any father had bestowed a daughter on them. Finally, and a point not made before, men of this age group rarely had any children of their own. The only entries in the last column of Table I are the irregularly born son of Teapot; Padimo's first daughter who died virtually at birth; and the 8-year-old son of Gitjara who was the last child born to his second ex-widow. Tiwi men rarely had young wives until they were around forty; they even more rarely had any children of their own before that age. Padimo's dead baby and Gitjara's 1-year-old son were exceptional; the zeros in the last column against the names of Boya (42), L. F. B. (38), and Summit (36) represent the normal situation for Tiwi men of such ages. 561 582

In terms of success (as measured by bestowals) Padimo and Summit (largely through the patronage of elders) and Boya and Gitjara (largely through their own operations) were the coming young men among the Malauila. Of the others, L. F. B. was approaching forty with few assets and no influence, and the other three, Tiberun, Banana, and Teapot, had not even got started in the influence race. 554 584

A Very Successful Elder: Ki-in-kumi

The most influential man in Malau and the head of the biggest household was Ki-in-kumi. Since he had been born around 1863-64 and had been 159 557

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Politics of Widow Remarriage

Ki-in-kumi's large establishment was the sort of set-up that every Tiwi sought to achieve but few accomplished. An establishment such as his meant wealth, power, prestige, and influence for its head, and, in Malau, Ki-in-kumi was the only man with such a household. With eleven males, many of them food producing; sixteen women, all of them food producing; and several of the girls under fourteen able to assist the older women, the amount of food this unit could collect in a day provided an ample food surplus for the establishment. A man whose household was a surplus food producer was a successful man. Moreover, since the large work force that produced the food surplus contained numerous young wives who (usually) could be relied upon also to produce numerous female babies, he was doubly blessed with both the requisites—surplus food and surplus daughters—necessary to increase his influence and make more people beholden to him or dependent on him. Of the thirty-five married women in Malau, sixteen, or over 45 percent, were in this one establishment.

By comparison, the other old men of Malau were less successful.[5] Through pooling their work forces, Enquirio and Merapanui had achieved an establishment (Unit II) almost as big as that of Ki-in-kumi, and probably its members ate almost as well as the members of his, but their effort was a shared effort and their influence and prestige had to be divided between them. They had been lucky with daughters but, divided between the two fathers, the eleven daughters in their establishment were less impressive than Ki-in-kumi's eight, and the total of seven young wives between them was quite overshadowed by Ki-in-kumi's nine. The two old brothers were successful men and headed a successful operation, but their prestige and success must be rated at least one whole degree below that of Ki-in-kumi.

Another pair of elderly brothers, White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua, had also joined forces (Unit III), but the results can be judged as only fair. They were at least the best off of their age group, the 45- to 55-year-olds, but the competition in that age group was weak, as can be seen by comparison of their establishment with Units IV and V, the households of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai. Perhaps the best indication of the respective success in life of the seven oldest men is that given in the column of Table III headed "young wives." Of the twenty-three such women in the band, eighteen were in the establishments[6] of the three oldest men (Units I and II); the next five men in age shared the remaining five (Units III, IV, and V).

It might be thought that the small establishments of the unsuccessful junior elders like White Man, Ku-nai-u-ua, Pingirimini, and Tipiperna-gerai could be expected to increase sharply in size and these men to grow in relative prestige and influence when death removed the three old men at the heads

[5] It will be noticed that as we move into the older group of men we have to use their native names, since most of them had no "whiteman" names.

[6] Two of these eighteen were of course actually married to Padimo, but still part of the establishment of their father, Ki-in-kumi, since Padimo's wives all lived with Ki-in-kumi's wives.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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554 of Units I and II and made their wives available for redistribution. The working of the Tiwi system made this possibility unlikely. Unsuccessful junior elders could not expect to step into the shoes of successful senior elders merely by [888] outliving them; nor could one rise to power in the gerontocratic system [555] merely by living past fifty-five. What was necessary was age *plus* ability, and the time to demonstrate the ability was in one's thirties. If it was not demonstrated and recognized by then, a man could not forge ahead in his middle forties and early fifties, for by then it was too late. This fact gave a certain cyclical quality to the transfer of influence in Tiwi. The influence of successful 557 senior elders, to the extent that such an intangible thing was transferable at 587 all, tended to skip a decade and bypass the men currently in the junior elder category in favor of the men in the current "young operator" category. Since Ki-in-kumi was already quite old, there was in 1929 a great deal of political maneuvering going on in Malau and elsewhere in anticipation of his death, and it was clear that the people most likely to profit by his death and the redistribution of his twelve resident wives (one-third of all resident wives in [561] the band) were the men aged from thirty-two to forty-two such as Padimo, Boya, Summit, and Gitjara, all of whom were jockeying for position to take advantage of the death of any old man, especially such a wealthy elder as Ki-in-kumi. Some of the widows would undoubtedly remarry into other bands, but these younger Malauila, living with or near the old man's establishment, were already taking advantage of their strategic location to make some preliminary deals and marriage arrangements for the old man's widows even before his death. Neither Padimo, as Ki-in-kumi's son-in-law, nor Boya, as his nominal "son," could themselves marry any of the widows, but as resident members of his establishment and the only two men so situated, each was in an excellent spot to act as an honest broker in the disposal of Ki-in-kumi's large estate. Anybody interested in obtaining a widow or two at the death of Ki-in-kumi was well advised to have a few quiet words with either Padimo or Boya well ahead of time. Both of them had wives who lived and worked every day alongside Ki-in-kumi's womenfolk and thus they each had ideal communication systems to the women's side of the band. This was why they had held off setting up their own separate establishments though they were both married men. Neither were "heirs" of Ki-in-kumi in any strict Western use of that word, but it was obvious that it was their careers that would be promoted and their spheres of influence that would be enhanced by the death of Ki-in-kumi. The junior elders, all approaching or past the age of fifty with only small establishments and small spheres of influence, were being bypassed in the transfer of the old man's assets.

Every Tiwi anxious to obtain a Ki-in-kumi widow recognized the strategic positions of Padimo and Boya; the problem was to decide which broker to retain, since the positions of the two men in relation to Ki-in-kumi were so different. For the past four or five years Padimo had been the right-hand man and trusted lieutenant and undoubtedly it was he upon whom Ki-in-kumi was relying to carry out his own wishes about the distribution of his widows. We said earlier that old men found it difficult to control the remarriage of their

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

557 would become involved or make any soundings among the widows unless there
587 was something in it for them. Hence the client had to find out whether a promise of general goodwill and friendship was all that Boya (or Padimo) would ask in return for his services or whether the price would be much
[584] higher—perhaps as high as the bestowal of the client's next baby daughter. It was in such ways that widow-remarriage arrangements and infant bestowals were intertwined; a much-delayed bestowal to an apparently unrelated individual would be the ultimate pay-off to the broker or agent who had engineered a widow remarriage for the bestower years before.

[561] This role of agent in the disposal of a dead man's widows was a type of operation best suited to men in the first stages of their own married lives —that is, to men in their middle thirties or very early forties who had perhaps married their first or second widows and who had as yet no young wives of their own in residence. Having no young wives to guard, they were able to get around easily on diplomatic missions and they had their own listening posts inside the world of women in the person of their own mothers (if still alive) and in the elderly widows whom they themselves had married. The ambitious young brokers were tipped off by their mothers and elderly wives as to how the young wives wished to be distributed and what the competing young brokers were trying to arrange. Thus when a wealthy old man like Ki-in-kumi died, the redistribution of his wives through remarriage was a matter that had been decided beforehand by an extraordinary complex tangle of semisecret arrangements and deals and promises, but the people most influential in arranging the redistribution were the young brokers who usually got few, if any, of the young widows for themselves but who collected their rewards in reputation, influence, alliances, and future bestowals from the men for whom they had acted as agents.

[768] Thus the death of Ki-in-kumi or of any other old man with many wives tended to disperse the wives all over the tribe, with only one or two, or at most three, going to any one new husband. A large estate was almost always fragmented by the death of the old man who had built it up, and any one of his contemporaries was able to take over only a very small fraction of it at best. The levirate and sororate principles, though present, worked very feebly. The men who benefited most—not immediately, but eventually—were the young operators.[7] In such a manner Padimo and Boya were sure to be the long-term beneficiaries of Ki-in-kumi's death though neither of them could remarry any of his widows. The real heirs of the wealthy old men of sixty and over were the young men who happened to be between thirty-two and forty-
554 two when those old men got near to death. The men between forty-five and
557 fifty-five whose brokerage business ten years earlier had not been very skillfully
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[7] At least some of the so-called "stolen" or disputed wives were widows who had insisted on marrying the younger agent instead of the older client, which put the young broker in the embarrassing position of saying to his client, "I cannot make delivery of the widow I acquired on your account; she insists on marrying me instead." Such an incident did not do his agency business much good but tended rather to frighten off clients.

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handled, or who happened to be at the brokering age when no big households 554
were being liquidated, found themselves in the position that Pingirimini and 557
Tipiperna-gerai occupied in 1928-29. We know they had not been successful 587
dealers in their thirties because we found them around the age of fifty with only one resident wife each and relatively few bestowals in prospect. Their earlier dealings in widows had not laid the right foundations for successful careers as elders. Even before he was forty, Padimo had five or six bestowed wives either in residence or in prospect, and Boya, not much over forty, had several already promised. The death of Ki-in-kumi in the near future would bring both of them more reputation and ultimately more bestowals in return for their skill (if they showed it) in the disposition of the estate. The inferiority of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai to these younger men in the marriage and influence struggle was already apparent and would be even more accentuated by Ki-in-kumi's death.

The Politics of Bestowal

The above discussion of how younger men were indirectly benefited 587
by the deaths or impending deaths of wealthy older men does not pretend to give an exhaustive list of all the considerations that went into the reallocation of a dead man's widows. We built our analysis around those factors which were paramount in the case of Ki-in-kumi's household. Other cases were different to the extent that there were real adult sons involved in them rather than a nominal "son" like Boya, or because in them the old man had not chosen a clear-cut executor as Ki-in-kumi had chosen Padimo, or because an old man had surviving brothers close to him in age and alliance who would emphasize the levirate principle and seek to have it followed in the relocation of their dead brother's widows. The few points we are seeking to emphasize among the many that might be emphasized in any exhaustive treatment of Tiwi widow remarriage are: 1) that widow remarriage was a very flexible area in which the ultimate disposition of the widows was decided by the manipulations and wishes of a wide range of individuals including both relatives and nonrelatives. The dead man himself; the fathers of the wives, if still alive; the brothers of the widows, if adults; the widows themselves, if strong minded; the executors of the dead man, if clearly nominated; and the numerous dealers and brokers on behalf of remote clients or even on their own account—all tried to make their own wishes prevail. The result was that no two cases were ever alike, but on balance 2) it was younger men rather than [561]
older men who were most likely to enhance their reputations and increase their assets in the long run as the results of these widow redeals, even though in the short run it was the older men who remarried most of the widows, especially the younger widows.

We have briefly discussed what we have labeled the politics of widow 584
remarriage before discussing the politics of infant bestowal, although logically 163
it might appear that infant bestowal should be taken up first. We have fol-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

584 lowed this order because, in Tiwi life, infant bestowal was reserved for fathers,
163 and a Tiwi was at least a middle-aged man before he became a father at all. Before he could have a daughter to bestow, he had to be the father of one; and before he could become a father, he had to have a baby girl bestowed upon him and wait for her to grow up to child-bearing age. The much-married Ki-in-kumi did not have his first actual daughter (as distinct from wives' daughters begotten by previous husbands) until he was forty-five, and Enquirio was closer to fifty than to forty when his first real daughter was born. We are inclined to call such daughters free or unencumbered daughters since the step-daughters brought into a man's household by widows, even young widows, were already bestowed by act of the widows' previous husbands and the new husband's control over their marriage was therefore encumbered by the dispositions made by his predecessors.

Thus most men did not have and could not expect to have any free or
584 unencumbered daughters to bestow until they were well into their forties. By that time a man was a prisoner of his past. When at last he had free daughters he was no longer a free man but a junior elder with a mass of obligations both to older men and to younger men, which he had contracted in the previous twenty or thirty years. Even his initiation, which had started when he
[881] was only about fifteen, left him under obligation to the older men who had initiated him. Any bestowals he had received had almost necessarily come to him from older men. In his thirties, it is true, he had operated in the widow remarriage area and put some older men under obligation to him by acting as their agent. But in his agency activities he had also contracted debts, usually in fee-splitting or log-rolling agreements with other agents of about his own age. Thus all his past activities, from his initiation at fifteen until the arrival of his first free daughter at (let us say) age forty-five, were on balance a story of obligations contracted and debts of gratitude assumed in his career of upward mobility. The more successful he had been up to now, the stronger the pressure on him to begin paying off those who had helped him, since it was assumed that his very success was a clear indication of how much obligation he must have to other men, especially older men and contemporaries.

If this line of reasoning had been the only relevant one, a Tiwi of age
584 forty-five just presented with his first free daughter would have had problem
557 enough deciding which of his many obligations to liquidate first by his bestowal decision for that daughter. Unfortunately he was at the age when he had to consider the future as well as the past. Some of his old obligations were to men who were very old and unlikely to live much longer. Others were to men of his own age with whom he had been partners ten years before, but by now it was clear that some of these would never amount to much and paying them
[554] off would reap no dividends for the future. Failure to meet the obligation might incur their enmity, but in view of their lack of success, perhaps their hostility was a lesser evil. In 1929, Gitjara, who had needed L. F. B. to get his own career launched, was ready to drop him as a partner now that Gitjara had attracted favorable notice in the form of two bestowals. The junior elders, though obligated to older men like Ki-in-kumi, were not bestowing their scanty

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

sister's son being initiated, the attitude of a Tiwi toward the whole *pukimani* state was essentially a passive attitude. *Pukimani* behavior was something one accepted and conformed to when required; it was in no way an active attempt to change nature, people, food, gods, spirits, or anything else in the universe. It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that since their *pukimani* system offered them no handle by which to seek actively to alter the universe in which they lived, the Tiwi found that universe to their liking as it was. Unlike the tribes of central Australia who lavished a lot of thought upon magical methods of improving the food supply or the rainfall, the Tiwi believed and acted on the belief that as long as they observed their *pukimani* taboos, the food would continue to be as abundant and the rains as regular as they had always been. The central Australians, by seeking to coerce nature through magic, suggest that they found nature unsatisfactory; the Tiwi, by relying upon passive taboo-observance alone, suggest rather that their relationship to nature was an acceptable equilibrium that they wanted to preserve, not change. And if everybody observed his *pukimani* taboos when required, that equilibrium would remain undisturbed. Hence the antisocial man in Tiwi was not the maker of individual magic (he was unknown, anyway) but the nonobserver of taboo. By his nonobservance he threatened to upset the normally satisfactory equilibrium between man and nature. For a senior Tiwi male to be charged publicly with breaking *pukimani* rules was a disgrace and a blow to his prestige and his position in public opinion. His behavior was possibly a sin against the spirits but it was certainly a shame in the eyes of his fellows. *Pukimani* observance was thus a matter of respectability to a much greater degree than it was a matter of pleasing the spirits.

DEATH As was mentioned above, death is the natural phenomenon around which the Tiwi had woven their most elaborate web of ritual. The most frequent and most important Tiwi ceremonies were the mourning ceremonies, and they came in three sizes—small, medium, and large—depending on the age, sex, and importance of the dead person. The mourning ceremonies which drew the crowds were not held until some time after the death and burial. All bodies of dead persons were buried within twenty-four hours of their death by digging a hole near the camp where the death had occurred and placing the body, wrapped in bark, in it. Near most well-used camping spots there was already a graveyard marked by old graveposts, and the latest corpse was buried there or near there. Seldom was the body carried any distance for burial. If a person died even less than a mile from an old burial ground, there was little inclination to carry the body that far. He would be buried, instead, within perhaps a hundred yards of where he died. This had certain awkward repercussions for social organization, since occasionally a person died while away from his home district and, being buried where he died, his ceremonies were held and his posts erected in a district in which his immediate family did not live. Young men often used this to validate a change of residence, giving as their reason for living in a band territory in which they had not grown up, the location there of their father's graveposts.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

To avoid constant use of the awkward phrase "mourning ceremony," we refer to it as the funeral though it took place some considerable time after the burial of the body. How long a time elapsed between the burial and the funeral depended upon the importance of the dead person. The more important the deceased, the longer it took after his or her burial to prepare for the funeral, both ceremonially and practically. Babies frequently had no funeral ceremonies at all, especially if they died very young and unnamed. Children were given small funerals, held within a month or so after the death, and the people present were merely the members of the local households. Young adult men and all adult women had funerals of medium size, and old men had the biggest funerals of all. Big funerals were rarely held in the wet season because of the height of the grass and the consequent difficulty of travel. The season after the end of the rains (April-May-June) was a favorite time for funerals since by then people were moving again and there was then an accumulated backlog of funerals to be held for people who had died late in the previous dry season or during the wet. The mourning ceremonies of two or more people were sometimes held together; this obviously required that they be buried close together, although they need not have died at the same time. Seeking as usual to increase his importance in the public eye, a man might hold the medium-sized funeral of one of his children at the same time and place as the big funeral of an important elder—provided their graves were close together—even though two or three months had separated the two deaths.

The actual burial of the body immediately after death was usually a small affair attended only by whatever people happened to be in the vicinity. But some Tiwi ancients were on their last legs for months before they finally expired, and it was typical of Tiwi psychology that people should maneuver to be present when a death occurred. Until the anthropologist understood that even death had its political aspects, he could not understand why the Tiwi were always so anxious to hang around the camp of an old man who was taking an awfully long time to die. Since so very little happened at the actual time of death, this desire to be on the spot seemed merely morbid curiosity.[8] But it was not. A death immediately divided the whole tribe into two groups: a small group of relatives who automatically became mourners and therefore in a state of strict taboo, and the rest who were not sufficiently close to the deceased to have to assume a state of *pukimani*. The mourners, being *pukimani*, could do scarcely anything except weep and wail and gash their heads with stone axes. They could not touch the body or wrap it in bark; nor could they dig the grave, nor put the body in, nor fill in the hole. They had to ask non-mourners to carry out these tasks and thus became obligated to those non-

[8] How else was one to interpret the reluctance of Hart's party to move on, after spending three weeks waiting for old Tamboo to die, and the old man still lingered on? "Let's wait another day; maybe he'll die tomorrow" was the invariable response to suggestions that we move. "And if he does die, what will happen?" "Nothing; we'll move on then." But this was early in the fieldwork period, before Hart realized the all-pervasive character of Tiwi opportunism.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 557 571 764 mourners for their services. Death, in other words, incapacitated the relatives, so the nonrelatives swarmed in to "help" them—that is, take advantage of their incapacity. A man who could say, "I helped to dig your mother's grave" had a hold for the rest of his life over the man or men to whom he could say it. Such a hold was not as strong, of course, as that of a man who could say, "I helped you get your first bestowed wife," but the difference of obligation was only a difference of degree. The Tiwi were always "helping" each other, but the man who was "helped" therefore "owed" something to his helper. At deaths, mourners mourned and nonmourners did the work; therefore the mourners "owed" the nonmourners, and such debts were carried on the same mental ledgers as other debts, such as marriage debts.

182 571 765 [764] When deaths occurred suddenly and unexpectedly, the mourners had to choose their helpers for the burial from the relatively few people present at the time, and were thus often forced to become obligated to men they did not much relish being under obligation to. At the funerals the same bookkeeping mentality prevailed, but since these were not held until months after the death and burial, the chief mourners had time to select their helpers with ease and political finesse. Satellites were very useful in this connection, since a man could ask his satellites to perform the necessary ceremonial services and thus get a return from them for the debts of gratitude they already owed him. This was one reason why a skillful Tiwi politician did not by any means select only close kinsmen for satelliteship. A death which made him *pukimani* was likely to make his close kinsmen *pukimani* also, hence he needed some satellites who were not close kinsmen.

182 557 571 765 [762] In the interval between the burial and the funeral, the chief mourner, on behalf of all the mourners but fairly independently if he were a big man, allocated all the jobs that had to be done in preparation for the funeral. Everybody who came had to be fed by the mourners, and the collection and hoarding of the necessary food develved on the women of the mourning households. Thus the mourners provided the food, but everything else necessary had to be prepared by nonmourners. The chief item among the ceremonial necessities was the graveposts. The prohibition on mourners approaching the body and the grave extended to the posts, and therefore the cutting, carving, erecting on the grave, and painting of these central features of the funeral ceremonies had to be carried out by nonmourners, "asked to cut the posts" by the chief mourner. Here there was much room for influence maneuvers. A big man acting as chief mourner for a dead relative wanted the funeral to be as lavish as possible, to show his own importance. But the more important the [554] nonmourners he selected to cut the posts for him, the more he owed them for their services. Such a request was in the nature of asking a favor, and to ask a favor was to put oneself in a subordinate position, in terms of influence. The Tiwi power orientation was so ingrained that, even when acting as chief mourner, an elder could not avoid making his requests and allocating the ceremonial tasks so as to gain ground if possible, or at least not lose any ground, in the influence and prestige race.

765 The mourning ceremonies, though prolonged for several days of con-

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The territory of the *Tiklauila* is roughly contained in the area in the 361
south of Bathurst Island, south of Point Hurd and west of *Mukambrimo*, 621
which is a river about eight miles to the west of the mission station. In 103
this area, roughly about two hundred square miles, there are a number of districts with specific names. Anyone familiar with the Australian blackfellow knows how certain districts are given certain names, and although no native can tell the exact boundaries, everyone in the tribe knows when he has come into one of these districts and when he has left it. The principle of differentiation of these areas seems to be upon the basis of the physical aspect of the country, a valley for example having a distinct name from either set of hills surrounding it, a plain being distinguished from a thickly-wooded piece of bushland on its margin, and so on.

These districts play an important part in Tiwi land ownership. 423
Certain districts are not owned by the horde as a whole, but by a single [621]
family of that horde. Thus in the horde we are considering, *Tanio*, the extensive district in the extreme south-western corner of the island around Cape Fouveroy, is owned by a single set of men, all of whom are the son's sons of *Mikidjimirla*, a man who as far as can be judged died about 1870-1880. The basis of their title is the fact that *Mikidjimirla* died and was buried in the district, hence all the game and fruit in *Tanio* belong to them, and cannot be hunted or collected by anyone else without their consent.

The question immediately arises as to whether the mere burial of a 423
man in a district gives his heirs property rights in that district. The 425
Tiwi answer is that it always does if the man was sufficiently important. 554
The man in question here, *Mikidjimirla*, was from all accounts one who left a deep impression on the society of his time both by his personality and by his prowess in warfare. More than that he left his mark on following generations by the number of children he had. At the present 423
time, there are nine men, all grandchildren of *Mikidjimirla*, in whom the 613
hunting and fruit-collecting rights of *Tanio* are vested, and these men and their families normally camp in *Tanio* and deny the right of other *Tiklauila* families to hunt there. This group has a solidarity of its own which is expressed by a name *Tanianwila*, which is one of the alternative horde-names. It should be noted in this connection that the Tiwi name for [601]
father's father is *amini*, and the members of this group will frequently

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The southern section of Bathurst

[31 [997] Island (Hart 1930) is inhabited by a subtribe called the Tiklauila. In 1911 a Roman Catholic Mission station was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island, virtually in Tiklauila territory, and at the time of the present writer's field work this was the only white settlement. In the generation before the missionaries arrived the "big man" among the Tiklauila was Turimpi. 159 Because of their complicated marriage and inheritance regulations the average Tiwi old man in the course of his lifetime accumulates an impressive number of wives and Turimpi was no exception to this rule. At the time of his death, which occurred toward the end of the 1890's at an age which was probably something approaching 70, Turimpi counted as his wives then living or pre-deceasing him no less than 25 females. Of these the only one we need to pay any attention to is the woman named Bongdadu. She, while Turimpi's wife, had borne numerous children, of whom three males grew to manhood—Antonio, born in approximately 1883, Mariano born three or four years later, and Louis born around 1893. Sometime between 1895 and 1900 she was widowed by the death of Turimpi, whereupon she married another elderly man, Murikambunga, to whom she bore two more sons—Tipperary, born around 1900, and Bob born about a year later. Bongdadu of course had numerous other children who did not survive childhood.[3] It is her five adult sons who concern us here.

Turimpi, as the number of wives suggests, was an important tribal figure [554] during his lifetime. Importance, prestige, tendency to be spoken of as a "big man" are in Tiwi functions of a number of factors in which age, number of wives, fighting ability, wisdom in council, and "family" in the sense of having relatives who are also "big men," are all compounded. On all these counts Turimpi was important, and his prestige tended to carry on after his death. 554 Since the horde or subtribe is a comparatively small group, ranging in size 627 from 214 for the Tiklauila (the biggest) to 57 for the Mingwila (the smallest), there will seldom be more than two or three "big men" in a subtribe at the same time, and at certain periods there may be none at all since the few old men who have the age qualification may not have the other qualifications. Turimpi's death left the Tiklauila to some extent in this state. There were few other men with comparable seniority and none of them had the qualifications for informal leadership and local prestige that he had possessed. His death left a gap, and [768] a gap that could hardly be filled by his eldest son Antonio, who at the time of his father's death was a youth of about 16 years of age. About thirty years [114] later, in 1928 to 1930, the field work upon which the present paper is based was carried out.

ANTONIO

159 It so happened that the present writer had been with the Tiwi for nearly three months before he met Antonio, although during those three months he had been closely associated with two of his brothers, Mariano and Tipperary. These two gave Antonio a great build-up as one of the most important men around, as a "big man" in every possible Tiwi sense. But when encountered in person he proved most disappointing. The only words that fitted Antonio

were words like "insecure" and "uneasy." He was not particularly aggressive nor particularly submissive, but he fluctuated between the two attitudes. One got the impression after associating with him that he was never sure of what was expected of him and acted therefore in contradictory ways according to what *he thought* was expected of him. Or to put the same impression another way, there seemed a constant discrepancy between what people expected of Antonio and what he wanted to do if left alone. In tribal fights, for instance, he acted fiercely and aggressively and with the air of swaggering braggadocio that that all important men are expected to show in fighting, yet at the earliest possible moment he melted into the crowd with visible relief at being able to quit the center of the stage and without a trace of rancor or ill will toward any of the people whom he had been abusing or had been abused by a few minutes before. In council meetings of senior men he was always listened to with respect yet always had to be prodded into speaking at all. He never initiated a policy or offered his opinion until pressure was put upon him to state what he thought, and while his opinion when given was listened to with attention it was always a paraphrase of some opinion already given, usually the majority opinion of the group. He expressed what he thought the group wanted him to say, never an "opinion of his own." In this respect Antonio had many of the characteristics of a "yes-man" and like his counterparts in more civilized societies he seldom took the unpopular side and seldom stood up to opposition.

Two burning political issues agitating the Tiwi in 1928-30 were the issues of (1) plural marriage and (2) the visits of the Japanese pearling luggers. The Catholic missionaries had taken a strong stand on plural marriages and were bringing all the economic and moral pressure they could exert on the younger Tiwi to induce them to restrict themselves to one wife. Failure to bow to Mission pressure resulted in the recalcitrant's being cut off from the European food, tobacco, clothes, etc. which could only be obtained through the Mission. But beginning in the middle 1920's Japanese pearling boats in ever increasing numbers had carried on the practice of anchoring on the further side of Melville Island during the period of high tide (when diving for pearl shell was impossible) and inviting the natives to provide their women as prostitutes for the use of the crews during their stay on the beaches. The Japanese captains paid lavishly in European goods for any women thus provided and the subtribes on the southeast side of Melville, in particular the subtribe called the Yeimpi, proved very susceptible to the Japanese temptations.

These two issues of plural marriage and prostitution for the Japanese rather neatly complemented each other at two points. Not only did the Japanese rival the Mission station as a source of supply for European goods; the possession of a large number of wives was a condition that made a man very unpopular with the missionaries, but, if he were disposed to rent out some of them, made the same man very popular with the Japanese. The plural marriage issue, if alone, would clearly have divided the tribe into the conservatives, staunchly upholding plural marriage as the Tiwi way, and the radicals abandoning it in return for Mission favor. But such an alignment was cut right across

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

548 by the Japanese issue, since it tempted the conservative with several wives to
595 violate all the old tribal sanctions by renting out his wives, and it provided
648 the Mission adherent radicals with a grand opportunity to pose as the real de-
668 fenders of the old culture and to charge the old polygamists with being the real
797 renegades from the ancient ways.

It can be easily guessed how high feelings ran on these issues and how hotly
159 they were debated when a number of Tiwi gathered together. But on neither
177 of these issues or on any aspect of them did Antonio show any signs of leader-
797 ship. He accumulated wives but always apologized in a rather deprecating and apple-polishing way when he met the missionaries, and spent part of his time hanging around the Mission despite the contemptuous attitude which the missionaries adopted toward him. He thus contrasted very unfavorably with some of his contemporaries, notably one Dooley who, having been for years a one-wife man and a Mission favorite, inherited a second wife at around the age of forty. Dooley's decision was clear-cut and highly spectacular. He accepted the second wife, shook the dust of the Mission station from his feet and never set foot near it again, taking up again the traditional life of a Tiwi elder, deep in the bush, with his two wives and later additions, ignoring all white innovations, even tobacco.[4] Dooley's uncompromising behavior was greatly admired by the tribe but few had the strength of character to emulate him, certainly not Antonio.

159 On the Japanese issue Antonio was just as vacillating. Prodded by others to make a statement he would in ringing tones denounce as disgraceful and scandalous the behavior of the Yeimpi wife-renters, but on his visits to the Yeimpi country—ostensibly "to see for himself what was going on"—he shared eagerly in the proceeds of vice which his friends there offered him and was even heard on a few occasions to wonder aloud why the Japanese always went to the Yeimpi country when there were plenty of secluded beaches in Tiklauila country. Instantly challenged, "Would you want the Japanese to come here?" "Would you rent your wives to them if they did?" poor Antonio quickly turned it into a feeble joke, saying deprecatingly, "Oh no, no, no. I just wondered why they always go to those ugly Yeimpi women?"

In summary we might say that Antonio's personal behavior appeared to be that of a man pushed into a position rather too big for him to fill. He was
[554] not by nature particularly aggressive or domineering, but as the eldest son of
[626] Turimpi he was constantly being pushed by public opinion onto the center of the stage, whereas he would have been much happier if public opinion had left him alone to be an ordinary, average member of the crowd. The role he was called on by his status position to play seemed to give him little or no pleasure, little or no personal satisfaction. Such a view of his "personality" is supported by the fact that when alone in the bush with his own family and away from the society of his peers Antonio was relaxed and at ease. As Durk-
159 heim pointed out, the basic factor in Australian social psychology is that men
571 spend a great part of their lives hunting and collecting in the bush, completely out of physical contact with all people except members of their own households,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 [561] have some slight voice in tribal affairs. Antonio had already emerged into this latter group and therefore was already committed to the old way of things to an extent that Mariano was not. This line of reasoning will explain at least why Mariano was chosen rather than Antonio. Louis, on the other hand, was still a boy indistinguishable among the group of 18 year olds.

159 554 797 Students of social organization in small societies are aware that in such societies the status requirements for certain positions are frequently such that often only a very few individuals, sometimes only one individual, are actually available to fill the positions. A similar narrow range of potential holders also pertains, it would seem, to statuses not known to the native culture but thrown up, as it were, by the demands of the culture-contact situation, as in the present case by the arrival of the Mission. What the missionaries needed among the natives was a spokesman for them (a) who had some influence, and influence in Tiwi is a combination of age, family prestige and personal forcefulness; (b) who was a local man in the district in which the Mission was built; (c) who was young enough to be flexible in his actions and thinking and therefore capable of being influenced by them; (d) who was not yet so committed to tribal mores (plural wives, strict observance of taboos, etc.) that once trusted by the Mission and identified in the native mind as a Mission-supporter he would be likely to embarrass the Mission by backsliding; and (e) who was willing to take on the job. They found their man in Mariano. A careful review of all the other possible candidates as they existed in 1911 fails to reveal any other man who had so many of the above desiderata. Dooley had many, but was a person of no family, certainly not a son of Turimpi.

In the early days of the Mission Mariano thus became its main spokesman among the tribe and the most trusted interpreter for and adviser of the priests. By 1928 he to some extent still occupied this position. But by then the Mission had had seventeen years in which to build up wider contacts and find other spokesmen, and its needs were no longer the same needs as in its pioneer days. Moreover, not only had the Mission matured in those seventeen years but so had Mariano. At the age of 42 or so, he was now a man of influence and prestige in the tribe but, like many better-known leaders of men in other societies, he was inclined toward an aggressive, bumptious self-importance and an exaggerated belief in his own indispensability. He had therefore become rather a trial to the missionaries (and to all the other white men to whom he had attached himself). The result was a continued series of quarrels between him and the Mission, which usually ended with Mariano, in a rage, storming off either to the bush or Port Darwin. In Port Darwin he characteristically worked for only the more important whites, senior government officials or at the hospital, until his anger had cooled sufficiently for him to return, self-contained, dignified, completely humorless and rather pompous, to ascertain whether the missionaries realized how foolish they had been to quarrel with him. If they had not, then he simply quit the Mission and waited for the arrival of some white visitor who needed a native sponsor. He thus acquired a greater knowledge of white ways than most of the Tiwi and as a result no doubt of his op-

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

portunities for cultural comparison he at the same time acquired an acute insight into his own culture and into the psychology of his fellow tribesmen. For the anthropologist he was a magnificent informant and a continuous pain in the neck. As increasing years gave him increasing tribal seniority, Mariano became increasingly domineering and touchy about his own importance and increasingly recognized by the younger men as the man who voiced the "promission" and hence "pro-white" point of view in tribal arguments. However, it would be a mistake to think of him as the "detribalized" native of the literature (as another Benelong, e.g., in the magnificent study of culture contact given by the Australian novelist Eleanor Dark, 1941). On the contrary the tough old unacculturated natives who lived deep in the bush and who tried to act much of the time as if white men didn't exist not only accepted Mariano but respected him and paid deep attention to his arguments. The reasons why they did this are, I think, all considerations of "personality," that is, they respected Mariano despite his collaboration with the Mission largely because Mariano was the kind of man he was. He was forceful and determined; he was sincere, he was consistent both in word and in deed, he was intelligent and knew both the psychology of his audience and how to marshal his arguments so as to obtain maximum impact from his material. And he had supreme confidence in his own righteousness. Time and again one was struck by the contrast between him and his elder brother Antonio. When Antonio spoke (always after being prompted or coerced into giving his opinion), people listened hoping to hear wisdom and force and cogency; instead they heard only hackneyed phrases and inconsistent arguments which left them dissatisfied and unconvinced. When Mariano spoke (always without invitation and frequently ahead of many of his seniors), he laid down, in vehement tones, a definite policy, and even though his policy was unacceptable to his hearers as it frequently was, they listened with close attention and voiced their approval at the end, not so much of the policy he outlined as the directness and clearness of the delivery and the logic of his position.

The difference between the two men is well illustrated by their attitudes toward the Japanese wife-renting on the Yeimpi beaches. On this, the burning issue of the day, Antonio never took a stand but shilly-shallied on all sides of it, despite the fact—frequently drawn to his attention—that his small daughter was betrothed to an old Yeimpi who was a notorious wife-renter and he, therefore, in a very short time would be faced with the decision of whether to hand the girl over to her promised husband or not. Mariano on the contrary seized upon the Japanese issue from its first appearance as proof of the essential soundness of the Mission campaign against plural marriages. His speeches were clear-cut and definite. "It all goes to show that the priests are right when they say that having a lot of wives is a bad thing. These old Yeimpi have too many wives. If they had only one each, like white men (and inferentially like Mariano himself), they would not be doing this disgusting thing of renting out their wives to Japanese, they would want to keep their one wife to themselves like decent Tiwi." Most of his hearers (a) considered themselves decent Tiwi, but

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emphasized, are presented from the point of view of a female Ego, for I strongly feel that it is only by using a female Ego that one can see the Tiwi marriage "game" as a "system." Following this, I present the kinship terminology together with some comments on the system of kin classification that are relevant to the marriage system. The last section discusses some aspects of the exchange of women between descent groups and local groups. 121 128

I am only too well aware that I do not have all the facts necessary to make a complete analysis of Tiwi social organization. It must also be stated that the relative-age analysis was a desk study based largely on what I believe to be logical deductions from the collected factual information pertaining to the age differences between spouses.[4] More field work is obviously necessary, and I hope that others who become interested in the problems of analysis and classification raised by this paper will comment and thereby suggest what they consider to be crucial areas for reinvestigation. 121

The Factor of Relative Age in Marriage Contracts

Hart and Pilling (1960) have described the dynamic nature of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a male Ego. My study supports their conclusion that for a Tiwi male the acquisition of wives and the acquisition of prestige are dependant variables. A Tiwi male will rarely acquire a wife through any form of contract before the age of 30. A bestowed wife, one who is promised before birth and becomes a cohabiting wife before puberty, is a valuable prestige symbol, but difficult to acquire. Thus a young man will frequently start his household with the acquisition of a less valuable but more easily obtainable type of wife, i.e., a widow, often of advanced age. Some Tiwi males never obtain sufficient prestige or political power to become involved in a bestowal contract, while others who are more fortunate may be involved in several such contracts. 554 554 582 [587]

My study of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a female Ego reveals some interesting differences in perspective. First and foremost is the fact that, while involvement in a bestowal contract is a cultural ideal, albeit rarely realized, for a male's first marriage, it is an inescapable norm for every Tiwi woman's first marriage. Thus, while this type of contract can be considered "preferential" but not normative from the point of a male Ego, it is acknowledged by Tiwi women as an inflexible "rule" governing their first marriage before puberty to a man whom they describe as "the one who grew me up, treated me like a father, and made me a woman."[5] 183 582

Thus a marriage contract for a man's first wife need not be—and frequently is not—the same as the initial contract leading to a girl's primary marriage. Furthermore, the form of the contract for a man's first wife is apt to vary considerably, whereas the form of the initial

5 [The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche. Cf. p.465, cat. 116 -- Analyst.]

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

hands of a limited number of specified relatives of the woman, the 584
privilege of exercising a particular role in a marriage contract depends on the individual's age relative to others holding similar rights and relative to the woman involved in the contract. I have chosen to base the following classification of contracts on the single factor of who has the right to make the contract.

Type A Contracts

A Type A contract involves four individuals. The authority to [603]
make the contract resides solely in the hands of the bride's mother's father. At the time the contract is made, this man is at the expected age of 50—the age when a man is at the height of his political career. Acquiring wives for himself to further his career and maintain his [554 595]
prestige is only one of the activities involving marriage contracts in which a Tiwi male is engaged at this time of life. As a father, he has [593]
a duty to look after the welfare of his daughters even after they are married. As an elder in a matrilineal descent group, he has a similar [614]
duty toward all younger members of that descent group, male and female. By arranging a correct Type A marriage contract, a Tiwi man can fulfill two duties at the same time. He can provide his daughter with a son-in-law, whom he selects on the basis of potential economic and political ability and who, if of roughly the same age as the daughter, can be expected to provide her, under the terms of the contract, with continued support throughout her life. By selecting a young man in his own descent group (his sister's daughter's son) to provide this support, he at the same time assures this young man that he will eventually obtain a bestowed and preferred type of wife which will help him on his road to prestige.

The arranger of a Type A contract may be dead by the time the bride is of an age to be given over to her selected groom. The rights to implement the contract, consequently, do not permanently reside with the arranger, but rather they are the duty of the mother of the bride. They are not given to the mother's husband, even if he is also the bride's father. In the space of time that may well elapse between the arrangement of the contract and its implementation, the bride's mother may have a number of husbands, each of whom may have different axes to grind and varying motives for changing the selection of the groom. The right to change any Type A contract belongs to both the mother of the bride and to the groom; if either does not live up to the obligations of the contract the other may consider it void.

A Type A contract, therefore, is one which preferentially and [614]
frequently results in a marriage of a MoFaSiDaSo to a MoMoBrDaDa and in a marital union between two matrilineal descent groups. This arrangement is unaffected either by the death of the arranger or by any secondary marriage of the bride's mother to a man who, though the real father of the bride, might possibly belong to a descent group other than the two originally involved in the contract.

The enduring quality of a Type A contract over a span of two 582
generations is a most important aspect of the total marriage system

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

582 and for Tiwi fathers' statements that they can only "find" children
614 in their own country.

Today, with nonlocalized sibs, both the sib and the local group are
582 considered in the exchange of woman, which is direct with reference
614 to sibs but indirect with reference to local groups. Such exchange
may in some cases involve sibs and countries or *tungarima*, in others
621 sibs and districts or subcountries. I found that approximately 50 per cent of local-group exchanges were between *tungarima* and 50 per cent within the *tungarima*.

582 With local-group exchange and unilateral cross-cousin marriage preferred and predominant, we have an indirect but circular marriage exchange system. We cannot, however, consider the entire society as being involved in a single marriage exchange system. The system is best seen from the point of view of a single male Ego, whose marriages are systematized according to rules which are society wide, but whose actual marriages are determined by past affiliations which can be and often are variable with respect to sib and local-group exchange.

554 That the Tiwi system is Ego-oriented is most evident when a male Ego dies and his relatives foregather for his funeral ceremonies
571 (Goodale 1959). If such an Ego has lived a full life, he will be affiliated at the time of his death with a number of social groups. He is affili-
764 ated by birth with a matrilineal sib. By his father's death he is affiliated with a local group and a *tungarima*, which may or may not be the same as the group with whom he currently resides; in either case he is affiliated with the latter and will be buried among them. Through marriage, Ego is likewise affiliated with one or more additional sibs and local groups.

601 Only those persons who belong to the several above-mentioned groups with which the deceased is actually affiliated are expected to
764 honor him by attending his funeral ceremony. When death occurs, these individuals are terminologically reclassified into four cate-
602 gories, from the members of each of which similar behavior is expected. The spouse and spouse's siblings become *ambarui*. Cross-cousins, MoFa, FaMo, BrDaCh (ws), and SiSoCh (ms) all become *yempi*. Siblings and parallel cousins, MoMo, FaFa, BrSoCh (ws), and SiDaCh (ms), regardless of their sib affiliations, are classed together as *pudawi*. All kinsmen in the first ascending and first descending generations are classed as *unandawi*. Since, however, there is a distinct role differentiation between Fa, FaSi, and SoCh (ms), on the one hand, and Mo, MoBr, and SiCh (ms), on the other, I suspect there may be a terminological distinction which escaped me, inasmuch as these "funeral terms," with the exception of *ambarui*, are no longer in use.

Conclusion

582 In this paper I have considered the form and nature of the varying types of contracts that lead to marriage among the Tiwi. I have

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

554 of Units I and II and made their wives available for redistribution. The working of the Tiwi system made this possibility unlikely. Unsuccessful junior elders could not expect to step into the shoes of successful senior elders merely by [888] outliving them; nor could one rise to power in the gerontocratic system [555] merely by living past fifty-five. What was necessary was age *plus* ability, and the time to demonstrate the ability was in one's thirties. If it was not demonstrated and recognized by then, a man could not forge ahead in his middle forties and early fifties, for by then it was too late. This fact gave a certain cyclical quality to the transfer of influence in Tiwi. The influence of successful 557 senior elders, to the extent that such an intangible thing was transferable at 587 all, tended to skip a decade and bypass the men currently in the junior elder category in favor of the men in the current "young operator" category. Since Ki-in-kumi was already quite old, there was in 1929 a great deal of political maneuvering going on in Malau and elsewhere in anticipation of his death, and it was clear that the people most likely to profit by his death and the redistribution of his twelve resident wives (one-third of all resident wives in [561] the band) were the men aged from thirty-two to forty-two such as Padimo, Boya, Summit, and Gitjara, all of whom were jockeying for position to take advantage of the death of any old man, especially such a wealthy elder as Ki-in-kumi. Some of the widows would undoubtedly remarry into other bands, but these younger Malauila, living with or near the old man's establishment, were already taking advantage of their strategic location to make some preliminary deals and marriage arrangements for the old man's widows even before his death. Neither Padimo, as Ki-in-kumi's son-in-law, nor Boya, as his nominal "son," could themselves marry any of the widows, but as resident members of his establishment and the only two men so situated, each was in an excellent spot to act as an honest broker in the disposal of Ki-in-kumi's large estate. Anybody interested in obtaining a widow or two at the death of Ki-in-kumi was well advised to have a few quiet words with either Padimo or Boya well ahead of time. Both of them had wives who lived and worked every day alongside Ki-in-kumi's womenfolk and thus they each had ideal communication systems to the women's side of the band. This was why they had held off setting up their own separate establishments though they were both married men. Neither were "heirs" of Ki-in-kumi in any strict Western use of that word, but it was obvious that it was their careers that would be promoted and their spheres of influence that would be enhanced by the death of Ki-in-kumi. The junior elders, all approaching or past the age of fifty with only small establishments and small spheres of influence, were being bypassed in the transfer of the old man's assets.

Every Tiwi anxious to obtain a Ki-in-kumi widow recognized the strategic positions of Padimo and Boya; the problem was to decide which broker to retain, since the positions of the two men in relation to Ki-in-kumi were so different. For the past four or five years Padimo had been the right-hand man and trusted lieutenant and undoubtedly it was he upon whom Ki-in-kumi was relying to carry out his own wishes about the distribution of his widows. We said earlier that old men found it difficult to control the remarriage of their

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 admitted the charge along the age-old line of "the woman tempted me," Louis always faced his accusers silently, sullenly, almost disinterestedly. He never excused himself, never alibied. On the other hand he never gloried in or boasted of his sexual exploits, he merely gave the impression that he was completely disinterested in the whole procedure of argument and punishment and wanted to get it over with as quickly as possible. It was very evident that, despite his sexual reputation, he was not invested with any glamour nor did he excite any hero-worship on the part of the younger men. The role of Don Juan [555] in some cultures can presumably be a role that leads to a successful seducer's [837] being envied and even to some extent hero-worshipped by the young bloods, but this seems quite absent as a cultural possibility in Tiwi values. Successful young seducers never act publicly as if they were proud of themselves nor in any way show off or assume a "look how clever I am" manner. Absence of such behavior was very noticeable in others besides Louis, and certainly he never acted in such a way, despite his obvious suitability for such a role were it culturally available.

In camp and during the periods of the collective life he was silent, gloomy and dour, frequently irritable, unfriendly and hostile to everybody. He was [582] too young, in Tiwi terms, to rate a wife, but the policy of the Mission to dis- [797] courage plural marriages had as its positive correlate the promotion of marriages for the wifeless young men and Louis was one of those who had obtained a wife through Mission manipulations. She died after a beating which Louis in one of his frequent fits of anger had administered to her, and while the natives never said so openly, they clearly agreed with the Mission's charges that Louis had murdered his wife. Thus accused to his face by the Mission, Louis shrugged his shoulders in his normal, indifferent way. In council he seldom spoke and what he said carried no weight. This, of course, may well have [561] been due to his age as in Tiwi terms Louis at 31 or 32 was still a young man who should keep silent in the presence of his seniors. But it was very noticeable that even in the quick informal conferences between members of a party on the march involving such petty decisions as whether to camp at this waterhole or try and make the next one before nightfall, or in similar minor decision-making, Louis took no part. He listened silently to the debate, was very quick to foresee correctly what the decision was going to be as was evidenced by his starting off again by himself before the main party had realized where the consensus lay, but he apparently felt no urge to express aloud his own views on the issue. His actions showed that in his private analysis of the situation he was way ahead of most of the debaters but apparently his personal satisfactions came from correct anticipation of majority decision rather than from any desire to participate himself in decision-making. The same ability to listen, analyze what he heard, to act upon his own analysis but never to intervene actively was very noticeable in Louis' reaction to the accusations against him by the outraged husbands. An outraged husband usually begins his charges late at night when the camps are quiet. At such a time he begins to yell his accusations through the darkness at the top of his voice, naming the seducer,

517 887 quently, on the banks of some creek or river in Tiklauila territory, a party wanting to cross would scout around and find a canoe hidden in the weeds. Everybody would use it to cross, and the question "Whose canoe is it?" would elicit the reply, "Oh, it's always there and everybody uses it who wishes to cross." But if the question were "Who made it in the first place and put it there?" the answer would be, "Probably Timalarua. He likes making canoes; he makes them all the time." He also liked making spears and posts, though he was not as generous with them as Tu'untalumi. When one of his posts appeared at a funeral, people would point it out admiringly saying, "Timalarua made that one" and the speaker would trace the lines and designs on it with his finger, using much the same gestures as an art critic in a modern gallery. When a post by Tu'untalumi was identified and admired, however, the admiration was for Tu'untalumi the generous person rather than Tu'untalumi the [554] artist. One was a wonderful craftsman, the other was a wonderful man. But acclaim given to the song and dance performances of the two men was just the reverse: the dances of Timalarua were adequate but not outstanding, those of Tu'untalumi were in a class by themselves.

Comparison of the activities of these two old men illustrates the impossibility of drawing any line, in the simpler cultures at least, between artistic production and technological production. The canoes and the posts manufactured by Timalarua and the posts manufactured and the new dances created by Tu'untalumi were all, so to speak, in the same category, as far as the Tiwi were concerned. The distinction we might make between the canoes as "useful" products and the posts and dances as ceremonial or artistic products never occurred to them. All were objects or products which only successful old men had the required skill and leisure to make. The fact that one old man liked to make canoes and leave them around for other people to use, and another old man liked to compose dances and perform his compositions widely for other people to enjoy, to them merely indicated individual taste and choice; it did not make the first a craftsman and the second an artist. This point has been overlooked in most of the theorizing about primitive art; perhaps a necessary first step in the development of primitive artists is for a society to be able to provide a few men with enough leisure time to be able to cultivate what might perhaps best be called hobbies, since a hobby can equally well be something "useful" to society, like canoe making, or something personally satisfying, like dancing or decorating graveposts.

[411] 531 556 The huge, heavy, painted spears made by these old Tiwi men were mainly used only for display, and even the oldest men were positive that this had always been the tradition. In fact, they seemed a little shocked at the implication that such beautiful and valuable objects could ever have been used for such mundane purposes as hunting or warfare. The cutting and painting of such spears took time and skill—more time than a gravepost—and no important man went to the smallest gathering without bearing on his shoulder at least half a dozen of these symbols of his importance. If on his way through the bush he sighted a kangaroo, he dropped his painted spears and stalked [224] the animal with an ordinary spear, or more probably left it to the young men in the party who carried only ordinary ones.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission, automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their opponents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were economically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

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About the Book

This is a case study of a system of influence and power which is based on a strange currency. The currency is woman. Newborn females, nubile marriageable females, toothless old hags — all are valuable in Tiwi terms. Because men compete for prestige and influence through their control over women, women have the value of a scarce commodity. Under this system there are no illegitimate children, no unmarried females of any age, and wives are either very much older or very much younger than their husbands. 562 [557] [848 589]

A vivid picture of Tiwi life, as viewed from within the culture, emerges in this book. The reader is not made an outsider, left to peer into a dimly understood, formalized, alien way of life. Rather, he is taken inside the family group, by the night's campfire. He becomes a witness to angry quarrels, a participant in involved machinations aimed at success — as defined by the Tiwi. He comes to know individual Tiwi as real people. 114

This book is a study of social interaction. But it is also a study of culture change. Much happened between Hart's and Pilling's visits to the Tiwi. These changes are described, and we see them in the context of the period of Tiwi contacts with the outside world. (a)

GEORGE AND LOUISE SPINDLER
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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

584 The most important way is one which we have already mentioned—namely,
587 widow remarriage.

Widow Remarriage

595 To become "a big man" a Tiwi had, among other things, to accumulate
557 a lot of wives. This required time, in addition to everything else. A rising star
587 who accumulated by bestowal seven or eight wives by his middle forties and then died, merely left a lot of widows to be redistributed at his graveside, and by the process of wealth attracting more wealth, or capital creating more capital, the widows were most likely to be redistributed among his rivals and competitors of his own age group or among men even older than he. Hence, the largest number of wives ultimately accrued to the successful man who lived longest, since he was likely to gather up at least a few of the widows of each of his contemporaries or seniors as they predeceased him.

There was thus a close correlation between increasing age and the number of wives a man had, and the largest households belonged to a few surviving old men in each band. The two conditions, therefore, which were necessary to accumulate a large household were (1) to attract prospective fathers-in-law to invest their infant daughters in you while you were a young man, and then (2) to live long enough to reap the dividends. The longer you lived, the more dividends would accrue to you from one source or another, provided you started off right by attracting betrothals in your twenties and thirties.

But what about the unimpressive young men, the "noncomers," who somehow failed as young men to attract any prospective fathers-in-law to invest an infant daughter in them? As we have seen, even the most highly regarded and well-connected Tiwi young man had to wait until his late thirties or longer before his first bestowed wife was old enough to join him in domestic bliss, but at least while waiting he knew the time was coming. The overlooked or unbetrothed young man had no such prospects. Since the only source of supply of new females was through the birth of female infants whose hands only their fathers could bestow, it would appear as if a young Tiwi male overlooked or ignored by all fathers of bestowable female daughters had no alternative except permanent bachelorhood. Doubtless Tiwi fathers, as a class, would have regarded this as an ideal situation and would have said that permanent bachelorhood was a proper fate for such friendless and hence useless young men, but no social system of such rigidity has ever been discovered by anthropologists. Tiwi fathers were able rigidly to control the marriages of their infant daughters, but they were not able to control with the same rigidity the remarriages of their own widows, and it was widow remarriage that supplied the loophole in the system, or the cultural alternative that took care of young men.

587 A Tiwi husband was unavoidably and necessarily always much older than a bestowed wife. Therefore he usually died much earlier than she. A girl of fourteen who entered into residence with her first husband when he was

As mechanisms validating this success of fathers rights

584 against clan rights there existed two rules: he who bestowed the name had
592 the right to dispose in marriage; and all names given by a woman's previous
614 husband were cancelled by his death and a new set of names given to all her
[553] children by her new husband. Strictly and universally enforced, such rules
would put *all* control over the marriages of *all* women, of every age, in the
hands of their mother's husbands—that is, men from outside the clan of the
women being disposed of, in other words, fathers in the Tiwi sense. But the
Tiwi system failed to achieve such a result though their rules are pointed
toward it. They achieved something close to it as far as infant or even young
girls were concerned, since the fellow clansmen of such girls were either (as
brothers) too young and unimportant to have any power to resist this alien
control over their sisters' hands, or (as mothers' brothers and hence older
men) too involved and absorbed in their own activities *as fathers* to take any
581 position asserting clan rights as against fathers' rights. To be successful in
557 tribal life, an ambitious young Tiwi male was best advised to forget his mother
584 and his sisters' daughters (all members of his clan) and concentrate on getting
[614] wives for himself. Only by getting wives could he have daughters, and only
by having daughters could he build alliances and obtain influence, power, and
more wives. To get wives for himself, he could not use his mother or his
sisters or his sisters' daughters, since their disposal was in the hands of the men
who had named them—that is, their fathers. But there came a time in the life
of an older man when his mother was old, and *her* mother was dead, and there-
fore the rights of the last man to name his mother had lapsed. And a similar
situation would arise in the case of his sisters when their mother's last husband
died. By this age, a man so situated was likely to be powerful enough and
skilled enough in the rules of the game to exert some control over the late
remarriages of his elderly sisters and even of his mother, were she still alive.
592 Whenever this occurred, although the resulting situation might have the super-
584 ficial appearance of clan solidarity—with sons, mothers, brothers, and sisters
587 all acting and planning together as a partnership—such a surface appearance
was illusory. The motivations involved in it were scarcely altruistic desires on
the part of the brothers to look after their mothers and elderly sisters, but
rather efforts by the brothers to use to advantage, in their intricate political
schemes, some women of their own clan (their mothers and elderly sisters).
Earlier in life these men had been prevented from such manipulation by the
control over those women exercised by nonclansmen (their husbands or fath-
ers) through the naming rules. Put another way, we might say that Tiwi men
as a group had acquiesced to the system wherein "the father" had control over
all marriages of his "daughters," because every Tiwi man hoped to be a
"father" himself; but having acquiesced, every Tiwi male tried to beat the
system, especially as he became older and more influential, by intriguing in the
remarriages of his mother and elderly sisters—matters in which, according to
the strict letter of the law, he had no right to interfere, since bestowal rights
resided with the "father" or "fathers" of these women. One factor which
[582 greatly contributed to the setting aside of the rights involved in the naming
582] system was the fact that since, on the whole, old men married young women

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 jointly, or any one of them singly, were able to translate that claim into marriage depended on the other claims. Brotherhood in itself gave no exclusive right to widows, but of course a brother, being necessarily of the same clan and frequently of the same band as the deceased husband, was well in line to assert a claim to the widow if he could make the claim good. Cursory inspection of the genealogies reveals, however, a surprisingly small number of cases of men taking over the widows of their deceased brothers. At best it was a very minor factor in Tiwi marriage customs.

The parallel custom of the sororate—that is, of sisters being married to the same husband—was more common. It occurred both in connection with infant bestowal, by a father promising *all* his daughters by a particular wife [595] to the same husband, or in connection with widow remarriage, whereby two or [584] more full sisters, previously married to the same husband, passed together on his death to the same new husband. The sororate occurred more frequently in the first form than in the second, largely because, as already mentioned, widows had more say in their own marriages than baby girls had, but there was nothing obligatory nor required about it, as is shown by the frequent cases in which a father bestowed all his daughters by one wife on the same man but on the early death of that man rebestowed them *seriatim* on several different husbands. One got the impression, though no Tiwi ever made the point explicit, that within the Tiwi bestowal system the prevailing high rate 165 of infantile and child mortality was an important factor in sustaining the sororate principle to the extent that it did exist. A father who bestowed upon a 182 587 man the first daughter borne by a certain wife was almost obliged to bestow upon the same man the second daughter of the same wife if the first one died in infancy. Moreover, since most fathers bestowed their daughters with an eye to their own advantage, it was clearly desirable if he wanted to cement the goodwill of a prospective son-in-law, to promise him *all* the daughters produced by a certain wife, so that even though most of them died in infancy, at least one or two would be delivered in good condition at the age of puberty. [557] The aim of bestowal was to win friends and influence people, and a bestowal of a child who died before she reached the son-in-law did a father little good. A shrewd father could avoid this risk by following the sororate principle; a stupid or feckless father who scattered his daughters widely could well end up with as many disappointed sons-in-law as friendly ones, as the infantile and child mortality took its heavy toll of his young daughters. In the genealogies, sororate marriages in some form occur much more frequently than levirate marriages, but nonetheless their incidence is such as to indicate that they were a relatively minor feature in Tiwi marriages and that their occurrence was most frequently due to careful fathers trying to insure sons-in-law against disappointment, and themselves against charges of nondelivery.

171 No account of marriage in any Australian tribe can go very far without raising the difficult matter of the kinship system, since all the accounts we have 582 of mainland Australian tribes tell us that all marriages there took place within a rigid kinship framework which required everybody to marry somebody who was automatically his or her cross-cousin (for example, a man and a daughter

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

matter might end there. Or the old man might let matters rest until the time of the next big gathering of people at a funeral or at the *kolema* rituals, and then revive the issue under such public circumstances that the accused young man could not slip away unpunished. If he followed this second course, the old man went to the gathering covered from head to foot in white paint, the Tiwi uniform for anybody who came in anger and intended to pick a fight with somebody. The decision between these two lines of action lay, of course, with the old man, and while that decision was to some extent determined by how vindictive and revengeful he felt, nonetheless it was also influenced by how this dispute was related to all the other feuds, disputes, deals, marriage exchanges, and so forth, in which both parties were already involved. Like a good lawyer in our own culture, the old man had to consider, before he took the matter to court, who the young man was and who his friends and relatives were, and had to ask himself whether in seeking vengeance for the blow to his pride he might not be doing himself more political harm than the injury was worth.

In arriving at his decision, the old man was influenced to some extent also by another variable, the attitude of the young man. If the alleged offense occurred only once and the young man denied it and thereafter kept his distance, the accuser would probably let the matter drop. Offenders were very rarely caught *in flagrante*, and the evidence of seduction was almost always circumstantial or hearsay. In every case there was some element of doubt as to whether the right young male was being accused or whether the whole story had not been invented by some of the old wives out of sheer spite toward a young wife. The old man had to take such factors into consideration, not out of any abstract sense of justice, but because, naturally, he didn't like to be made a fool of, either by young men or his own spiteful old wives. But he was most suspicious and unbelieving of his own flighty young wives, and sometimes the accused young man was defiant and persistent in his attentions to the same young wife, or wives. In effect, such a young man was daring the old husband to do his worst. Such continued defiance of the seniority system could not be permitted; it became a case not of simple seduction but of subversive activity, since it was a threat to the whole social structure of the tribe, centered as that was around the marriage of old men to young women. When confronted by such action, a Tiwi elder said (as people of other cultures might), "What would happen if everybody did that? We'd have complete anarchy and free love." Hence an old husband, so defied, was almost duty bound not just to seek satisfaction for the private injury done to himself, but to defend the public weal by hauling the offender before the bar of public opinion and denouncing him before as large a crowd as possible, as a public enemy. If the situation became so flagrant that he could not wait until the next big funeral or the next *kolema* gathering, he began calling in surrounding camps or going himself, dressed in white paint, to summon them to assist him in meting out public justice to the violator of the system. When a sufficient number of upholders of the right (that is, senior heads of households) had been collected together, the usual one-sided duel (see below, Chapter 4) was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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The Prestige and Influence System

TO BECOME a really big man, or even a minor figure among the elders, a Tiwi had to devote all his adult life to that goal. Careers were built up and influential positions gained not by executing spectacular coups at any one time, but by slow, devious maneuvering and dealing in influence throughout adulthood. Men in their early thirties invested their very small assets in the hope of large returns twenty years later, and if the anthropologist witnessed the initial investment he was not around to witness the final return; or if he witnessed the return he found it difficult to reconstruct all the relevant details of the initial investment. A man in 1928 bestowed his daughter in a certain direction because of some deal back in 1900, arranged by men many of whom were now dead. And the bestowal in 1928 was done in such a way as to bind the hands of men negotiating in 1960, some of whom were infants in 1928.[1] 557

The Tiwi influence and career patterns can best be compared to a sort of nonstop bridge game wherein the scores were never totaled up nor a new game ever started on a clean slate.[2] Whenever an observer came in, he always

[1] A typical illustration of this situation arose during the writing of this book. In 1928-29 Hart had observed Padimo beginning to acquire a number of bestowed wives. Being interested in the status of Padimo twenty-five years later, he included Padimo in a list of inquiries to Pilling. Pilling's reply: "Re Padimo. I am almost certain that he was the 'Paddy' who died leaving several widows, in February, 1953, about three months before I got to the Islands. The natives did not like to talk much about him while I was there (because of the taboo on dead men's names) and his widows were still being fought over. The fights over his widows did not end until the week I left (if they really did then)." Thus the deals which Hart saw in 1928-29 were having delayed repercussions when Pilling was there in 1953-54. 124 768 551 578

[2] We use bridge rather than poker as our analogy because nobody ever "went broke" in Tiwi influence competition and nobody ever "won the pot," because there was no pot to win. The scoring was always, so to speak, on a comparative basis and everybody, even the most unsuccessful man, had some score relative to his competitors.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

557 entered in the middle of the game and found the current hands being played with all the old scores back for at least two generations influencing the play of the present hands. The game never had a beginning or an end; every new player had to start in the middle and make the best of whatever assets he had by way of kinship, clanship, household membership, and help from older players. Similarly, any attempt to describe the operations involved or the "rules" of the game must perforce start in the middle.

The "game" was one of trying to win friends and increase prestige and influence over others. The "assets," in a tribe with such minimal material possessions as the Tiwi, were mostly intangible ones such as friendship, "help," goodwill, respect of others, control over others, importance, and influence. 557 562 Even in our culture such things are difficult to express in concrete or tangible symbols. The most concrete symbol of Tiwi success was the possession of surplus food, for this not only permitted its possessor to make gifts to others and throw large parties for which he picked up the check, but also gave him lots of leisure time to devote to social and political life. Since a man required a large number of women in his work force if he was to build up a surplus of food, in the final analysis it was control of women that was the most tangible index of power and influence. Women were the main currency of the influence struggle, the main "trumps" in the endless bridge game.

It should be noticed that we stress the value of women as women rather than as wives or bestowable daughters. To a smart Tiwi politician, wives or daughters were assets but so was his mother—if submissive to her son's wishes. So were his sisters—if amenable. A bachelor at the age of thirty who had several sisters was a lucky young man, especially if those sisters already had daughters to their current husbands. As successful old men used their infant daughters to gain influence and buy satellites, so young men used their mothers and their sisters—if they could.

Thus the psychological line between the attitude of a man toward a wife and his attitude toward a sister or a daughter was a very thin one. A Tiwi elder had many women related to him in some way—as wives, as daughters, as step-daughters, as sisters, as sisters' daughters, as wards, and as mother—and all of these were part of his assets or capital. The fact that he had sexual rights to the wives and not to the daughters or the sisters was only of minor relevance. What was of major relevance was that they were all women whom he could use—or try to use—as investment funds in his own career of influence seeking. The devious details of Tiwi prestige and influence operations are much easier to follow if one keeps in mind the crucial fact that the Tiwi men valued women as political capital available for investment in gaining the goodwill of [593] other men more than they were interested in them as sexual partners. Some of the more senile elders were quite vague about the young girls in their household; such an old man was sure only of the fact that a girl, by being in his household, was part of his capital. Which were his daughters and which were recently joined young wives was a question that had to be referred to the old wives who kept track of such academic details.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Women were, however, a form of capital that possessed the power of 562
talking back to the investors. As daughters or as wives they were quite thor- 593
oughly subordinate to the wishes of their fathers or husbands, and Tiwi wives were as frequently and as brutally beaten by their husbands as wives in any other savage society. But as mothers and as sisters the women were not coerced by their sons and their brothers. On the contrary, sons or brothers wishing to use their mothers or their sisters in their political schemes (typically when those mothers or sisters became or were about to become widows) could only do so with the active collaboration of the women concerned. Tough-minded [587]
young widows could drive a hard bargain with their brothers as to where they remarried, since each needed the other to make the remarriage acceptable to the tribe at large and to beat down the other competitors (the dead husbands' brothers, for example) who wished to control the remarriage of the widows. Young girls thus had no bargaining power but young widows had a good deal. Old mothers with influential senior sons were extremely powerful. Any affront to an old woman was an affront to her sons, and some of the strongest influence networks were alliances of several senior brothers, in which their old mother seemed to be the mastermind and the senior sons largely the enforcers of what the old mother and her middle-aged daughters (their sisters) had decided among themselves.

Thus, for women, as for men, age and political skill were the crucial 562
factors in determining their position. Young girls were chattels and as such 888
were passed around from husband to husband. But with increasing age, smart 553
young women, especially in alliance with their smart young brothers, could control their own fate with some firmness, and if they and their brothers had a shrewd old mother (also with powerful senior brothers still alive) to advise them and support them, then the decisions of such a group as to where the girls remarried were very difficult decisions for anybody else to combat or oppose. Not as independent operators, but as behind-the-scenes allies of their sons and brothers, Tiwi mothers and sisters enjoyed much more essential freedom in their own careers as often-remarried widows than would appear at first sight in a culture which ostensibly treated all women as currency in the [587]
political careers of the men. No matter how males, both old and young, might connive, they were constantly aware that no remarriage of a widow could ever be arranged and made to stick unless the widow herself was agreeable.

In the limited space available, all we can offer are a few samples of 557
how the influence game was played by a few selected individuals of various 888
ages. Age was of great importance in Tiwi careers and therefore we select our samples from all the adult male age-groups. We have selected them all from the same band—the Malauila—so as to show as clearly as possible the interplay between one career and another for men of the same band. And finally [177
we select men of the Malauila band for our examples because in 1928-29 it 797
was a band little affected as yet by the outside influences—Catholic missionaries 121]
and Japanese pearl divers—which were beginning to modify Tiwi marriage customs among some of the other bands.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

162 [621] The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

561 [858 882] [591] Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

561 589 884 [582] [177] The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

561 884 557 [582] The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows, and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

159 554 [589] In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was still a bachelor and why Banana had acted so impulsively and thereby 159
gotten himself in the bad graces of the elders. The two men were the eldest 554
of four brothers without any full sisters and as such they were necessarily
handicapped in their career struggle. Elders seeking satellites or contempo- [557]
raries seeking allies looked askance at men without sisters, for such men could
have no sisters' daughters to use in the marriage-arrangements struggle.
The mother of Tiberun and Banana was dead, but even were she still alive, [582
few men would have been interested in marrying a widow whose only living 581]
children were sons. Widows without daughters and bachelors without sisters
rated very low in the scale of desirable assets sought either by elders or by
contemporaries.

Tiberun was thus the only bachelor in the 30-42 age group. Of the 159
remainder we select Teapot as an example of another man who failed to get 554
started. Teapot was at least 35, and about seven years previously he had "stolen" 626
a wife from an elder. This wife was no ancient and shop-worn widow like
the wife Banana had "stolen," but a young girl who had been betrothed in
due form to an elder by her father. How Teapot had managed to get away with
her is too complicated an incident to unravel here, and in any case it hadn't
done Teapot much good. After presenting Teapot with a baby boy the young
woman died, and Teapot, with a now six-year-old son, was more or less an
outcast among the Malauila. No elder wanted him as a satellite and none of
his contemporaries wanted him as an ally. His mother was dead and his only
sister was married to a Munupula elder. This sister in Munupi was his only
asset and one which a different man might have used as a means to better
himself. But Teapot, instead of using this small asset to get started on a
career, had chosen to defy the rules and "steal" an elder's bestowed wife.
"Stealing" an old widow was reprehensible conduct in the eyes of the elders;
stealing a young bestowed wife was unforgivable. Hence Teapot, since his
crime, had received no bestowal, had been able to marry no widow, and was
wanted by no one as an ally.

A complete contrast to these two unsuccessful men in their thirties was 159
provided by the case of Gitjara, who was about the same age as Tiberun. 557
Gitjara, it is true, had sisters, and that was always a help. Using his sisters 562
(already married and bearing children to an elder) as bait, Gitjara when he 584
was about 28 proposed an alliance to L. F. B., a rather feeble man about five
years older than himself, who was not doing very well in the influence race.
The gist of the proposal was that, since both their mothers were still alive and
each married to an old man who could not last much longer, Gitjara should
marry the ancient mother of L. F. B. when she became a widow, and L. F. B.
should marry Gitjara's mother when that old lady became a widow. Perhaps
the idea originated with the two old women rather than with either of the
young men. Since such arrangements were essentially plots or schemes, it is
impossible to determine who conceived them in the first place—old women
ambitious to aid their sons or young men ready to use their mothers as long-
term gambits to ultimately provide themselves with young wives. Mother-
exchange operations were probably first conceived at high-level strategy con-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 [562]

ferences in which smart mothers and dull mothers, smart sons and dull sons were all present, and the final plan emerged from consensus.

In this case the former husbands of the two old women both died conveniently soon and within about three years of each other and, according to plan, there came into existence a household of two men in their thirties each married to the elderly mother of the other. Gitjara and L. F. B. thus set up jointly the foundations of their households and began their careers as a joint enterprise.

Gitjara had two sisters, both married to White Man, an elder, and already the mothers of daughters to him. By marrying Gitjara's mother, L. F. B. automatically became the nominal father of these women, and in the event of White Man's death would have, as such, some say in where they remarried. But the right of the step-father to redispose widowed step-daughters was always disputed by the brothers (or even sons) of the step-daughters, provided those brothers (or sons) were old enough or influential enough for their wishes to be taken seriously. Thus we may say that in putting L. F. B. into position as his own step-father, Gitjara's main object had been to get a satellite or henchman of his own into the position of step-father of his sisters (the wives of White Man) so that when they became widows there would be no conflict between the wishes of their brother and the wishes of their step-father as to whom they should remarry. L. F. B. as step-father was, so to speak, a stooge for Gitjara the brother.

Conversely, L. F. B. had two sisters both married to Ki-in-kumi, the most powerful elder in Malau. By marrying the mother of L. F. B., Gitjara [606] became the step-father of two of Ki-in-kumi's wives, thus immediately (despite his youth) becoming technically the father-in-law of that powerful old man, and a man with some say in where those two wives of Ki-in-kumi would remarry on Ki-in-kumi's death. As step-father of such widows, Gitjara would have to make his wishes prevail as against the wishes of their brothers, but the only brother was L. F. B. and his vote was obviously in Gitjara's pocket.

By engineering this double shuffle of two elderly widows, each with daughters, Gitjara had launched his career as a marriage manipulator. Almost before it was concluded he became involved in another widow operation. We will omit the intricate details, but can say that he emerged from this with a second wife for himself, this one (naturally) also a widow but quite a young widow. This woman had already borne four sons and one daughter to her previous husband but was still young enough when Gitjara took her over in 1926 to bear him a son (her last) in 1927. In Tiwi terms the acquisition of this widow by Gitjara was a real achievement for the young man, not because of her comparative youth nor because of the son she bore him but because among the children by her previous marriage was a daughter aged about nine [554] at the time she remarried Gitjara. To become the step-father of such a young girl was a real asset for the young operator. Her dead father had bestowed this child on Summit, another of the same Malauila age group of 30-year-olds and hence one of Gitjara's rivals and competitors in the influence struggle.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

This created an intriguing situation since Summit, having had this child bestowed on him at her birth some nine years previously, had thus acquired a bestowed wife at about age 27; Gitjara now 33 or so still had not received a bestowal. By remarrying the mother of Summit's young bestowed wife, Gitjara had turned the tables on one of his chief competitors among his age group. He could not, of course, alter the bestowal; in five or six years' time the girl would take up residence with Summit. But as the step-father who renamed the girl and the head of the household in which she would live for the next five years, Gitjara was in an excellent position to make Summit enter into a deal or two with him. He could drag his feet as to the time of the delivery of the girl to Summit; he could drop hints that there was something irregular about the bestowal to Summit in the first place, and so on; but whatever form of pressure he chose to exert on Summit, the latter well knew that all Gitjara wanted was to be cut in on some of Summit's deals and to be included in the network of Summit's alliances. The next move was now clearly up to Summit. 159 557 584

If Summit wished the nine-year-old girl now in Gitjara's household to be transferred promptly and without argument, he would be well advised to give some consideration to Gitjara, perhaps even the promise of one of his still-to-be-born daughters either as a wife or as a ward. Although not necessary, it would be a politically wise gesture. If he did so, both men would be gambling in futures. Since Summit's young wife was now nine years old, it would be at least six or seven years before she could produce a daughter (if at all) and another fourteen or fifteen years before any such daughter (if she lived) would be old enough to join Gitjara's household either as a wife or ward. Hence, under any such arrangement between the two young men, Summit would be giving something to Gitjara but in such a way that the latter could not collect for at least twenty years and might never collect.

Anthropologists will note that such arrangements still conformed to the patterns of cross-cousin marriage. Gitjara as *de jure* father delivers his "daughter" to Summit and thus becomes technically Summit's mother's brother or wife's father. Twenty years later (if all goes well) Summit delivers his daughter (by Gitjara's daughter) to Gitjara, thus becoming technically the mother's brother or wife's father of Gitjara. Gitjara himself might marry this daughter of Summit by his own step-daughter or treat her as a ward given to him by Summit and bestow her on some other man selected by himself; in the latter case he would be acting as father to his step-daughter's daughter. There were no clan barriers to such an arrangement, since fathers had to belong to clans different from those of their wives and of their daughters, step-daughters and daughters' daughters. 159 602 [582] [584] [614]

There were, of course, alternative actions or "deals" open to Summit and also to Gitjara, depending upon their plans in other directions. The pattern described above, however, was extremely common in Tiwi marriage arrangements, and often it was the reason why some very old man would receive some female infant as a wife: an agreement of this type had been made twenty or thirty years before, when the now senile old man was in his 159 557 584

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 thirties and when the mother of the baby he was now receiving was married to some man long since dead. The circumstances were certainly right for such an arrangement in the Gitjara-Summit case of 1928.

159 557 582 If we now pause and look at the marriage career of Gitjara at the point it had reached by the time he was 33, we can separate out three distinct types of operation in which this admirable young man had engaged. His first marriage, with L. F. B.'s elderly mother, had brought into existence a joint household of young men and elderly widows which not only was a very satisfactory housekeeping arrangement but also put Gitjara and his ally, L. F. B., in a position to exert some influence on all the subsequent remarriages of their respective sisters.

Gitjara's marriage a few years later to a second widow put him in a position to enter into marriage arrangements even more directly, since the second widow had a daughter promised to Summit but still too young to take up residence with him. By dragging his feet on the fulfilment of this promise, Gitjara could put pressure on Summit and extract from the latter some sort [584] of consideration to facilitate the delivery of the girl. Gitjara was thus well in the marriage-broker business before he had any children of his own and indeed before he had received any bestowal. This was the second type of operation for an up-and-coming young man, and it was one wherein a shrewd and aggressive operator would use the daughters of other men (that is, of a widow's previous husbands) in such a way as to attach all sorts of codicils and contingent interests and second mortgages to the original bestowal of those daughters, many of these collectable in full only in the far distant future, after all prior interests had been satisfied or had lapsed.

The third type of operation engaged in by Gitjara was, of course, to try and attract bestowed wives of his own. His vigorous operations, by age 33, in the widow remarriage field, were not only ends in themselves but also were the type of operation that attracted the approval of older men with daughters to bestow. Hence it is not surprising to find that by 1929 Gitjara, married to the two widows already mentioned, had received two bestowals. The older of these was a girl of ten rebestowed on Gitjara in 1927 when the man died upon whom she had been bestowed at birth. The second was a baby born in 1927 whose father was Tomitari of the Rangwila. (The choice of Gitjara as a son-in-law by Tomitari was so interesting that we shall discuss it later in this chapter.) Both these bestowals were made *after* Gitjara had engineered his remarriage of the two widows and as far as kinship was concerned had no connection whatever with these widows or their close relatives. We conclude, therefore, that widow remarriage could be used by alert and aggressive men in their early thirties for three purposes: (1) to establish households and obtain elderly housekeepers; (2) to establish low-priority rights in the daughters of the widows' previous husbands; and (3) to attract attention to themselves as smart operators and gain the attention and approval of older men. As an outgrowth of the third purpose, they were likely to attract bestowals. Hence we may say that among the Tiwi the best road to obtaining a [587] young wife or several young wives was for a young man to be first successful

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the manipulation of the remarriages of elderly widows, who were always in large supply. If a man showed skill and know-how in his early thirties among the widows, then in his late thirties and early forties young wives would be bestowed upon him in abundance. Such a lesson could not have a better exemplar than Gitjara. By age 33 he had done so well among the widows that his first *young* wife would be joining his household by the time he was thirty-eight or thirty-nine, and another was already a year old. Clearly he was a young man of promise and one to be watched—and cultivated.

Summit, a man slightly older than Gitjara, must be dealt with very briefly, since the reasons for his success would take us too far afield. In 1929 he had a list of six wives, the only resident one being an elderly widow. The other five were bestowals and the eldest of these was the girl of ten whom we have already mentioned as being in the household of her step-father, Gitjara. Two more, younger than the ten-year-old, were in the household of Padimo (see below) and the remaining two were in the household of one of the elders of the Rangwila band. Summit, in Tiwi reckoning, was a Rangwila himself and had only moved to Malau a few years before. Some four years previously he had been a young Rangwila with no less than five bestowed child-wives. Three of these had been given him by an elder in Malau, two by an elder of his own band. The Malauila girls were older than the two Rangwila girls and his Malauila father-in-law was older than his Rangwila father-in-law. Summit therefore moved north to supervise personally his interests in Malau. He had, however, been out-maneuvered when the Malauila father-in-law died, since Gitjara had then been able to remarry the mother of Summit's eldest child-wife and Padimo had been able to remarry the mother of the other two little girls. Having thus moved to Malau to be near to and a satellite of his elderly Malauila father-in-law, Summit now found himself the technical son-in-law of two young men of his own age group who were among his keen competitors in the influence struggle. To ensure that his three promised Malauila child-wives joined his household when old enough, he now needed to make some arrangements with Gitjara and Padimo. Summit had gotten his bestowals rather early and rather easily but he still had the problem of nailing them down.

While thus engaged in acquiring five bestowed young wives and trying to promote their safe delivery when ready, Summit had married a widow not much more than forty years old but childless by her two previous husbands.[8] Such a widow at least provided him with a food-getter and housekeeper and enabled him to establish a household into which his five bestowed wives would enter as they successively reached the proper age. Thus Summit's household in 1929 consisted only of himself and his *palimaringa* wife. Within the next fifteen years it would be increased by the addition of at least five young wives,

[8] Such women who had reached middle age without surviving children were called by a special term, *palimaringa*, in Tiwi and the term referred to childlessness rather than barrenness. Summit's widow, for example, had borne two children, both of whom had died in infancy, and she was classified as a *palimaringa*. When a *palimaringa* became very, very old indeed, the word changed to *timaringa*.

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 plus any new bestowals, plus any further widows Summit might find it to his interest (and power) to rematry.

159 584 557 Padimo, who thus enters our story as one of Summit's rivals and one of his nominal fathers-in-law, was also a Rangwila who had moved to Malau at the call of an elderly father-in-law. He presents another pattern of Tiwi upward mobility and one that was statistically more frequent than the rather tortuous road followed by men like Gitjara. Padimo had been chosen as a nephew worth supporting by old Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest of the Malauila. The earliest proof of Ki-in-kumi's patronage of Padimo had come in 1925-26 when an old man died, leaving eight widows of very diverse ages. Three of these "widows," aged respectively 17, 13, and 9 at the time of the death of their first husband, were daughters of Ki-in-kumi. Being so young and their brothers being equally young, their father's right to arrange their remarriage was unchallenged and Ki-in-kumi reassigned[4] them as wives to young Padimo, then aged about thirty-three. The eldest of the three girls had already borne two female children to the dead man, these being the two girl babies mentioned above as having been promised to Summit.

As well as the three young widows, Padimo had also obtained at the same redistribution the oldest and most haggish of the dead man's eight wives. It was at the same redistribution that Gitjara had obtained his second widow (the mother of the girl promised to Summit). Thus through Ki-in-kumi's influence, Padimo had obtained four "widows" of the eight left by the man who died in 1925-26; Gitjara, working without a powerful patron, had been lucky to obtain one.

159 595 [604] Ki-in-kumi had subsequently followed up this initial selection of Padimo as a favored sister's son by giving further daughters to him as they were born. Consequently, by 1929 Padimo's wife list consisted of the following:

A. One extremely ancient widow.

B. One wife aged about 20, daughter of Ki-in-kumi, mother already of two daughters by a previous husband who, before his death, bestowed these daughters on Summit.

C. One wife aged about 17, daughter of Ki-in-kumi; had just had her first child (who lived only a week); had previously been bestowed on the dead husband of wife B, but was too young to join his household before he died.

D. Three more girls, daughters of Ki-in-kumi, the eldest about 12 and hence old enough to have been bestowed on the same previous husband as wives B and C; the other two aged 2 and 1 and hence born since his death. All three of these were still resident in their father's household.

[584 587] [4] It is difficult to decide whether such reassignments of female children by their father, on the death of the man to whom he had first betrothed them, should be called "rebestowals" or "remarriages." We prefer the first word since such "child-widows" were usually reassigned by their fathers (if still alive) without any challenge to his rights to do so. They therefore do not differ from original bestowals at birth except for the awkward semantic fact that the man to whom such a "child-wife" was reassigned was technically her second husband.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

With a lineup such as this by the time he was thirty-six, Padimo was clearly in 159
process of going places in Tiwi society. The only weakness one could see in 557
his position was that it all derived from the favor of one patron, and no old 595
man with daughters, other than Ki-in-kumi, had seen fit to bestow a girl
upon him. It should be noted that in 1929, though Padimo had two young
wives resident in his household, he still had no children of his own. His first 159
child, born that year, lived only a few days. The only children in residence were 557
the two girls promised to Summit by the previous husband of their mother. 592
Their bestowal on Summit was a matter beyond Padimo's control though he 584
could use them to force some concessions from Summit just as Gitjara could
with the girl in his household. But as Padimo's young wives began to bear
daughters of his own, his bestowal of them would be less encumbered by the
commitments of any predecessor. While Ki-in-kumi lived, Padimo would have
to consider his obligations to that old man and at least consult with Ki-in-kumi
as to how he should bestow his female children, since any such children would
be the daughters' daughters of the old man. Nor would the death of Ki-in-kumi
leave Padimo entirely free to bestow his own daughters anywhere he wished.
Many of the girls already given to him as wives by Ki-in-kumi had mothers
who possibly, and brothers who certainly, would outlive Ki-in-kumi. On the [587]
old man's death, all of his numerous wives would remarry—some of the older
ones probably to ambitious younger men—and these new husbands of the
widows of Ki-in-kumi would begin interfering with and trying to alter the
arrangements made for his daughters by the old man during his lifetime. Thus [606]
Padimo would find himself stuck with a group of new and antagonistic fathers-
in-law in place of the old, indulgent father-in-law who had been responsible
for his success so far. Padimo's problem was basically how to hold, after
Ki-in-kumi's death, the favored position he had gained during the old man's
lifetime through the old man's favor.

In the meantime, with Ki-in-kumi still alive and powerful, Padimo had 159
the biggest and fastest expanding household among the Malauila men in their 592
thirties. The only remaining man in this age group was Boya who was the 557
oldest of them all, being at least 42 years old in 1928. As might be expected,
his career illustrates some new facets of the Tiwi influence struggle.

Structurally the position of Boya was simple but politically it was com- 159
plex. His father had been a henchman and satellite of Ki-in-kumi in the early
career of that old operator and roughly had had somewhat the same relation-
ship to the young Ki-in-kumi as L. F. B. had to Gitjara. Boya's father, the
satellite, left only two widows (an indication of his mediocrity) and these
two widows had been remarried by Ki-in-kumi, the patron. One of these
widows was Boya's mother, and Boya was too young at the time to have any
say in where his mother remarried. Ki-in-kumi's interest in marrying Boya's
mother was not of course because he thus acquired Boya as a step-son, but
because he acquired Boya's sisters as step-daughters. Step-sons were liabilities [562]
which new husbands had to take over in order to get rights in the real assets
—the step-daughters.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

of that wealthy elder, we will first summarize, in Table I, the marital conditions of the eight young men we have been discussing. 592

TABLE I
THE MALAUILA YOUNG MEN IN 1928-29

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Name	Age	Resident Old Wives (Ex-widows)	Resident Young Wives (Bestowals)	Promised Wives (Under 14)	Own Children
Tiberun	33	0	0	0	0
Banana	28	1	0	0	0
Teapot	35	0[a]	0	0	1
Gitjara	33	2	0	2	1
L. F. B.	38	1	0	1	0
Summit	36	1	0	5	0
Padimo	36	1	2	3	0[b]
Boya	42	1	0	4	0

[a] Teapot's "stolen" wife was dead.
[b] Padimo's first child, born in 1929, lived only a few days.

This table presents a summary of many of our earlier attempts at generalization. The only Malauila under the age of 43 who had a bestowed young wife old enough to live with him was Padimo, who was thus exceptionally lucky. Leaving out young Banana, five of the seven men between the ages of 30 and 42 had young females promised to them, but these were mostly babies or children who would not come into residence for several years. Six of the seven had married widows, mostly elderly widows, well in advance of the arrival of young wives and before any father had bestowed a daughter on them. Finally, and a point not made before, men of this age group rarely had any children of their own. The only entries in the last column of Table I are the irregularly born son of Teapot; Padimo's first daughter who died virtually at birth; and the 1-year-old son of Gitjara who was the last child born to his second ex-widow. Tiwi men rarely had young wives until they were around forty; they even more rarely had any children of their own before that age. Padimo's dead baby and Gitjara's 1-year-old son were exceptional; the zeros in the last column against the names of Boya (42), L. F. B. (38), and Summit (36) represent the normal situation for Tiwi men of such ages. 561 582

In terms of success (as measured by bestowals) Padimo and Summit (largely through the patronage of elders) and Boya and Gitjara (largely through their own operations) were the coming young men among the Malauila. Of the others, L. F. B. was approaching forty with few assets and no influence, and the other three, Tiberun, Banana, and Teapot, had not even got started in the influence race. 554 584

A Very Successful Elder: Ki-in-kumi

The most influential man in Malau and the head of the biggest household was Ki-in-kumi. Since he had been born around 1863-64 and had been 159 557

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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159 a "young operator" somewhat before 1900, the deals by which he got his
557 career launched were difficult to reconstruct. The results of them, plus the fact that he lived long enough to draw full dividends from them, gave him by
159 1928-29 a wife-list of twenty-one. These had been accumulated as follows:
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When around 30 years old he remarried two elderly widows and a year or two later received his first bestowal. Thus by age 33 he had three wives. On that foundation he went ahead thus:

		Total
At age 33		
Had two widows and one bestowed wife		3
Between age 33 and age 43		
Remarried two more widows and had three more bestowed wives join him	+5	8
Between age 43 and age 53		
Three more bestowed wives came into residence	+3	11
(During these twenty years at least five bestowed wives died in infancy or childhood)	+5	16
Between age 53 and age 65		
Two more bestowed wives joined him and he married 2 more widows (one the mother of Boya)	+4	20
Now at age 66 there is still one more bestowed wife, aged about 9, in her father's household	+1	21

Thus his list of twenty-one wives was made up of six elderly widows and fifteen bestowed or rebestowed young wives.

By 1928-29 five of his bestowed wives had died before puberty and one was still with her father. Three of his six widows were dead. Subtracting these nine women, we find that his current household contained twelve resident and active wives: the oldest about sixty, two in their fifties, four in their forties or thirties, three in their twenties, and the two youngest around seventeen or eighteen years of age. Almost all of them had borne children since joining his household, but the death rate had been high among Ki-in-kumi's children and from all of his wives he had only eight living children of whom six were girls. Five of these six daughters he had bestowed or rebestowed on Padimo (see above) and the sixth on a middle-aged Rangwila. His oldest living daughter was the girl of 20 married to Padimo. His oldest living son was a boy of 18, despite the fact that Ki-in-kumi had been "a married man" for over thirty-five years. This was a situation which many Tiwi elders found themselves
159 in at the close of long and successful lives. With numerous wives, numerous
592 step-sons, large households to be managed, and large estates to be liquidated after their deaths, their oldest real sons (as distinct from step-sons) were still boys or youths and as such quite unsuitable as executive assistants while the old man lived or as heirs or executors after the old man died. Quite apart
[882 from kinship considerations, the Tiwi emphasis on age and seniority made it
889] impossible for Ki-in-kumi to utilize in any capacity his 18-year-old son. A youth of that age was a nonentity, whoever his father.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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554 of Units I and II and made their wives available for redistribution. The working of the Tiwi system made this possibility unlikely. Unsuccessful junior elders could not expect to step into the shoes of successful senior elders merely by [888] outliving them; nor could one rise to power in the gerontocratic system [555] merely by living past fifty-five. What was necessary was age *plus* ability, and the time to demonstrate the ability was in one's thirties. If it was not demonstrated and recognized by then, a man could not forge ahead in his middle forties and early fifties, for by then it was too late. This fact gave a certain cyclical quality to the transfer of influence in Tiwi. The influence of successful ● 557 senior elders, to the extent that such an intangible thing was transferable at 587 all, tended to skip a decade and bypass the men currently in the junior elder category in favor of the men in the current "young operator" category. Since Ki-in-kumi was already quite old, there was in 1929 a great deal of political maneuvering going on in Malau and elsewhere in anticipation of his death, and it was clear that the people most likely to profit by his death and the redistribution of his twelve resident wives (one-third of all resident wives in [561] the band) were the men aged from thirty-two to forty-two such as Padimo, Boya, Summit, and Gitjara, all of whom were jockeying for position to take advantage of the death of any old man, especially such a wealthy elder as Ki-in-kumi. Some of the widows would undoubtedly remarry into other bands, but these younger Malauila, living with or near the old man's establishment, were already taking advantage of their strategic location to make some preliminary deals and marriage arrangements for the old man's widows even before his death. Neither Padimo, as Ki-in-kumi's son-in-law, nor Boya, as his nominal "son," could themselves marry any of the widows, but as resident members of his establishment and the only two men so situated, each was in an excellent spot to act as an honest broker in the disposal of Ki-in-kumi's large estate. Anybody interested in obtaining a widow or two at the death of Ki-in-kumi was well advised to have a few quiet words with either Padimo or Boya well ahead of time. Both of them had wives who lived and worked every day alongside Ki-in-kumi's womenfolk and thus they each had ideal communication systems to the women's side of the band. This was why they had held off setting up their own separate establishments though they were both married men. Neither were "heirs" of Ki-in-kumi in any strict Western use of that word, but it was obvious that it was their careers that would be promoted and their spheres of influence that would be enhanced by the death of Ki-in-kumi. The junior elders, all approaching or past the age of fifty with only small establishments and small spheres of influence, were being bypassed in the transfer of the old man's assets.

Every Tiwi anxious to obtain a Ki-in-kumi widow recognized the strategic positions of Padimo and Boya; the problem was to decide which broker to retain, since the positions of the two men in relation to Ki-in-kumi were so different. For the past four or five years Padimo had been the right-hand man and trusted lieutenant and undoubtedly it was he upon whom Ki-in-kumi was relying to carry out his own wishes about the distribution of his widows. We said earlier that old men found it difficult to control the remarriage of their

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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widows with the same unchallenged authority with which they bestowed their daughters. Nevertheless they tried hard in many cases to do so. Ki-in-kumi was one who tried hard to make the decisions for his widows, by selecting Padimo as his trusted executor. If Padimo faithfully carried out the old man's wishes after he died, then the widows were not likely to come on the open market; they would be redistributed in accordance with the terms of Ki-in-kumi's will (in both senses of the word "will").

Though, of course, Padimo might prove to be a dishonest executor of the estate, there was a safeguard provided in that the new husbands whom Ki-in-kumi had selected for his wives were all aware of his wishes and hence if Padimo tried to depart from those wishes the cheated heirs would bring charges of double dealing and broken promises against him. But regardless of Padimo's honesty after the death, his position as Ki-in-kumi's trusted lieutenant clearly made him an unsuitable agent before the death for those numerous men who wanted some of Ki-in-kumi's future widows and who had not seen any indication that Ki-in-kumi had included them among his beneficiaries. The obvious young man for such men to use as their go-between and agent was Boya. Ki-in-kumi was hostile to him and had given him nothing willingly. Boya's presence in the old man's establishment was based on the nominal tie of Ki-in-kumi being the last husband of his mother to rename him before she died. Viewed thus, the two young men in Ki-in-kumi's household can be said to have become agents for two different networks of intrigue. Padimo was the manager and agent for all the men, including Ki-in-kumi himself, who wanted to perpetuate and continue the existing alliances and arrangements that Ki-in-kumi had built or helped to build during his long and successful career; Boya was the natural agent for all the men who, being outside that set of alliances, had nothing to gain from Ki-in-kumi's death unless his death dissolved the network of alliances and arrangements of which Ki-in-kumi had been the main architect. Padimo's responsibility was necessarily a sort of holding-together and preserving operation as the executor of an existing estate; Boya's clients were men hoping for fragmentation and subdivision not only of Ki-in-kumi's widows but also of the alliances and deals of which the widows were a part.

It is incidentally amusing, and also indicative of how the ever-present kinship ties affected all such deals and redeals, to note that if some of Boya's clients succeeded in grabbing off some of Ki-in-kumi's widows—despite the opposition, before his death, of Ki-in-kumi and the presumed opposition, after the death, of Padimo the executor—they were very liable thus to become automatically fathers-in-law of Padimo, since several of Ki-in-kumi's wives already had daughters who were bestowed on Padimo.

The question then of which agent was employed by the numerous men yearning to acquire one or more of Ki-in-kumi's widows was fairly well settled by the respective roles which the two young men occupied in the household. Men already well inside the Ki-in-kumi-centered alliances were relying on Padimo; men outside those alliances were relying on Boya to engineer a fluid situation and a more open market. In choosing an agent in this as in any other "deal," there was also the question of fee. Neither Padimo nor Boya

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

557 587 would become involved or make any soundings among the widows unless there was something in it for them. Hence the client had to find out whether a promise of general goodwill and friendship was all that Boya (or Padimo) would ask in return for his services or whether the price would be much [584] higher—perhaps as high as the bestowal of the client's next baby daughter. It was in such ways that widow-remarriage arrangements and infant bestowals were intertwined; a much-delayed bestowal to an apparently unrelated individual would be the ultimate pay-off to the broker or agent who had engineered a widow remarriage for the bestower years before.

[561] This role of agent in the disposal of a dead man's widows was a type of operation best suited to men in the first stages of their own married lives —that is, to men in their middle thirties or very early forties who had perhaps married their first or second widows and who had as yet no young wives of their own in residence. Having no young wives to guard, they were able to get around easily on diplomatic missions and they had their own listening posts inside the world of women in the person of their own mothers (if still alive) and in the elderly widows whom they themselves had married. The ambitious young brokers were tipped off by their mothers and elderly wives as to how the young wives wished to be distributed and what the competing young brokers were trying to arrange. Thus when a wealthy old man like Ki-in-kumi died, the redistribution of his wives through remarriage was a matter that had been decided beforehand by an extraordinary complex tangle of semisecret arrangements and deals and promises, but the people most influential in arranging the redistribution were the young brokers who usually got few, if any, of the young widows for themselves but who collected their rewards in reputation, influence, alliances, and future bestowals from the men for whom they had acted as agents.

[768] Thus the death of Ki-in-kumi or of any other old man with many wives tended to disperse the wives all over the tribe, with only one or two, or at most three, going to any one new husband. A large estate was almost always fragmented by the death of the old man who had built it up, and any one of his contemporaries was able to take over only a very small fraction of it at best. The levirate and sororate principles, though present, worked very feebly. The men who benefited most—not immediately, but eventually—were the young operators.[7] In such a manner Padimo and Boya were sure to be the long-term beneficiaries of Ki-in-kumi's death though neither of them could remarry any of his widows. The real heirs of the wealthy old men of sixty and over were the young men who happened to be between thirty-two and forty-
554 two when those old men got near to death. The men between forty-five and
557 fifty-five whose brokerage business ten years earlier had not been very skillfully
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[7] At least some of the so-called "stolen" or disputed wives were widows who had insisted on marrying the younger agent instead of the older client, which put the young broker in the embarrassing position of saying to his client, "I cannot make delivery of the widow I acquired on your account; she insists on marrying me instead." Such an incident did not do his agency business much good but tended rather to frighten off clients.

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handled, or who happened to be at the brokering age when no big households were being liquidated, found themselves in the position that Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai occupied in 1928-29. We know they had not been successful dealers in their thirties because we found them around the age of fifty with only one resident wife each and relatively few bestowals in prospect. Their earlier dealings in widows had not laid the right foundations for successful careers as elders. Even before he was forty, Padimo had five or six bestowed wives either in residence or in prospect, and Boya, not much over forty, had several already promised. The death of Ki-in-kumi in the near future would bring both of them more reputation and ultimately more bestowals in return for their skill (if they showed it) in the disposition of the estate. The inferiority of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai to these younger men in the marriage and influence struggle was already apparent and would be even more accentuated by Ki-in-kumi's death. 554 557 587

The Politics of Bestowal

The above discussion of how younger men were indirectly benefited by the deaths or impending deaths of wealthy older men does not pretend to give an exhaustive list of all the considerations that went into the reallocation of a dead man's widows. We built our analysis around those factors which were paramount in the case of Ki-in-kumi's household. Other cases were different to the extent that there were real adult sons involved in them rather than a nominal "son" like Boya, or because in them the old man had not chosen a clear-cut executor as Ki-in-kumi had chosen Padimo, or because an old man had surviving brothers close to him in age and alliance who would emphasize the levirate principle and seek to have it followed in the relocation of their dead brother's widows. The few points we are seeking to emphasize among the many that might be emphasized in any exhaustive treatment of Tiwi widow remarriage are: 1) that widow remarriage was a very flexible area in which the ultimate disposition of the widows was decided by the manipulations and wishes of a wide range of individuals including both relatives and nonrelatives. The dead man himself; the fathers of the wives, if still alive; the brothers of the widows, if adults; the widows themselves, if strong minded; the executors of the dead man, if clearly nominated; and the numerous dealers and brokers on behalf of remote clients or even on their own account—all tried to make their own wishes prevail. The result was that no two cases were ever alike, but on balance 2) it was younger men rather than older men who were most likely to enhance their reputations and increase their assets in the long run as the results of these widow redeals, even though in the short run it was the older men who remarried most of the widows, especially the younger widows. 587 [561]

We have briefly discussed what we have labeled the politics of widow remarriage before discussing the politics of infant bestowal, although logically it might appear that infant bestowal should be taken up first. We have fol- 584 163

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

584 lowed this order because, in Tiwi life, infant bestowal was reserved for fathers,
163 and a Tiwi was at least a middle-aged man before he became a father at all. Before he could have a daughter to bestow, he had to be the father of one; and before he could become a father, he had to have a baby girl bestowed upon him and wait for her to grow up to child-bearing age. The much-married Ki-in-kumi did not have his first actual daughter (as distinct from wives' daughters begotten by previous husbands) until he was forty-five, and Enquirio was closer to fifty than to forty when his first real daughter was born. We are inclined to call such daughters free or unencumbered daughters since the step-daughters brought into a man's household by widows, even young widows, were already bestowed by act of the widows' previous husbands and the new husband's control over their marriage was therefore encumbered by the dispositions made by his predecessors.

584 Thus most men did not have and could not expect to have any free or unencumbered daughters to bestow until they were well into their forties. By that time a man was a prisoner of his past. When at last he had free daughters he was no longer a free man but a junior elder with a mass of obligations both to older men and to younger men, which he had contracted in the previous twenty or thirty years. Even his initiation, which had started when he [881] was only about fifteen, left him under obligation to the older men who had initiated him. Any bestowals he had received had almost necessarily come to him from older men. In his thirties, it is true, he had operated in the widow remarriage area and put some older men under obligation to him by acting as their agent. But in his agency activities he had also contracted debts, usually in fee-splitting or log-rolling agreements with other agents of about his own age. Thus all his past activities, from his initiation at fifteen until the arrival of his first free daughter at (let us say) age forty-five, were on balance a story of obligations contracted and debts of gratitude assumed in his career of upward mobility. The more successful he had been up to now, the stronger the pressure on him to begin paying off those who had helped him, since it was assumed that his very success was a clear indication of how much obligation he must have to other men, especially older men and contemporaries.

584 If this line of reasoning had been the only relevant one, a Tiwi of age
557 forty-five just presented with his first free daughter would have had problem enough deciding which of his many obligations to liquidate first by his bestowal decision for that daughter. Unfortunately he was at the age when he had to consider the future as well as the past. Some of his old obligations were to men who were very old and unlikely to live much longer. Others were to men of his own age with whom he had been partners ten years before, but by now it was clear that some of these would never amount to much and paying them [654] off would reap no dividends for the future. Failure to meet the obligation might incur their enmity, but in view of their lack of success, perhaps their hostility was a lesser evil. In 1929, Gitjara, who had needed L. F. B. to get his own career launched, was ready to drop him as a partner now that Gitjara had attracted favorable notice in the form of two bestowals. The junior elders, though obligated to older men like Ki-in-kumi, were not bestowing their scanty

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

free daughters on the older men but upon each other while waiting for the power alignment in Malau to change with Ki-in-kumi's death. Perhaps the clearest case of the pull between the obligations of the past and the planning for the future in the bestowal of free daughters was provided by Merapanui. He was a man who owed or thought he owed very little to his elders. None of them had ever bestowed a girl on him, and he reached fifty with nothing but an ancient widow. The fortunate death of an elder brother had suddenly provided him with bestowable daughters rather later in life than the average. By 1929 he had been able to bestow no less than four, and every one of them went to men much younger than himself and in other bands. Merapanui, being relatively free of old debts, was investing his daughters in young men with a future, but unlike Ki-in-kumi who had invested most of his daughters in one younger man, Padimo, old Merapanui believed in diversifying his investments. 557 584

Thus the politics of bestowal marriage were just as complicated as the politics of widow remarriage but, since a man was ten or more years older when he became involved in the former than when he became involved in the latter, a rather different set of motivations prevailed. At thirty-five as a mobile operator in the widow field, a man was trying to launch a career, and if he had no obvious assets—no living sisters or mother or important mother's brothers—he was often trying to launch it on a shoestring. By forty-five the same man was well along in his career and was a junior elder—the head of a household with at least one young wife in residence and a man beginning to have bestowable daughters of his very own. He now saw tribal politics and reputation building in different perspective from the way they had looked to him ten years earlier. Then he had put his services and his wits and his diplomatic skills at the disposal of older men in order to gain favorable notice from the elders. But now that he was an elder himself, albeit still low in the pecking order of elders, he was no longer their satellite but rather one of them and therefore in competition with them. Now he no longer wanted to build up his client's business; he wanted to build up his own household and his own influence. With the arrival of his first free daughters he was no longer content to work for and accept the leadership of older clients; he was in business as an elder for himself. His free daughters were therefore bestowed not as acknowledgments of his obligations to older men but as inducements to younger men to accept him as their patron. With his first free daughters a man was in position to become emancipated from the dominance of the elders because with the arrival of those daughters he could start bidding against them for the allegiance of men younger than himself.

One of the neatest examples of the switch in life career was provided in 1928 by the case of Tomitari. All Tiwi life careers and marriage arrangements were so tangled that one was delighted to find a relatively open and shut case. Some of the principals involved were relatives of Padimo, who was originally a Rangwila before Ki-in-kumi, his patron, lured him to Malau. Padimo and three sisters were the children of a Rangwila man and woman whom for simplicity's sake we will call Padimo's real father and real mother. The father bestowed the three girls on another Rangwila named Inglis who was 159 557 584

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 about the same age as himself. (If we tried to answer *why* he did, the case would
557 no longer be simple.) Padimo's father died while the four children were still
584 young, and their mother remarried a relatively young man named Tomitari. This occurred in about 1914 and the situation then was as follows:

GENEALOGY I
THE INGLIS-TOMITARI RELATIONSHIP 1914
(Males are in italics; ages are in brackets)

Padimo's Father (just dead) 1. = Padimo's Mother (40) = 2. *Tomitari* (30)

Inglis (44) = Sister I (21) | *Padimo* (20) | Sister II (13) | Sister III (10)

Fifteen years or so later, all parties were still alive; the two youngest sisters had joined Inglis as wives and all three sisters had borne children to him, including girls. Thus the situation in 1928-29 was:

GENEALOGY II
(1928-29)

Padimo's Mother (55) = *Tomitari* (45)

Padimo

Sister I wife of *Inglis* (59)
Sister II wife of *Inglis*
Sister III wife of *Inglis*
↓
Daughter A (11)
Daughter B (8)
Daughter C (5)
Daughter D (2)
Daughter E (1)

The three sisters of Padimo had borne five daughters to Inglis and as they were successively born Inglis had bestowed the first three on Tomitari. He did not bestow the fourth or fifth nor any of his daughters by other wives.

The master clue to the whole matter was the marriage in 1914 of Padimo's widowed mother to Tomitari, then little more than thirty. His function had been to act as trustee or stand-in for Inglis' interest, not in the
[587] widow but in her daughters who had been bestowed on Inglis by their dead father. The young Tomitari as step-father of the girls had to ensure their safe delivery to Inglis' household. (One was there already but the other two were not.) Tomitari accomplished his mission, acquiring the widow, of course, as a wife in the process; the girls arrived safely in Inglis' household and Inglis paid off handsomely by bestowing their daughters on his honest agent who had held off the competitors.

But by 1923 or thereabouts Inglis had stopped paying off. Tomitari by then had received three bestowals from Inglis. (Actually he had received about six, but three died in infancy). Moreover, he was no longer a young man but

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was entering the junior elder class and, having received wives from other sources than Inglis, was getting to the point where he would soon have free daughters of his own. He had no intention of performing any more services for Inglis who was now nearly sixty. Hence Inglis had not bestowed any daughters on Tomitari since 1923; those of his daughters who had been born since that year were bestowed on men other than Tomitari and men who were younger and less successful than he. 159 584 557

As we see it, the deals involving widows, particularly the pay-offs to young agents for acting to promote the interests of older men, had distorted what might be called the pure theory of Tiwi bestowal. According to the pure theory, mothers' brothers bestowed their daughters on selected sisters' sons, and the older man who gave a young man a wife and became his wife's father, was performing a kindness toward a favorite nephew for which the nephew should be grateful. But the Inglis-Tomitari operation shows how the theory had become distorted in practice. In order that Inglis might have some young daughters whom he would be free to bestow on his favored young nephew, Tomitari, in 1914 he had had to arrange the young man's marriage with an elderly widow to ensure safe delivery to him (Inglis) of some young wives who would bear him those daughters. Everything went smoothly and no slip-up occurred, yet by the time Inglis was in a position to give a wife to his favored young nephew, he found that the latter was no longer a dependent young man but a successful junior elder competing with him in his own field of identifying and using talent among the younger men. Tomitari's first daughter, born in 1927—not to any daughter of Inglis but to an older wife—was bestowed by its father on the distant but very promising Gitjara, a man of thirty-two. Gitjara was thus selected by Tomitari as a promising satellite at about the same age as Tomitari in 1914 had been selected by Inglis. Moreover, Tomitari by this time, far from being the grateful nephew of old Inglis (as the theory stipulated), was looking forward with anticipation to the old man's death, since when that occurred, among the widows of Inglis would be the three sisters of Padimo of whom he was still the nominal father. It was by acting as their step-father when they were children that he had got his own career started. They were indeed the foundation stone of his own career and, having profited so much from them as children, he was keenly interested in their redisposition whenever Inglis' death should put them on the market again. Thus he was simultaneously the husband of some of Inglis' daughters and nominal father of some of Inglis' wives. In the first status, he was expected by the theory to be a grateful son-in-law of Inglis; in the second status, the facts of Tiwi life required him to see Inglis' death as providing him with an opportunity to derive some new benefits for himself from his position as nominal father of the three wives of Inglis whose delivery to Inglis' household he had himself engineered. 183 581 604 159 183 584 604 [557 593]

Thus the politics of bestowal cannot be separated from the politics of widow remarriage. Every case of one had endless repercussions in the other. Sisters' sons who were promised young wives by their mothers' brothers were always too old to be grateful by the time the bestowal occurred or by the even later time when the bestowed child was old enough to come into residence. 182 557 584 604

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 Mothers' brothers, in turn, were unable to endow their nephews any earlier
557 because they as younger men had been caught in the same trap. The only way
584 out was by deals in which older men and younger men collaborated. Ideally
604 such collaborative efforts should always have been between mothers' brothers and sisters' sons, but amid such fierce competition and endless log rolling this was not possible, and in many cases the mother's-brother—sister's-son relationship was a *result* of collaboration between older man and younger man rather than a cause. The bond arose from the deal rather than from their original kinship, particularly when the two men involved were very close in age.

The collaborative deals between older men and younger men were essentially designed to compensate for the older man's inability to bestow a young wife upon the younger man at a reasonable age. As was stated before, not until he was about forty-five would the older man have a free or unencumbered daughter. By then his younger collaborator and satellite had attracted the attention of older and wealthier men with many unencumbered daughters. After
159 performing all his services to Inglis, young Tomitari had not had to depend
557 on him for his first bestowal. A wealthier man than Inglis had reached over
571 Inglis' head, so to speak, and bought Tomitari's allegiance by the bestowal of
584 a young wife who provided Tomitari with a free daughter several years earlier than any child the daughters of Inglis could provide. With this first unencumbered daughter, Tomitari promptly bid for the allegiance of Gitjara. Put in terms of allegiances, Tomitari had from 1914 until about 1923 been the henchman of Inglis. During those years he passed from about age thirty to age forty, and his main patron was Inglis, who passed from about forty-four and on the fringes of the elder group to about fifty-four and accepted among the elder group. Then—and this was typical of the shift of allegiance that occurred in most life careers—a senior elder more wealthy in wives and daughters than Inglis bid for Tomitari's allegiance, and Tomitari became his henchman. Five years later, in 1928, Tomitari was a coming junior elder in Rangu and a man of influence in his own right. His oldest bestowed wife had already borne him a daughter whom he used to make Gitjara *his* henchman. The three wives (daughters A, B, and C) of Inglis were nearing the stage when they would join his household and he had other bestowals from other quarters. His relation to Inglis was no longer that of henchman but of rival, since they were now both successful elders in the same band and competitors in the struggle to make younger men dependent on them. Far from bestowing any more daughters on Tomitari, Inglis was bestowing his daughters (now plentiful) on men of Gitjara's generation (though not on Gitjara). Having more free daughters than Tomitari, he had more men of that generation to patronize, but since Inglis was sixty and Tomitari only forty-five, time was obviously on the side of the latter.

557 Thus the crux of the Tiwi system of influence-satelliteship-marriage ar-
571 rangement-wealth centered around what happened to a man in his thirties. This
584 is what we meant when we said earlier that old men with many daughters bestowed them on young men who looked to them like "comers." Old men

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

with many free daughters were usually men well over fifty. "Comers" were 557
men in their thirties. In so choosing the "comers," the old and wealthy men 571
reached right over the junior elders and the forty-year-old group down to the 584
ranks of the young operators. In this way we may say that the real power [888]
group, the successful old gerontocrats, chose their own successors. They chose
young men twenty or more years younger than themselves (as Ki-in-kumi chose
Padimo) because men at such an age were not rivals or competitors. A man so
chosen in his thirties could be already powerful and fairly wealthy by his
middle forties (like Tomitari in 1928) and very wealthy in his fifties. Such
men went up fast because of their selection by the group in power. Those not
so chosen had to go up the hard way by accumulating what position and in-
fluence they could by manipulations of the few available females not con-
trolled by the wealthy old men. The "haves" left a small minority of women
available to the "have-not" men to keep them quiet, but the great majority of
females were concentrated in the hands of a few old men and these old men
chose their own successors. Thus the Tiwi system actually deserves to be called 561
a primitive oligarchy as much as it deserves to be called a gerontocracy. It was 887
run by a few old men who ruled it not so much because they were old but
because as young men they had been clever and then had lived long enough
to reap the rewards of their cleverness. These rewards made up Tiwi wealth—
many wives, much leisure, many daughters to bestow, many satellites and
henchmen, and much power and influence over other people and tribal affairs.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

571 602 628 he had arrived there as a member of a large war party. This situation stemmed from the coexistence, on the one hand, of the intricate web of kinship that united everybody present and made the problem of who would support whom unpredictable enough, and, on the other, the intricate network of deals and promises and personal alliances and obligations that every senior Tiwi man had woven inside the kinship system. A Tiwi elder did not, for example, have one category of relatives called his mother's brothers; he had at least three different categories of mother's brothers. There were those mother's brothers who had given him nothing, those who had given him wives, and those who had promised him a wife but were dragging their feet on delivery, or even trying to renege on their promise. In pressing a case against one of this third category, an elder might quite conceivably alienate some of his mother's brothers of the second category. Nor could he be sure of the support of even his own brothers, since they were certainly cultivating, and possibly undercutting him with, the same donors of daughters as he was involved with. Perhaps the nondelivery, which was the whole basis of his case against the mother's brother, had been instigated by his own brother trying to engineer a rebestowal of the girl to him. Because of the two networks, that of formal kinship obligations and that of marriage deals, two Tiwi seniors engaged in a dispute had no impartial body to whom they could submit their arguments about breach of contract. Disputes between a young man and an elder could [674] be submitted to the publicly witnessed duel, since these were not breaches of contract but cases of trespass by the young men, and as such were crimes. [626] Impartial public opinion upheld the old men and punished the young men every time. The old men's arguments with each other, however, could not be [686] so adjusted, since they involved marriage deals (as distinct from seduction) and in marriage deals everybody was involved and nobody was impartial. Where any senior stood on any marriage deal in dispute depended on how that [557] deal fitted into his own conniving. In that area of life, every adult man had his own axes to grind and a disinterested group of umpires was impossible to find.

628 578 Thus Tiwi battles had to be the confused, disorderly, inconclusive things they always were. They usually lasted all day, during which about two-thirds of the elapsed time was consumed in violent talk and mutual abuse between constantly changing central characters and satellites. The remaining third of the time was divided between duels involving a pair of men who threw spears at each other until one was wounded, and brief flurries of more general weapon throwing involving perhaps a dozen men at a time, which ended whenever somebody, even a spectator, was hit. As a result of this full day of violence, perhaps a few of the cases would be settled that night—by a father handing over his delayed daughter, or a man with a disputed wife relinquishing her to her rightful husband—but when the war party left next day to return home, the number of cases settled was likely to be less than the number of new feuds, grievances, and injuries that had originated during the day of battle. For not only did the participants carry away from the battlefield a vivid memory of all the physical wounds, intended or accidental, inflicted by whom

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

To avoid constant use of the awkward phrase "mourning ceremony," we refer to it as the funeral though it took place some considerable time after the burial of the body. How long a time elapsed between the burial and the funeral depended upon the importance of the dead person. The more important the deceased, the longer it took after his or her burial to prepare for the funeral, both ceremonially and practically. Babies frequently had no funeral ceremonies at all, especially if they died very young and unnamed. Children were given small funerals, held within a month or so after the death, and the people present were merely the members of the local households. Young adult men and all adult women had funerals of medium size, and old men had the biggest funerals of all. Big funerals were rarely held in the wet season because of the height of the grass and bush and the consequent difficulty of travel. The season after the end of the rains (April-May-June) was a favorite time for funerals since by then people were moving again and there was then an accumulated backlog of funerals to be held for people who had died late in the previous dry season or during the wet. The mourning ceremonies of two or more people were sometimes held together; this obviously required that they be buried close together, although they need not have died at the same time. Seeking as usual to increase his importance in the public eye, a man might hold the medium-sized funeral of one of his children at the same time and place as the big funeral of an important elder—provided their graves were close together—even though two or three months had separated the two deaths.

The actual burial of the body immediately after death was usually a small affair attended only by whatever people happened to be in the vicinity. But some Tiwi ancients were on their last legs for months before they finally expired, and it was typical of Tiwi psychology that people should maneuver to be present when a death occurred. Until the anthropologist understood that even death had its political aspects, he could not understand why the Tiwi were always so anxious to hang around the camp of an old man who was taking an awfully long time to die. Since so very little happened at the actual time of death, this desire to be on the spot seemed merely morbid curiosity.[8] But it was not. A death immediately divided the whole tribe into two groups: a small group of relatives who automatically became mourners and therefore in a state of strict taboo; and the rest who were not sufficiently close to the deceased to have to assume a state of *pukimani*. The mourners, being *pukimani*, could do scarcely anything except weep and wail and gash their heads with stone axes. They could not touch the body or wrap it in bark; nor could they dig the grave, nor put the body in, nor fill in the hole. They had to ask non-mourners to carry out these tasks and thus became obligated to those non-

[8] How else was one to interpret the reluctance of Hart's party to move on, after spending three weeks waiting for old Tamboo to die, and the old man still lingered on? "Let's wait another day; maybe he'll die tomorrow" was the invariable response to suggestions that we move. "And if he does die, what will happen?" "Nothing; we'll move on then." But this was early in the fieldwork period, before Hart realized the all-pervasive character of Tiwi opportunism.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 mourners for their services. Death, in other words, incapacitated the relatives,
557 so the nonrelatives swarmed in to "help" them—that is, take advantage
571 of their incapacity. A man who could say, "I helped to dig your mother's grave"
764 had a hold for the rest of his life over the man or men to whom he could say it. Such a hold was not as strong, of course, as that of a man who could say, "I helped you get your first bestowed wife," but the difference of obligation was only a difference of degree. The Tiwi were always "helping" each other, but the man who was "helped" therefore "owed" something to his helper. At deaths, mourners mourned and nonmourners did the work; therefore the mourners "owed" the nonmourners, and such debts were carried on the same mental ledgers as other debts, such as marriage debts.

182 When deaths occurred suddenly and unexpectedly, the mourners had to
571 choose their helpers for the burial from the relatively few people present at
765 the time, and were thus often forced to become obligated to men they did not
[764] much relish being under obligation to. At the funerals the same bookkeeping mentality prevailed, but since these were not held until months after the death and burial, the chief mourners had time to select their helpers with care and political finesse. Satellites were very useful in this connection, since a man could ask his satellites to perform the necessary ceremonial services and thus get a return from them for the debts of gratitude they already owed him. This was one reason why a skillful Tiwi politician did not by any means select only close kinsmen for satelliteship. A death which made him *pukimani* was likely to make his close kinsmen *pukimani* also, hence he needed some satellites who were not close kinsmen.

182 In the interval between the burial and the funeral, the chief mourner,
557 on behalf of all the mourners but fairly independently if he were a big man,
571 allocated all the jobs that had to be done in preparation for the funeral.
765 Everybody who came had to be fed by the mourners, and the collection and
[462] hoarding of the necessary food devolved on the women of the mourning households. Thus the mourners provided the food, but everything else necessary had to be prepared by nonmourners. The chief item among the ceremonial necessities was the graveposts. The prohibition on mourners approaching the body and the grave extended to the posts, and therefore the cutting, carving, erecting on the grave, and painting of these central features of the funeral ceremonies had to be carried out by nonmourners, "asked to cut the posts" by the chief mourner. Here there was much room for influence maneuvers. A big man acting as chief mourner for a dead relative wanted the funeral to be as lavish as possible, to show his own importance. But the more important the
[554] nonmourners he selected to cut the posts for him, the more he owed them for their services. Such a request was in the nature of asking a favor, and to ask a favor was to put oneself in a subordinate position, in terms of influence. The Tiwi power orientation was so ingrained that, even when acting as chief mourner, an elder could not avoid making his requests and allocating the ceremonial tasks so as to gain ground if possible, or at least not lose any ground, in the influence and prestige race.

765 The mourning ceremonies, though prolonged for several days of con-

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as 765
ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a
sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own 535
dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major
chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out 765
again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus.
Most of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually [424]
owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to
death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial
occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special 765
to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony,
when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts
and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive
the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners'
state of *pukimani*.

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has 182
been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions 557
of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious
occasions. The connecting link was the state of *pukimani* in which death put 571
the relatives. Men in a state of *pukimani* were at a disadvantage in social and 765
political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things
for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not [577]
afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they
would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the
spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for
the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts
came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and
thus their own *pukimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to
them for many months, came to an end.

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, 881
which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females 571
there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and
elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the
status of *Marukumarni*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and
did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the
ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than
himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for
the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring
it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests.
The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials
or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems;
indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the
beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who 881
were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation 607
of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely [605]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 male of her choice and the couple soon set up housekeeping with Father
177 Gsell's blessing. This was, at least, how the missionary saw it.

584 But what were the real circumstances surrounding this "free choice" by
797 Polly? Her real father—that is, the husband to whom her mother Rita was married when Polly was born—had promised Polly to Kardu. Timalarua had "stolen" Polly from Kardu, her rightful husband. Nor is this the whole story. Rita had been "stolen" by Puti from Polly's father Turimpi. After several fights between Puti and the aging Turimpi and after Rita's complete refusal to return to Turimpi, Turimpi allowed Puti to keep Rita as his wife. Polly, however, was ultimately to go to the man to whom she had been promised, Kardu. But Puti, as the potential next father of Polly, had promised Cabbagee that as soon as Kardu died Polly was to be Cabbagee's wife. That is, when Polly chose Cabbagee as her mate she was only bypassing Kardu and taking as her husband the next normal alternative open to her.

When one considers what parts of Father Gsell's reform were significant in this case, one finds that only late consummation of marriage, monogamy, and marriage between agemates were important. A female did not actually have a "free choice" of her mate as Father Gsell had hoped and, in fact, had specified. She selected a youth to whom one of her relatives had at least tentatively promised her. Or (to put it in Hart's terms) she married—under Mission auspices—a young man who had at least a second or third mortgage on her.

159 Let us follow the case of Cabbagee's marriage further. He married Polly
177 when he was about 23; he was too young to be married in the old pattern and was, therefore, happy to get a wife and be on his way up the social ladder.
595 But when the next female promised to him (before her birth) came of age
797 and he collected her, Polly made a terrific row. She did not want any younger female around her household as a second wife and told the priest at the Mission so. He in turn deprived Cabbagee of all gifts of tobacco and food and sent him and his family to the bush to think over the matter. After a few months, Cabbagee decided that he wanted tobacco and that after all the only place he could get it was at the Mission. He and his family returned and he gave up his second wife to Father Gsell, for a payment of food.

Younger men who were getting wives from among Father Gsell's convent girls thus found that they were unwise to accept a second wife from any other source. But such a young man, married under Catholic auspices, soon
584 found that he could enhance his prestige without invoking criticism from the
557 Mission if he gathered around him his own female relatives, the younger of whom he could give away later, one at a time, to men of his choice. A married man like Cabbagee, who gave another man his sister or sister's daughter, was in a position to ask all sorts of favors from the recipient, especially gifts of food, tobacco, and trade goods, and support in politics.

177 By the end of World War II, even these newer concepts of marriage
583 agreement had begun to alter. There were many young Christian females desiring to have husbands whose fathers and brothers were not asking further wives as repayment. The fathers began to ask for new types of concessions

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

361 special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply.
592 The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general
[171] thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably
592 smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during
574 supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger
[593 household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece
602] of meat or a dish of *kwoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the
●[561 general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through
578] all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all
512 resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated
517 with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive
[562] work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the
[513] shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an
[578] argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

578 Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion
182 with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit
837 that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic
592 efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

162 [621] The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

561 [858 882] [591] Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

561 589 884 [582] [177] The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

561 884 557 [582] The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

159 554 [589] In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

of that wealthy elder, we will first summarize, in Table I, the marital conditions of the eight young men we have been discussing. 592

TABLE I
THE MALAUILA YOUNG MEN IN 1928-29

159
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584

Name	Age	Resident Old Wives (Ex-widows)	Resident Young Wives (Bestowals)	Promised Wives (Under 14)	Own Children
Tiberun	33	0	0	0	0
Banana	28	1	0	0	0
Teapot	35	0[a]	0	0	1
Gitjara	33	2	0	2	1
L. F. B.	38	1	0	1	0
Summit	36	1	0	5	0
Padimo	36	1	2	3	0[b]
Boya	42	1	0	4	0

[a] Teapot's "stolen" wife was dead.
[b] Padimo's first child, born in 1929, lived only a few days.

This table presents a summary of many of our earlier attempts at generalization. The only Malauila under the age of 43 who had a bestowed young wife old enough to live with him was Padimo, who was thus exceptionally lucky. Leaving out young Banana, five of the seven men between the ages of 30 and 42 had young females promised to them, but these were mostly babies or children who would not come into residence for several years. Six of the seven had married widows, mostly elderly widows, well in advance of the arrival of young wives and before any father had bestowed a daughter on them. Finally, and a point not made before, men of this age group rarely had any children of their own. The only entries in the last column of Table I are the irregularly born son of Teapot; Padimo's first daughter who died virtually at birth; and the 1-year-old son of Gitjara who was the last child born to his second ex-widow. Tiwi men rarely had young wives until they were around forty; they even more rarely had any children of their own before that age. Padimo's dead baby and Gitjara's 1-year-old son were exceptional; the zeros in the last column against the names of Boya (42), L. F. B. (38), and Summit (36) represent the normal situation for Tiwi men of such ages. 561 582

In terms of success (as measured by bestowals) Padimo and Summit (largely through the patronage of elders) and Boya and Gitjara (largely through their own operations) were the coming young men among the Malauila. Of the others, L. F. B. was approaching forty with few assets and no influence, and the other three, Tiberun, Banana, and Teapot, had not even got started in the influence race. 554 584

A Very Successful Elder: Ki-in-kumi

The most influential man in Malau and the head of the biggest household was Ki-in-kumi. Since he had been born around 1863-64 and had been 159 557

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

554 of Units I and II and made their wives available for redistribution. The working of the Tiwi system made this possibility unlikely. Unsuccessful junior elders could not expect to step into the shoes of successful senior elders merely by [888] outliving them; nor could one rise to power in the gerontocratic system [555] merely by living past fifty-five. What was necessary was age *plus* ability, and the time to demonstrate the ability was in one's thirties. If it was not demonstrated and recognized by then, a man could not forge ahead in his middle forties and early fifties, for by then it was too late. This fact gave a certain cyclical quality to the transfer of influence in Tiwi. The influence of successful 557 senior elders, to the extent that such an intangible thing was transferable at 587 all, tended to skip a decade and bypass the men currently in the junior elder category in favor of the men in the current "young operator" category. Since Ki-in-kumi was already quite old, there was in 1929 a great deal of political maneuvering going on in Malau and elsewhere in anticipation of his death, and it was clear that the people most likely to profit by his death and the redistribution of his twelve resident wives (one-third of all resident wives in [561] the band) were the men aged from thirty-two to forty-two such as Padimo, Boya, Summit, and Gitjara, all of whom were jockeying for position to take advantage of the death of any old man, especially such a wealthy elder as Ki-in-kumi. Some of the widows would undoubtedly remarry into other bands, but these younger Malauila, living with or near the old man's establishment, were already taking advantage of their strategic location to make some preliminary deals and marriage arrangements for the old man's widows even before his death. Neither Padimo, as Ki-in-kumi's son-in-law, nor Boya, as his nominal "son," could themselves marry any of the widows, but as resident members of his establishment and the only two men so situated, each was in an excellent spot to act as an honest broker in the disposal of Ki-in-kumi's large estate. Anybody interested in obtaining a widow or two at the death of Ki-in-kumi was well advised to have a few quiet words with either Padimo or Boya well ahead of time. Both of them had wives who lived and worked every day alongside Ki-in-kumi's womenfolk and thus they each had ideal communication systems to the women's side of the band. This was why they had held off setting up their own separate establishments though they were both married men. Neither were "heirs" of Ki-in-kumi in any strict Western use of that word, but it was obvious that it was their careers that would be promoted and their spheres of influence that would be enhanced by the death of Ki-in-kumi. The junior elders, all approaching or past the age of fifty with only small establishments and small spheres of influence, were being bypassed in the transfer of the old man's assets.

Every Tiwi anxious to obtain a Ki-in-kumi widow recognized the strategic positions of Padimo and Boya; the problem was to decide which broker to retain, since the positions of the two men in relation to Ki-in-kumi were so different. For the past four or five years Padimo had been the right-hand man and trusted lieutenant and undoubtedly it was he upon whom Ki-in-kumi was relying to carry out his own wishes about the distribution of his widows. We said earlier that old men found it difficult to control the remarriage of their

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

557 would become involved or make any soundings among the widows unless there
587 was something in it for them. Hence the client had to find out whether a promise of general goodwill and friendship was all that Boya (or Padimo) would ask in return for his services or whether the price would be much
[584] higher—perhaps as high as the bestowal of the client's next baby daughter. It was in such ways that widow-remarriage arrangements and infant bestowals were intertwined; a much-delayed bestowal to an apparently unrelated individual would be the ultimate pay-off to the broker or agent who had engineered a widow remarriage for the bestower years before.

[561] This role of agent in the disposal of a dead man's widows was a type of operation best suited to men in the first stages of their own married lives —that is, to men in their middle thirties or very early forties who had perhaps married their first or second widows and who had as yet no young wives of their own in residence. Having no young wives to guard, they were able to get around easily on diplomatic missions and they had their own listening posts inside the world of women in the person of their own mothers (if still alive) and in the elderly widows whom they themselves had married. The ambitious young brokers were tipped off by their mothers and elderly wives as to how the young wives wished to be distributed and what the competing young brokers were trying to arrange. Thus when a wealthy old man like Ki-in-kumi died, the redistribution of his wives through remarriage was a matter that had been decided beforehand by an extraordinary complex tangle of semisecret arrangements and deals and promises, but the people most influential in arranging the redistribution were the young brokers who usually got few, if any, of the young widows for themselves but who collected their rewards in reputation, influence, alliances, and future bestowals from the men for whom they had acted as agents.

[768] Thus the death of Ki-in-kumi or of any other old man with many wives tended to disperse the wives all over the tribe, with only one or two, or at most three, going to any one new husband. A large estate was almost always fragmented by the death of the old man who had built it up, and any one of his contemporaries was able to take over only a very small fraction of it at best. The levirate and sororate principles, though present, worked very feebly. The men who benefited most—not immediately, but eventually—were the young operators.[1] In such a manner Padimo and Boya were sure to be the long-term beneficiaries of Ki-in-kumi's death though neither of them could remarry any of his widows. The real heirs of the wealthy old men of sixty and over were the young men who happened to be between thirty-two and forty-
554 two when those old men got near to death. The men between forty-five and
557 fifty-five whose brokerage business ten years earlier had not been very skillfully
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[1] At least some of the so-called "stolen" or disputed wives were widows who had insisted on marrying the younger agent instead of the older client, which put the young broker in the embarrassing position of saying to his client, "I cannot make delivery of the widow I acquired on your account; she insists on marrying me instead." Such an incident did not do his agency business much good but tended rather to frighten off clients.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

handled, or who happened to be at the brokering age when no big households were being liquidated, found themselves in the position that Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai occupied in 1928-29. We know they had not been successful dealers in their thirties because we found them around the age of fifty with only one resident wife each and relatively few bestowals in prospect. Their earlier dealings in widows had not laid the right foundations for successful careers as elders. Even before he was forty, Padimo had five or six bestowed wives either in residence or in prospect, and Boya, not much over forty, had several already promised. The death of Ki-in-kumi in the near future would bring both of them more reputation and ultimately more bestowals in return for their skill (if they showed it) in the disposition of the estate. The inferiority of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai to these younger men in the marriage and influence struggle was already apparent and would be even more accentuated by Ki-in-kumi's death. 554 557 587

The Politics of Bestowal

The above discussion of how younger men were indirectly benefited by the deaths or impending deaths of wealthy older men does not pretend to give an exhaustive list of all the considerations that went into the reallocation of a dead man's widows. We built our analysis around those factors which were paramount in the case of Ki-in-kumi's household. Other cases were different to the extent that there were real adult sons involved in them rather than a nominal "son" like Boya, or because in them the old man had not chosen a clear-cut executor as Ki-in-kumi had chosen Padimo, or because an old man had surviving brothers close to him in age and alliance who would emphasize the levirate principle and seek to have it followed in the relocation of their dead brother's widows. The few points we are seeking to emphasize among the many that might be emphasized in any exhaustive treatment of Tiwi widow remarriage are: 1) that widow remarriage was a very flexible area in which the ultimate disposition of the widows was decided by the manipulations and wishes of a wide range of individuals including both relatives and nonrelatives. The dead man himself; the fathers of the wives, if still alive; the brothers of the widows, if adults; the widows themselves, if strong minded; the executors of the dead man, if clearly nominated; and the numerous dealers and brokers on behalf of remote clients or even on their own account—all tried to make their own wishes prevail. The result was that no two cases were ever alike, but on balance 2) it was younger men rather than older men who were most likely to enhance their reputations and increase their assets in the long run as the results of these widow redeals, even though in the short run it was the older men who remarried most of the widows, especially the younger widows. 587 561

We have briefly discussed what we have labeled the politics of widow remarriage before discussing the politics of infant bestowal, although logically it might appear that infant bestowal should be taken up first. We have ful- 584 163

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

with many free daughters were usually men well over fifty. "Comers" were 557
men in their thirties. In so choosing the "comers," the old and wealthy men 571
reached right over the junior elders and the forty-year-old group down to the 584
ranks of the young operators. In this way we may say that the real power [886]
group, the successful old gerontocrats, chose their own successors. They chose young men twenty or more years younger than themselves (as Ki-in-kumi chose Padimo) because men at such an age were not rivals or competitors. A man so chosen in his thirties could be already powerful and fairly wealthy by his middle forties (like Tomitari in 1928) and very wealthy in his fifties. Such men went up fast because of their selection by the group in power. Those not so chosen had to go up the hard way by accumulating what position and influence they could by manipulations of the few available females not controlled by the wealthy old men. The "haves" left a small minority of women available to the "have-not" men to keep them quiet, but the great majority of females were concentrated in the hands of a few old men and these old men chose their own successors. Thus the Tiwi system actually deserves to be called 561
a primitive oligarchy as much as it deserves to be called a gerontocracy. It was 887
run by a few old men who ruled it not so much because they were old but because as young men they had been clever and then had lived long enough to reap the rewards of their cleverness. These rewards made up Tiwi wealth—many wives, much leisure, many daughters to bestow, many satellites and henchmen, and much power and influence over other people and tribal affairs.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

on whom, but they also brooded long and suspiciously upon who had supported whom and why, either verbally or with spear in hand. In addition, all the incidents of the battle, in minute detail, were relayed to the rest of the tribe who had not been present, and many of these absentees would discover, among the proceedings, things they did not like or suspicious-looking actions on the part of some of their competitors or putative friends. These they would weave into their own strategies and store up for future use. An elder frequently found some basis for a new grievance against somebody in the events of a battle at which he had not even been present. 628 578

Finally, through all these disputes and hostile actions between senior men ran their united suspicion of bachelors. The only "battle" in two years between large groups drawn from distinct bands that had a clear-cut and definite final act was one fought in Rangu in late 1928. On that occasion, after disputing and fighting among themselves from early morning until mid-afternoon, all the old men present from both war parties gradually channeled all their anger toward one unfortunate young Mandiimbula bachelor whom they finally accused of going around from band to band creating misunderstandings between various elders. Several elders on both sides testified publicly that their mistrust of each other had started shortly after the bachelor in question had begun hanging around their households; whereupon the senior warriors of the two opposing armies had no difficulty in deciding that most of their suspicions of each other "were all his fault," and with great unanimity ganged up on the bachelor and quickly clubbed him into unconsciousness for being a troublemaker and a suspicion spreader. In the midst of battle the gerontocracy had reasserted its solidarity by finding a bachelor scapegoat upon whom to unload all their mutual suspicions and aggressions. 54 578 628

Religious Activities

If by religious activities we mean those beliefs and practices which pertain to unseen or supernatural forces, including rituals whose performance somehow affects those forces, then Tiwi religion readily crystallized around three focal points. These were: 1) their elaborate system of day-to-day taboos; 2) the elaborate set of beliefs and rituals pertaining to death; and 3) their complicated initiation ceremonies for young men. Add to these their myths and folklore about creation and their tribal past, and the whole of Tiwi religion has been covered. Space permits only brief mention of these three focal points. 771

TABOO In earlier chapters we have pointed out several aspects of life in which Tiwi culture diverged sharply from what anthropologists have come to regard as Australian mainland norms and we have suggested that these differences from the mainland are most reasonably to be attributed to either Tiwi isolation or favorable food supply, or some combination of both factors. In their religious life this same line of explanation continues to have validity. To those familiar with the cultures of Australian tribes, perhaps 171 789

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

771 sister's son being initiated, the attitude of a Tiwi toward the whole *pukimani*
784 state was essentially a passive attitude. *Pukimani* behavior was something one accepted and conformed to when required; it was in no way an active attempt to change nature, people, food, gods, spirits, or anything else in the universe. [181] It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that since their *pukimani* system offered them no handle by which to seek actively to alter the universe in which they lived, the Tiwi found that universe to their liking as it was. Unlike the tribes of central Australia who lavished a lot of thought upon magical methods of improving the food supply or the rainfall, the Tiwi believed and acted on the belief that as long as they observed their *pukimani* taboos, the food would continue to be as abundant and the rains as regular as they had always been. [171] The central Australians, by seeking to coerce nature through magic, suggest that they found nature unsatisfactory; the Tiwi, by relying upon passive taboo-observance alone, suggest rather that their relationship to nature was an acceptable equilibrium that they wanted to preserve, not change. And if everybody observed his *pukimani* taboos when required, that equilibrium would remain undisturbed. Hence the antisocial man in Tiwi was not the maker of individual magic (he was unknown, anyway) but the nonobserver of taboo. By his nonobservance he threatened to upset the normally satisfactory equilib-
[626] rium between man and nature. For a senior Tiwi male to be charged publicly with breaking *pukimani* rules was a disgrace and a blow to his prestige and his position in public opinion. His behavior was possibly a sin against the spirits but it was certainly a shame in the eyes of his fellows. *Pukimani* observance was thus a matter of respectability to a much greater degree than it was a matter of pleasing the spirits.

765 DEATH As was mentioned above, death is the natural phenomenon around which the Tiwi had woven their most elaborate web of ritual. The most frequent and most important Tiwi ceremonies were the mourning ceremonies, [554] and they came in three sizes—small, medium, and large—depending on the [561] age, sex, and importance of the dead person. The mourning ceremonies which 562 drew the crowds were not held until some time after the death and burial. 764 All bodies of dead persons were buried within twenty-four hours of their death by digging a hole near the camp where the death had occurred and placing the body, wrapped in bark, in it. Near most well-used camping spots there was already a graveyard marked by old graveposts, and the latest corpse was buried there or near there. Seldom was the body carried any distance for burial. If a person died even less than a mile from an old burial ground, there was little inclination to carry the body that far. He would be buried, instead, within perhaps a hundred yards of where he died. This had certain awkward repercussions for social organization, since occasionally a person died while away from his home district and, being buried where he died, his ceremonies were held and his posts erected in a district in which his immediate family [591] did not live. Young men often used this to validate a change of residence, giving as their reason for living in a band territory in which they had not grown up, the location there of their father's graveposts.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to marry the boy's sisters, an easily met requirement since girls were "married" so much earlier than their brothers. Very senior and successful men did not bother as a rule with initiation sponsorship because it took too much of their valuable time. Hence in practice, most boys at the *Marukumarni* age were taken in hand by a group of men around 40 years of age who were at least betrothed to, if not already married to, the boys' sisters. Such men justified or rationalized their actions by stating that, as the husbands of the boy's sisters, they wanted their little brother-in-law to be made into a man in proper form. In fact, they were usually given the job by the boy's father, who, having bestowed daughters upon them, regarded it as a legitimate request to make of them. It was the duty of male cross-cousins to initiate their wives' little brothers, but in true Tiwi style the father had to request them to do it, and they counted it in their tallies of what they owed him and what he owed them.

Though the father instigated and stage managed the whole affair, he and his household were always thunderstruck when the cross-cousins—armed to the teeth and painted like a war party—arrived at his camp one evening and proceeded to carry off forcibly the yelling 14-year-old.[6] He had to be dragged literally from the bosom of his family, with his mother screaming and trying to hide him and the father pretending to resist the invaders of his household. From then on, until the final stage (*Mikingula*) at age 24-26, the boy was completely under the authority of the men who carried him off. During these approximately ten to twelve years, he spent much of the time alone with them in the bush where the group lived a monastic existence, as a small band of isolates, speaking to no one (especially not to females) and obtaining their own food. During these phases the tutors guarded the boy as if he were literally a prisoner and taught him all the things—chiefly ritual matters—that grown men should know. At intervals the youth was allowed to go home, on week-end leaves so to speak, but when at home he had to observe all the silences, the modest demeanor, the taboos and the austerities of the isolated life. In monastic language, he was under a strict rule of obedience to his tutors.

Breaking in on the long years of austerity, spent either in seclusion in the bush or in *pukimani* at home, were periodic collective ceremonies when the youth was ritually advanced from one stage of initiation to the next.[7] These were public ceremonies, witnessed by large crowds, and the more important of such transition ceremonies took place in January and February when the *kolema* yams were ripe. At these ceremonies the youths were handled in batches or classes, all the boys of one grade being ritually advanced to the next grade, and the top grade or final class being formally graduated as fully initiated men. The crucial grade—when the pubic hairs were forcibly pulled out and he was at last allowed to talk back a little to his tutors—was usually reached by a youth somewhere between his eighteenth and twentieth years, but

[6] See Hart 1955 for some further details of the tearing away of the boy from the bosom of his family.

[7] A full list of initiation grade names and their duration in years is given in Hart 1951.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he still had six years to go after that, not finishing the final grade of *Mikingula* until somewhere past the age of 24 or 25.

In contrast with the mainland initiation ceremonies, we think the most interesting point about Tiwi initiation resides not in the formal ceremonies but in the removal from the food-production units, for long periods of the year, of all the young males between the ages of 14 and 25. It is true that they did not spend *all* their time in seclusion and that after the age of twenty they remained mostly in their household camps, where they contributed to the household food production. Nonetheless, it remains clear that only a very well-off tribe could afford to allow so much time off from food production to all its young hunters. Tiwi fathers, it would seem, in arranging for the initiation of their sons to begin just when they were becoming productive hunters, were willing to sacrifice that productivity for less tangible advantages. The youths, secluded and guarded in the bush while getting an education, were not only out of the work force but were also out of the predatory-bachelor force. A Tiwi elder made sacrifices to "send his sons to college" but he breathed easier to know that the sons of the other elders were all there too.

All males without exception had to go through the full initiation cycle, and from the time of their first forcible seizure at the age of 14-15 to their final graduation at 24-26, they were in a state of *pukimani* and their personal names were strictly taboo to everybody in the tribe. Each youth was referred to only by his grade name, *Marukumarni* for the first year, *Mikingula* for the last four years, and so on. And here we return finally to a point which was mentioned much earlier—namely, the complete unimportance in tribal eyes of all males below the age of twenty-five. Until they had completed the final stage of initiation, Tiwi males were still boys; they did not even have names. Occasionally, when collecting genealogies and coming upon a reference to a young man, the innocent anthropologist would ask, "Is he married?" In tones of the deepest contempt the informant would reply, "That kid, how could he be married? He's still *Mikingula*." Though *Mikingula* was the stage typically reached by a man at about 20-21 and lasted for the next four years, to the Tiwi it was still a stage in the life of a boy. Not until he had finished as *Mikingula* could he step out into the world and life of men. How he spent the years immediately after finishing initiation decided how soon some senior man would think sufficiently highly of him to aid him in acquiring his first ancient widow.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

circle, the women and children looking on. The designs radiating from the central circle represent a forest of eucalyptus trees. 532x 881

FIG. 11. *The Kulama Ceremony*
The Ningauis Performing the Second Kulama Ceremony.

KULAMA INITIATION

561 881

Grades of Kulama initiates		*Period of initiation*
Marukumuni Marukumuninga	Male Female	From approximately April until next Kulama
Kilipaniati Kilipaniatinga	Male Female	From Kulama, mid-March until the fruiting of the cycad, about mid-July
Wadjeniati Wadjeniatinga	Male Female	From mid-July until the eating of the edible yam, at the next Kulama

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

561
881

Grades of Kulama initiates		Period of initiation
Mikinatrina	Male	2 years
Mikinatrininga	Female	
Mikintara	Male	From one kulama until the next
Mikintaringa	Female	
Mikiatarima	Male	From one kulama until the next
Mikiatarimingа	Female	
Mikingula	Male	Fully initiated for life
Mikingulinga	Female	

2. THE PRELIMINARY RITUALS OF THE KULAMA

881 (1) *The Capture of the Marukumuni Initiate*

According to my informants, any tribesman chosen for initiation, must be a mature man, usually married and with children. In fact, all the men pointed out to me as being suitable candidates were thirty years of age or older.[18]

The first time there is a gathering of people after a *kulama* ceremony, such as at a burial, or an *ilania*,[19] the fully initiated *kulama* men, the *Mikingulas*, ask the permission of the leader of the *kulama*, the *Naripikilitipi*, to capture any man or woman, who is suitable for the first stage of initiation, that of the *Marukumuni*.[20] In preparation for this, the *Mikingulas* have already mixed a quantity of yellow ochre.

At a given signal, one of the *Mikingulas*, who has been standing unobtrusively near, suddenly throws his arms around the chosen initiate. The captive struggles to release himself, protesting against being initiated into the *kulama*. But a number of the *Mikingulas* rush to their companion's aid, lay the struggling initiate on the ground, paint a design, in yellow, on his upper arms and body (Pl. 42A), and put the red tail feathers of a black cockatoo in his hair. Meanwhile, other initiated men are walking around the group

[302] [301]

[18] The age of initiation has been raised since Spencer and Fry saw the *kulama* in the early days of the century. Spencer (1928, p. 665) refers to young boys, while Reuben Cooper, whom I knew in 1920 as a young man about twenty, would have only been about thirteen years of age when Fry saw him as a *Kilipaniati*.

[178] [114]

[19] A preliminary ceremony for the burial rituals.

[20] I do not know who captures the female initiate, the *Marakumuninga*.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 expression as *int'abominaiiya* (=your wife) is forbidden, nor for example
843 can one of the woman's brothers enquire the whereabouts of his sister from the woman's husband. There is no such prohibition, however, against the use of her name nor against references to her by the rest of the tribe provided always the husband is not within hearing.

551 None of the names of a person passing through any stage of initiation
561 can be used by anyone at all. Such a person is always alluded to or
881 addressed as *Watyinyirti* or *Mikinyirtiya* or whatever degree of initiation he or she has reached. As the normal initiation ceremonies are carried out continuously from the age of seventeen to the age of about twenty-six for a man and from ten to nineteen for a girl, for those periods of their lives personal names are seldom used.

I propose to call these names "initiation-grade names," since they are applied to an individual according to the grade of initiation he has reached. A full list of them is as follows :—

Initiation-Grade Names (Male).

Average Age.		Duration of Grade.	
15-17	..	1 year	*Maru-kumarni*
15-17	..	6 months	*Kilipirni-ati*
16-18	..	6 months	*Watyinyirti*
18-20	..	2 years	*Mikin yirtiya*
19-21	..	1 year	*Mikin djira*
20-22	..	1 year	*Mikadjirima*
24-26	..	4 years	*Mikin gula*

Initiation-Grade Names (Female)[8].

10-12	..	1 year	*Maru-kumarniya*
15-17	..	6 months	*Kilipirni-atiya*
11-13	..	6 months	*Watyinyirtiya*
13-15	..	2 years	*Mikin yirtiyiya*
14-16	..	1 year	*Mikin djiriya*
15-17	..	1 year	*Mikadjiriniya*
19-21	..	4 years	*Mikin guliya*

551 In addition to these initiation-grade names there is also a series of
561 names which I propose to call "age-grade names." These are more

[8] In actual practice the female names are not nearly as commonly used as the male.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

strictly descriptive rather than terms of address, yet quite frequently they are used in both ways. They refer to the state of life the person has reached and are often used as substitute names during the period in which an individual is nameless on account of his name being tabu. Names such as baby, young man, etc., are of course found in every language; it is their occasional use as terms of address that makes them interesting among the Tiwi, and also the fact that Spencer has confused them with the initiation-grade names. These names are :—

Age-Grade Names (Male).

Male baby	(Birth to about 11)	*Kiritini*
Boy approaching puberty	(12-14)	*Mala-kuniṇa*
Uninitiated boy or young man		*Tatiṇ-ati*
Young man during initiation		(Initiation Grade Term)
Initiated man		*Mikingula*
Old man	(over 60)	*Irula or Palini*

Age-Grade Names (Female).

Female baby	(Birth to about 6)	*Kiritiṇa*
Girl approaching puberty	(7 to 11)	*Aliiṇa*
Girl beginning to menstruate	(12-14)	*Muru-kibura*
Girl at first pregnancy		*Miriṇaladja*
Shortly before birth of child		*Poporṇanti*
Mother of male child		*Ari-aui*
Mother of female child		*Pirnambili*
Mother of several children		*Nurau-rika*
Old women with children		*Pirimariṇa*
Barren woman		*Timiriṇa*

If these two lists are compared with Spencer,[4] it will be found that all the names which he gives as "status terms" are included in one or other of my two lists with the exception of "Gunmurdi" which Spencer gives as "very old man," and which I was quite unable to trace at all. I have adopted the division into age-grade names and initiation-grade names and rejected "status terms" altogether as the two groups of names are quite distinct, one depending on age, the other on advancement in initiation.

[4] *Native Tribes of Northern Australia*, 1914, p. 84.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

usually wives and children only, but this life lived in an isolated household is broken in upon at intervals by short interludes of the "collective life," when members of numbers of households gather together for ceremonies, legal proceedings, fights and initiations. If we may call these two types of living the public life and the private life of the adult male Australian, then we may say that Antonio was very happy in private life and uncomfortable in public life. The two activities which made him happiest were playing with his children and hunting with his dogs. When left alone by society to do these two things Antonio was a kindly, patient, gentle, good-natured and relaxed man, but in all social relations with other adult men he was nervous and uncertain of himself. One might hazard the opinion that it was because children and dogs made no great demands upon him that he was happy and at ease with them, but people he found very trying since they were always expecting him to "take a stand" or to make a decision and this was something he had no talent for, something which did not "come naturally" to him, and something which gave him no satisfaction. Turimpi's mantle had fallen on a man who just wanted the world to let him alone, who preferred his home, his family and his dogs to any rewards which public life could give him.

159 [571]

MARIANO

Mariano was first encountered in Port Darwin before the writer had got to the Tiwi. Finding me waiting for transportation to the islands, Mariano offered to come with me and act as my chief interpreter and informant. As he appeared a very intelligent and mature member of the tribe, I promptly hired him. Or so I thought at the time. Events were to prove that what had happened was that Mariano had appropriated me. For Mariano was (in his own opinion, at least) the only possible person fit to escort and advise a white man visiting the Tiwi. He had created something of a monopoly in the job of white man's escort and adviser. The beginning of this not unusual native profession went back, in his case, to the foundation of the Mission station. When the missionaries arrived in 1911 and began to build their mission houses Mariano became almost immediately the principal go-between of Mission and natives. As far as the situation of 1911 can now be reconstructed the factors operating to select Mariano for this position were merely suitability of social status, availability and willingness to undertake it. As already mentioned, the Mission was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island. This was Tiklauila territory and at that time the dominant family among the Tiklauila was that of Turimpi. Of Turimpi's sons, Antonio, the eldest, was about 28 or 29, Mariano was about 25 and Louis, the third son, was a youth not yet 20. Antonio's role as eldest son was already fixed, Mariano's, as second son, was still flexible. Antonio was personally unaggressive except when forced into taking a strong stand, Mariano (we may speculate) was already more forceful and more prone to draw attention to himself by aggressive behavior.[8] Mariano was just ready in 1911 to emerge from the age group of young men who should, according to Tiwi ideas, be seen and not heard into the age group of "junior adult men" who

123 159 [115] 159 [797] [561]

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 have some slight voice in tribal affairs. Antonio had already emerged into this latter group and therefore was already committed to the old way of things to [561] an extent that Mariano was not. This line of reasoning will explain at least why Mariano was chosen rather than Antonio. Louis, on the other hand, was still a boy indistinguishable among the group of 18 year olds.

159 554 797 Students of social organization in small societies are aware that in such societies the status requirements for certain positions are frequently such that often only a very few individuals, sometimes only one individual, are actually available to fill the positions. A similar narrow range of potential holders also pertains, it would seem, to statuses not known to the native culture but thrown up, as it were, by the demands of the culture-contact situation, as in the present case by the arrival of the Mission. What the missionaries needed among the natives was a spokesman for them (a) who had some influence, and influence in Tiwi is a combination of age, family prestige and personal forcefulness; (b) who was a local man in the district in which the Mission was built; (c) who was young enough to be flexible in his actions and thinking and therefore capable of being influenced by them; (d) who was not yet so committed to tribal mores (plural wives, strict observance of taboos, etc.) that once trusted by the Mission and identified in the native mind as a Mission-supporter he would be likely to embarrass the Mission by backsliding; and (e) who was willing to take on the job. They found their man in Mariano. A careful review of all the other possible candidates as they existed in 1911 fails to reveal any other man who had so many of the above desiderata. Dooley had many, but was a person of no family, certainly not a son of Turimpi.

In the early days of the Mission Mariano thus became its main spokesman among the tribe and the most trusted interpreter for and adviser of the priests. By 1928 he to some extent still occupied this position. But by then the Mission had had seventeen years in which to build up wider contacts and find other spokesmen, and its needs were no longer the same needs as in its pioneer days. Moreover, not only had the Mission matured in those seventeen years but so had Mariano. At the age of 42 or so, he was now a man of influence and prestige in the tribe but, like many better-known leaders of men in other societies, he was inclined toward an aggressive, bumptious self-importance and an exaggerated belief in his own indispensability. He had therefore become rather a trial to the missionaries (and to all the other white men to whom he had attached himself). The result was a continued series of quarrels between him and the Mission, which usually ended with Mariano, in a rage, storming off either to the bush or Port Darwin. In Port Darwin he characteristically worked for only the more important whites, senior government officials or at the hospital, until his anger had cooled sufficiently for him to return, self-contained, dignified, completely humorless and rather pompous, to ascertain whether the missionaries realized how foolish they had been to quarrel with him. If they had not, then he simply quit the Mission and waited for the arrival of some white visitor who needed a native sponsor. He thus acquired a greater knowledge of white ways than most of the Tiwi and as a result no doubt of his op-

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 O120 Tiwi O120

159 admitted the charge along the age-old line of "the woman tempted me," Louis always faced his accusers silently, sullenly, almost disinterestedly. He never excused himself, never alibied. On the other hand he never gloried in or boasted of his sexual exploits, he merely gave the impression that he was completely disinterested in the whole procedure of argument and punishment and wanted to get it over with as quickly as possible. It was very evident that, despite his sexual reputation, he was not invested with any glamour nor did he excite any hero-worship on the part of the younger men. The role of Don Juan [555] in some cultures can presumably be a role that leads to a successful seducer's [837] being envied and even to some extent hero-worshipped by the young bloods, but this seems quite absent as a cultural possibility in Tiwi values. Successful young seducers never act publicly as if they were proud of themselves nor in any way show off or assume a "look how clever I am" manner. Absence of such behavior was very noticeable in others besides Louis, and certainly he never acted in such a way, despite his obvious suitability for such a role were it culturally available.

In camp and during the periods of the collective life he was silent, gloomy and dour, frequently irritable, unfriendly and hostile to everybody. He was too young, in Tiwi terms, to rate a wife, but the policy of the Mission to dis- [582] courage plural marriages had as its positive correlate the promotion of mar- [797] riages for the wifeless young men and Louis was one of those who had obtained a wife through Mission manipulations. She died after a beating which Louis in one of his frequent fits of anger had administered to her, and while the natives never said so openly, they clearly agreed with the Mission's charges that Louis had murdered his wife. Thus accused to his face by the Mission, Louis shrugged his shoulders in his normal, indifferent way. In council he seldom spoke and what he said carried no weight. This, of course, may well have been due to his age as in Tiwi terms Louis at 31 or 32 was still a young man who [561] should keep silent in the presence of his seniors. But it was very noticeable that even in the quick informal conferences between members of a party on the march involving such petty decisions as whether to camp at this waterhole or try and make the next one before nightfall, or in similar minor decision-making, Louis took no part. He listened silently to the debate, was very quick to foresee correctly what the decision was going to be as was evidenced by his starting off again by himself before the main party had realized where the consensus lay, but he apparently felt no urge to express aloud his own views on the issue. His actions showed that in his private analysis of the situation he was way ahead of most of the debaters but apparently his personal satisfactions came from correct anticipation of majority decision rather than from any desire to participate himself in decision-making. The same ability to listen, analyze what he heard, to act upon his own analysis but never to intervene actively was very noticeable in Louis' reaction to the accusations against him by the outraged husbands. An outraged husband usually begins his charges late at night when the camps are quiet. At such a time he begins to yell his accusations through the darkness at the top of his voice, naming the seducer,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 Tip, and every white man who came in contact with him immediately shortened his name to the obvious diminutive form, was a person whose whole life was devoted to laughter. No English word fits him so well as the word "gay." This gaiety was not clownishness or buffoonery nor did it contain any element of malice or desire to hurt others; it was simply an enormous sense of fun. The other four brothers were in their different ways rather taut and tense personalities, or at least three were and Antonio was when away from home. Tip alone of the five brothers was always completely relaxed and unselfconscious. He was always looking on the bright side, always trying to banish tension and worry with a quip or a wisecrack, always making a joke. His favorite sentence opening was "perhaps." On one occasion a camp I was in
159 was badly scared by a ghost appearing in the middle of the night in the midst
522 of the camp fires. Everybody, anthropologist included, huddled around their
[715] fires, not daring to look and yet unable to abstain from furtive peeps. Finally the apparition seemed to have gone and there were low whispers from various firesides of, "Has it gone?—I think it's gone—it doesn't seem to be there now." "Perhaps it's gone to Port Darwin to see a movie," said Tip, loudly, and immediately the tension was broken and the whole camp shouted with laughter. On another occasion a group of natives who were escorting an elderly and venerable French priest through the bush, were chased by a herd of wild buffalo[8] and forced to take refuge in the nearby trees. The buffalo pawed and snorted under the trees and a discussion took place as to how to frighten them away. Shouting, swearing and throwing sticks failed to frighten them off. "Perhaps, Father," said Tip, convulsed with laughter at the whole proceeding and addressing the priest, "perhaps they would go away if you cursed at them in the Church language [i.e., Latin]."

159 There are several important things to notice about Tip's humor. One is
522 that much of the time he used it as a means of initiating action, as in the ghost
561 incident where he took the lead over several senior men in dissolving the tension, or in the Warner incident,[9] where the initiating suggestion to play a very old and hackneyed joke came from him. In a culture that looked with disfavor on young men speaking out of turn, Tip was always speaking out of turn, but because such speaking was always in a joking form, few if any natives recognized it as being out of turn. From certain points of view we might say that Tip had found, through his gaiety, a tool which he used to make his presence felt without exciting social disapproval because of his lack of age. But that statement makes the whole matter sound far too conscious and de-
159 liberate. Again we face a constantly recurring problem—how much of "personality" is status-dictated and how much "natural"? Will increasing years and dignity cause Tip to cease laughing at life and its problems? There seem at least two grounds for strongly doubting it. One is the admittedly subjective but strongly held view that Tip didn't laugh and joke and come out with his incongruous "perhaps" to achieve effect or as a means to the end of social recognition, but because he genuinely and naturally enjoyed his own humor. Too many nights have I dozed off to sleep listening to Tip gurgling with sup-

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 O120 Tiwi O120

pressed laughter on the other side of the fire as he recalled to himself the amusing incidents of the day. Even when alone with his thoughts he was still laughing. This suggests that Tip's gaiety was "natural" rather than contrived for effect, and there is support for the suggestion in the fact that Tip was regarded as a poor hunter, because, as one critic put it, "He doesn't concentrate on killing the kangaroo but plays jokes on the kangaroo and makes a game out of hunting." Another indication that when alone he behaved in the same irresponsible manner that he exhibited in public. 159

The second ground that suggests that fun-loving and gaiety are not incompatible with increasing age and tribal status is the fact that there were many old and venerable Tiwi who loved fun and laughter just as Tipperary did. One such was Tu'untalumi, one of the most elderly of the Tiklauila, a man of weight, dignity and poise. He was a highly respected person, an expert in ceremonial performances and a rigid traditionalist in all things. But despite his age and dignity this man was as given to fun and laughter as Tip was. The main difference was that Tip's laughter was loud, boisterous and prankish; Tu'untalumi's jokes and quips were delivered in low, gentle tones and his laughter was dignified and restrained. But within the limitations imposed by his status he got as much fun and extracted as much humor out of life as Tip, illustrating the point that age and seniority in Tiwi do not at all necessarily mean sourness and lack of humor. Although the two were not related Tipperary played up to the old man and courted and valued his approval while Tu'untalumi clearly liked having Tip around him. They were kindred souls but separated by more than forty years of age. 157 522 561 159 522 572

As is probably the case in most cultures, so among the Tiwi—the genuinely gay person is popular. Tipperary though the next to youngest of Turimpi's sons was the one with most friends. Perhaps significantly, his friends were among both his seniors and juniors, but not among his brothers. Antonio was the only brother who sought Tip's company and this can be accounted for either by the fact that Antonio, when not harassed by his status, was an easy-going, friendly and none too intelligent man who laughed readily even when none too sure of what the joke was, or that he found Tip's company a relaxation from the cares of state. Of the other brothers, the self-righteous and puritanical Mariano considered Tip frivolous and deplored (or was jealous of) the tendency of white men to become fond of him. Louis actively disliked Tip perhaps because his love affairs were an obvious target for some of Tip's better quips. "Perhaps he is going into the bush to take a nap" was one of his comments when he saw Louis disappearing among the trees. With his full brother Bob, Tip had few close ties, perhaps because Bob spent much of his time in Darwin, but even more likely, one suspects, because Bob, an indefinite and colorless youngster, shrank from attracting public notice, whereas Tip was always drawing attention to himself, with the result that Bob to save himself embarrassment avoided his company. 159 593

Outside his siblings, Tipperary's gaiety earned him the liking and companionship of the younger men and made him a favorite younger man of some 159 522 572

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

garded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker. The tribe thought of him in much the same way, the missionaries and anthropologist agreed with the estimate. Bob was essentially a "good boy." He never did anything wrong, never answered back, never spoke out of turn, never stepped out of line, never deviated from the behavior expected of him. He was, of course, too young in Tiwi categories to have any influence or importance. But it is hard to see how age could turn him into anything more positive than he was at 28, at which age he invited the comment that he had very little personality. About all that could be said is that he was a born follower and always tried to do the right thing, the right thing consisting in conforming to the expectations of whatever group he happened to be with at the moment. When with the tribe Bob did what the elders told him to do. If they disagreed among themselves, Bob waited until the majority decision was clear and then added his voice to the chorus of agreement. The same faithfulness which caused his white employers to label Bob "a good boy" caused the tribal elders to regard him as among the sounder of the young men, though they deplored his tendency to spend so much time in Darwin. But even on his trips to Darwin Bob did not depart too much from the norms for men of his age who had been children when the Mission came and who therefore constituted a post-white generation. He did not stay more than three or four months at a time in Darwin, he returned for all the steps of his initiation ceremonies, he observed his food and other taboos even when in Darwin, and during his sojourns there he never caused scandal back-home by getting into the slightest "trouble." He went to Darwin when the tribe could raise no valid objection to his going, he returned whenever his absence led to criticism. Bob was a barometer of which line offered the least resistance at any given time. His chief motivation seemed to be to escape public attention, to always be where he would attract the least notice.

The only occasion I ever saw Bob forced to emerge from the background and take the center of the stage was on one occasion when he returned from Darwin and was told by the local gossips that his wife had been unfaithful to him during his absence. The man involved was—not surprisingly—his brother Louis. This really put Bob on the spot. In pre-white days a youngster like Bob would not have had a wife, and therefore the situation of a man of Bob's tender years calling an older man to account for seducing his wife could not have arisen. The traditional pattern in seduction cases is for the husband, necessarily an older man, to accuse the alleged seducer, necessarily a young man and therefore a bachelor and a person of no importance, and demand vengeance on him. The accuser is, therefore, traditionally a man of weight and prestige and dignity, and carries on his case against the seducer with style and authority. The accused on the other hand, being young and a person of no importance, stands abashed, cowed and silent, looking guilty while the outranged husband showers him with tirades of abuse, followed finally by spears or throwing-sticks. In the case of Bob versus Louis the casting of these traditional roles was all wrong. Bob, overcome with embarrassment, did his best

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 to give an imitation of an angry and indignant elder telling off an impertinent
177 "young punk,"[11] but even to the Tiwi, the spectacle of the subservient and
183 retiring Bob trying to overawe and browbeat the formidable and completely
561 self-reliant Louis was such a perversion of the traditional pattern that it bor-
684 dered on the farcical. As soon as it was over and the conventions were satisfied, Bob, pale and shaken by the unwonted initiative and aggressiveness he had been forced to display, hurried back to the oblivion of Darwin where no such demands were made on a good boy, and, presumably to ensure that he would not be forced to go through such an ordeal again, took the rather unusual step of taking his wife along with him this time.

157 The above brief sketches convey perhaps some idea of the variation in personalities of the five brothers. Obviously no definite conclusions can be drawn from material of this sort. It is merely suggestive of possibilities for theory. What it seems to suggest is, however, at variance with the idea that personality is substantially uniform in the simpler societies. No attempt has been made in this paper to explore the full gamut of personal differences among the Tiwi. By adding half a dozen other individuals (including such as Tu'untalumi and Dooley, already briefly mentioned) to the five siblings we have discussed above, it would be easy to widen the number of "personality types" illustrated. By confining our attention to the sons of Turimpi we have avoided an arbitrary selection of contrasting individuals; the five men selected were chosen *not because* they were different *but because* they were brothers. How different they are in that vaguely defined thing called personality is largely a matter of opinion depending almost entirely upon what is regarded as a "personality" difference. All that we would here claim for them in the way of difference is that on any continuum for a single trait the five sons of Turimpi range themselves about as differentially as any five average men are likely to do in our culture. In aggressiveness, for example, Mariano is well toward one end of the range, Bob well toward the other; Tipperary, Louis and Antonio at different points in between. In decisiveness or decision-making, Mariano, Louis and Tipperary belong to the heavily positive side, Antonio and Bob on the heavily negative side. But if we couple with decisiveness the ability to win friends and influence people, Tipperary, the decisive and popular, must be sharply separated from Louis and Mariano, decisive but unpopular. The three aggressive dominating types differ markedly among themselves in what might be called interest in life or chief motivating force, Mariano expressing his need for dominance through political channels, Louis through sex, Tipperary through laughter and kidding. On an introvert-extrovert continuum, Louis the silent withdrawn lone-wolf has to be placed well toward the introvert pole, with Mariano not very far away from him, but with Tipperary the out-giving friendly "Rotarian" kidder at the other extreme, and Antonio well down toward Tipperary's end. These are of course just a few of the possible ranges along which the sons of Turimpi have to be located.

Whatever facet of behavior we seize on for comparison, we find these five

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

All those in number one group belong to the same clan, and are "opposite" to those of number two group, who also belong to one clan. The lines A, B, C and D are intermarrying groups, i.e. Ego marries his *yabunaiya*, etc. 582 601 [614]

Of course, relationship terms also include others denoting the type of relation or blood tie. For instance, a mother's brother or a sister's son (group) when distantly related to Ego could be his father-in-law and would then be called *YUNARENIWA*. A true father is *ERINGANI*, a father's sister, *yananiya*; father's father *ARMINI*; father's mother, *armma*; mother's brother's own daughter, *yamuina*, and one son, *YAMUWANINI*[4]; half brother is *INGULABINI* and a half-sister *inguleba*.[5]

This system of marriage is not unlike the Murngin and Anula system and also is the same as the *wadji wadji* (wrong side marriage) of the Mudbara. In one, cross-cousins—not *inguleba*—can marry, while in the true Mudbara cross-cousin marriage is prohibited. 582

Rites. The rituals centre around the Kulama. The underlying principle of this is to ensure that the Kulama (a small hot yam that embodies the spirit of the "old woman" and guardian of the horde) is cooked correctly, for this ensures her protection against Maradji, the rainbow snake, another old woman who can cause evil to come upon them and "swallow them" up. It is performed during the wet season by each family, and is said to bring about a plentiful supply of food. The Kulama is also used to pass the initiates, both male and female, from a lower to a higher order in the social scale, although I myself could not see that any important results were obtained by the initiates through the ritual.[6] 796 [561]

Some result, or at least protection, however, is obtained: if the Kulama is not sung or danced at the prescribed time or place, the Marakarti (spear grass) and also the ring used for cooking the Kulama yams at the ritual, would give rise to a poison, *Tani*, which would pass into the air and cause sickness; perhaps a youth who had not passed through the Kulama would sicken and die. On the other hand, a youth who has passed through the ritual may gain a certain satisfaction by believing that he can drive the sickness away and protect the family. In addition, the Kulama is not only an increase ritual for yams; in it the father also "sings" the name of his child in a form of song, *apa*, and foretells in a dream that a certain spirit "shade" will be incarnated through one of his wives at some future date; for these children are waiting at that "spirit dreaming" place called Bilawuwi. In other words, it is a human increase ritual. [751] [842]

[4] These are true cousins and cannot marry.

[5] This *ingulebe* native is the term for persons who are taboo to Ego; they cannot approach Ego's wives, as their sweat must not touch. They are people who are "out of line" in relationship. For instance, if a Kudjarli man marries two women, one a Tukambani and the other a Mintai, his children would be of two different *pulwi* or totems. These children, half-brothers and half-sisters, are *ingulebe* to each other.

[6] It is unlike the Karawadi of the subincised people, in which the initiate is freed of certain food taboos, and again in the Kudidjingara, through which the old men receive magical power to levy tribute from the young people of the tribe, who have not passed through that ritual.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Sickness is cured by beating the ground around the victim to hunt the evil spirit 755
away. Likewise, a song, Upripu, is sung by the wives of the sick man to make him
better. The *Kurewa*, a pointed bone, or sometimes a tomahawk is used to stab a 754
person's urine or an article his body has touched (e.g. a bark he has lain upon to sleep)
and so cause him to die. Blood thrown into the sea will cause a violent wind and a [82]
big tide. The Kulama rite will bring about the same result. No instance has been 775
found of magic being used to entice the spirit from a person's body, yet if a person
failed to show sympathy for the dead, the dead person's "shade" would cause that
person to die and then run away with his "shade." To mention the name of the 784
newly dead is taboo. If a person accidentally does this he must immediately hit his
mouth and spit to cleanse it of the evil.

Names. The names given to the women and men are of three types; the first 551
is the actual name and is given to a person at the Kulama rite; this is an ordinary
word such as "honey nest," etc., but it is always in a different language from the
ordinary one which is used everyday. The child also receives the name of his father,
father's brother or father's sister; this is a traditional name. Then, in the case of a
male, come the terms denoting his initiation grade in the Kulama. First stage—
Murahmani; second stage—*Wadjaneta*; third stage—*Migingartiya*=first song
and *Midjintera*=second song; fourth stage—*Mekearterima*=third song; and finally,
Mahagala, which denotes that the man is qualified to conduct a Kulama. Likewise,
both sexes have grade names denoting their status in the Pukamane death ritual.
Male terms: first stage—*waniati*; second stage—*warunerera*; third stage—
wanereterima; fourth stage—*wanderara*. With girls and women these names are
the same except for the ending denoting the sex.

In the case of women there are terms denoting age or condition. *Kudjine*— 551
child; *alinga*—girl; *miriyaleta*—puberty; *murogarbra*—breasts developed; *pira-* 561
muruka—first sign of pregnancy; *paprungala*—pregnant woman; *wanantaka*—
woman who has a child dead, and *umparu*—widow. Other terms are *pilukwen*—
widower; *mentuygini* and *padrubanga*—boy and girl respectively, whose mother is
pregnant; *indjula*— a woman whose breasts have fallen; and as on the mainland, a
mother is always called by the sex of the child she carries in her arms: *oriowri* if a
boy, *kudjine* if a girl.

Language. The language is peculiar. In many instances, owing to the masculine 193
and feminine endings of the words, the women seem to speak a different language to
the men. In addition, another language, or set of words, which is very rarely spoken, 192
seems to obtrude itself. Thus one article will have many names. This is brought 551
about by the strong death-taboo on names; as soon as a native dies, his names and
his son's names are taboo and others are substituted. In this way every year new 192
words are coined. Only recently at a Kulama two new ones appeared as a conse-
quence of this taboo. *Purinteriya*, new name for tree, and *alepwa*, new name for
coconut. Or a Kulama name may be given as, say, *wilinkurawa*, the meaning of
which will be given as honey nest; and yet numerous words for honey are nothing

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

About the Authors

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Arnold R. Pilling, a Californian, studied at the University of California at Berkeley. He was a Fulbright Fellow to Australia in 1953 and 1954 and spent most of that time studying the culture of the Tiwi. He is now a member of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Wayne State University in Detroit.

About the Book

This is a case study of a system of influence and power which is based on a strange currency. The currency is woman. Newborn females, nubile marriageable females, toothless old hags — all are valuable in Tiwi terms. Because men compete for prestige and influence through their control over women, women have the value of a scarce commodity. Under this system there are no illegitimate children, no unmarried females of any age, and wives are either very much older or very much younger than their husbands. 562 [557] [548 589]

A vivid picture of Tiwi life, as viewed from within the culture, emerges in this book. The reader is not made an outsider, left to peer into a dimly understood, formalized, alien way of life. Rather, he is taken inside the family group, by the night's campfire. He becomes a witness to angry quarrels, a participant in involved machinations aimed at success — as defined by the Tiwi. He comes to know individual Tiwi as real people. 114

This book is a study of social interaction. But it is also a study of culture change. Much happened between Hart's and Pilling's visits to the Tiwi. These changes are described, and we see them in the context of the period of Tiwi contacts with the outside world. 121

GEORGE AND LOUISE SPINDLER
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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to the husband of the pregnant woman. We carefully say "the husband of the pregnant woman" rather than "the father of the child" because the right resided in the male head of the household at the time of the birth. Although he was ordinarily both the father of the child and the husband of its mother, there were naturally occasions when a child was born after the death of its father, in which case the right of betrothal unquestionably belonged to the mother's new husband. The clearest statement of this rule is to say that the right of betrothal of all newly born females resided in the husband of the mother at the time of the girl's birth. "He who named the child bestowed it." 584 851 593

In most human societies the proportion of males and females in the population is approximately equal, except in the older age-groups where women predominate owing to their tendency to live longer than men. The Tiwi conformed to this norm biologically, but their cultural insistence that all females of every age be married resulted in further unusual features of the domestic situation. No such compulsory marriage was required or expected of males. Hence, the total female population, but only part of the male population, was married. Mathematically this permitted, indeed required, a high degree of plural marriage. The men who held the right to betroth—namely, the fathers of the female babies—could, within certain limits imposed by the kinship system, bestow their about-to-be-born or newly born daughters where they wished, and they certainly did not bestow them on about-to-be-born or newly born males. On the contrary, they bestowed them, generally speaking, where some tangible return was to be anticipated. Put bluntly, in Tiwi culture daughters were an asset to their father, and he invested these assets in his own welfare. He therefore bestowed his newly born daughter on a friend or an ally, or on somebody he wanted as a friend or an ally. Such a person was apt to be a man near his own age or at least an adult man, and hence perhaps forty years or so older than the newly born baby bestowed upon him as a wife. Or, the father might bestow an infant daughter on a man—or some close relative of such a man—who had already bestowed an infant daughter upon him, thus in effect swapping infant daughters. Obviously, the fathers who did the swapping, even if they were not quite the same age themselves, were bound to be many years older than the infant wives they thus received from each other. Or, thirdly, a father looking for a suitable male upon whom to bestow his infant daughter's hand might decide to use her as old-age insurance—in which case he selected as her future husband not one of the older adult men who would be old when he himself was old, but a likely looking youngster "with promise"; that is, a youth in his late twenties or thirties who showed signs of being a good hunter and a good fighting man, and who was clearly on his way up in tribal power and influence. Such a youth, in his late twenties at the time of betrothal, would, with luck, be in his prime as "a big man" in about twenty years—a time when the father of the infant daughter would be getting old and decrepit and much in need of an influential son-in-law who was obligated to him. 162 [581 595] [584] 593 582 581 [562] [572] [606 888]

There were other bases upon which infant daughters were betrothed, 582 593

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

361 special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply.
592 The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general
[171] thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably
592 smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during
574 supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger
[593 household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece
602] of meat or a dish of *kwoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the
[561 general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through
578] all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all
512 resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated
517 with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive
[562] work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the
[513] shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had st[illegible] an
[578] argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on [illegible]using each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

578 Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion
182 with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit
837 that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic
592 efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

The mobility of people other than household heads was much less. Women and children could move only with the permission, and usually in the company, of their lord and master. Occasionally old and trusted wives might be sent, unsupervised, on a journey by their husbands or their brothers, usually to carry messages and bring back gossip, but young wives were never trusted to be out of sight either of the husband or of elderly female supervisors. Young men were less subject to their fathers' orders and hence were fairly free to come and go as they pleased, but the universal suspicion which all husbands bore toward wandering young men put severe restrictions on their mobility and prevented them attaching themselves to any household or camp in which they did not have some close relative. 562 ● 571 [203]

The fact, then, that a man like Tu'untalumi was (in Tiwi terms) very mobile did not necessarily mean that members of his household shared his degree of mobility. When he took most of his large household with him on his journeys away from home, as he often did, it was always because he was going a considerable distance and was traveling slowly, living off the country as he went. In such cases he liked to have a large retinue to feed him on the way and also to permit him to entertain in fitting style when he arrived. For while it was true that at a funeral or at an initiation the relatives of the deceased or of the novices were supposed to take care of the feeding of all the visitors, nonetheless, wealthy and generous men like Tu'untalumi believed in taking along with them a bevy of young wives, with a couple of efficient elderly widow-wives in charge of them, to contribute to the food-getting and food-preparing activities. Of course the supervision of the young wives' morals in the strange environment was often difficult, especially in the hectic atmosphere of a big ceremonial, but this worry was compensated for by the fact that the visitor who came so attended was contributing a number of extra food providers to the labor force of the harassed hosts and thus making a generous gesture, and also by the fact that such a visitor was not dependent upon the hospitality provided by the hosts. Having his own food-producing unit with him, he could live better and stay longer than if he had come alone or only as one of a party of men. In this respect, as in so many others, a Tiwi household head's decision had to be reached by balancing against one another the two competing motives of, on the one hand, the desire to eat well and, on the other, the desire to keep his young wives safe from prowling bachelors. Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest man of the Malauila band, usually decided not only to leave his wives at home but also not even to go himself. But Ki-in-kumi was a gloomy, pessimistic old man. Tu'untalumi usually decided to do the thing in style, travel with a large retinue, have all the comforts of home while in strange districts, and take his chances on the strange bachelors. He clearly believed that a good booming ceremony with lots to eat and himself in the center directing the dancing was well worth the risk of a few of his young wives being seduced off-stage. Men like Ki-in-kumi thought Tu'untalumi an old fool for not leaving his young wives at home, and Tu'untalumi probably thought that old Ki-in-kumi might as well be dead, especially since his death would be the occasion for a really magnificent funeral. 159 222 462 527 [574] [837 593] [184]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

557 entered in the middle of the game and found the current hands being played with all the old scores back for at least two generations influencing the play of the present hands. The game never had a beginning or an end; every new player had to start in the middle and make the best of whatever assets he had by way of kinship, clanship, household membership, and help from older players. Similarly, any attempt to describe the operations involved or the "rules" of the game must perforce start in the middle.

The "game" was one of trying to win friends and increase prestige and influence over others. The "assets," in a tribe with such minimal material possessions as the Tiwi, were mostly intangible ones such as friendship, "help," goodwill, respect of others, control over others, importance, and influence. 557 562 Even in our culture such things are difficult to express in concrete or tangible symbols. The most concrete symbol of Tiwi success was the possession of surplus food, for this not only permitted its possessor to make gifts to others and throw large parties for which he picked up the check, but also gave him lots of leisure time to devote to social and political life. Since a man required a large number of women in his work force if he was to build up a surplus of food, in the final analysis it was control of women that was the most tangible index of power and influence. Women were the main currency of the influence struggle, the main "trumps" in the endless bridge game.

It should be noticed that we stress the value of women as women rather than as wives or bestowable daughters. To a smart Tiwi politician, wives or daughters were assets but so was his mother—if submissive to her son's wishes. So were his sisters—if amenable. A bachelor at the age of thirty who had several sisters was a lucky young man, especially if those sisters already had daughters to their current husbands. As successful old men used their infant daughters to gain influence and buy satellites, so young men used their mothers and their sisters—if they could.

Thus the psychological line between the attitude of a man toward a wife and his attitude toward a sister or a daughter was a very thin one. A Tiwi elder had many women related to him in some way—as wives, as daughters, as step-daughters, as sisters, as sisters' daughters, as wards, and as mother—and all of these were part of his assets or capital. The fact that he had sexual rights to the wives and not to the daughters or the sisters was only of minor relevance. What was of major relevance was that they were all women whom he could use—or try to use—as investment funds in his own career of influence seeking. The devious details of Tiwi prestige and influence operations are much easier to follow if one keeps in mind the crucial fact that the Tiwi men valued women as political capital available for investment in gaining the goodwill of [593] other men more than they were interested in them as sexual partners. Some of the more senile elders were quite vague about the young girls in their household; such an old man was sure only of the fact that a girl, by being in his household, was part of his capital. Which were his daughters and which were recently joined young wives was a question that had to be referred to the old wives who kept track of such academic details.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

Women were, however, a form of capital that possessed the power of talking back to the investors. As daughters or as wives they were quite thoroughly subordinate to the wishes of their fathers or husbands, and Tiwi wives were as frequently and as brutally beaten by their husbands as wives in any other savage society. But as mothers and as sisters the women were not coerced by their sons and their brothers. On the contrary, sons or brothers wishing to use their mothers or their sisters in their political schemes (typically when those mothers or sisters became or were about to become widows) could only do so with the active collaboration of the women concerned. Tough-minded young widows could drive a hard bargain with their brothers as to where they remarried, since each needed the other to make the remarriage acceptable to the tribe at large and to beat down the other competitors (the dead husbands' brothers, for example) who wished to control the remarriage of the widows. Young girls thus had no bargaining power but young widows had a good deal. Old mothers with influential senior sons were extremely powerful. Any affront to an old woman was an affront to her sons, and some of the strongest influence networks were alliances of several senior brothers, in which their old mother seemed to be the mastermind and the senior sons largely the enforcers of what the old mother and her middle-aged daughters (their sisters) had decided among themselves.

562 593 587

Thus, for women, as for men, age and political skill were the crucial factors in determining their position. Young girls were chattels and as such were passed around from husband to husband. But with increasing age, smart young women, especially in alliance with their smart young brothers, could control their own fate with some firmness, and if they and their brothers had a shrewd old mother (also with powerful senior brothers still alive) to advise them and support them, then the decisions of such a group as to where the girls remarried were very difficult decisions for anybody else to combat or oppose. Not as independent operators, but as behind-the-scenes allies of their sons and brothers, Tiwi mothers and sisters enjoyed much more essential freedom in their own careers as often-remarried widows than would appear at first sight in a culture which ostensibly treated all women as currency in the political careers of the men. No matter how males, both old and young, might connive, they were constantly aware that no remarriage of a widow could ever be arranged and made to stick unless the widow herself was agreeable.

562 888 553 587

In the limited space available, all we can offer are a few samples of how the influence game was played by a few selected individuals of various ages. Age was of great importance in Tiwi careers and therefore we select our samples from all the adult male age-groups. We have selected them all from the same band—the Malauila—so as to show as clearly as possible the interplay between one career and another for men of the same band. And finally we select men of the Malauila band for our examples because in 1928-29 it was a band little affected as yet by the outside influences—Catholic missionaries and Japanese pearl divers—which were beginning to modify Tiwi marriage customs among some of the other bands.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

was still a bachelor and why Banana had acted so impulsively and thereby 159
gotten himself in the bad graces of the elders. The two men were the eldest 554
of four brothers without any full sisters and as such they were necessarily
handicapped in their career struggle. Elders seeking satellites or contempo- [557]
raries seeking allies looked askance at men without sisters, for such men could
have no sisters' daughters to use in the marriage-arrangements struggle.
The mother of Tiberun and Banana was dead, but even were she still alive, [582
few men would have been interested in marrying a widow whose only living
children were sons. Widows without daughters and bachelors without sisters 581]
rated very low in the scale of desirable assets sought either by elders or by
contemporaries.

Tiberun was thus the only bachelor in the 30-42 age group. Of the 159
remainder we select Teapot as an example of another man who failed to get 554
started. Teapot was at least 35, and about seven years previously he had "stolen" 626
a wife from an elder. This wife was no ancient and shop-worn widow like
the wife Banana had "stolen," but a young girl who had been betrothed in
due form to an elder by her father. How Teapot had managed to get away with
her is too complicated an incident to unravel here, and in any case it hadn't
done Teapot much good. After presenting Teapot with a baby boy the young
woman died, and Teapot, with a now six-year-old son, was more or less an
outcast among the Malauila. No elder wanted him as a satellite and none of
his contemporaries wanted him as an ally. His mother was dead and his only
sister was married to a Munupula elder. This sister in Munupi was his only
asset and one which a different man might have used as a means to better
himself. But Teapot, instead of using this small asset to get started on a
career, had chosen to defy the rules and "steal" an elder's bestowed wife.
"Stealing" an old widow was reprehensible conduct in the eyes of the elders;
stealing a young bestowed wife was unforgivable. Hence Teapot, since his
crime, had received no bestowal, had been able to marry no widow, and was
wanted by no one as an ally.

A complete contrast to these two unsuccessful men in their thirties was 159
provided by the case of Gitjara, who was about the same age as Tiberun.
Gitjara, it is true, had sisters, and that was always a help. Using his sisters 557
(already married and bearing children to an elder) as bait, Gitjara when he 562
was about 28 proposed an alliance to L. F. B., a rather feeble man about five 584
years older than himself, who was not doing very well in the influence race.
The gist of the proposal was that, since both their mothers were still alive and
each married to an old man who could not last much longer, Gitjara should
marry the ancient mother of L. F. B. when she became a widow, and L. F. B.
should marry Gitjara's mother when that old lady became a widow. Perhaps
the idea originated with the two old women rather than with either of the
young men. Since such arrangements were essentially plots or schemes, it is
impossible to determine who conceived them in the first place—old women
ambitious to aid their sons or young men ready to use their mothers as long-
term gambits to ultimately provide themselves with young wives. Mother-
exchange operations were probably first conceived at high-level strategy con-

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 [562] ferences in which smart mothers and dull mothers, smart sons and dull sons were all present, and the final plan emerged from consensus.

In this case the former husbands of the two old women both died conveniently soon and within about three years of each other and, according to plan, there came into existence a household of two men in their thirties each married to the elderly mother of the other. Gitjara and L. F. B. thus set up jointly the foundations of their households and began their careers as a joint enterprise.

Gitjara had two sisters, both married to White Man, an elder, and already the mothers of daughters to him. By marrying Gitjara's mother, L. F. B. automatically became the nominal father of these women, and in the event of White Man's death would have, as such, some say in where they remarried. But the right of the step-father to redispose widowed step-daughters was always disputed by the brothers (or even sons) of the step-daughters, provided those brothers (or sons) were old enough or influential enough for their wishes to be taken seriously. Thus we may say that in putting L. F. B. into position as his own step-father, Gitjara's main object had been to get a satellite or henchman of his own into the position of step-father of his sisters (the wives of White Man) so that when they became widows there would be no conflict between the wishes of their brother and the wishes of their step-father as to whom they should remarry. L. F. B. as step-father was, so to speak, a stooge for Gitjara the brother.

Conversely, L. F. B. had two sisters both married to Ki-in-kumi, the most powerful elder in Malau. By marrying the mother of L. F. B., Gitjara [606] became the step-father of two of Ki-in-kumi's wives, thus immediately (despite his youth) becoming technically the father-in-law of that powerful old man, and a man with some say in where those two wives of Ki-in-kumi would remarry on Ki-in-kumi's death. As step-father of such widows, Gitjara would have to make his wishes prevail as against the wishes of their brothers, but the only brother was L. F. B. and his vote was obviously in Gitjara's pocket.

By engineering this double shuffle of two elderly widows, each with daughters, Gitjara had launched his career as a marriage manipulator. Almost before it was concluded he became involved in another widow operation. We will omit the intricate details, but can say that he emerged from this with a second wife for himself, this one (naturally) also a widow but quite a young widow. This woman had already borne four sons and one daughter to her previous husband but was still young enough when Gitjara took her over in 1926 to bear him a son (her last) in 1927. In Tiwi terms the acquisition of this widow by Gitjara was a real achievement for the young man, not because of her comparative youth nor because of the son she bore him but because among the children by her previous marriage was a daughter aged about nine [554] at the time she remarried Gitjara. To become the step-father of such a young girl was a real asset for the young operator. Her dead father had bestowed this child on Summit, another of the same Malauila age group of 30-year-olds and hence one of Gitjara's rivals and competitors in the influence struggle.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

With a lineup such as this by the time he was thirty-six, Padimo was clearly in 159
process of going places in Tiwi society. The only weakness one could see in 557
his position was that it all derived from the favor of one patron, and no old 585
man with daughters, other than Ki-in-kumi, had seen fit to bestow a girl
upon him. It should be noted that in 1929, though Padimo had two young
wives resident in his household, he still had no children of his own. His first 159
child, born that year, lived only a few days. The only children in residence were 557
the two girls promised to Summit by the previous husband of their mother. 592
Their bestowal on Summit was a matter beyond Padimo's control though he 584
could use them to force some concessions from Summit just as Gitjara could
with the girl in his household. But as Padimo's young wives began to bear
daughters of his own, his bestowal of them would be less encumbered by the
commitments of any predecessor. While Ki-in-kumi lived, Padimo would have
to consider his obligations to that old man and at least consult with Ki-in-kumi
as to how he should bestow his female children, since any such children would
be the daughters' daughters of the old man. Nor would the death of Ki-in-kumi
leave Padimo entirely free to bestow his own daughters anywhere he wished.
Many of the girls already given to him as wives by Ki-in-kumi had mothers
who possibly, and brothers who certainly, would outlive Ki-in-kumi. On the [587]
old man's death, all of his numerous wives would remarry—some of the older
ones probably to ambitious younger men—and these new husbands of the
widows of Ki-in-kumi would begin interfering with and trying to alter the
arrangements made for his daughters by the old man during his lifetime. Thus [606]
Padimo would find himself stuck with a group of new and antagonistic fathers-
in-law in place of the old, indulgent father-in-law who had been responsible
for his success so far. Padimo's problem was basically how to hold, after
Ki-in-kumi's death, the favored position he had gained during the old man's
lifetime through the old man's favor.

In the meantime, with Ki-in-kumi still alive and powerful, Padimo had 159
the biggest and fastest expanding household among the Malauila men in their 592
thirties. The only remaining man in this age group was Boya who was the 557
oldest of them all, being at least 42 years old in 1928. As might be expected,
his career illustrates some new facets of the Tiwi influence struggle.

Structurally the position of Boya was simple but politically it was com- 159
plex. His father had been a henchman and satellite of Ki-in-kumi in the early
career of that old operator and roughly had had somewhat the same relation-
ship to the young Ki-in-kumi as L. F. B. had to Gitjara. Boya's father, the
satellite, left only two widows (an indication of his mediocrity) and these
two widows had been remarried by Ki-in-kumi, the patron. One of these
widows was Boya's mother, and Boya was too young at the time to have any
say in where his mother remarried. Ki-in-kumi's interest in marrying Boya's
mother was not of course because he thus acquired Boya as a step-son, but
because he acquired Boya's sisters as step-daughters. Step-sons were liabilities [562]
which new husbands had to take over in order to get rights in the real assets
—the step-daughters.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

sister's son being initiated, the attitude of a Tiwi toward the whole *pukimani* state was essentially a passive attitude. *Pukimani* behavior was something one accepted and conformed to when required; it was in no way an active attempt to change nature, people, food, gods, spirits, or anything else in the universe. It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that since their *pukimani* system offered them no handle by which to seek actively to alter the universe in which they lived, the Tiwi found that universe to their liking as it was. Unlike the tribes of central Australia who lavished a lot of thought upon magical methods of improving the food supply or the rainfall, the Tiwi believed and acted on the belief that as long as they observed their *pukimani* taboos, the food would continue to be as abundant and the rains as regular as they had always been. The central Australians, by seeking to coerce nature through magic, suggest that they found nature unsatisfactory; the Tiwi, by relying upon passive taboo-observance alone, suggest rather that their relationship to nature was an acceptable equilibrium that they wanted to preserve, not change. And if everybody observed his *pukimani* taboos when required, that equilibrium would remain undisturbed. Hence the antisocial man in Tiwi was not the maker of individual magic (he was unknown, anyway) but the nonobserver of taboo. By his nonobservance he threatened to upset the normally satisfactory equilibrium between man and nature. For a senior Tiwi male to be charged publicly with breaking *pukimani* rules was a disgrace and a blow to his prestige and his position in public opinion. His behavior was possibly a sin against the spirits but it was certainly a shame in the eyes of his fellows. *Pukimani* observance was thus a matter of respectability to a much greater degree than it was a matter of pleasing the spirits.

DEATH As was mentioned above, death is the natural phenomenon around which the Tiwi had woven their most elaborate web of ritual. The most frequent and most important Tiwi ceremonies were the mourning ceremonies, and they came in three sizes—small, medium, and large—depending on the age, sex, and importance of the dead person. The mourning ceremonies which drew the crowds were not held until some time after the death and burial. All bodies of dead persons were buried within twenty-four hours of their death by digging a hole near the camp where the death had occurred and placing the body, wrapped in bark, in it. Near most well-used camping spots there was already a graveyard marked by old graveposts, and the latest corpse was buried there or near there. Seldom was the body carried any distance for burial. If a person died even less than a mile from an old burial ground, there was little inclination to carry the body that far. He would be buried, instead, within perhaps a hundred yards of where he died. This had certain awkward repercussions for social organization, since occasionally a person died while away from his home district and, being buried where he died, his ceremonies were held and his posts erected in a district in which his immediate family did not live. Young men often used this to validate a change of residence, giving as their reason for living in a band territory in which they had not grown up, the location there of their father's graveposts.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

without quarrels. Again, there is no comparable ceremony on the mainland. 171 [881]

(c) Throughout the mainland of Australia, women occupy a low social status within the tribal framework. They are rigidly excluded from almost all aspects of the ceremonial life, and of initiation; they also are ignorant of most of the creation myths, the procedures of the secret rituals, and even the existence of the sacred objects. 171 562

These restrictions do not apply to the women of the Tiwi. They are initiated, side by side, with the men, and take similar though not identical parts in the ritual. They also participate in all phases of the burial ceremonies, at which they usually perform their own dance, the *Amburu*, but occasionally take part in dances which are performed by the men (Pl. 25c). A woman even has the right to cut and paint a burial pole, if her husband, who has been allotted the task, is unavoidably absent. In short, I was unable to find any aspect of Tiwi ceremonial life in which women could not take their part if they so desired.

(d) Although the creation story of the Tiwi is basically similar to that of the aborigines elsewhere in Australia, it is not as elaborate as, say, the travels of the Wawalik and the Djunkgao Sisters of Arnhem Land, recorded by Warner (1937), nor those of Central Australia, described by Spencer and Gillen (1899). I did not witness, nor did I hear of any specific Tiwi ceremony that commemorated the myths of the creation period. The dances in the *ilanias*, and the final rituals of the burial ceremony, usually referred to the various creatures or the elements, but seldom to an incident in the creation myth. 171 773 [535]

(e) There are also important differences between many of the myths of the Tiwi and those of the mainland people. For instance, in northern Australia, it is the moon man who brings death to mankind; in Melville Island the same moon-man endeavours to prevent death from coming to the world. I have already pointed out other wide differences between the astronomical myths of the mainland and those of the adjacent Melville Island.

On Arnhem Land, in fact, as far as South Australia, the aborigines, almost without exception, believe that their spirits go to a distant land not visible to human eyes, where there is continuous good weather, and an abundance of easily gathered food. 171 775

On the other hand, the Tiwi believe that at the close of the burial rituals the spirits of their dead return to their separate birthplaces, where each one hunts for food in the same manner as its living relatives, suffering, as they do, from exposure if the weather is inclement, and from hunger if the food supplies are limited.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

relatives of the mother, such as the mother's mother's brother. The Tiwi have matrilineal totemic clans. 553 602

Names are seldom bestowed upon an individual by women; the only female relative having that power is the actual mother's mother. A mother is never in any circumstances allowed to name her own child. The reason for this is fairly obvious. The naming of children is a ritual affair, and as such is more or less forbidden to the women, for although their exclusion is not nearly so strict as in some other parts of Australia, they do not, among the Tiwi, take very much part in ritual affairs. The mother's mother, however, stands in a rather privileged position to her daughter's child. She is of the same totem and is normally a very old woman, and to a certain extent appears to become a symbol of the clan for her daughter's son. A boy, for example, will strongly resent and often endeavour to revenge any insult to his mother's mother, even if it means taking up arms against his own father. For example, during my stay a boy of twelve abused his father and quitted his father's camp for over a month because in a fight between hordes his father had injured the boy's mother's mother's brother. There was no particular respect or regard for the latter individual on the part of the boy, but the injury was a grave insult to his mother's mother. [603] [562] 603

It must also be understood that it is impossible for any two people to have the same name. Should a father inadvertently bestow upon his child a name already in use he is guilty of a gross breach of etiquette, and to prevent such a possibility a man will refrain for a long time from coining a name until he is fairly certain that the one he decides upon is neither already in use nor was held by any person recently dead. Although the Tiwi number nearly eleven hundred people at the present time, and each one of these has on an average three names, a careful study of these three thousand three hundred names fails to reveal any two as being identical. 551 [161]

By the time that a child reaches puberty he is the possessor of several names since by then some at least of the people entitled to bestow names upon him will have exercised that privilege. In exceptional cases he may have six or seven names though sometimes only one. All of these will have been known at some time or other to the tribe at large, though it is usually possible to get a full list of a person's names only from that individual himself or his father or mother.

It is not at all unusual in primitive societies for the death of a man to

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

527 mainland, it will be remembered, are with preference postponed until after night-
535 fall. The women were not permitted to take part in the proceedings, but were,
[562] indeed, kept at some considerable distance off. Youths and male children were allowed to join in the ceremonies without apparent restriction. When we met with men, hunting in the bush, and they had been convinced of our *bona fide* intentions, they would approach us in groups of from two to four, and deliver up their long
[200] spears to us. Several of the young men would, in the meantime, run into the woods as messengers to summon others who were as yet unaware of the presence of the strangers in their haunts.

203 A corrobboree[1] having been decided upon, the signal or invitation to take part
527 in the event is sounded by two or three of the older men, who have previously arranged it among themselves. This initial note is a long-drawn, continuous yell resembling the German diphthong ö! Other members immediately fall in with the same note and are joined, at intervals, by others excitedly rushing up to take their stand alongside of those who started the call. The monosyllabic "ö" is kept continuous by the combined efforts of many voices, each of which individually expires for a moment, after the lungs' capacity for air has been completely exhausted. The note is, however, taken up again immediately after a fresh supply of air has been inhaled. The weirdness of the monotone is suddenly broken by the powerful voice of the "master" of the ceremonies, who brings forth a penetrating, but abrupt, order resembling "wahoi." This is instantly and collectively repeated by all others present. A momentary silence follows and allows the sombre trunks of the surrounding forest to reiterate the final word in ringing echoes.

The leader once more gives the note; this time in a slightly modified form resembling a long-continued "ye," that merges imperceptibly into a "yi." A sudden shrill "wahoi-hoi" brings that note also to a stop. A deadly silence prevails.

527 The primary appellation now being over, the performers congregate themselves into a compact group. In the meanwhile much excited vociferation ensues from every mouth, young as well as old. At this stage their eyes make a survey of any
[628] neighbouring encampment and if, by chance, a likely performer is noticed who has not heeded the appeal and is shirking his duty by non-attendance, he is furiously implored, at times abusively, to join the assemblage of performers. The leader now emerges from the group at a walking pace and is followed, in single file, by all participants, each in his turn falling into regular order as though his place had previously been allotted to him. The course taken by the leader is a winding one; walking, at first, some distance away from the point of starting but returning
527 eventually thereto. The musical accompaniment is started afresh, and though not
533 exactly melodious to the European ear, it is certainly a remarkably clever and original production on the part of the aboriginal. The nearest way we might describe it in words is that it is in the form of a trill, produced by a rapidly repeated

Compare also H. Klaatsch, *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, pp. 589 and 590.

797 telephone, with which they keep in touch with the Presbytery in Darwin, not only were the good fathers there to greet us, but the children of the mission school had also been given a holiday to celebrate the occasion. Small boys and half-grown lads were there in force and soon crowded round the 'plane. The bearded men against the fence kept in the background, while women and girls peered over the stile that leads into the garden. Men and boys wore only the little naga, women and girls a short sarong [291] —and they are all the better for this lack of clothing.

KINDLY and shrewd old Father Gsell, who founded the mission rather more than a quarter of a century ago, has his own ideas with regard to the black man. He does not ruin his health by dressing him (or her) up in mission clothing, and he sees that the blacks who come into the mission do not become mere spongers and hangers-on. When a black asks for flour or anything else that he requires, Father Gsell replies, "What have you to give for it?" He may have a spear, for which the good father has no use, but he will take it, or anything that the black can offer in payment. If the black's reply is "Nothing," Father Gsell will say "Well, you are a big, strong man; you can dig the garden."

It does not matter that the garden has been dug before. The thing is to keep the blacks from becoming cadgers. Treated so, they retain their self-respect and do not degenerate into useless loafers hanging round the mission station, just for what they can get without any effort. The mission fathers, of course, do all they can for the sick and injured—that is an entirely different matter. Every missionary who has been long on any field in North Australia must recognise that it is impossible to do anything with a full-grown black to alter his outlook in any way, and the methods of the Sacred Heart Mission must appeal to all unbigoted members of any church as admirable common-sense.

It is only with the very young that the missionaries can hope for any success in the inculcating of Christian ideals, and it is towards the little boys and girls that the good fathers look for 797 the reward of their self-sacrificing labours. They are able to get them, too, without pandering to the laziness of their parents. 562 The natives, who are always fond of children, are quite willing 567 to have their little boys well fed and well looked after; but, 439 when it comes to the girls, self-interest enters into the question. Little girls can be sold to the Japanese of the pearling fleets, [855] and the Japanese are liberal in the matter of prices.

FATHER Gsell must therefore buy the girls in competition with the Japanese. It has been said that this is countenancing a shameful and revolting slave-trade, and that to buy the girls is definitely wrong in principle. What would the worthy critics do? Are they content to see this dreadful traffic continued, or have they any practical alternative to offer? Father Gsell is trying at least to save as many girls as possible from the horrible fate in store for them. The regular patrol of North Australian waters by the forces of the Government may eventually put an end to the practice, but what of all these little girls in the meantime? As they grow up, the Christian boys and girls marry one another, and, as the Christians have one wife only, they are unwilling to sell or to hire her out to the Japanese. This, like all the dealings of the Sacred Heart Mission with the islanders, is based on practical common sense.

797 tets, supervising the lubras' work and ordering stores, which are brought from Darwin by the mission's own lugger *St. Francis*. The pleasant lunch we had at the refectory, where wide windows, open all round, admitted every wandering breeze, was due to their efforts, and later I was to see something of the results of their teaching.

797 School, both for boys and for girls, takes up only two and a half hours each day, but the pupils learn quickly, and the more 871 they are taught the more they can absorb. Reading and writing are mastered without any more difficulty than in the case of white children of the same age, though the pupils were very shy and almost inaudible when exhibiting their prowess. Arithmetic they do not take to so kindly, unless they happen to be interested by some problem that has a definitely practical application to their own lives; but drawing comes natural to the islanders, as it does to the blacks of the mainland, where I had already seen very spirited sketches made by aboriginal children. Of the affection of the children, both for the sisters and the mission fathers, there was no doubt. To be as close to them as possible was an honour they were all bent on securing.

797 THE "blackies," as they call the girls, range in age from tiny 562 tots to those who are practically young women. They were all much excited by the novelty of our visit, bubbling over with laughter, whispering and giggling together. The older "blackies" eye a visitor coyly, smiling over their shoulders with a flash of white teeth; and, when the pilot and I came along with one of the sisters to hear them sing the "Magnificat" and "Adeste Fideles," they fled shrieking, only to turn round and giggle again when they thought that they were far enough away.

"No more gammon!" called the sister, and they lined up demurely to sing their hymns right tunefully, with spasms of giggles in the intervals. To hold up a finger is quite sufficient to bring shrieks of delight from these childish, happy creatures. "Georgie," a very little boy with a very big tummy, so young that he was not yet at the boys' school, sang "Georgie Porgie, puddiny pie, kissed the girls and made them cry" with much aplomb and gesture. If Georgie was at the girls' school, he did not forget that he was a man. He spoke man's language, not woman's [198 516] talk such as women by custom must use on Bathurst Island, and he sat down like a man with knees wide apart, not together as a woman must.

535 Then, while the older "blackies" formed a circle, chanting in their own language and clapping their hands in time, little girls, [562] two by two, performed women's dances, which again differ from those of the men. There were buffalo, bullock, and lugger dances, when they imitated the animals with arms widespread or bent slightly at the elbows to represent the horns, or held at angles such as those at which sails are set on a lugger, while, now and then, two little fists beaten together faithfully copied the "put-put" of Diesel engines.

More ambitious and complicated was the dance of the overseas mail 'plane that flies from Singapore to Darwin, when whirling arms represented the propellers and stamping feet the beat of [198 533 768] the engines. There is, by the way, a sacred language used for songs, and it is only in this language that the name of the dead can be mentioned. If by chance anyone should mention a dead man's name in the ordinary language, every one within hearing will spit with vigour. If defenceless, the maker of such a faux pas will be hit about the head.

[p. 18(B)]

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

commitments so as to try and advantage himself as much as possible by a skillful use of whatever shadowy right in the daughters he had obtained by becoming their current "father." 584 592 768

It is within such a context that the apparent swapping of mothers by Dominico and Antonio must be viewed. By marrying Bongdadu in her dotage, Dominico had acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters, the sisters of Antonio, but since his marriage to her had been, partly at least, arranged by Antonio and her other sons, he would have to share with them his disposal rights to their sisters. Similarly, the marriage of Dominico's ancient mother to Antonio (part, so to speak, of the same "package deal") meant that Antonio as current father had some say in the future disposal of Dominico's sisters when they became widowed, since he had the power of renaming them. 587 584

What in effect occurred in this, as in many other cases, was that men of different clans and of about the same age formed a partnership or close alliance wherein "sons" and "husbands" cooperated in arranging the remarriages of their "mothers" and "sisters" by acting as quasi-fathers and treating their mothers and sisters as "quasi-daughters." The partnership or "firm" of Dominico (of the Crane clan) and Antonio, Mariano, and their brothers (of the Red Paint clan) had already arranged the remarriages of Bongdadu (Red Paint clan) and of Dominico's mother (Crane clan), and stood ready to take care of all future remarriages of any of Bongdadu's daughters (Red Paint) or Dominico's sisters (Crane) whenever any of these women became widowed. Each member of the firm was trying to maximize his own self-interest in this and all the other alliances he had a share in, but operations had to be carried out in this partnership form because the marriage of any woman had to be arranged by her "father," and the father, in the Tiwi rules, had to be a nonclansman of the woman whose marriage he arranged. Hence the Red Paint men needed Dominico, a Crane, as a front man to arrange the remarriages of their sisters, and he in turn used Antonio, a Red Paint man, to arrange the remarriages of his sisters. When clansmen made decisions about the remarriages of their sisters, they could only do it by using agreeable nonclansmen as nominal "fathers" and cooperating with them—and the agreeable nonclansmen would of course only come in on the deal if there was something in it for them, as there was for the obscure and unimportant Dominico in the present case. In return for acting as a front for the Red Paint brothers, he got himself a second wife, an excellent food provider though no longer beautiful; he became the ally, even if junior, of some men with assured futures; and he acquired some shadowy residual rights in the future remarriages of several potential widows. Dominico did himself a lot of good by marrying Bongdadu; if he hadn't married her, he would never have attracted much tribal notice and hence would not have warranted mention in these pages. 571 584 587 614

We find that the whole complex situation makes most theoretical sense if we see it as essentially an institutional struggle between clan rights and the father's rights in women. Tiwi fathers, as suggested above, had taken away from the clan the right to make marriage decisions for newly born female members of the clan. As mechanisms validating this success of father's rights 584 592 614

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

staged and this was usually sufficient to incapacitate the offender and make him decide to move—at least for a while—into some other district. The group thus hastily convened to mete out public justice seldom numbered more than sixty or seventy people (seven or eight households) and having been convened *ad hoc* would remain camped together only for the forty-eight hours or less needed to deal with the emergency.

Joint Activities

This discussion of the alternative lines of action open to an outraged household head enables us to specify the relatively rare occasions during the year when the dull, quiet, day-by-day, food-gathering routines of the dispersed household camps were interrupted by events that required many households to gather together in one place and indulge in joint action. Foremost among these occasions were big funerals and the *kolema* ceremonial, both of which were mentioned above. These were the main religious events of the year, full of dancing, singing, wailing, and excitement. The excitement was the psychological result of so many people being together at the same time, a rare experience in the life of any Tiwi. Since the *kolema* ceremonial was an annual event and even the most enthusiastic funeral goer did not attend more than three or four really big funerals in the course of a year, we may reckon that even an old and important man, much concerned with ritual observances, would probably find himself a participant in such crowd activities on not more than some six occasions per year. For less important men and for women and children the number of such occasions was less than six. The *kolema* ceremonial lasted two weeks or more, big funerals, even when they became the occasion for carrying on other public business, did not last more than four or five days each. Hence we may reckon an average of about a week each for the half-dozen times a really big man spent in the company of a sizable crowd of fellow tribesmen, giving a total annual average of about six or seven weeks at most out of every fifty-two—or a little less than 10 percent of the year spent by an old important man in large ceremonial activities or what Durkheim calls the collective life of the tribe.

In addition there were the smaller gatherings, such as the funerals of younger men and most women, and the calling together of a number of households to settle a dispute in the manner we have described above. These were collective occasions also but they brought together a considerably smaller crowd. A really big man's funeral was likely to draw over three hundred people or even as much as one-third of the whole tribe.[4] Not only did many

[4] Tamboo's funeral in May 1929 (he died in the previous August) drew practically the full band membership (men, women, and children) of the four Bathurst Island bands; almost all the Munupula; many Mandiimbula; and large delegations from the remaining three bands. With such a crowd, an actual head count was difficult, especially of the children, but there must have been over four hundred people present. Needless to say, excitement was intense; more fights occurred, more insults were exchanged, more ancient feuds revived and new ones started, and more food consumed than at any funeral in living memory. At least that was the opinion of Tamboo's chief mourners, but since it was they who threw the party and had to pay for it, they may have been biased.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Not only did many

people come to such a funeral to express their kinship with, and pay their respects to, the deceased, but as mentioned above, many men with disputes to settle or fights to pick let such matters ride until the next big funeral was called and then took advantage of the large crowd to provide the necessary witnesses for the transaction of the outstanding legal business. Gatherings of many households for purely legal affairs, without funerals or *kolema* ceremonial as the main *raison d'etre* for the gathering, were comparatively rare and when they did occur they were usually called by one man, to settle one case only, and hence did not promote the attendance of very many households. Similarly, the funerals of most women and of younger and therefore less important men drew together at most ten or twelve households and a few other individuals, so that the crowd was usually not above one hundred people at the most. A single *ad hoc* legal duel, even when an episode in a long-drawn out and notorious dispute, seldom drew more than this number. Duels always attracted some spectators who came for the excitement, even though not personally involved, provided of course they were camped somewhere in the vicinity.

527 571 619 764 627

This second type of collective gathering, of which the smaller funerals and the single duels were the main occasions, might then require the attendance of a household head, accompanied by some or all of his household members, perhaps five or six times a year. These gatherings would each last less than forty-eight hours, and since the people the household head met at them would mostly be people of his own band or of closely adjoining bands, the excitement of seeing unfamiliar faces—people not seen for over a year perhaps—would be absent. We may reckon that attendance at these smaller, more localized gatherings, and the participation in group activity which they entailed, took up two more weeks, all told, out of the yearly round. When these two weeks are added to the six or seven already estimated for the time spent by a busy public man at the large gatherings, we find that even the busiest and most gregarious senior elders spent less than ten weeks out of the fifty-two in collective activity outside their immediate households.

To complete the list of occasions which called for joint activity by the members of several households, we must include the joint kangaroo hunt. This activity was very localized and very spasmodic, occurring only when and where conditions were right and somebody felt sufficiently energetic to organize it. Much of the Tiwi country is a mixture of dense scrub and relatively open savannah; kangaroo are relatively easy to hunt in the latter but very hard to get near in the denser types of vegetation. The native method of hunting was based on getting as close as possible to the animal before it saw or heard the hunter. If it detected the hunter, it fled, and no Tiwi in his senses ever threw a spear or a throwing stick at a moving kangaroo.[8] Only when the animal was standing still and the hunter was close enough to aim carefully at a vital part was the spear thrown. At certain seasons of the year, particularly after the end of the wet and early in the dry season, many sections of good kangaroo country gave very poor hunting returns because the grass had become

224 [137] 221 224

[8] The up-and-down movement of a hopping kangaroo in flight makes it an extraordinarily difficult target even for skilled white hunters armed with shotguns or rifles.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

221 so high and rank that the hunters were unable to get near the kangaroo. In
224 this event, a senior man of the district might decide to convene a grass-
[554] burning posse. To it he invited more or less whom he pleased, so long as he included other household heads of the same band and other senior men from outside it whose ancestry gave them some claim to be invited. At the appointed time the hunters assembled, perhaps ten or fifteen adult men, with younger ones doing the actual hunting and the older ones supervising. The women and children acted as beaters; the grass was set on fire over a big area, and the kangaroos rounded up and killed while dazed by the smoke and the noise. The bag of animals killed in such a concerted hunt sometimes ran higher than one kangaroo per participant, so that every man, woman, and child present was able to gorge himself on kangaroo meat for a day or two. This sudden glut of meat was not, however, the main object of the burning, but a dividend. Even though few kangaroos were caught in the smoke and confusion, the burned-over area would provide good visibility for kangaroo hunting during the rest of the dry season, since the new tender shoots that sprang from the burned-over grass were a favorite food of the kangaroo and served to lure them out of the denser scrub areas and the mangrove swamps where hunting them was always difficult.

224 These occasional joint hunts, like the occasional small fights and the
● 57 funerals of unimportant people, usually brought together only the members
619 of households who lived relatively close to one another, so that while they are included in the list of events which interrupted household isolation, they did not, as a rule, involve any interaction between members of any wider group than the neighboring households. Perhaps the whole matter of activity beyond the household and the band can be illustrated best by an actual case.
159 We have already mentioned the venerable Tu'untalumi, an old man resident
888 among the Tiklauila, who as late as 1929, and despite the fact that by then the Tiklauila were the band most subject to mission influence, nonetheless had a list of twenty-one wives. In other ways besides his record of polygamy, Tu'untalumi was a pillar of the old culture. Though past seventy and much too old to hunt, he was a most enthusiastic and indefatigable song and dance composer, and in his zest for ceremonial he made a point of attending every big festival and as many smaller ones as he could get to. The whole tribe respected Tu'untalumi as a big man, liked him as a person, admired him for his steadfast support of Tiwi traditions, and most of all accepted him as a sort of leading authority on ritual matters. When dubious or disputed points of ceremonial were submitted to him, his decision, given clearly and firmly and with much citation of precedent and the distant past, was accepted without demur. His presence at a gathering located outside his own district was always a source of gratification to the household which had convened the gathering. The fact that Tu'untalumi had seen fit to attend not only made that household feel important but also provided its members with a technical guide and arbiter for unofficial help in running the rituals. The old man loved going to parties—and he was always a welcome guest—and years of such activity had given him such a sturdy, wiry constitution that despite his near-seventy-five years he could

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 887 [166] *Middle of October*: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[7] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much [578 764] involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing.

[881 574] *End of October*: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

[881] *End of January*: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

End of February: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, 571 even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

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[7] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing [17] [548] to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeiangi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The mobility of people other than household heads was much less. 562
Women and children could move only with the permission, and usually in the 571
company, of their lord and master. Occasionally old and trusted wives might
be sent, unsupervised, on a journey by their husbands or their brothers, [203]
usually to carry messages and bring back gossip, but young wives were never trusted to be out of sight either of the husband or of elderly female supervisors. Young men were less subject to their fathers' orders and hence were fairly free to come and go as they pleased, but the universal suspicion which all husbands bore toward wandering young men put severe restrictions on their mobility and prevented them attaching themselves to any household or camp in which they did not have some close relative.

The fact, then, that a man like Tu'untalumi was (in Tiwi terms) very 159
mobile did not necessarily mean that members of his household shared his 222
degree of mobility. When he took most of his large household with him on his 467
journeys away from home, as he often did, it was always because he was going 527
a considerable distance and was traveling slowly, living off the country as he
went. In such cases he liked to have a large retinue to feed him on the way
and also to permit him to entertain in fitting style when he arrived. For
while it was true that at a funeral or at an initiation the relatives of the de- [574]
ceased or of the novices were supposed to take care of the feeding of all the
visitors, nonetheless, wealthy and generous men like Tu'untalumi believed in taking along with them a bevy of young wives, with a couple of efficient elderly widow-wives in charge of them, to contribute to the food-getting and
food-preparing activities. Of course the supervision of the young wives' morals [837
in the strange environment was often difficult, especially in the hectic at- 593]
mosphere of a big ceremonial, but this worry was compensated for by the fact that the visitor who came so attended was contributing a number of extra food providers to the labor force of the harassed hosts and thus making a generous gesture, and also by the fact that such a visitor was not dependent upon the hospitality provided by the hosts. Having his own food-producing unit with him, he could live better and stay longer than if he had come alone or only as one of a party of men. In this respect, as in so many others, a Tiwi household head's decision had to be reached by balancing against one another the two competing motives of, on the one hand, the desire to eat well and, on the other, the desire to keep his young wives safe from prowling bachelors. Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest man of the Malauila band, usually decided not only to leave his wives at home but also not even to go himself. But Ki-in-kumi was a gloomy, pessimistic old man. Tu'untalumi usually decided to do the thing in style, travel with a large retinue, have all the comforts of home while in strange districts, and take his chances on the strange bachelors. He clearly believed that a good booming ceremony with lots to eat and himself in the center directing the dancing was well worth the risk of a few of his young
wives being seduced off-stage. Men like Ki-in-kumi thought Tu'untalumi an [184]
old fool for not leaving his young wives at home, and Tu'untalumi probably thought that old Ki-in-kumi might as well be dead, especially since his death would be the occasion for a really magnificent funeral.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 Mothers' brothers, in turn, were unable to endow their nephews any earlier
557 because they as younger men had been caught in the same trap. The only way
584 out was by deals in which older men and younger men collaborated. Ideally
604 such collaborative efforts should always have been between mothers' brothers and sisters' sons, but amid such fierce competition and endless log rolling this was not possible, and in many cases the mother's-brother—sister's-son relationship was a *result* of collaboration between older man and younger man rather than a cause. The bond arose from the deal rather than from their original kinship, particularly when the two men involved were very close in age.

The collaborative deals between older men and younger men were essentially designed to compensate for the older man's inability to bestow a young wife upon the younger man at a reasonable age. As was stated before, not until he was about forty-five would the older man have a free or unencumbered daughter. By then his younger collaborator and satellite had attracted the attention of older and wealthier men with many unencumbered daughters. After
159 performing all his services to Inglis, young Tomitari had not had to depend
557 on him for his first bestowal. A wealthier man than Inglis had reached over
571 Inglis' head, so to speak, and bought Tomitari's allegiance by the bestowal of
584 a young wife who provided Tomitari with a free daughter several years earlier than any child the daughters of Inglis could provide. With this first unencumbered daughter, Tomitari promptly bid for the allegiance of Gitjara. Put in terms of allegiances, Tomitari had from 1914 until about 1923 been the henchman of Inglis. During those years he passed from about age thirty to age forty, and his main patron was Inglis, who passed from about forty-four and on the fringes of the elder group to about fifty-four and accepted among the elder group. Then—and this was typical of the shift of allegiance that occurred in most life careers—a senior elder more wealthy in wives and daughters than Inglis bid for Tomitari's allegiance, and Tomitari became his henchman. Five years later, in 1928, Tomitari was a coming junior elder in Rangu and a man of influence in his own right. His oldest bestowed wife had already borne him a daughter whom he used to make Gitjara *his* henchman. The three wives (daughters A, B, and C) of Inglis were nearing the stage when they would join his household and he had other bestowals from other quarters. His relation to Inglis was no longer that of henchman but of rival, since they were now both successful elders in the same band and competitors in the struggle to make younger men dependent on them. Far from bestowing any more daughters on Tomitari, Inglis was bestowing his daughters (now plentiful) on men of Gitjara's generation (though not on Gitjara). Having more free daughters than Tomitari, he had more men of that generation to patronize, but since Inglis was sixty and Tomitari only forty-five, time was obviously on the side of the latter.

557 Thus the crux of the Tiwi system of influence-satelliteship-marriage ar-
571 rangement-wealth centered around what happened to a man in his thirties. This
584 is what we meant when we said earlier that old men with many daughters bestowed them on young men who looked to them like "comers." Old men

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

with many free daughters were usually men well over fifty. "Comers" were men in their thirties. In so choosing the "comers," the old and wealthy men reached right over the junior elders and the forty-year-old group down to the ranks of the young operators. In this way we may say that the real power group, the successful old gerontocrats, chose their own successors. They chose young men twenty or more years younger than themselves (as Ki-in-kumi chose Padimo) because men at such an age were not rivals or competitors. A man so chosen in his thirties could be already powerful and fairly wealthy by his middle forties (like Tomitari in 1928) and very wealthy in his fifties. Such men went up fast because of their selection by the group in power. Those not so chosen had to go up the hard way by accumulating what position and influence they could by manipulations of the few available females not controlled by the wealthy old men. The "haves" left a small minority of women available to the "have-not" men to keep them quiet, but the great majority of females were concentrated in the hands of a few old men and these old men chose their own successors. Thus the Tiwi system actually deserves to be called a primitive oligarchy as much as it deserves to be called a gerontocracy. It was run by a few old men who ruled it not so much because they were old but because as young men they had been clever and then had lived long enough to reap the rewards of their cleverness. These rewards made up Tiwi wealth—many wives, much leisure, many daughters to bestow, many satellites and henchmen, and much power and influence over other people and tribal affairs.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

therefore the question of who threw the spear that wounded her gave rise to a new series of wrangles which had to be integrated into all the old ones. A man who had been quietly sitting, minding his own business and having no quarrels with anybody, would suddenly leap into the center of the stage and announce that the damaged old lady was his mother and therefore he wanted the hide of the rat that had damaged her, and a whole new argument was in progress. 628

If the person wounded in the first flurry of spear throwing was a senior male, that similarly led the arguments off in some new direction since his kinsmen in *both* war parties felt compelled to support him or revenge his wound or inflict a wound on his wounder. Frequently it appeared that the original matters of dispute, which had brought the two war parties together in the first place, were forgotten and lost in the new disputes and fights that originated on the field of battle. Such a view was supported by the frequency with which one found at the end of the day that the main casualties and the main headline performers had been people who had gone to the field of battle in the morning with no quarrel with anybody, and not even wearing white paint. Even the most peaceful spectator in the most remote corner of the gallery was likely to find himself in the center of the ring before the day was over at a Tiwi "battle." 578 628

Despite this apparent confusion and near anarchy of procedure, however, the main outlines were quite clear. The bands were not firm political entities and therefore could not do battle, as bands, with each other. Everybody, on both sides, was interrelated in the same kinship system. An angry old Tiklauila, abusing and throwing spears at an angry old Mandiimbula, might have as the basis of his complaint the fact that the Mandiimbula father had promised but not delivered one of his daughters. Since Tiwi bestowals were from mother's brother to sister's son, the spear throwing was patently a case of a sister's son abusing his mother's brother, and the fact that the two men belonged to different bands was not germane to their dispute. The angry Tiklauila elder could not demand support from other Tiklauila *as Tiklauila* in the case at issue for it involved a dispute between kinsmen whose band affiliations were irrelevant to the subject matter. Mainly for this reason the so-called war party of one band against another band turned out to be only a loose collection of individuals, each with his own case to argue, who found it convenient, and safer, to travel together into the territory of another band and argue all their individual cases on the same day at the same place. Tiwi interpersonal relations were primarily kin relations between members of all bands; territorial loyalties were shifting ones, temporary and necessarily quite subordinate to kin loyalties. Hence warfare, in the sense of pitched battles between groups aligned through territorial loyalties, did not occur and could not occur among the Tiwi. 621 628 602 619

The confusion of the so-called battle itself was also due to the primacy of kinship and friendship ties. When a man with a grievance started his harangue on a battlefield, he was never quite sure of what support he would get or where it would come from. He was pretty much on his own, even though 602 628 571

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

571 602 628 he had arrived there as a member of a large war party. This situation stemmed from the coexistence, on the one hand, of the intricate web of kinship that united everybody present and made the problem of who would support whom unpredictable enough, and, on the other, the intricate network of deals and promises and personal alliances and obligations that every senior Tiwi man had woven inside the kinship system. A Tiwi elder did not, for example, have one category of relatives called his mother's brothers; he had at least three different categories of mother's brothers. There were those mother's brothers who had given him nothing, those who had given him wives, and those who had promised him a wife but were dragging their feet on delivery, or even trying to renege on their promise. In pressing a case against one of this third category, an elder might quite conceivably alienate some of his mother's brothers of the second category. Nor could he be sure of the support of even his own brothers, since they were certainly cultivating, and possibly undercutting him with, the same donors of daughters as he was involved with. Perhaps the nondelivery, which was the whole basis of his case against the mother's brother, had been instigated by his own brother trying to engineer a rebestowal of the girl to him. Because of the two networks, that of formal kinship obligations and that of marriage deals, two Tiwi seniors engaged in a dispute had no impartial body to whom they could submit their arguments about breach of contract. Disputes between a young man and an elder could [674] be submitted to the publicly witnessed duel, since these were not breaches of contract but cases of trespass by the young men, and as such were crimes. [626] Impartial public opinion upheld the old men and punished the young men every time. The old men's arguments with each other, however, could not be [686] so adjusted, since they involved marriage deals (as distinct from seduction) and in marriage deals everybody was involved and nobody was impartial. Where any senior stood on any marriage deal in dispute depended on how that [557] deal fitted into his own conniving. In that area of life, every adult man had his own axes to grind and a disinterested group of umpires was impossible to find.

628 578 Thus Tiwi battles had to be the confused, disorderly, inconclusive things they always were. They usually lasted all day, during which about two-thirds of the elapsed time was consumed in violent talk and mutual abuse between constantly changing central characters and satellites. The remaining third of the time was divided between duels involving a pair of men who threw spears at each other until one was wounded, and brief flurries of more general weapon throwing involving perhaps a dozen men at a time, which ended whenever somebody, even a spectator, was hit. As a result of this full day of violence, perhaps a few of the cases would be settled that night—by a father handing over his delayed daughter, or a man with a disputed wife relinquishing her to her rightful husband—but when the war party left next day to return home, the number of cases settled was likely to be less than the number of new feuds, grievances, and injuries that had originated during the day of battle. For not only did the participants carry away from the battlefield a vivid memory of all the physical wounds, intended or accidental, inflicted by whom

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

To avoid constant use of the awkward phrase "mourning ceremony," we refer to it as the funeral though it took place some considerable time after the burial of the body. How long a time elapsed between the burial and the funeral depended upon the importance of the dead person. The more important the deceased, the longer it took after his or her burial to prepare for the funeral, both ceremonially and practically. Babies frequently had no funeral ceremonies at all, especially if they died very young and unnamed. Children were given small funerals, held within a month or so after the death, and the people present were merely the members of the local households. Young adult men and all adult women had funerals of medium size, and old men had the biggest funerals of all. Big funerals were rarely held in the wet season because of the height of the grass and bush and the consequent difficulty of travel. The season after the end of the rains (April-May-June) was a favorite time for funerals since by then people were moving again and there was then an accumulated backlog of funerals to be held for people who had died late in the previous dry season or during the wet. The mourning ceremonies of two or more people were sometimes held together; this obviously required that they be buried close together, although they need not have died at the same time. Seeking as usual to increase his importance in the public eye, a man might hold the medium-sized funeral of one of his children at the same time and place as the big funeral of an important elder—provided their graves were close together—even though two or three months had separated the two deaths.

The actual burial of the body immediately after death was usually a small affair attended only by whatever people happened to be in the vicinity. But some Tiwi ancients were on their last legs for months before they finally expired, and it was typical of Tiwi psychology that people should maneuver to be present when a death occurred. Until the anthropologist understood that even death had its political aspects, he could not understand why the Tiwi were always so anxious to hang around the camp of an old man who was taking an awfully long time to die. Since so very little happened at the actual time of death, this desire to be on the spot seemed merely morbid curiosity.[8] But it was not. A death immediately divided the whole tribe into two groups: a small group of relatives who automatically became mourners and therefore in a state of strict taboo, and the rest who were not sufficiently close to the deceased to have to assume a state of *pukimani*. The mourners, being *pukimani*, could do scarcely anything except weep and wail and gash their heads with stone axes. They could not touch the body or wrap it in bark; nor could they dig the grave, nor put the body in, nor fill in the hole. They had to ask non-mourners to carry out these tasks and thus became obligated to those non-

[8] How else was one to interpret the reluctance of Hart's party to move on, after spending three weeks waiting for old Tamboo to die, and the old man still lingered on? "Let's wait another day; maybe he'll die tomorrow" was the invariable response to suggestions that we move. "And if he does die, what will happen?" "Nothing; we'll move on then." But this was early in the fieldwork period, before Hart realized the all-pervasive character of Tiwi opportunism.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 557 571 764 mourners for their services. Death, in other words, incapacitated the relatives, so the sonrelatives swarmed in to "help" them—that is, take advantage of their incapacity. A man who could say, "I helped to dig your mother's grave" had a hold for the rest of his life over the man or men to whom he could say it. Such a hold was not as strong, of course, as that of a man who could say, "I helped you get your first bestowed wife," but the difference of obligation was only a difference of degree. The Tiwi were always "helping" each other, but the man who was "helped" therefore "owed" something to his helper. At deaths, mourners mourned and nonmourners did the work; therefore the mourners "owed" the nonmourners, and such debts were carried on the same mental ledgers as other debts, such as marriage debts.

182 571 765 [764] When deaths occurred suddenly and unexpectedly, the mourners had to choose their helpers for the burial from the relatively few people present at the time, and were thus often forced to become obligated to men they did not much relish being under obligation to. At the funerals the same bookkeeping mentality prevailed, but since these were not held until months after the death and burial, the chief mourners had time to select their helpers with care and political finesse. Satellites were very useful in this connection, since a man could ask his satellites to perform the necessary ceremonial services and thus get a return from them for the debts of gratitude they already owed him. This was one reason why a skillful Tiwi politician did not by any means select only close kinsmen for satelliteship. A death which made him *pukimani* was likely to make his close kinsmen *pukimani* also, hence he needed some satellites who were not close kinsmen.

182 557 571 765 [462] In the interval between the burial and the funeral, the chief mourner, on behalf of all the mourners but fairly independently if he were a big man, allocated all the jobs that had to be done in preparation for the funeral. Everybody who came had to be fed by the mourners, and the collection and hoarding of the necessary food devolved on the women of the mourning households. Thus the mourners provided the food, but everything else necessary had to be prepared by nonmourners. The chief item among the ceremonial necessities was the graveposts. The prohibition on mourners approaching the body and the grave extended to the posts, and therefore the cutting, carving, erecting on the grave, and painting of these central features of the funeral ceremonies had to be carried out by nonmourners, "asked to cut the posts" by the chief mourner. Here there was much room for influence maneuvers. A big man acting as chief mourner for a dead relative wanted the funeral to be as lavish as possible, to show his own importance. But the more important the [554] nonmourners he selected to cut the posts for him, the more he owed them for their services. Such a request was in the nature of asking a favor, and to ask a favor was to put oneself in a subordinate position, in terms of influence. The Tiwi power orientation was so ingrained that, even when acting as chief mourner, an elder could not avoid making his requests and allocating the ceremonial tasks so as to gain ground if possible, or at least not lose any ground, in the influence and prestige race.

765 The mourning ceremonies, though prolonged for several days of con-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as 765
ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a
sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own
dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major 535
chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out 765
again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus.
Most of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually
owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to [424]
death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial
occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special 765
to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony,
when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts
and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive
the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners'
state of *pukimani*.

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has 182
been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions
of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious 557
occasions. The connecting link was the state of *pukimani* in which death put 571
the relatives. Men in a state of *pukimani* were at a disadvantage in social and 765
political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things
for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not
afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they [577]
would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the
spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for
the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts
came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and
thus their own *pukimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to
them for many months, came to an end.

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, 881
which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females
there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and 571
elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the
status of *Marukumarni*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and
did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the
ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than
himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for
the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring
it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests.
The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials
or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems;
indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the
beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who 881
were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation 607
of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely [605]

177 them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now
592 only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that
159 his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few un-
177 comfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped
592 with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose
[736 deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother
968] had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased
[584 younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Car-
589] mel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were
[607] two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1]
[602] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

177 We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led
by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a list-
162 ing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration
571 in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent.
[764 Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had
604 daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the
584 "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-
177

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

by the Japanese issue, since it tempted the conservative with several wives to violate all the old tribal sanctions by renting out his wives, and it provided the Mission adherent radicals with a grand opportunity to pose as the real defenders of the old culture and to charge the old polygamists with being the real renegades from the ancient ways.

It can be easily guessed how high feelings ran on these issues and how hotly they were debated when a number of Tiwi gathered together. But on neither of these issues or on any aspect of them did Antonio show any signs of leadership. He accumulated wives but always apologized in a rather deprecating and apple-polishing way when he met the missionaries, and spent part of his time hanging around the Mission despite the contemptuous attitude which the missionaries adopted toward him. He thus contrasted very unfavorably with some of his contemporaries, notably one Dooley who, having been for years a one-wife man and a Mission favorite, inherited a second wife at around the age of forty. Dooley's decision was clear-cut and highly spectacular. He accepted the second wife, shook the dust of the Mission station from his feet and never set foot near it again, taking up again the traditional life of a Tiwi elder, deep in the bush, with his two wives and later additions, ignoring all white innovations, even tobacco.[4] Dooley's uncompromising behavior was greatly admired by the tribe but few had the strength of character to emulate him, certainly not Antonio.

On the Japanese issue Antonio was just as vacillating. Prodded by others to make a statement he would in ringing tones denounce as disgraceful and scandalous the behavior of the Yeimpi wife-renters, but on his visits to the Yeimpi country ostensibly "to see for himself what was going on" he shared eagerly in the proceeds of vice which his friends there offered him and was even heard on a few occasions to wonder aloud why the Japanese always went to the Yeimpi country when there were plenty of secluded beaches in Tiklauila country. Instantly challenged, "Would you want the Japanese to come here?" "Would you rent your wives to them if they did?" poor Antonio quickly turned it into a feeble joke, saying deprecatingly, "Oh no, no, no. I just wondered why they always go to those ugly Yeimpi women?"

In summary we might say that Antonio's personal behavior appeared to be that of a man pushed into a position rather too big for him to fill. He was not by nature particularly aggressive or domineering, but as the eldest son of Turimpi he was constantly being pushed by public opinion onto the center of the stage, whereas he would have been much happier if public opinion had left him alone to be an ordinary, average member of the crowd. The role he was called on by his status position to play seemed to give him little or no pleasure, little or no personal satisfaction. Such a view of his "personality" is supported by the fact that when alone in the bush with his own family and away from the society of his peers Antonio was relaxed and at ease. As Durkheim pointed out, the basic factor in Australian social psychology is that men spend a great part of their lives hunting and collecting in the bush, completely out of physical contact with all people except members of their own households,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

usually wives and children only, but this life lived in an isolated household is broken in upon at intervals by short interludes of the "collective life," when members of numbers of households gather together for ceremonies, legal proceedings, fights and initiations. If we may call these two types of living the public life and the private life of the adult male Australian, then we may say that Antonio was very happy in private life and uncomfortable in public life. The two activities which made him happiest were playing with his children and hunting with his dogs. When left alone by society to do these two things Antonio was a kindly, patient, gentle, good-natured and relaxed man, but in all social relations with other adult men he was nervous and uncertain of himself. One might hazard the opinion that it was because children and dogs made no great demands upon him that he was happy and at ease with them, but people he found very trying since they were always expecting him to "take a stand" or to make a decision and this was something he had no talent for, something which did not "come naturally" to him, and something which gave him no satisfaction. Turimpi's mantle had fallen on a man who just wanted the world to let him alone, who preferred his home, his family and his dogs to any rewards which public life could give him.

159 [571]

MARIANO

Mariano was first encountered in Port Darwin before the writer had got to the Tiwi. Finding me waiting for transportation to the Islands, Mariano offered to come with me and act as my chief interpreter and informant. As he appeared a very intelligent and mature member of the tribe, I promptly hired him. Or so I thought at the time. Events were to prove that what had happened was that Mariano had appropriated me. For Mariano was (in his own opinion, at least) the only possible person fit to escort and advise a white man visiting the Tiwi. He had created something of a monopoly in the job of white man's escort and adviser. The beginning of this not unusual native profession went back, in his case, to the foundation of the Mission station. When the missionaries arrived in 1911 and began to build their mission houses Mariano became almost immediately the principal go-between of Mission and natives. As far as the situation of 1911 can now be reconstructed the factors operating to select Mariano for this position were merely suitability of social status, availability and willingness to undertake it. As already mentioned, the Mission was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island. This was Tiklauila territory and at that time the dominant family among the Tiklauila was that of Turimpi. Of Turimpi's sons, Antonio, the eldest, was about 28 or 29, Mariano was about 25 and Louis, the third son, was a youth not yet 20. Antonio's role as eldest son was already fixed, Mariano's, as second son, was still flexible. Antonio was personally unaggressive except when forced into taking a strong stand, Mariano (we may speculate) was already more forceful and more prone to draw attention to himself by aggressive behavior.[8] Mariano was just ready in 1911 to emerge from the age group of young men who should, according to Tiwi ideas, be seen and not heard into the age group of "junior adult men" who

123 159 [115] 159 [797] [561]

582 and for Tiwi fathers' statements that they can only "find" children
614 in their own country.

Today, with nonlocalized sibs, both the sib and the local group are
582 considered in the exchange of woman, which is direct with reference
614 to sibs but indirect with reference to local groups. Such exchange may in some cases involve sibs and countries or *tungarima*, in others
621 sibs and districts or subcountries. I found that approximately 50 per cent of local-group exchanges were between *tungarima* and 50 per cent within the *tungarima*.

With local-group exchange and unilateral cross-cousin marriage
582 preferred and predominant, we have an indirect but circular marriage exchange system. We cannot, however, consider the entire society as being involved in a single marriage exchange system. The system is best seen from the point of view of a single male Ego, whose marriages are systematized according to rules which are society wide, but whose actual marriages are determined by past affiliations which can be and often are variable with respect to sib and local-group exchange.

That the Tiwi system is Ego-oriented is most evident when a
554 male Ego dies and his relatives foregather for his funeral ceremonies (Goodale 1959). If such an Ego has lived a full life, he will be affiliated
● 571 at the time of his death with a number of social groups. He is affili-
764 ated by birth with a matrilineal sib. By his father's death he is affiliated with a local group and a *tungarima*, which may or may not be the same as the group with whom he currently resides; in either case he is affiliated with the latter and will be buried among them. Through marriage, Ego is likewise affiliated with one or more additional sibs and local groups.

Only those persons who belong to the several above-mentioned
601 groups with which the deceased is actually affiliated are expected to
764 honor him by attending his funeral ceremony. When death occurs, these individuals are terminologically reclassified into four cate-
602 gories, from the members of each of which similar behavior is expected. The spouse and spouse's siblings become *ambarui*. Cross-cousins, MoFa, FaMo, BrDaCh (ws), and SiSoCh (ms) all become *yempi*. Siblings and parallel cousins, MoMo, FaFa, BrSoCh (ws), and SiDaCh (ms), regardless of their sib affiliations, are classed together as *pudawi*. All kinsmen in the first ascending and first descending generations are classed as *unandawi*. Since, however, there is a distinct role differentiation between Fa, FaSi, and SoCh (ms), on the one hand, and Mo, MoBr, and SiCh (ms), on the other, I suspect there may be a terminological distinction which escaped me, inasmuch as these "funeral terms," with the exception of *ambarui*, are no longer in use.

Conclusion

582 In this paper I have considered the form and nature of the varying types of contracts that lead to marriage among the Tiwi. I have

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

to the husband of the pregnant woman. We carefully say "the husband of the pregnant woman" rather than "the father of the child" because the right resided in the male head of the household at the time of the birth. Although he was ordinarily both the father of the child and the husband of its mother, there were naturally occasions when a child was born after the death of its father, in which case the right of betrothal unquestionably belonged to the mother's new husband. The clearest statement of this rule is to say that the right of betrothal of all newly born females resided in the husband of the mother at the time of the girl's birth. "He who named the child bestowed it." 584 851 593

In most human societies the proportion of males and females in the population is approximately equal, except in the older age-groups where women predominate owing to their tendency to live longer than men. The Tiwi conformed to this norm biologically, but their cultural insistence that all females of every age be married resulted in further unusual features of the domestic situation. No such compulsory marriage was required or expected of males. Hence, the total female population, but only part of the male population, was married. Mathematically this permitted, indeed required, a high degree of plural marriage. The men who held the right to betroth—namely, the fathers of the female babies—could, within certain limits imposed by the kinship system, bestow their about-to-be-born or newly born daughters where they wished, and they certainly did not bestow them on about-to-be-born or newly born males. On the contrary, they bestowed them, generally speaking, where some tangible return was to be anticipated. Put bluntly, in Tiwi culture daughters were an asset to their father, and he invested these assets in his own welfare. He therefore bestowed his newly born daughter on a friend or an ally, or on somebody he wanted as a friend or an ally. Such a person was apt to be a man near his own age or at least an adult man, and hence perhaps forty years or so older than the newly born baby bestowed upon him as a wife. Or, the father might bestow an infant daughter on a man—or some close relative of such a man—who had already bestowed an infant daughter upon him, thus in effect swapping infant daughters. Obviously, the fathers who did the swapping, even if they were not quite the same age themselves, were bound to be many years older than the infant wives they thus received from each other. Or, thirdly, a father looking for a suitable male upon whom to bestow his infant daughter's hand might decide to use her as old-age insurance—in which case he selected as her future husband not one of the older adult men who would be old when he himself was old, but a likely looking youngster "with promise"; that is, a youth in his late twenties or thirties who showed signs of being a good hunter and a good fighting man, and who was clearly on his way up in tribal power and influence. Such a youth, in his late twenties at the time of betrothal, would, with luck, be in his prime as "a big man" in about twenty years—a time when the father of the infant daughter would be getting old and decrepit and much in need of an influential son-in-law who was obligated to him. 162 [581] 595] [584] 593 582 581 [562] [572] [606] [888]

There were other bases upon which infant daughters were betrothed, 582 593

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 O120 Tiwi O120

pressed laughter on the other side of the fire as he recalled to himself the amusing incidents of the day. Even when alone with his thoughts he was still laughing. This suggests that Tip's gaiety was "natural" rather than contrived for effect, and there is support for the suggestion in the fact that Tip was regarded as a poor hunter, because, as one critic put it, "He doesn't concentrate on killing the kangaroo but plays jokes on the kangaroo and makes a game out of hunting." Another indication that when alone he behaved in the same irresponsible manner that he exhibited in public. 159

The second ground that suggests that fun-loving and gaiety are not incompatible with increasing age and tribal status is the fact that there were many old and venerable Tiwi who loved fun and laughter just as Tipperary did. One such was Tu'untalumi, one of the most elderly of the Tiklauila, a man of weight, dignity and poise. He was a highly respected person, an expert in ceremonial performances and a rigid traditionalist in all things. But despite his age and dignity this man was as given to fun and laughter as Tip was. The main difference was that Tip's laughter was loud, boisterous and prankish; Tu'untalumi's jokes and quips were delivered in low, gentle tones and his laughter was dignified and restrained. But within the limitations imposed by his status he got as much fun and extracted as much humor out of life as Tip, illustrating the point that age and seniority in Tiwi do not at all necessarily mean sourness and lack of humor. Although the two were not related Tipperary played up to the old man and courted and valued his approval while Tu'untalumi clearly liked having Tip around him. They were kindred souls but separated by more than forty years of age. 157 522 561 159 522 572

As is probably the case in most cultures, so among the Tiwi—the genuinely gay person is popular. Tipperary though the next to youngest of Turimpi's sons was the one with most friends. Perhaps significantly, his friends were among both his seniors and juniors, but not among his brothers. Antonio was the only brother who sought Tip's company and this can be accounted for either by the fact that Antonio, when not harassed by his status, was an easy-going, friendly and none too intelligent man who laughed readily even when none too sure of what the joke was, or that he found Tip's company a relaxation from the cares of state. Of the other brothers, the self-righteous and puritanical Mariano considered Tip frivolous and deplored (or was jealous of) the tendency of white men to become fond of him. Louis actively disliked Tip perhaps because his love affairs were an obvious target for some of Tip's better quips. "Perhaps he is going into the bush to take a nap" was one of his comments when he saw Louis disappearing among the trees. With his full brother Bob, Tip had few close ties, perhaps because Bob spent much of his time in Darwin, but even more likely, one suspects, because Bob, an indefinite and colorless youngster, shrank from attracting public notice, whereas Tip was always drawing attention to himself, with the result that Bob to save himself embarrassment avoided his company. 159 593

Outside his siblings, Tipperary's gaiety earned him the liking and companionship of the younger men and made him a favorite younger man of some 159 522 572

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

of the oldest and most respected seniors, particularly of Tu'untalumi and those swayed by his opinion. It follows from this that Tip though given to jokes and pranks cannot be written off as merely a privileged buffoon. On the contrary his wit and gaiety earned him friends and his friends gave him influence out of proportion to his youth. Some insight into this is supplied by the shadow of the ubiquitous Louis. Tipperary, through the missionaries' efforts on behalf of monogamy, had obtained a wife at a much earlier age than would have been possible under pre-white conditions, and according to the women, who have their own sources of information about such things, Louis was strongly attracted by Tipperary's wife. Since Louis was not noted for restraint or self-discipline in these matters the obvious question was why he did not press his attention on her as he had done on numerous other women, including the wife of Tip's younger brother Bob. "Oh no, he doesn't dare chase after Tipperary's wife. The old men would be very angry if he did anything to her," was the reply of the old hags who were the local gossip columnists. This belief that the "old men" would undoubtedly protect Tip's wife while they had noticeably failed to protect Bob's wife from a similar threat (see below) is a pretty clear indication that the two young men had very different places in tribal estimation—a fact that in turn can be correlated with no status differential between them and leaves only the "personality" difference between the two men to account for it. Tip was popular with the control groups, Bob was not, therefore the control groups would support Tip because they liked him. They were indifferent toward Bob.[10]

To summarize Tipperary is relatively easy. He was a cheery, relaxed, fun-loving young man who enjoyed his own humor but enjoyed it all the more if it were shared by an appreciative audience. He was therefore gregarious, friendly, outgoing and extroverted. He would have been a good Rotarian or a better disk-jockey. Because of these traits he was noticed a great deal more by his elders than his age justified and the notice he received was usually favorable. He was popular in a way none of his brothers were, and because of this popularity was able to express opinions and exert influence to an extent unusual for one of his years. In a society where men under 30 are expected to be seen and not heard, Tip was constantly being heard. This was only possible because his natural gaiety and warmth prejudiced almost everybody in his favor. He was the sort of man about whom it is often said in our culture "he always makes a party go," or, "he is the sort of person who just naturally makes friends."

BOB

The youngest brother, Bob, needs only two words to describe him—complete nonentity. About 27 or 28 when I knew him and, because of the Mission's efforts, married a good deal younger than he would have been under pre-white conditions, Bob, whatever the occasion or circumstances, was always part of the background. Like many of the younger Tiwi he was inclined to spend part of each year in Darwin working for the white men, and by them he was regarded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tribe, owned also the country on the opposite side of Apsley Strait at the southeast corner of Bathurst, while the Malauila, the band in the northern half of Bathurst Island, conversely overlapped their ownership across the strait to take in a thin strip of coastline on the northwest corner of Melville. 423 621

These details illustrate the fact that the band was the land-owning, workaday, territorially organized group which controlled the hunting, the food supply, and the warfare. Until the white man arrived in force in the coastal waters of North Australia, the average Tiwi regarded the nine bands as the main functional units of his existence, and his loyalty to and identification with his band were given much greater opportunity for exercise than any loyalty to or identification with the whole Tiwi tribe. He did many things as a member of a band, but he did little as a member of a tribe. Only when an outsider turned up did he need to think of himself as a Tiwi, and outsiders were very rare. For the rest of the time he thought of himself as a member of his band, thought of his band as his people, and of his band territory as his country. 619 621

The Household

Since the band consisted of anything from one hundred to three hundred people, it could not live together in one place, except for very short periods of time. Hunting and gathering in almost any part of the world (except the northwest coast of America in pre-white times) require the human population to disperse itself very thinly over the countryside and live from day to day in small hunting and camping units. Such small primary groups are usually in one sense families and in another sense households, and this is the case among the Tiwi. We propose to call such units households rather than families for reasons that will soon become apparent. It is true that Tiwi "houses," especially in the long dry season (from March to October), were the flimsiest and most temporary of structures, but the group of people in question was the group who lived together day after day, hunted as a unit, pooled the results of their food getting, and ate and slept together. Functionally this group is identical with an American household, even though the "house" they used was nothing more than a few piled-up tree branches, used as shelter for a night or two and then abandoned. Like the American household also, the Tiwi household usually consisted of a man, his wife (or wives), and their children, though in many would also be included a few leftovers or extras, common to all cultures, such as bachelor uncles, visiting cousins, ancient widowers, and ambiguous "men who came to dinner" and were still there. (Tiwi households did not, however, include maiden aunts, female orphans, or ancient widows, since these could not exist in Tiwi culture.) [361] 592 [342] [574] [589]

Thus the Tiwi household was more or less the same thing as the Tiwi family group, but Tiwi family organization had such a number of unusual twists that we find it desirable to insist upon calling such a group the house-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply. The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece of meat or a dish of *kwoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

578 quietly slipped away to some other camp and was not seen the following
684 morning. The matter might then die, depending largely on whether the old husband wanted to carry it further or was content to drop it. If the young
[627] man was still in camp the following day, the old man might insist on a duel then and there, but it would take place only if the camp were large, since Tiwi duels were essentially legal actions and as such needed a sizable audience for their correct staging. Disputes between men, of which old men accusing young men of seduction were by far the most common type, usually remained at the verbal level until a large body of spectators was available. Since such large
[527] concentrations of many households were necessary for the performance of the
627] main collective ceremonials, it was at the time of these ceremonials that most verbal arguments were pushed by the aggrieved party to the action level.

554 During the dry season (April to November) when travel was easy, the
764 only collective ceremonials sufficiently important to draw together a large number of households were those held for the funerals of big men. In the wet season (November to March) when the grass and bush were high and travel was difficult, the main collective phases of the male initiation ceremonies were
[881] held (see Chapter 4), and these brought together for a few weeks at a time large numbers of households. The funeral ceremonies for adults were always held some considerable time after the death and burial of the deceased. How long a period elapsed between the death and the funeral ceremonies depended on the expected size of the gathering, and this figure correlated; at least roughly, with the importance of the deceased. Here again the overriding considera-
● 574 tion was food supply, since the chief mourners (that is, the deceased's closer
764 relatives) had to feed everybody who came to the funeral while the ceremonies
433 lasted, which might be almost a week. The more important the dead person the bigger the crowd at his funeral, and hence the greater the amount of time
182 needed by the mourners to arrange the catering. As much as a year might elapse between the death and the time when the mourners felt that the funeral arrangements—especially the food supply, but also the ceremonial preparation —were sufficiently well in hand to permit them to set a date and send out invitations for the funeral ceremonies. Funerals, therefore, were not held at regular times but were individually scheduled at times fixed by the chief mourners. They were always held in the dry season, however (except those of
[627] young children, to which nobody came in any case), and therefore an old man who had a dispute to settle or a case to try publicly could always depend on a few big funerals being held in the not very distant future which would provide the large audience necessary to make the settlement of the dispute legal. During the wet season the *kolema* phases of the initiation ceremonial
[881] always drew a large attendance; the annual time of these was pretty definitely fixed by the ripening of the *kolema* yams.

578 Hence the verbal wrangles in the small scattered encampments at night,
684 about seduction during the day, could have any one of three outcomes, depending largely upon the determination of the old man-accuser and the demeanor
627 of the young man-accused. If by the following morning the young man had disappeared and showed no further interest in the old man's menage, the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 887 [166]

Middle of October: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[1] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing.

[578 764]

[881 574]

End of October: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

[881]

End of January: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

End of February: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

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[1] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeimpi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.

[177] [548]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The mobility of people other than household heads was much less. Women and children could move only with the permission, and usually in the company, of their lord and master. Occasionally old and trusted wives might be sent, unsupervised, on a journey by their husbands or their brothers, usually to carry messages and bring back gossip, but young wives were never trusted to be out of sight either of the husband or of elderly female supervisors. Young men were less subject to their fathers' orders and hence were fairly free to come and go as they pleased, but the universal suspicion which all husbands bore toward wandering young men put severe restrictions on their mobility and prevented them attaching themselves to any household or camp in which they did not have some close relative. 562 571 [203]

The fact, then, that a man like Tu'untalumi was (in Tiwi terms) very mobile did not necessarily mean that members of his household shared his degree of mobility. When he took most of his large household with him on his journeys away from home, as he often did, it was always because he was going a considerable distance and was traveling slowly, living off the country as he went. In such cases he liked to have a large retinue to feed him on the way and also to permit him to entertain in fitting style when he arrived. For while it was true that at a funeral or at an initiation the relatives of the deceased or of the novices were supposed to take care of the feeding of all the visitors, nonetheless, wealthy and generous men like Tu'untalumi believed in taking along with them a bevy of young wives, with a couple of efficient elderly widow-wives in charge of them, to contribute to the food-getting and food-preparing activities. Of course the supervision of the young wives' morals in the strange environment was often difficult, especially in the hectic atmosphere of a big ceremonial, but this worry was compensated for by the fact that the visitor who came so attended was contributing a number of extra food providers to the labor force of the harassed hosts and thus making a generous gesture, and also by the fact that such a visitor was not dependent upon the hospitality provided by the hosts. Having his own food-producing unit with him, he could live better and stay longer than if he had come alone or only as one of a party of men. In this respect, as in so many others, a Tiwi household head's decision had to be reached by balancing against one another the two competing motives of, on the one hand, the desire to eat well and, on the other, the desire to keep his young wives safe from prowling bachelors. Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest man of the Malauila band, usually decided not only to leave his wives at home but also not even to go himself. But Ki-in-kumi was a gloomy, pessimistic old man. Tu'untalumi usually decided to do the thing in style, travel with a large retinue, have all the comforts of home while in strange districts, and take his chances on the strange bachelors. He clearly believed that a good booming ceremony with lots to eat and himself in the center directing the dancing was well worth the risk of a few of his young wives being seduced off-stage. Men like Ki-in-kumi thought Tu'untalumi an old fool for not leaving his young wives at home, and Tu'untalumi probably thought that old Ki-in-kumi might as well be dead, especially since his death would be the occasion for a really magnificent funeral. 159 222 462 527 [574] [837 593] [184]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

202 765 *palmajinis*, and cane armlets, *jairinis*. Then, taking a female *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaguni*, in his hand he seated himself within sight of the camp.

[301] [302] The local aborigines went out to welcome him, but on seeing the message stick and hearing the news, they mourned hysterically, cutting their heads [785] and beating themselves with sticks.

When the mourning died down, the aborigines gave the messenger a meal, [574] after which he returned to his own camp.

Although the general distribution of the totemic *purunkitas* has been dis- [126] continued in recent years, the aborigines who knew them well, made nine [184] examples for me. It would seem that each totemic place had its own particular [794] design, for when I showed the *purunkita* (Fig. 7D) to old *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, neither of whom had seen it previously, they recognized it immediately as a message stick which would have been sent to the *Mudungkala* totemic group of Buchanan Island, at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. However, other *purunkitas*, i.e. (Fig. 5C; Fig. 5F, G, H; and Fig. 6A, E) are still being used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

During the early days of our stay, when the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were about to start, three men, two of them, *Marawani* and *Uramatjina*, being the chief mourners, made a journey to the Bathurst Island people for the purpose of giving them a *purunkita* and telling them the news.

A few days later a Bathurst Island man returned with the message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H, and verbal instructions relating to the forthcoming burial rituals.

Although I did not see the message stick which *Marawani* and his com- [126] panions carried to Bathurst Island, I was able to make a rubbing of another (Fig. 7C), which was sent to the same locality on the death of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife.

Later, old *Tjamalampua* sent another message stick (Fig. 7A, B), to the men of the *Mudungkala* totem of Buchanan Island, asking for European goods and food to pay the "workers" at the final rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*.

Notification of Death

202 The designs on message stick, Fig. 7C, which an aboriginal carried to the 211 Bathurst Island people, together with the news of the death of *Nulatini*, did ×532 not, in any way, refer to the message that accompanied it, but to topographical details along the motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point on Apsley Straits.

The upper section, *d*, is the aboriginal camp at Snake Bay, and the indentations, *a*, *a*, are the rocks on its shores. The cross-hatched rectangle in the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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×532

Mudungkala totemic group. On the reverse side (Fig. 7B), the zig-zag line *a*, is the road between Snake Bay (upper end, *b*), and Cockle Point, in Apsley Strait (lower end, *c*). At *d*, *d*, is a request for two six-pound bags of sugar; *e*, for tea; *f*, sufficient printed calico for a loin cloth; *g*, three sticks of tobacco; *h*, a tin of tobacco; *j*, a pair of trousers; *k*, a pocket knife, and *m*, a pipe. The crossed lines at *n* indicate the camp of *Tjamalumpua*, the sender of the message stick.

Buchanan Island

The message stick (Fig. 7D) refers to the Jaulama jungle, about a half a mile south of our camp.

This stick was sent by the chief mourner of the Melville Island *pukamuni* group to the members of the ironwood, *Mudungkala*, totemic group of Buchanan Island, and adjacent Bathurst Islanders, notifying them of the oncoming burial rituals. The designs on the stick, however, have no relationship to either the ironwood tree group or the message they would receive. The short vertical lines at *c*, *c*, are living paper-bark trees, and the transverse lines, *a*, *a*, dead paper-bark trees in the Jaulama jungle. At *b*, are the roots of the trees, and at panels *c*, the vines of the edible *roko* yams on the branches of the paper-barks. The four panels, *d*, *d*, etc., are jungle trees, and *e* indicates their roots.

Invitation to Adjoining Tribe

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Fig. 6G, H, illustrates a message stick (not associated with a *pukamuni* ceremony) from the Melville Island people, inviting the aborigines on the Coburg Peninsula to pay them a visit and to perform some of their mainland ceremonies.[97]

On the obverse side, Fig. 6G, the parallel lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the shores of the Coburg Peninsula, and the zig-zag line, *b*, a mangrove creek in the same locality.

On the reverse side, 6H, the V-shaped patterns, *a*, indicate the men who have been invited from the Coburg Peninsula, and those in the lower section, *b*, the women. The short transverse lines at *c*, represent the Melville Island men who will act as hosts to the visitors.

Secular

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Fig. 5E is a secular message stick sent to an aboriginal, *Marawani*, who was on a visit to Darwin, asking him to bring back the following goods; *a*,

[97] This message stick suggests that, at the present time, members of the mainland tribes and those of the Tiwi, occasionally visit each other.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

775 the white man came, would have been its totemic place. As the *mopaditi* travels, flocks of screeching black cockatoos fly overhead to tell the spirits [825] at its birthplace, that a new *mopaditi* is coming to live with them. The local spirits, on its arrival, rush out to welcome the *mopaditi*, beating themselves over the head and shoulders[51] with throwing sticks to indicate their pleasure. At its new home, no matter what its previous state, the spirit is transformed into a young person of good health and equable temperament, for, in the land of the spirits, everyone must be healthy, happy and at peace with each other.

Making its camp with the other *mopaditis*, many of whom were old companions, the new spirit goes out hunting and foodgathering with them until the beginning of its own burial ceremonies. Then, with all of its dead relatives, the new *mopaditi* returns to watch the living people perform the dances and chant the songs of its *ilanis* and *pukamuni* ceremonies.

As the *mopaditis* are invisible to mortal eyes, the performers at the burial rituals do not see them, although they know the *mopaditis* are in the surrounding forest, watching all that is going on.

When the rituals of the day are over, and all the people have gone to sleep, the *mopaditis* themselves enter the ceremonial ground, carrying out the same dances, and chanting the same songs as those of the living. This happens at all ceremonies, whether they are the *ilanis*, the final *pukamuni*, or the *kulama* rituals.

At the conclusion of its final *pukamuni*, the new *mopaditi* returns to its birthplace. There it is treated as a youth, and has again to pass through all stages of the *kulama* initiation, progressing at the same rate as when it was a living person.

Occasionally parties of *mopaditis*, especially if not long dead, will return to have a look at their living friends and relatives. But, although the aborigines regard these *mopaditis* as well-mannered and kindly, they still fear them.

Sometimes, particularly at night, a *mopaditi* will follow an aboriginal too [781] closely, making his skin clammy and his hair rise on end. To protect himself, [789] the affrighted person calls out loudly to scare away the spirit. If this is not successful, he will kindle a fire or carry a torch of flaming bark, knowing that the *mopaditis* fear the light. For that reason, the aborigines are safe from the attacks of the spirits of their dead so long as they keep their camp-fires burning.

[576] [51] This is the custom of the living when they meet someone they have not seen for a long while.

evening to kill geese. When they returned with only three geese, a long conference was held. I offered all the food I could spare and it was decided that, in return for a few yams and some of the goose, I should make dampers and put jam on them for the children, all of whom were under five and very hungry, and give small pieces of tobacco to the men and women. This was Albert's, Agnes's, and Big Jack's tobacco, and so everyone traded something and all pronounced it a fair deal. I cooked the damper, smothered it with jam and, with Agnes prompting, called, "Kakritjui Kali." "Little ones, come." The five who could walk, ran, then stood shyly by while I handed each a piece; then they ran back to their mothers. Soon they were back and, nudged by their mothers, all murmured "Thank you very much." This was a phrase I never heard, either in the native language or in English, when they were receiving from another native. Giving and receiving were so much a part of their life that among themselves "thank you's" seemed unnecessary.

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[223]
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Fig. 16. Agnes, Filley, and Crissy-boy cooling off in the river

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus. The rest of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony, when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners' state of *pukimani*.

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious occasions. The connecting link was the state of *pukimani* in which death put the relatives. Men in a state of *pukimani* were at a disadvantage in social and political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and thus their own *pukimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to them for many months, came to an end.

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the status of *Marukumarni*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests. The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems; indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply. The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece of meat or a dish of *kwoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he was at the same time the executive director of a work unit which he expected 578
to work for him, and the husband of many of its members whom he expected 182
to be faithful to him. The young wives were willing, under supervision, to 837
meet his first expectation, but found it difficult, even under the strictest super- 592
vision, to meet the second. Successful supervision of the morals of young wives
was easy to achieve at night because each camp was then gathered together
and it was relatively easy for the husband and his senior wives to guard the
young wives closely. But during the daytime matters were different. Then the 837
young women of the household were widely scattered through the fairly dense
bush and it was impossible for the old wives to watch them every minute of
the day. And the young men of other households, or even of their own house-
hold, were hunting game in the same neighborhood. Encounters, whether by
chance or by previous arrangement, were likely to occur and probably occurred
with a high degree of frequency. We say "probably" because no anthropologist
working with a tribe which has neither courts nor written records can ever
know how often casual extramarital offenses take place. (There is even some
difficulty in obtaining reliable statistics on such matters in our own society,
as the attacks on the late Dr. Kinsey's statistics indicate.) We therefore make
no statement about how common the act of adultery was in Tiwi culture, but
we can say that, judging by the public accusations of adultery, its practice
must have been widespread indeed. In any Tiwi camp comprising more than 578
two households, few weeks went by without an outraged and angry old hus- 837
band shouting accusations at one of the younger men sitting by another camp
fire a few yards away. The young man accused would (usually) deny it; the
old women of both households would enter the argument, the young man's [595]
mother protesting his innocence, the old man's elderly wives (who had of
course been the informers) giving details of time and place and circumstance;
the young man would produce, or try to produce, an alibi and appeal to a
friend to bear him out; the old man would call the friend a liar and the youth's
mother an old witch; the youth's mother would retaliate by shouting things
she knew (but had never before revealed) about the private lives of everybody
in the old man's household, including the old man himself when he was a
young bachelor. A good time would be had by all, including the listening
anthropologist, but nobody would get much sleep. Such nocturnal uproars, al-
ways starting with accusations hurled by an older husband against a younger
man and always involving incidents that had allegedly occurred while the
young wife was somehow left unchaperoned for a short period during her
daytime wandering in search of food, were a commonplace of nightlife among
the Tiwi; but no case was ever reported, observed, or hinted at in which even
the most adventurous and enterprising bachelor had succeeded in seducing,
or had even attempted to seduce, a young wife when she was back in camp [833]
after nightfall. The deeds were always done in the secrecy of the bush during
the daytime; it was the recriminations and accusations that occurred in the
public glare of the campfires at nighttime.

Sometimes these disputes or accusations went no further than the noc- 578
turnal shouting of charges. Often the young man accused the previous night 684

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

578 quietly slipped away to some other camp and was not seen the following
684 morning. The matter might then die, depending largely on whether the old husband wanted to carry it further or was content to drop it. If the young
[627] man was still in camp the following day, the old man might insist on a duel then and there, but it would take place only if the camp were large, since Tiwi duels were essentially legal actions and as such needed a sizable audience for their correct staging. Disputes between men, of which old men accusing young men of seduction were by far the most common type, usually remained at the verbal level until a large body of spectators was available. Since such large
[527] concentrations of many households were necessary for the performance of the
627] main collective ceremonials, it was at the time of these ceremonials that most verbal arguments were pushed by the aggrieved party to the action level.

554 During the dry season (April to November) when travel was easy, the
764 only collective ceremonials sufficiently important to draw together a large number of households were those held for the funerals of big men. In the wet season (November to March) when the grass and bush were high and travel was difficult, the main collective phases of the male initiation ceremonies were
[881] held (see Chapter 4), and these brought together for a few weeks at a time large numbers of households. The funeral ceremonies for adults were always held some considerable time after the death and burial of the deceased. How long a period elapsed between the death and the funeral ceremonies depended on the expected size of the gathering, and this figure correlated, at least roughly, with the importance of the deceased. Here again the overriding considera-
574 tion was food supply, since the chief mourners (that is, the deceased's closer
764 relatives) had to feed everybody who came to the funeral while the ceremonies
433 lasted, which might be almost a week. The more important the dead person the bigger the crowd at his funeral, and hence the greater the amount of time
182 needed by the mourners to arrange the catering. As much as a year might elapse between the death and the time when the mourners felt that the funeral arrangements—especially the food supply, but also the ceremonial preparation —were sufficiently well in hand to permit them to set a date and send out invitations for the funeral ceremonies. Funerals, therefore, were not held at regular times but were individually scheduled at times fixed by the chief
[627] mourners. They were always held in the dry season, however (except those of young children, to which nobody came in any case), and therefore an old man who had a dispute to settle or a case to try publicly could always depend on a few big funerals being held in the not very distant future which would provide the large audience necessary to make the settlement of the dispute legal. During the wet season the *kolema* phases of the initiation ceremonial
[881] always drew a large attendance; the annual time of these was pretty definitely fixed by the ripening of the *kolema* yams.

578 Hence the verbal wrangles in the small scattered encampments at night,
684 about seduction during the day, could have any one of three outcomes, depending largely upon the determination of the old man-accuser and the demeanor
627 of the young man-accused. If by the following morning the young man had disappeared and showed no further interest in the old man's menage, the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

matter might end there. Or the old man might let matters rest until the time of the next big gathering of people at a funeral or at the *kolema* rituals, and then revive the issue under such public circumstances that the accused young man could not slip away unpunished. If he followed this second course, the old man went to the gathering covered from head to foot in white paint, the Tiwi uniform for anybody who came in anger and intended to pick a fight with somebody. The decision between these two lines of action lay, of course, with the old man, and while that decision was to some extent determined by how vindictive and revengeful he felt, nonetheless it was also influenced by how this dispute was related to all the other feuds, disputes, deals, marriage exchanges, and so forth, in which both parties were already involved. Like a good lawyer in our own culture, the old man had to consider, before he took the matter to court, who the young man was and who his friends and relatives were, and had to ask himself whether in seeking vengeance for the blow to his pride he might not be doing himself more political harm than the injury was worth.

In arriving at his decision, the old man was influenced to some extent also by another variable, the attitude of the young man. If the alleged offense occurred only once and the young man denied it and thereafter kept his distance, the accuser would probably let the matter drop. Offenders were very rarely caught *in flagrante*, and the evidence of seduction was almost always circumstantial or hearsay. In every case there was some element of doubt as to whether the right young male was being accused or whether the whole story had not been invented by some of the old wives out of sheer spite toward a young wife. The old man had to take such factors into consideration, not out of any abstract sense of justice, but because, naturally, he didn't like to be made a fool of, either by young men or his own spiteful old wives. But he was most suspicious and unbelieving of his own flighty young wives, and sometimes the accused young man was defiant and persistent in his attentions to the same young wife, or wives. In effect, such a young man was daring the old husband to do his worst. Such continued defiance of the seniority system could not be permitted; it became a case not of simple seduction but of subversive activity, since it was a threat to the whole social structure of the tribe, centered as that was around the marriage of old men to young women. When confronted by such action, a Tiwi elder said (as people of other cultures might), "What would happen if everybody did that? We'd have complete anarchy and free love." Hence an old husband, so defied, was almost duty bound not just to seek satisfaction for the private injury done to himself, but to defend the public weal by hauling the offender before the bar of public opinion and denouncing him before as large a crowd as possible, as a public enemy. If the situation became so flagrant that he could not wait until the next big funeral or the next *kolema* gathering, he began calling in surrounding camps or going himself, dressed in white paint, to summon them to assist him in meting out public justice to the violator of the system. When a sufficient number of upholders of the right (that is, senior heads of households) had been collected together, the usual one-sided duel (see below, Chapter 4) was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 887 [166]

Middle of October: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[1] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing.

[578 764]

[881 574]

End of October: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

[881]

End of January: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

End of February: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

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[1] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeimpi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.

[173] [548]

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission, automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their opponents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were economically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

3

The Prestige and Influence System

To become a really big man, or even a minor figure among the elders, a Tiwi had to devote all his adult life to that goal. Careers were built up and influential positions gained not by executing spectacular coups at any one time, but by slow, devious maneuvering and dealing in influence throughout adulthood. Men in their early thirties invested their very small assets in the hope of large returns twenty years later, and if the anthropologist witnessed the initial investment he was not around to witness the final return; or if he witnessed the return he found it difficult to reconstruct all the relevant details of the initial investment. A man in 1928 bestowed his daughter in a certain direction because of some deal back in 1900, arranged by men many of whom were now dead. And the bestowal in 1928 was done in such a way as to bind the hands of men negotiating in 1960, some of whom were infants in 1928.[1] 557

The Tiwi influence and career patterns can best be compared to a sort of nonstop bridge game wherein the scores were never totaled up nor a new game ever started on a clean slate.[2] Whenever an observer came in, he always

[1] A typical illustration of this situation arose during the writing of this book. In 1928-29 Hart had observed Padimo beginning to acquire a number of bestowed wives. Being interested in the status of Padimo twenty-five years later, he included Padimo in a list of inquiries to Pilling. Pilling's reply: "Re Padimo. I am almost certain that he was the 'Paddy' who died leaving several widows, in February, 1953, about three months before I got to the Islands. The natives did not like to talk much about him while I was there (because of the taboo on dead men's names) and his widows were still being fought over. The fights over his widows did not end until the week I left (if they really did then)." Thus the deals which Hart saw in 1928-29 were having delayed repercussions when Pilling was there in 1953-54. [24 768 551 578]

[2] We use bridge rather than poker as our analogy because nobody ever "went broke" in Tiwi influence competition and nobody ever "won the pot," because there was no pot to win. The scoring was always, so to speak, on a comparative basis and everybody, even the most unsuccessful man, had some score relative to his competitors.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 relatives, soon caught up with them. Several cases of such elopements occurred
583 during the period of fieldwork, including the case of one young couple (Peanut and Jumbo's wife) who made repeated attempts to elope over a period of several years. But despite the relaxation of standards that white contact had
[626] brought, as long as they remained on the islands these violators of the system were soon forced back into conformity by outraged public opinion and its punitive sanctions. Unless he fled to the mainland with his girl, the young bachelor who stole an old man's young wife had to restore her sooner or later to her rightful husband. Under pre-white conditions they could not flee to the mainland; if they tried, they both probably drowned on the way or at least were never heard of again.

Thus the isolation of the Tiwi made the rule of the gerontocracy much
182 more absolute, and the enforcement of it much more effective than was possible
691 for any of the mainland tribes where violators of the rules could skip across the border. Tiwi bachelors had to be satisfied, by and large, with casual and temporary liaisons and even in these, because of the constant suspicion of the old husbands and the constant spying and scandalmongering of the old wives, they had to be prepared to be often caught and, when caught, to be punished.
[578] Thus we come to another of the main emphases in Tiwi culture—the enormous frequency of disputes, fights, duels, and war parties arising directly or indirectly out of cases of seduction. If we may call this area of life the legal area, then over 90 percent of legal affairs were matters in which women were in some way involved.

THE DUEL The Tiwi formula for handling seduction was very
627 straightforward and clear-cut in its formal outline. Since senior men had young
684 wives and young men had not, seduction was necessarily viewed as an offense by a young man against a senior man. Hence the charge was always laid by the senior and the younger man was always the defendant.[1] At night in camp the accuser hurled his charges at the offender. We described earlier the alternatives available at this stage to both parties. Two of those alternatives were for the old man to press the matter to a public "trial," either the next day, if the camp was already a large one, or else on the next occasion when both men were present in a big gathering.

The basic shape of all Tiwi trials was standardized in the form that we have been calling the duel. Everybody present—men, women, children, and dogs—formed a rough circle in an open space, sitting or standing according to their degree of excitement at the moment. At one end stood the accuser,
[302 the old man, covered from head to foot in white paint, with his ceremonial
411] spears in one hand and a bundle of the more useful hunting spears in the

[1] Under pre-white conditions this had to be so. After the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, some young men through Mission manipulation got a young wife at an age that would have been impossible earlier. This resulted in an occasional case around the Mission where a *young* husband charged a man older than himself with seducing his wife. The resulting duel, with an older man as defendant, was regarded by the Tiwi as both embarrassing and ludicrous, perhaps analogous to the average American's attitude toward female professional wrestlers. (See Hart 1954 for a case of this sort, the duel of Bob v. Louis.)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

therefore the question of who threw the spear that wounded her gave rise to a new series of wrangles which had to be integrated into all the old ones. A man who had been quietly sitting, minding his own business and having no quarrels with anybody, would suddenly leap into the center of the stage and announce that the damaged old lady was his mother and therefore he wanted the hide of the rat that had damaged her, and a whole new argument was in progress. 628

If the person wounded in the first flurry of spear throwing was a senior male, that similarly led the arguments off in some new direction since his kinsmen in *both* war parties felt compelled to support him or revenge his wound or inflict a wound on his wounder. Frequently it appeared that the original matters of dispute, which had brought the two war parties together in the first place, were forgotten and lost in the new disputes and fights that originated on the field of battle. Such a view was supported by the frequency with which one found at the end of the day that the main casualties and the main headline performers had been people who had gone to the field of battle in the morning with no quarrel with anybody, and not even wearing white paint. Even the most peaceful spectator in the most remote corner of the gallery was likely to find himself in the center of the ring before the day was over at a Tiwi "battle." 578 628

Despite this apparent confusion and near anarchy of procedure, however, the main outlines were quite clear. The bands were not firm political entities and therefore could not do battle, as bands, with each other. Everybody, on both sides, was interrelated in the same kinship system. An angry old Tiklauila, abusing and throwing spears at an angry old Mandiimbula, might have as the basis of his complaint the fact that the Mandiimbula father had promised but not delivered one of his daughters. Since Tiwi bestowals were from mother's brother to sister's son, the spear throwing was patently a case of a sister's son abusing his mother's brother, and the fact that the two men belonged to different bands was not germane to their dispute. The angry Tiklauila elder could not demand support from other Tiklauila *as Tiklauila* in the case at issue for it involved a dispute between kinsmen whose band affiliations were irrelevant to the subject matter. Mainly for this reason the so-called war party of one band against another band turned out to be only a loose collection of individuals, each with his own case to argue, who found it convenient, and safer, to travel together into the territory of another band and argue all their individual cases on the same day at the same place. Tiwi interpersonal relations were primarily kin relations between members of all bands; territorial loyalties were shifting ones, temporary and necessarily quite subordinate to kin loyalties. Hence warfare, in the sense of pitched battles between groups aligned through territorial loyalties, did not occur and could not occur among the Tiwi. 621 628 602 619

The confusion of the so-called battle itself was also due to the primacy of kinship and friendship ties. When a man with a grievance started his harangue on a battlefield, he was never quite sure of what support he would get or where it would come from. He was pretty much on his own, even though 602 628 571

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

571 he had arrived there as a member of a large war party. This situation stemmed
602 from the coexistence, on the one hand, of the intricate web of kinship that
628 united everybody present and made the problem of who would support whom unpredictable enough, and, on the other, the intricate network of deals and promises and personal alliances and obligations that every senior Tiwi man had woven inside the kinship system. A Tiwi elder did not, for example, have one category of relatives called his mother's brothers; he had at least three different categories of mother's brothers. There were those mother's brothers who had given him nothing, those who had given him wives, and those who had promised him a wife but were dragging their feet on delivery, or even trying to renege on their promise. In pressing a case against one of this third category, an elder might quite conceivably alienate some of his mother's brothers of the second category. Nor could he be sure of the support of even his own brothers, since they were certainly cultivating, and possibly undercutting him with, the same donors of daughters as he was involved with. Perhaps the nondelivery, which was the whole basis of his case against the mother's brother, had been instigated by his own brother trying to engineer a rebestowal of the girl to him. Because of the two networks, that of formal kinship obligations and that of marriage deals, two Tiwi seniors engaged in a dispute had no impartial body to whom they could submit their arguments about breach of contract. Disputes between a young man and an elder could
[674] be submitted to the publicly witnessed duel, since these were not breaches of contract but cases of trespass by the young men, and as such were crimes.
[626] Impartial public opinion upheld the old men and punished the young men every time. The old men's arguments with each other, however, could not be
[686] so adjusted, since they involved marriage deals (as distinct from seduction) and in marriage deals everybody was involved and nobody was impartial. Where any senior stood on any marriage deal in dispute depended on how that
[557] deal fitted into his own conniving. In that area of life, every adult man had his own axes to grind and a disinterested group of umpires was impossible to find.

Thus Tiwi battles had to be the confused, disorderly, inconclusive
628 things they always were. They usually lasted all day, during which about
578 two-thirds of the elapsed time was consumed in violent talk and mutual abuse between constantly changing central characters and satellites. The remaining third of the time was divided between duels involving a pair of men who threw spears at each other until one was wounded, and brief flurries of more general weapon throwing involving perhaps a dozen men at a time, which ended whenever somebody, even a spectator, was hit. As a result of this full day of violence, perhaps a few of the cases would be settled that night—by a father handing over his delayed daughter, or a man with a disputed wife relinquishing her to her rightful husband—but when the war party left next day to return home, the number of cases settled was likely to be less than the number of new feuds, grievances, and injuries that had originated during the day of battle. For not only did the participants carry away from the battlefield a vivid memory of all the physical wounds, intended or accidental, inflicted by whom

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

on whom, but they also brooded long and suspiciously upon who had supported whom and why, either verbally or with spear in hand. In addition, all the incidents of the battle, in minute detail, were relayed to the rest of the tribe who had not been present, and many of these absentees would discover, among the proceedings, things they did not like or suspicious-looking actions on the part of some of their competitors or putative friends. These they would weave into their own strategies and store up for future use. An elder frequently found some basis for a new grievance against somebody in the events of a battle at which he had not even been present. 628 578

Finally, through all these disputes and hostile actions between senior men ran their united suspicion of bachelors. The only "battle" in two years between large groups drawn from distinct bands that had a clear-cut and definite final act was one fought in Rangu in late 1928. On that occasion, after disputing and fighting among themselves from early morning until mid-afternoon, all the old men present from both war parties gradually channeled all their anger toward one unfortunate young Mandiimbula bachelor whom they finally accused of going around from band to band creating misunderstandings between various elders. Several elders on both sides testified publicly that their mistrust of each other had started shortly after the bachelor in question had begun hanging around their households; whereupon the senior warriors of the two opposing armies had no difficulty in deciding that most of their suspicions of each other "were all his fault," and with great unanimity ganged up on the bachelor and quickly clubbed him into unconsciousness for being a troublemaker and a suspicion spreader. In the midst of battle the gerontocracy had reasserted its solidarity by finding a bachelor scapegoat upon whom to unload all their mutual suspicions and aggressions. 54 578 628

Religious Activities

If by religious activities we mean those beliefs and practices which pertain to unseen or supernatural forces, including rituals whose performance somehow affects those forces, then Tiwi religion readily crystallized around three focal points. These were: 1) their elaborate system of day-to-day taboos; 2) the elaborate set of beliefs and rituals pertaining to death; and 3) their complicated initiation ceremonies for young men. Add to these their myths and folklore about creation and their tribal past, and the whole of Tiwi religion has been covered. Space permits only brief mention of these three focal points. 771

TABOO In earlier chapters we have pointed out several aspects of life in which Tiwi culture diverged sharply from what anthropologists have come to regard as Australian mainland norms and we have suggested that these differences from the mainland are most reasonably to be attributed to either Tiwi isolation or favorable food supply, or some combination of both factors. In their religious life this same line of explanation continues to have validity. To those familiar with the cultures of Australian tribes, perhaps 171 789

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 feuding system departed and the Tiwi community became more centralized,
611 especially around the Bathurst Island Mission, the utility of the old band
614 organization diminished and the underlying clan organization dominated. Sud-
621 denly, fighting was no longer in terms of band membership, for the matrilineal clan had become the only social unit of significance.

Today young Tiwi often deny that they have any band membership. But it is not unknown for teen-age Tiwi males to lie awake at night counting up the members of their matrilineal clan. According to informants, in the [578] 1940's and 50's the major fights which occurred at Bathurst Island Mission were interclan skirmishes.

177 Thus, among the Tiwi, we have an example of how a society with a patrilineal emphasis under strong influence from another society with a
611 patrilineal emphasis may, if there is an underlying matrilineal organization, become a society which is for all practical purposes solely matrilineal. The introductory student of anthropology is thereby warned that characterizations of societies as matrilineal or patrilineal are rarely adequate to form the basis for reconstructing past or predicting future forms of such societies.

Tiwi and the Australian Nation

648 Finally, let us consider those aspects of modern Tiwi life which attract national attention in Australia. What do the newspaper-reading members of the Australian public know about the Tiwi?

Probably the best known Tiwi is a male in his thirties, formerly known to other Tiwi and local residents of Darwin as Bobby Wilson. About 1953, an Australian movie producer, Charles Chauvel, went hunting for a "full-blood" aborigine who could act well enough to portray an aboriginal male in what became the Australian movie "Jedda." In Darwin, the producer found a football star from the Darwin group of Tiwi who could fill the part. Bobby Wilson soon was billed as Robert Tudawali.[3] He went "on location" at several spots in the Territory and finally traveled to Sydney for the studio shooting. The Sydney papers caught his story and spread his bearded face over the country. Bobby Wilson's photo from the local newspaper was hung up in several native huts at Bathurst Island Mission. After much publicity, he ultimately returned to his wife and their hut in the Bagot Native Compound in Darwin. Again the newshounds caught his story. According to them, he had returned to a life of degradation. The Australian public was shocked that a star of one of their best films should be discarded to live again like every other aborigine in Darwin. Tudawali was "rescued" and given a second role in another Australian film.

177 Bobby Wilson was only one of a large number of young Tiwi who are
52 recognized as fine athletes. There are two football teams in Darwin which have
648 Tiwi members: the Catholic team, St. Mary's, which often takes the local

[3] The last name Tudawali is an attempt to spell the Tiwi word for shark.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(iii) *The Totemic Songs and Dances.* At the completion of the meal, both the "workers" and the *pukamuni* men and women performed a series of dances to the accompaniment of traditional totemic songs. 765

Almost without exception, these songs and dances belonged to the totemic beings of Wailu, the country of *Tiparawilkiniri*, the father of the dead man, *Wonimpari*.

These rituals were opened by the leader, who, standing in the centre of the *milimilu*, called out the names of the totemic beings of Wailu, *Andjaki* (fresh water), *Pukadringa* (thunderstorm), *Tomituka* (rain), and *Bumerali* (lightning). As before, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wis*" after each name was called.

The men then chanted the rain song, "The heavy rain falls and the frog calls, *pabi, pabi, pumerala*", while the men danced, with their fingers pointing to the ground, symbolizing falling rain (Pl. 30a), and the woman, *Prupadau*, hopped along the ground in imitation of the frog-woman,[66] *Kwuk-kwuk*. As the dance proceeded, the men and *Prupadau* all imitated the actions of the frog-woman by hopping along the ground on their hands and knees. [539] 765 535

While the dance was in progress, the leader called out "*Tomituka*" (rain). *Prupadau*, picking up a sheet of paper-bark, held it over her head and shivered, and the men, their hands clasped tightly over their heads, shouted, "*Bama, bama*" (rain finish). This completed the dance. *Pulanimbui* danced the white-headed sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), before the *pumuti* began.

(iv) *The Pumuti.*[67] The *pumuti* rituals, which are always carried out with much goodwill, friendliness and laughter, were performed at most, if not all, of the *ilanie*, and, in a restricted form, at the final *pukamuni*. 765

At some stage, usually toward the end of the *ilania*, sometimes more than once, each man and woman, taking a bunch of leaves, or a roll of paper-bark and calling softly "*Ooh, ooh, ooh*", beat the wife, or husband, sisters, brothers, and all the near relatives of that particular spouse.

(v) *The Rite of Fire-jumping and the sending out of the Message Sticks.* The rite of fire-jumping, or *wandiatapinda*, carried out in the second series of *ilanie*, differed from that in the first series. Instead of the participants stepping over a fire (Pl. 24a), a number of the close relatives climbed a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and leaves (Pl. 23c). As each man 765 372

[66] The frog-woman, whose totemic place is Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island, is the mother of *Pukadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*.

[67] This ritual would tend to reduce tensions between the spouse and his, or her, relatives, which is considerable in some communities. [593] [578]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

months after the attack on Darwin. Many of the older Tiwi who were in Darwin during the bombing did not survive the war; the psychological strain and lack of sufficient food was too much for them. Genealogies show that an unusual number of deaths occurred among Tiwi between 1942 and 1946. 648 [165]

When Western food supplies again became available, the old Tiwi bush living seems to have departed. The Tiwi suddenly realized their full dependence upon the products which only the whites could provide. As the war came to an end and one after another of the temporary military bases were abandoned, the missionaries and the Tiwi salvaged what they could, transporting large amounts of corrugated iron to Bathurst Island Mission for native huts. The Tiwi were drawn together around the Mission in larger numbers than ever before, their camps ranging in a line along the Mission beach. The majority of the Tiwi, about 600, considered Bathurst Island Mission their home, although some of the young adult males spent most of the year in Darwin. About 90 islanders lived adjacent to the half-caste Melville Island Mission at Garden Point. Another 150 were permanently located at the government settlement at Snake Bay. The remaining Tiwi, about 150, were year-round residents of Darwin; over one hundred lived at Bagot Native Compound and at an unsupervised native camp at Point Gunn directly opposite the southernmost tip of Melville Island; the rest were inmates at the leper colony. The resulting total population of about 950, in 1954, is only about a hundred less than the figure of 1062 which Hart obtained in his census of 1928-29. 177 361 797 162 [161]

Marriage Arrangements

We have discussed how, under the traditional Tiwi pattern of life, the greatest energies of mature males were expended in bargaining with each other for new wives. The old social system was one which had as normal features prenatal and early childhood engagements for females, remarriage for all widows, considerable age difference between marriage partners, and polygamy. The new Catholic system introduced by Father Gsell outlawed, or at least discouraged, polygamous marriages, nuptial unions between persons of greatly differing ages, and all prenatal or childhood betrothals. As indicated, Father Gsell initiated his new policies by purchasing young females and then allowing them to choose their own partners from among their single agemates. 177 797 58

It is of interest to inspect the actual circumstances surrounding one of the earliest unions which took place under Father Gsell's supervision. About 1914, Polly, an attractive young female who had already had a rather checkered career, having been stolen by a Yuwatja male from her rightful mate, was "stolen back" by another Tiwi, Timalarua of the Rangwila. Polly, however, decided that she did not want an old husband like Timalarua, so she ran away to the sisters and Father Gsell. In time, old Timalarua allowed Father Gsell to buy this wife who did not want to live with him. Shortly afterward, Father Gsell asked Polly whom she wanted to marry. Polly named Cabbagee as the 159 177 584 797

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

542 hold rather than the family. There was no ambiguity about its "living together" aspect; there were many ambiguities about its kinship aspects. To some of these unusual domestic usages we now turn.

Marriage by Betrothal

589 In many nonliterate societies, including most, if not all of the mainland Australian tribes, there is a tendency to believe that the main purpose in life for a female is to get married. The Tiwi subscribed to this idea, but firmly carried it to its logical conclusion; namely, that all females must get married, regardless of age, condition, or inclination. They (and they almost alone among human societies) took the very slight step from saying "All females *should* be married" to saying "All females *must* be married." As a result, in aboriginal times there was no concept of an unmarried female in Tiwi ideology, no word for such a condition in their language, and in fact, no female in the population without at least a nominal husband. Their own explanation of this unique situation was connected with their beliefs about conception and where 581 babies come from. Anthropologists have long been aware that the Australian 842 aborigines generally (and indeed some of the Melanesians, such as the famous case of the Trobriand Islands) ignored the role of the male in human conception and firmly believed that a woman becomes pregnant because a spirit has entered into her body. The Tiwi were no exception, but went a step further than the mainlanders in dealing with the dangerous situation created by the unpredictability of the spirits. Since any female was liable to be impregnated by a spirit at any time, the sensible step was to insist that every female have a husband *all the time* so that if she did become pregnant, the child would always have a father. As a result of this logical thinking, all [584] Tiwi babies were betrothed before or as soon as they were born; females were thus the "wives" of their betrothed husbands from the moment of birth onward. For similar reasons, widows were required to remarry at the gravesides [587] of their late husbands, and this rule applied even to ancient hags who had already buried half a dozen previous husbands in the course of a long life. It can readily be seen that these rules—prenatal betrothal of female infants and immediate remarriage of all widows—effectively eliminated all possibility of an unmarried female from Tiwi society. They also eliminated any possibility of an unmarried mother or a fatherless child. No matter where the unpredictable spirit chose to create a baby, whether it was in the body of a pretty young woman, a toothless old hag, or a little girl of six or seven, the pregnant [71] female would have a husband, and the children when born would have a 848 father. The Tiwi were thus probably the only society in the world with an illegitimacy rate of zero.

584 The practical application of these two unusual rules had certain unusual 851 consequences. The rule of prenatal betrothal obviously gave a great deal of 593 power to the person with the right to betroth, and in Tiwi this right belonged

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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to the husband of the pregnant woman. We carefully say "the husband of the pregnant woman" rather than "the father of the child" because the right resided in the male head of the household at the time of the birth. Although he was ordinarily both the father of the child and the husband of its mother, there were naturally occasions when a child was born after the death of its father, in which case the right of betrothal unquestionably belonged to the mother's new husband. The clearest statement of this rule is to say that the right of betrothal of all newly born females resided in the husband of the mother at the time of the girl's birth. "He who named the child bestowed it." 584 851 593

In most human societies the proportion of males and females in the population is approximately equal, except in the older age-groups where women predominate owing to their tendency to live longer than men. The Tiwi conformed to this norm biologically, but their cultural insistence that all females of every age be married resulted in further unusual features of the domestic situation. No such compulsory marriage was required or expected of males. Hence, the total female population, but only part of the male population, was married. Mathematically this permitted, indeed required, a high degree of plural marriage. The men who held the right to betroth—namely, the fathers of the female babies—could, within certain limits imposed by the kinship system, bestow their about-to-be-born or newly born daughters where they wished, and they certainly did not bestow them on about-to-be-born or newly born males. On the contrary, they bestowed them, generally speaking, where some tangible return was to be anticipated. Put bluntly, in Tiwi culture daughters were an asset to their father, and he invested these assets in his own welfare. He therefore bestowed his newly born daughter on a friend or an ally, or on somebody he wanted as a friend or an ally. Such a person was apt to be a man near his own age or at least an adult man, and hence perhaps forty years or so older than the newly born baby bestowed upon him as a wife. Or, the father might bestow an infant daughter on a man—or some close relative of such a man—who had already bestowed an infant daughter upon him, thus in effect swapping infant daughters. Obviously, the fathers who did the swapping, even if they were not quite the same age themselves, were bound to be many years older than the infant wives they thus received from each other. Or, thirdly, a father looking for a suitable male upon whom to bestow his infant daughter's hand might decide to use her as old-age insurance—in which case he selected as her future husband not one of the older adult men who would be old when he himself was old, but a likely looking youngster "with promise"; that is, a youth in his late twenties or thirties who showed signs of being a good hunter and a good fighting man, and who was clearly on his way up in tribal power and influence. Such a youth, in his late twenties at the time of betrothal, would, with luck, be in his prime as "a big man" in about twenty years—a time when the father of the infant daughter would be getting old and decrepit and much in need of an influential son-in-law who was obligated to him. 162 [581] 595] [584] 593 582 581 [562] [572] [606] [868]

There were other bases upon which infant daughters were betrothed. 582 593

As mechanisms validating this success of fathers rights

584 against clan rights there existed two rules: he who bestowed the name had
592 the right to dispose in marriage; and all names given by a woman's previous
684 husband were cancelled by his death and a new set of names given to all her
[553] children by her new husband. Strictly and universally enforced, such rules
would put *all* control over the marriages of *all* women, of every age, in the hands of their mother's husbands—that is, men from outside the clan of the women being disposed of, in other words, fathers in the Tiwi sense. But the Tiwi system failed to achieve such a result though their rules are pointed toward it. They achieved something close to it as far as infant or even young girls were concerned, since the fellow clansmen of such girls were either (as brothers) too young and unimportant to have any power to resist this alien control over their sisters' hands, or (as mothers' brothers and hence older men) too involved and absorbed in their own activities *as fathers* to take any
581 position asserting clan rights as against fathers' rights. To be successful in
557 tribal life, an ambitious young Tiwi male was best advised to forget his mother
584 and his sisters' daughters (all members of his clan) and concentrate on getting
[614] wives for himself. Only by getting wives could he have daughters, and only by having daughters could he build alliances and obtain influence, power, and more wives. To get wives for himself, he could not use his mother or his sisters or his sisters' daughters, since their disposal was in the hands of the men who had named them—that is, their fathers. But there came a time in the life of an older man when his mother was old, and *her* mother was dead, and therefore the rights of the last man to name his mother had lapsed. And a similar situation would arise in the case of his sisters when their mother's last husband died. By this age, a man so situated was likely to be powerful enough and skilled enough in the rules of the game to exert some control over the late remarriages of his elderly sisters and even of his mother, were she still alive.
592 Whenever this occurred, although the resulting situation might have the super-
584 ficial appearance of clan solidarity—with sons, mothers, brothers, and sisters
587 all acting and planning together as a partnership—such a surface appearance was illusory. The motivations involved in it were scarcely altruistic desires on the part of the brothers to look after their mothers and elderly sisters, but rather efforts by the brothers to use to advantage, in their intricate political schemes, some women of their own clan (their mothers and elderly sisters). Earlier in life these men had been prevented from such manipulation by the control over those women exercised by nonclansmen (their husbands or fathers) through the naming rules. Put another way, we might say that Tiwi men as a group had acquiesced to the system wherein "the father" had control over all marriages of his "daughters," because every Tiwi man hoped to be a "father" himself; but having acquiesced, every Tiwi male tried to beat the system, especially as he became older and more influential, by intriguing in the remarriages of his mother and elderly sisters—matters in which, according to the strict letter of the law, he had no right to interfere, since bestowal rights resided with the "father" or "fathers" of these women. One factor which
[582 greatly contributed to the setting aside of the rights involved in the naming
582] system was the fact that since, on the whole, old men married young women

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was still a bachelor and why Banana had acted so impulsively and thereby gotten himself in the bad graces of the elders. The two men were the eldest of four brothers without any full sisters and as such they were necessarily handicapped in their career struggle. Elders seeking satellites or contemporaries seeking allies looked askance at men without sisters, for such men could have no sisters' daughters to use in the marriage-arrangements struggle. The mother of Tiberun and Banana was dead, but even were she still alive, few men would have been interested in marrying a widow whose only living children were sons. Widows without daughters and bachelors without sisters rated very low in the scale of desirable assets sought either by elders or by contemporaries. 159 554 [557] [582 581]

Tiberun was thus the only bachelor in the 30-42 age group. Of the remainder we select Teapot as an example of another man who failed to get started. Teapot was at least 35, and about seven years previously he had "stolen" a wife from an elder. This wife was no ancient and shop-worn widow like the wife Banana had "stolen," but a young girl who had been betrothed in due form to an elder by her father. How Teapot had managed to get away with her is too complicated an incident to unravel here, and in any case it hadn't done Teapot much good. After presenting Teapot with a baby boy the young woman died, and Teapot, with a now six-year-old son, was more or less an outcast among the Malauila. No elder wanted him as a satellite and none of his contemporaries wanted him as an ally. His mother was dead and his only sister was married to a Munupula elder. This sister in Munupi was his only asset and one which a different man might have used as a means to better himself. But Teapot, instead of using this small asset to get started on a career, had chosen to defy the rules and "steal" an elder's bestowed wife. "Stealing" an old widow was reprehensible conduct in the eyes of the elders; stealing a young bestowed wife was unforgivable. Hence Teapot, since his crime, had received no bestowal, had been able to marry no widow, and was wanted by no one as an ally. 159 554 626

A complete contrast to these two unsuccessful men in their thirties was provided by the case of Gitjara, who was about the same age as Tiberun. Gitjara, it is true, had sisters, and that was always a help. Using his sisters (already married and bearing children to an elder) as bait, Gitjara when he was about 28 proposed an alliance to L. F. B., a rather feeble man about five years older than himself, who was not doing very well in the influence race. The gist of the proposal was that, since both their mothers were still alive and each married to an old man who could not last much longer, Gitjara should marry the ancient mother of L. F. B. when she became a widow, and L. F. B. should marry Gitjara's mother when that old lady became a widow. Perhaps the idea originated with the two old women rather than with either of the young men. Since such arrangements were essentially plots or schemes, it is impossible to determine who conceived them in the first place—old women ambitious to aid their sons or young men ready to use their mothers as long-term gambits to ultimately provide themselves with young wives. Mother-exchange operations were probably first conceived at high-level strategy con- 159 557 562 584

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

was entering the junior elder class and, having received wives from other sources than Inglis, was getting to the point where he would soon have free daughters of his own. He had no intention of performing any more services for Inglis who was now nearly sixty. Hence Inglis had not bestowed any daughters on Tomitari since 1923; those of his daughters who had been born since that year were bestowed on men other than Tomitari and men who were younger and less successful than he. 159 584 557

As we see it, the deals involving widows, particularly the pay-offs to young agents for acting to promote the interests of older men, had distorted what might be called the pure theory of Tiwi bestowal. According to the pure theory, mothers' brothers bestowed their daughters on selected sisters' sons, and the older man who gave a young man a wife and became his wife's father, was performing a kindness toward a favorite nephew for which the nephew should be grateful. But the Inglis-Tomitari operation shows how the theory had become distorted in practice. In order that Inglis might have some young daughters whom he would be free to bestow on his favored young nephew, Tomitari, in 1914 he had had to arrange the young man's marriage with an elderly widow to ensure safe delivery to him (Inglis) of some young wives who would bear him those daughters. Everything went smoothly and no slip-up occurred, yet by the time Inglis was in a position to give a wife to his favored young nephew, he found that the latter was no longer a dependent young man but a successful junior elder competing with him in his own field of identifying and using talent among the younger men. Tomitari's first daughter, born in 1927—not to any daughter of Inglis but to an older wife—was bestowed by its father on the distant but very promising Gitjara, a man of thirty-two. Gitjara was thus selected by Tomitari as a promising satellite at about the same age as Tomitari in 1914 had been selected by Inglis. Moreover, Tomitari by this time, far from being the grateful nephew of old Inglis (as the theory stipulated), was looking forward with anticipation to the old man's death, since when that occurred, among the widows of Inglis would be the three sisters of Padimo of whom he was still the nominal father. It was by acting as their step-father when they were children that he had got his own career started. They were indeed the foundation stone of his own career and, having profited so much from them as children, he was keenly interested in their redisposition whenever Inglis' death should put them on the market again. Thus he was simultaneously the husband of some of Inglis' daughters and nominal father of some of Inglis' wives. In the first status, he was expected by the theory to be a grateful son-in-law of Inglis; in the second status, the facts of Tiwi life required him to see Inglis' death as providing him with an opportunity to derive some new benefits for himself from his position as nominal father of the three wives of Inglis whose delivery to Inglis' household he had himself engineered. 183 581 604 159 183 584 604 [557 593]

Thus the politics of bestowal cannot be separated from the politics of widow remarriage. Every case of one had endless repercussions in the other. Sisters' sons who were promised young wives by their mothers' brothers were always too old to be grateful by the time the bestowal occurred or by the even later time when the bestowed child was old enough to come into residence. 182 557 584 604

MoBrSo to be the first husband of a girl is not merely a question of preferential choice; a FaSiSo is actually the only cross-cousin of the appropriate age to be considered as a party to a Type A contract. 582

As a first step, let us consider the expected relative ages of the principal parties to a Type A contract: the mother-in-law, the son-in-law, and the expected daughter-wife. A girl becomes a mother-in-law at puberty. For the sake of convenience we may consider this to be at the absolute minimum age of ten. A boy becomes a son-in-law at an age of not less than ten, and he may well be older than this. The minimum age of a Tiwi male is determined by his physical ability to hunt for and otherwise serve his mother-in-law in order to fulfill his part of the contract. 582 606 [581]

We cannot expect the future daughter and wife to be born, on the average, for at least five years and conceivably not for twenty years after the contract is made. However, again for convenience, let us assume that, on the average, the promised daughter will be born ten years from the date of the contract, i.e., when both the mother and the son-in-law are about twenty years old. The young girl will not become a cohabiting wife for approximately another eight or ten years, at which time her promised husband will be at least 28 to 30 years of age. Thus an average difference of twenty years between the ages of a girl and her first husband is to be expected—a difference which is dictated solely by the form and nature of the initial Type A contract. 582

Hart (1930: 282) believed that this twenty-year age difference was largely a result of the excessive practice of polygyny quite evident in his time (ca. 1930). However, in 1954, when most polygynous households had been broken up, an analysis of age differences for all primary unions for women in my sample still reflected the same disparity. Few men under the age of 30 had received wives, and only one girl over the age of ten had not yet been given to her promised husband. The average age difference between wives and first husbands was 18.9 years, with a range of from three to 54 years (Goodale 1959: 72). [114] [595] [593]

I shall next consider the expected relative ages of parents, siblings, and the children of siblings (cousins). If there is a twenty-year age difference between husbands and wives, it logically follows that the same age difference will also exist between the mothers and fathers of children. A woman can expect to have children by the age of twenty, while a man will not be expected to have legitimate children until about the age of 40. If we assume that siblings are of the same relative age (there being a 50/50 chance that brothers and sisters are older or younger), then we can expect that a sister will, on the average, have a child twenty years before her brother has a child. Thus it can be expected that the FaSiSo of a female Ego will be twenty years older than she is, and that her MoBrSo will be twenty years younger. In arranging the primary marriage of a girl, it is thus virtually impossible that she be promised to a MoBrSo who by expectation is twenty years younger than she, and who indeed is 582 593 582 605

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

to the husband of the pregnant woman. We carefully say "the husband of the 584
pregnant woman" rather than "the father of the child" because the right 851
resided in the male head of the household at the time of the birth. Although 593
he was ordinarily both the father of the child and the husband of its mother, there were naturally occasions when a child was born after the death of its father, in which case the right of betrothal unquestionably belonged to the mother's new husband. The clearest statement of this rule is to say that the right of betrothal of all newly born females resided in the husband of the mother at the time of the girl's birth. "He who named the child bestowed it."

In most human societies the proportion of males and females in the 162
population is approximately equal, except in the older age-groups where women predominate owing to their tendency to live longer than men. The Tiwi conformed to this norm biologically, but their cultural insistence that all females of every age be married resulted in further unusual features of the [581
domestic situation. No such compulsory marriage was required or expected of 595]
males. Hence, the total female population, but only part of the male population, was married. Mathematically this permitted, indeed required, a high degree of plural marriage. The men who held the right to betroth—namely, [584]
the fathers of the female babies—could, within certain limits imposed by the 593
kinship system, bestow their about-to-be-born or newly born daughters where 582
they wished, and they certainly did not bestow them on about-to-be-born or 581
newly born males. On the contrary, they bestowed them, generally speaking, where some tangible return was to be anticipated. Put bluntly, in Tiwi culture daughters were an asset to their father, and he invested these assets in his own [562]
welfare. He therefore bestowed his newly born daughter on a friend or an ally, or on somebody he wanted as a friend or an ally. Such a person was apt to be a man near his own age or at least an adult man, and hence perhaps forty years or so older than the newly born baby bestowed upon him as a wife. Or, the father might bestow an infant daughter on a man—or some close [572]
relative of such a man—who had already bestowed an infant daughter upon him, thus in effect swapping infant daughters. Obviously, the fathers who did the swapping, even if they were not quite the same age themselves, were bound to be many years older than the infant wives they thus received from each other. Or, thirdly, a father looking for a suitable male upon whom to bestow his infant daughter's hand might decide to use her as old-age insurance—in which case he selected as her future husband not one of the older adult men who would be old when he himself was old, but a likely looking youngster "with promise"; that is, a youth in his late twenties or thirties who showed signs of being a good hunter and a good fighting man, and who was clearly on his way up in tribal power and influence. Such a youth, in his late twenties [606]
at the time of betrothal, would, with luck, be in his prime as "a big man" in [888]
about twenty years—a time when the father of the infant daughter would be getting old and decrepit and much in need of an influential son-in-law who was obligated to him.

There were other bases upon which infant daughters were betrothed. 582
593

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582 and indeed the father was seldom an entirely free agent, since he not only
593 had to make his choices for his daughters within the limits imposed by the kinship system, but he was also caught in an intricate network of previous commitments, residual interests, and contingent promises made by other men who had had some prior interest in the baby or the mother of the baby. To mention only the most common limiting situation of this sort, the mother of the baby might have been given to him in the first place on the understanding that when she grew up and had a female baby it was to be bestowed on so-and-so or even returned as a *quid pro quo* to its mother's father, either as wife or as ward.

582 We have oversimplified the situation, but it should be clear that Tiwi fathers, in an overwhelming number of cases, bestowed their infant daughters on husbands a great deal older than those daughters. It is hard to strike an average, but the overall situation is best expressed by saying that no Tiwi father, except in the most unusual cases, ever thought of bestowing an infant daughter upon any male below the age of at least twenty-five. Taking this lowest limit for illustration, this meant that a youth of twenty-five had his first wife betrothed or promised to him at that age but had to wait another fourteen years or so before she was old enough to leave her father's household and take up residence and marriage duties with him. By this time he was about forty and she was fourteen. An age gap between husband and wife at least as great as this, but usually greater, was a necessary and constant result of the Tiwi betrothal system.

No Tiwi young man, then, could expect to obtain his first resident wife through betrothal until he was well into his thirties, at which time this first resident wife would be around fourteen, having been betrothed to him
582 at her birth or before. But it was likely that his first wife's father, who spotted
595 him in his twenties as a "comer," was not the only older man to want him as a son-in-law. As in our own culture, where the first million is the hardest to make, so in Tiwi the first bestowed wife was the hardest to get. If some shrewd father with a daughter to invest in a twenty-year-old decided to invest her in you, his judgment was likely to attract other fathers to make a similar investment. As a result, for *some* Tiwi men, the arrival in residence of the first wife, an event for which they had to wait until their late thirties, was quickly followed by the arrival in residence of a second, third, and fourth (at least), all of them bestowed very shortly after the bestowal of the first. Thus a successful Tiwi, having had no resident wife at all until his late thirties, would accumulate perhaps half a dozen between his late thirties and his late forties as his various betrothed wives reached the age of puberty and joined his household, and from then on he was practically certain to accumulate still more wives as later bestowals grew up and as he was able to invest the daughters borne by his first crop of young wives in transactions which brought in a later crop.

595 That this is not an exaggerated or overdrawn picture of the number of wives that could be accumulated in the course of a long life by a successful

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

Tiwi household head is shown by the genealogies of the grandfathers of the present generation. Turimpi, who was born in the 1830's and died in the early 1900's, was at his death the most powerful old man among the Tiklauila. Some of his sons are still alive, and all of them were in the prime of life around 1930.[4] A complete list of Turimpi's wives, not all of them living in his household at the same time or necessarily alive at the same time, contains more than twenty names. But Turimpi was outshone in this regard by several of his contemporaries in other bands. A prominent Turupula of the same generation had a list of twenty-five; the father of Finger of the Wilrangwila had twenty-nine; the father of Tamboo and Puti had twenty-two. As late as 1930, men with lists of ten, eleven, and twelve wives were still plentiful, and Tu'untalumi, who was aged about seventy in that year and was a man of great influence, had by then accumulated no less than twenty-one.[5] 595

Such numbers of wives as these per husband are very much higher than usually prevail even among the most polygymous hunting tribes. Obviously, a domestic unit with twelve or more wives in it makes for a very large household. Among the Tiwi, a household even of such men as those just named did not contain all these wives at the same time, mainly because of the very great variation in the ages of a man's wives. As far as bestowed or betrothed wives were concerned, such wives arrived at their husband's household to take up wifely duties therein when they reached the age of about fourteen. Hence the first of them to arrive (typically when their husband was nearly forty) would be women of nearly forty by the time the latest of them arrived (typically when the husband was well into his sixties). Even when the husband died, let us say at the ripe old age of seventy-five, there would probably be some of his bestowed wives still under the age of fourteen who were as yet too young to join his household. Tu'untalumi, the man of twenty-one wives, was already about seventy in 1930, yet in his list of twenty-one wives five were still *al7inga*—that is, little girls not yet approaching puberty—and two were still babies at their mothers' breast. On the other hand, some of his earliest bestowed wives, who had taken up residence with him when he was in his late thirties, were already dead. 592 582 595

Because of this wide variation in the ages of a man's wives, it is necessary to distinguish between a "list" of a man's wives and those actually in residence in his household at any given time. The resident or active wives—one might almost say the working wives—were always fewer than the listed wives. This would necessarily be so even if marriage by betrothal were the only way by which a Tiwi man could obtain a wife. But while it was the most prestigeful form of marriage and the only respectable way in which a man could obtain a *young* wife, there were other ways of setting up a household 595 584 587

[4] See Hart 1954.

[5] Finger, Tamboo, and Puti were elders prominent in tribal affairs at the time of Hart's fieldwork. Puti was still live in 1953-54 and well known to Pilling. Tu'untalumi, held in great affection by Hart, but moribund to the Mission Station, died in 1935.

As mechanisms validating the success of fathers rights

584 against clan rights there existed two rules: he who bestowed the name had
592 the right to dispose in marriage; and all names given by a woman's previous
614 husband were cancelled by his death and a new set of names given to all her
[553] children by her new husband. Strictly and universally enforced, such rules
would put *all* control over the marriages of *all* women, of every age, in the
hands of their mother's husbands—that is, men from outside the clan of the
women being disposed of, in other words, fathers in the Tiwi sense. But the
Tiwi system failed to achieve such a result though their rules are pointed
toward it. They achieved something close to it as far as infant or even young
girls were concerned, since the fellow clansmen of such girls were either (as
brothers) too young and unimportant to have any power to resist this alien
control over their sisters' hands, or (as mothers' brothers and hence older
men) too involved and absorbed in their own activities *as fathers* to take any
581 position asserting clan rights as against fathers' rights. To be successful in
557 tribal life, an ambitious young Tiwi male was best advised to forget his mother
584 and his sisters' daughters (all members of his clan) and concentrate on getting
[614] wives for himself. Only by getting wives could he have daughters, and only
by having daughters could he build alliances and obtain influence, power, and
more wives. To get wives for himself, he could not use his mother or his
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who had named them—that is, their fathers. But there came a time in the life
of an older man when his mother was old, and *her* mother was dead, and there-
fore the rights of the last man to name his mother had lapsed. And a similar
situation would arise in the case of his sisters when their mother's last husband
died. By this age, a man so situated was likely to be powerful enough and
skilled enough in the rules of the game to exert some control over the late
remarriages of his elderly sisters and even of his mother, were she still alive.
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rather efforts by the brothers to use to advantage, in their intricate political
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control over those women exercised by nonclansmen (their husbands or fath-
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as a group had acquiesced to the system wherein "the father" had control over
all marriages of his "daughters," because every Tiwi man hoped to be a
"father" himself; but having acquiesced, every Tiwi male tried to beat the
system, especially as he became older and more influential, by intriguing in the
remarriages of his mother and elderly sisters—matters in which, according to
the strict letter of the law, he had no right to interfere, since bestowal rights
resided with the "father" or "fathers" of those women. One factor which
[592 greatly contributed to the setting aside of the rights involved in the naming
• 582] system was the fact that since, on the whole, old men married young women

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

and young men married old women, in many cases the nominal "father" of an elderly woman was very much younger and less influential than were her brothers, or her sons by an earlier husband. The brothers and/or sons, therefore, were able to override the wishes of their sisters' nominal father since the seniority system was on their side in such contests, even though the renaming rules were not. 182 582 584 587 592

Although it was very rare indeed for any Tiwi male to have a resident young wife until he was nearly forty, long before that age he was likely to acquire an ancient widow or two. In at least ninety out of every hundred cases a man's first resident wife was a widow very much older than himself. According to a complete genealogical census carried out in 1928-29, nearly every man in the tribe in the age group from thirty-two to thirty-seven was married to an elderly widow. Many of them had two elderly widows and a few had three. But very few of them, and certainly not more than one out of five of them, had a resident *young* wife. About half of them had bestowed wives, but these were mostly toddling infants who would not come into residence with them for another ten years or more. Even for the most promising and rapidly rising young man, the first young bestowed wife was not likely to arrive until several years after his marriage to a widow. 582 587

To get a start in life as a household head and thus to get his foot on the first rung of the prestige ladder, a Tiwi man in his thirties had first of all to get himself married to an elderly widow, preferably one with married daughters. This was the beginning of his career as a responsible adult. The widow did several things for him. She became his food provider and housekeeper. She served as a link to ally him with her sons. As her husband, he acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters when they became widowed. And she, as the first resident wife in his household, stood ready to be the teacher, trainer, and guardian of his young bestowed wives when they began to join him after they reached puberty. [593] [595]

Levirate, Sororate, and Cross-Cousin Marriage

We have emphasized infant bestowal and widow remarriage because it was the elaborate development of these two matrimonial mechanisms that brought about the unusual, perhaps unique, character of the Tiwi household. Other matrimonial mechanisms, more usual in preliterate societies, were also used by the Tiwi but always in combination with or as minor adjuncts to the two basic mechanisms. Thus, a man often remarried his dead brother's wives, or at least some of them, within the institution of widow remarriage. Such a practice is known to anthropologists as the levirate, and tribes are said "to have" the levirate or "not to have" it. The Tiwi, with their pluralistic approach to the whole area of marriage relationships, can hardly be said to fall into either category. To them, every widow had to remarry and among the many possible candidates for her, the brothers of the dead husband were recognized as having a reasonable, but far from automatic, claim. Whether the brothers 587

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 jointly, or any one of them singly, were able to translate that claim into marriage depended on the other claims. Brotherhood in itself gave no exclusive right to widows, but of course a brother, being necessarily of the same clan and frequently of the same band as the deceased husband, was well in line to assert a claim to the widow if he could make the claim good. Cursory inspection of the genealogies reveals, however, a surprisingly small number of cases of men taking over the widows of their deceased brothers. At best it was a very minor factor in Tiwi marriage customs.

The parallel custom of the sororate—that is, of sisters being married to the same husband—was more common. It occurred both in connection with infant bestowal, by a father promising *all* his daughters by a particular wife [595] to the same husband, or in connection with widow remarriage, whereby two or [584] more full sisters, previously married to the same husband, passed together on his death to the same new husband. The sororate occurred more frequently in the first form than in the second, largely because, as already mentioned, widows had more say in their own marriages than baby girls had, but there was nothing obligatory nor required about it, as is shown by the frequent cases in which a father bestowed all his daughters by one wife on the same man but on the early death of that man rebestowed them *seriatim* on several different husbands. One got the impression, though no Tiwi ever made the point explicit, that within the Tiwi bestowal system the prevailing high rate 165 of infantile and child mortality was an important factor in sustaining the sororate principle to the extent that it did exist. A father who bestowed upon a 587 man the first daughter borne by a certain wife was almost obliged to bestow upon the same man the second daughter of the same wife if the first one died in infancy. Moreover, since most fathers bestowed their daughters with an eye to their own advantage, it was clearly desirable if he wanted to cement the goodwill of a prospective son-in-law, to promise him *all* the daughters produced by a certain wife, so that even though most of them died in infancy, at least one or two would be delivered in good condition at the age of puberty. [557] The aim of bestowal was to win friends and influence people, and a bestowal of a child who died before she reached the son-in-law did a father little good. A shrewd father could avoid this risk by following the sororate principle; a stupid or feckless father who scattered his daughters widely could well end up with as many disappointed sons-in-law as friendly ones, as the infantile and child mortality took its heavy toll of his young daughters. In the genealogies, sororate marriages in some form occur much more frequently than levirate marriages, but nonetheless their incidence is such as to indicate that they were a relatively minor feature in Tiwi marriages and that their occurrence was most frequently due to careful fathers trying to insure sons-in-law against disappointment, and themselves against charges of nondelivery.

171 No account of marriage in any Australian tribe can go very far without raising the difficult matter of the kinship system, since all the accounts we have 582 of mainland Australian tribes tell us that all marriages there took place within a rigid kinship framework which required everybody to marry somebody who was automatically his or her cross-cousin (for example, a man and a daughter

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of his mother's brother).[10] Enough has been said already to indicate that in Tiwi marriage nothing was automatic. Females were given in marriage by their fathers, or (to a lesser extent) by their brothers, or (to a still lesser extent) by their sons. But fathers died and were succeeded by the men their widows remarried, and these men renamed all the widow's children, and by renaming them established some rights to make marriage decisions for the females. Therefore, cross-cousin marriage in Tiwi was merely part of the total system of marriage and had to adjust itself to the rest of the system. In theory, fathers could only bestow their infant daughters on men who stood to them in the relation of sisters' sons. Conversely, every man who received a bestowed wife received her from a man who was technically his mother's brother and of course the girl's father. To this extent the Tiwi were a tribe who practiced cross-cousin marriage and their kinship system belonged to one of the commonest Australian types, that which Radcliffe-Brown called Type I, having investigated it among the mainland tribe called the Kariera.[11] But a kinship system of the Kariera type could not accommodate all the complexities that had been introduced into Tiwi life by the emphasis on infant bestowal and widow remarriage. In particular, the generations kept getting badly mixed up, as for instance in the very common case of old men bestowing their infant daughters on other old men of their own age group, and in return receiving as infant wives (or wards) daughters of those old men. With this happening constantly, it was difficult to maintain the kinship principle that recipients of wives were always sons of the donor's sister and donors were always brothers of the recipient's mother. Which was mother's brother and which was sister's son in the case of two old men busily swapping daughters was a problem that put a severe strain on a Kariera-type kinship system. And widow remarriage introduced further complexities. We have already mentioned the case of two young men, Antonio and Dominico, who through a judicious use of widow-remarriage had ended up married to each other's elderly mothers. This was no isolated case; many pairs of men of like age were married to each other's mothers. Who called whom "father" and who called whom "son" became an insoluble riddle in such cases.

To avoid further involvement in the labyrinthine complexities of Australian kinship organization, all that we need say here is that the Tiwi had unscrambled the potential confusion introduced into their kinship categories by inventing a few new terms which, superimposed upon their Kariera-type system, kept everything straight. In Kariera, and generally among all the mainland tribes, no kinship distinction was made between potential wife and actual wife or between potential "in-laws" and actual "in-laws." A Kariera male called all the girls who were eligible for marriage to him by the same term (*Nuba*, usually translated mother's brother's daughter); all the fathers of such girls

[10] The definitive work on Australian kinship systems is Radcliffe-Brown 1930-31, and there is a large technical literature on the subject. See also Elkin 1951; Berndt 1955 and 1957; Murdock 1949.

[11] See Radcliffe-Brown 1913.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

601 by the same term (*Kaga*, usually translated as mother's brother); and all the mothers of such girls by the same term (*Toa*, usually translated father's sister or mother's brother's wife). When he married one of these girls he still called her *Nuba*, he still called his wife's father *Kaga*, and still called his wife's mother *Toa*. But not in Tiwi. For them, all potential wives were, in theory, mothers' brothers' daughters and all potential wives' fathers were mothers' brothers. But when a man married any such girl, he immediately called her by a new and different kinship term which can only be translated as "wife," and corresponding new and separate terms were used for the actual wife's father, actual wife's mother, and even for the actual wife's father's sister. Thus marriage introduced for a Tiwi a new set of relatives with new kinship terms different from those he used toward his general run of cross-cousins, mother's brothers, father's sisters, and so on, and these "relatives by actual marriage" terms, being based on actual marriages rather than kinship categories, were capable of handling in a fairly orderly manner all the complexities introduced into Tiwi domestic life by such customs as old men exchanging infant daughters or young men marrying each other's mothers. We may sum it up briefly by saying that Tiwi marriages operated within a general framework of cross-cousin marriage kinship categories identical with the 132 categories of the Kariera, but that females had become such important assets ●582 in power and prestige relationships among the senior men—marriage had be- 601 come, so to speak, such a political affair—that a new set of kinship terms based on actual marriages had to be superimposed on the terms geared to cross-cousin marriage; in cases of conflict or anomaly or confusion in the cross-cousin terms, the terms based on actual marriages were controlling or took precedence. Which is only another way of saying that in theory all Tiwi marriages were rather idealistically approximated to marriages between cross-cousins, but in practice they departed quite far from such an ideal; so far, in fact, that extra kinship terms had been introduced to take care of the relationships created by such departures.

"Disputed" Wives

588 There is still one more category of wives to be mentioned, a category for which the Tiwi had no name in their own language but which in pidgin English they referred to as "stolen" wives. A few women so labeled were likely to turn up in the "list" of the wives of most big men, but analysis of the circumstances in each case makes it clear that "stolen" was an unsuitable label and that wives so designated were most often in a status that should be called either "disputed" or "shared." In legal terms they were wives in which there was or had been a divided interest. To explain fully the nature of these cases would carry us over into both the Tiwi legal and sexual systems, and here we are trying to confine our analysis to those aspects of marriage that have consequences for household organization. Since these disputed or shared wives had

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to at least reside in some household and had at least a nominal current husband at any given moment of time, all we need to note about them at this point is that in any listing of a man's wives we have to include "disputed" wives in addition to all the other categories of wives mentioned previously. 588

The Household: An Overview

In the discussion so far we have selected only those aspects of the Tiwi family complex that had close bearing on the nature of the household. These aspects can be briefly summarized as follows: 582 592

1. the high number of wives per husband that a successful man was likely to acquire if he lived long enough.

2. the two distinct mechanisms by which wives were acquired—infant bestowal and widow remarriage.

3. the operation of the bestowal system in such a way as to prevent even the most promising young man from achieving coresidence with a bestowed wife until he was at least nearly forty years old.

4. the tendency for success to lead to more success, whereby *some* astute men received into their households a number of young wives in rapid succession after the age of forty. [554 595]

5. the tendency of younger men and of nonbetrothed younger men in particular to marry elderly widows while waiting for betrothed wives to grow up or, in the case of those with no bestowals in sight, to enable them to start a household of their own.

6. as a result of the integrated operation of all these customs, the strong tendency in Tiwi households for husbands to be very much older than their wives (as a result of infant bestowal) or very much younger than their wives (as a result of widow remarriage) or—what was commonest of all in the bigger households—some combination of both. Hence many a Tiwi husband had some wives much older than himself, including some already dead (but still counted), and some very much younger than himself, including some who were still babies in their mothers' wombs (with their sex still undetermined). All these dead wives, current wives, nominal wives, "disputed" wives, not-yet-joined-the-household wives, and not-yet-born wives were still counted in a husband's list, and the length of his list was a measure of his influence, power, and importance as a household head. [554 595]

It is now perhaps clear why we chose to begin our account of Tiwi culture with some discussion of Tiwi marriage. Compulsory marriage for all females, carried out through the twin mechanisms of infant bestowal and widow remarriage, resulted in a very unusual type of household, in which old successful men had twenty wives each, while men under thirty had no wives at all and men under forty were married mostly to elderly crones. This unusual household structure was the focal point of Tiwi culture. It linked together in an explicable unity the kinship system, the food-gathering system, the political 592 182 592

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

162 [621] The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

561 [858 882] [591] Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

561 589 884 [582] [177] The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

561 884 557 [582] The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

159 554 [589] In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was still a bachelor and why Banana had acted so impulsively and thereby 159
gotten himself in the bad graces of the elders. The two men were the eldest 554
of four brothers without any full sisters and as such they were necessarily
handicapped in their career struggle. Elders seeking satellites or contempo- [557]
raries seeking allies looked askance at men without sisters, for such men could
have no sisters' daughters to use in the marriage-arrangements struggle.
The mother of Tiberun and Banana was dead, but even were she still alive, [582
few men would have been interested in marrying a widow whose only living
children were sons. Widows without daughters and bachelors without sisters 581]
rated very low in the scale of desirable assets sought either by elders or by
contemporaries.

Tiberun was thus the only bachelor in the 30-42 age group. Of the 159
remainder we select Teapot as an example of another man who failed to get 554
started. Teapot was at least 35, and about seven years previously he had "stolen" 626
a wife from an elder. This wife was no ancient and shop-worn widow like
the wife Banana had "stolen," but a young girl who had been betrothed in
due form to an elder by her father. How Teapot had managed to get away with
her is too complicated an incident to unravel here, and in any case it hadn't
done Teapot much good. After presenting Teapot with a baby boy the young
woman died, and Teapot, with a now six-year-old son, was more or less an
outcast among the Malauila. No elder wanted him as a satellite and none of
his contemporaries wanted him as an ally. His mother was dead and his only
sister was married to a Munupula elder. This sister in Munupi was his only
asset and one which a different man might have used as a means to better
himself. But Teapot, instead of using this small asset to get started on a
career, had chosen to defy the rules and "steal" an elder's bestowed wife.
"Stealing" an old widow was reprehensible conduct in the eyes of the elders;
stealing a young bestowed wife was unforgivable. Hence Teapot, since his
crime, had received no bestowal, had been able to marry no widow, and was
wanted by no one as an ally.

A complete contrast to these two unsuccessful men in their thirties was 159
provided by the case of Gitjara, who was about the same age as Tiberun. 557
Gitjara, it is true, had sisters, and that was always a help. Using his sisters 562
(already married and bearing children to an elder) as bait, Gitjara when he 584
was about 28 proposed an alliance to L. F. B., a rather feeble man about five
years older than himself, who was not doing very well in the influence race.
The gist of the proposal was that, since both their mothers were still alive and
each married to an old man who could not last much longer, Gitjara should
marry the ancient mother of L. F. B. when she became a widow, and L. F. B.
should marry Gitjara's mother when that old lady became a widow. Perhaps
the idea originated with the two old women rather than with either of the
young men. Since such arrangements were essentially plots or schemes, it is
impossible to determine who conceived them in the first place—old women
ambitious to aid their sons or young men ready to use their mothers as long-
term gambits to ultimately provide themselves with young wives. Mother-
exchange operations were probably first conceived at high-level strategy con-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

This created an intriguing situation since Summit, having had this child bestowed on him at her birth some nine years previously, had thus acquired a bestowed wife at about age 27; Gitjara now 33 or so still had not received a bestowal. By remarrying the mother of Summit's young bestowed wife, Gitjara had turned the tables on one of his chief competitors among his age group. He could not, of course, alter the bestowal; in five or six years' time the girl would take up residence with Summit. But as the step-father who renamed the girl and the head of the household in which she would live for the next five years, Gitjara was in an excellent position to make Summit enter into a deal or two with him. He could drag his feet as to the time of the delivery of the girl to Summit; he could drop hints that there was something irregular about the bestowal to Summit in the first place, and so on; but whatever form of pressure he chose to exert on Summit, the latter well knew that all Gitjara wanted was to be cut in on some of Summit's deals and to be included in the network of Summit's alliances. The next move was now clearly up to Summit. 159 557 584

If Summit wished the nine-year-old girl now in Gitjara's household to be transferred promptly and without argument, he would be well advised to give some consideration to Gitjara, perhaps even the promise of one of his still-to-be-born daughters either as a wife or as a ward. Although not necessary, it would be a politically wise gesture. If he did so, both men would be gambling in futures. Since Summit's young wife was now nine years old, it would be at least six or seven years before she could produce a daughter (if at all) and another fourteen or fifteen years before any such daughter (if she lived) would be old enough to join Gitjara's household either as a wife or ward. Hence, under any such arrangement between the two young men, Summit would be giving something to Gitjara but in such a way that the latter could not collect for at least twenty years and might never collect.

Anthropologists will note that such arrangements still conformed to the patterns of cross-cousin marriage. Gitjara as *de jure* father delivers his "daughter" to Summit and thus becomes technically Summit's mother's brother or wife's father. Twenty years later (if all goes well) Summit delivers his daughter (by Gitjara's daughter) to Gitjara, thus becoming technically the mother's brother or wife's father of Gitjara. Gitjara himself might marry this daughter of Summit by his own step-daughter or treat her as a ward given to him by Summit and bestow her on some other man selected by himself; in the latter case he would be acting as father to his step-daughter's daughter. There were no clan barriers to such an arrangement, since fathers had to belong to clans different from those of their wives and of their daughters, step-daughters and daughters' daughters. 159 602 [582] [584] [614]

There were, of course, alternative actions or "deals" open to Summit and also to Gitjara, depending upon their plans in other directions. The pattern described above, however, was extremely common in Tiwi marriage arrangements, and often it was the reason why some very old man would receive some female infant as a wife: an agreement of this type had been made twenty or thirty years before, when the now senile old man was in his 159 557 584

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 thirties and when the mother of the baby he was now receiving was married to some man long since dead. The circumstances were certainly right for such an arrangement in the Gitjara-Summit case of 1928.

159 557 582 If we now pause and look at the marriage career of Gitjara at the point it had reached by the time he was 33, we can separate out three distinct types of operation in which this admirable young man had engaged. His first marriage, with L. F. B.'s elderly mother, had brought into existence a joint household of young men and elderly widows which not only was a very satisfactory housekeeping arrangement but also put Gitjara and his ally, L. F. B., in a position to exert some influence on all the subsequent remarriages of their respective sisters.

Gitjara's marriage a few years later to a second widow put him in a position to enter into marriage arrangements even more directly, since the second widow had a daughter promised to Summit but still too young to take up residence with him. By dragging his feet on the fulfilment of this promise, Gitjara could put pressure on Summit and extract from the latter some sort [584] of consideration to facilitate the delivery of the girl. Gitjara was thus well in the marriage-broker business before he had any children of his own and indeed before he had received any bestowal. This was the second type of operation for an up-and-coming young man, and it was one wherein a shrewd and aggressive operator would use the daughters of other men (that is, of a widow's previous husbands) in such a way as to attach all sorts of codicils and contingent interests and second mortgages to the original bestowal of those daughters, many of these collectable in full only in the far distant future, after all prior interests had been satisfied or had lapsed.

The third type of operation engaged in by Gitjara was, of course, to try and attract bestowed wives of his own. His vigorous operations, by age 33, in the widow remarriage field, were not only ends in themselves but also were the type of operation that attracted the approval of older men with daughters to bestow. Hence it is not surprising to find that by 1929 Gitjara, married to the two widows already mentioned, had received two bestowals. The older of these was a girl of ten rebestowed on Gitjara in 1927 when the man died upon whom she had been bestowed at birth. The second was a baby born in 1927 whose father was Tomitari of the Rangwila. (The choice of Gitjara as a son-in-law by Tomitari was so interesting that we shall discuss it later in this chapter.) Both these bestowals were made *after* Gitjara had engineered his remarriage of the two widows and as far as kinship was concerned had no connection whatever with these widows or their close relatives. We conclude, therefore, that widow remarriage could be used by alert and aggressive men in their early thirties for three purposes: (1) to establish households and obtain elderly housekeepers; (2) to establish low-priority rights in the daughters of the widows' previous husbands; and (3) to attract attention to themselves as smart operators and gain the attention and approval of older men. As an outgrowth of the third purpose, they were likely to attract bestowals. Hence we may say that among the Tiwi the best road to obtaining a [587] young wife or several young wives was for a young man to be first successful

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the manipulation of the remarriages of elderly widows, who were always in large supply. If a man showed skill and know-how in his early thirties among the widows, then in his late thirties and early forties young wives would be bestowed upon him in abundance. Such a lesson could not have a better exemplar than Gitjara. By age 33 he had done so well among the widows that his first *young* wife would be joining his household by the time he was thirty-eight or thirty-nine, and another was already a year old. Clearly he was a young man of promise and one to be watched—and cultivated. 159 557 582 587

Summit, a man slightly older than Gitjara, must be dealt with very briefly, since the reasons for his success would take us too far afield. In 1929 he had a list of six wives, the only resident one being an elderly widow. The other five were bestowals and the eldest of these was the girl of ten whom we have already mentioned as being in the household of her step-father, Gitjara. Two more, younger than the ten-year-old, were in the household of Padimo (see below) and the remaining two were in the household of one of the elders of the Rangwila band. Summit, in Tiwi reckoning, was a Rangwila himself and had only moved to Malau a few years before. Some four years previously he had been a young Rangwila with no less than five bestowed child-wives. Three of these had been given him by an elder in Malau, two by an elder of his own band. The Malauila girls were older than the two Rangwila girls and his Malauila father-in-law was older than his Rangwila father-in-law. Summit therefore moved north to supervise personally his interests in Malau. He had, however, been out-maneuvered when the Malauila father-in-law died, since Gitjara had then been able to remarry the mother of Summit's eldest child-wife and Padimo had been able to remarry the mother of the other two little girls. Having thus moved to Malau to be near to and a satellite of his elderly Malauila father-in-law, Summit now found himself the technical son-in-law of two young men of his own age group who were among his keen competitors in the influence struggle. To ensure that his three promised Malauila child-wives joined his household when old enough, he now needed to make some arrangements with Gitjara and Padimo. Summit had gotten his bestowals rather early and rather easily but he still had the problem of nailing them down. 159 584 [557 587]

While thus engaged in acquiring five bestowed young wives and trying to promote their safe delivery when ready, Summit had married a widow not much more than forty years old but childless by her two previous husbands.[8] Such a widow at least provided him with a food-getter and housekeeper and enabled him to establish a household into which his five bestowed wives would enter as they successively reached the proper age. Thus Summit's household in 1929 consisted only of himself and his *palimaringa* wife. Within the next fifteen years it would be increased by the addition of at least five young wives, 159 587 592 592 159

[8] Such women who had reached middle age without surviving children were called by a special term, *palimaringa*, in Tiwi and the term referred to childlessness rather than barrenness. Summit's widow, for example, had borne two children, both of whom had died in infancy, and she was classified as a *palimaringa*. When a *palimaringa* became very, very old indeed, the word changed to *timaringa*. [842]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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of that wealthy elder, we will first summarize, in Table I, the marital conditions of the eight young men we have been discussing. 592

TABLE I
THE MALAUILA YOUNG MEN IN 1928-29

Name	Age	Resident Old Wives (Ex-widows)	Resident Young Wives (Bestowals)	Promised Wives (Under 14)	Own Children
Tiberun	33	0	0	0	0
Banana	28	1	0	0	0
Teapot	35	0[a]	0	0	1
Gitjara	33	2	0	2	1
L. F. B.	38	1	0	1	0
Summit	36	1	0	5	0
Padimo	36	1	2	3	0[b]
Boya	42	1	0	4	0

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[a] Teapot's "stolen" wife was dead.
[b] Padimo's first child, born in 1929, lived only a few days.

This table presents a summary of many of our earlier attempts at generalization. The only Malauila under the age of 43 who had a bestowed young wife old enough to live with him was Padimo, who was thus exceptionally lucky. Leaving out young Banana, five of the seven men between the ages of 30 and 42 had young females promised to them, but these were mostly babies or children who would not come into residence for several years. Six of the seven had married widows, mostly elderly widows, well in advance of the arrival of young wives and before any father had bestowed a daughter on them. Finally, and a point not made before, men of this age group rarely had any children of their own. The only entries in the last column of Table I are the irregularly born son of Teapot; Padimo's first daughter who died virtually at birth; and the 1-year-old son of Gitjara who was the last child born to his second ex-widow. Tiwi men rarely had young wives until they were around forty; they even more rarely had any children of their own before that age. Padimo's dead baby and Gitjara's 1-year-old son were exceptional; the zeros in the last column against the names of Boya (42), L. F. B. (38), and Summit (36) represent the normal situation for Tiwi men of such ages. 561 582

In terms of success (as measured by bestowals) Padimo and Summit (largely through the patronage of elders) and Boya and Gitjara (largely through their own operations) were the coming young men among the Malauila. Of the others, L. F. B. was approaching forty with few assets and no influence, and the other three, Tiberun, Banana, and Teapot, had not even got started in the influence race. 554 584

A Very Successful Elder: Ki-in-kumi

The most influential man in Malau and the head of the biggest household was Ki-in-kumi. Since he had been born around 1863-64 and had been 159 557

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 render his name tabu. This is the case among the Tiwi. All the names of a dead man become strictly *pukimani* (=tabu) immediately upon his death. Anyone in the tribe who uses a name of a dead person at any time for years after his death but especially in the period—usually about five to six months—that always elapses between the death and the funeral corroboree, violates one of the strictest social sanctions the tribe possesses.
192 And this prohibition extends to all words in the ordinary language—
551 though curiously enough not in the sacred language—which bear any
765 resemblance in sound to any one of the names of the dead man. It applies equally to English names in use by the tribe with resemblances to native or English words and to native words which resemble either English or native words. Thus a boy named *Tipuki* having died "tobacco," "baccy," *Tiparkitimiri* all equally became *pukimani*. Similarly when *Mulankina*, one of the Mandeimbula horde died, *mulikina*, one of the commonest words in the language, meaning "plenty," "full," "enough," was dropped completely from the language.

551 Nor does the *pukimani* stop here. Not only is the use of any of the
553 names of the dead man prohibited, but there is an equally strong rule against the use of any of the personal names he has bestowed upon other people, be they his own children or the children of others. A young child may only have one name, that given him by his father, but should his father die he must become nameless until he gets a new name from somewhere. This aspect of the *pukimani* does not extend to similar words in either the ordinary or the sacred language. For instance although
[192 765] *Tambu*, a proper name bestowed by an old man became *pukimani* on the latter's death, the ordinary word *tamu* (imperative form of verb 'to sit down') was not affected.

582 On account chiefly of the extreme form of polygyny practised by the
595 Tiwi whereby most of the girls and young women belong to a comparatively few old men, the father of a family is almost invariably much older than his wife. While a woman goes to live with her husband at about the age of 13, a man is lucky to get his first wife under the age of 35. It follows that in the great majority of cases the father of children dies
587 long before the mother. Therefore as a woman without a husband is unknown amongst the Tiwi, a woman passes through the possession of quite a number of different men during her lifetime and does not remain in an unmarried state for more than a day or two. A widow

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 admitted the charge along the age-old line of "the woman tempted me," Louis always faced his accusers silently, sullenly, almost disinterestedly. He never excused himself, never alibied. On the other hand he never gloried in or boasted of his sexual exploits, he merely gave the impression that he was completely disinterested in the whole procedure of argument and punishment and wanted to get it over with as quickly as possible. It was very evident that, despite his sexual reputation, he was not invested with any glamour nor did he excite any hero-worship on the part of the younger men. The role of Don Juan [555] in some cultures can presumably be a role that leads to a successful seducer's [837] being envied and even to some extent hero-worshipped by the young bloods, but this seems quite absent as a cultural possibility in Tiwi values. Successful young seducers never act publicly as if they were proud of themselves nor in any way show off or assume a "look how clever I am" manner. Absence of such behavior was very noticeable in others besides Louis, and certainly he never acted in such a way, despite his obvious suitability for such a role were it culturally available.

In camp and during the periods of the collective life he was silent, gloomy and dour, frequently irritable, unfriendly and hostile to everybody. He was [582] too young, in Tiwi terms, to rate a wife, but the policy of the Mission to dis- [797] courage plural marriages had as its positive correlate the promotion of marriages for the wifeless young men and Louis was one of those who had obtained a wife through Mission manipulations. She died after a beating which Louis in one of his frequent fits of anger had administered to her, and while the natives never said so openly, they clearly agreed with the Mission's charges that Louis had murdered his wife. Thus accused to his face by the Mission, Louis shrugged his shoulders in his normal, indifferent way. In council he seldom spoke and what he said carried no weight. This, of course, may well have [561] been due to his age as in Tiwi terms Louis at 31 or 32 was still a young man who should keep silent in the presence of his seniors. But it was very noticeable that even in the quick informal conferences between members of a party on the march involving such petty decisions as whether to camp at this waterhole or try and make the next one before nightfall, or in similar minor decision-making, Louis took no part. He listened silently to the debate, was very quick to foresee correctly what the decision was going to be as was evidenced by his starting off again by himself before the main party had realized where the consensus lay, but he apparently felt no urge to express aloud his own views on the issue. His actions showed that in his private analysis of the situation he was way ahead of most of the debaters but apparently his personal satisfactions came from correct anticipation of majority decision rather than from any desire to participate himself in decision-making. The same ability to listen, analyze what he heard, to act upon his own analysis but never to intervene actively was very noticeable in Louis' reaction to the accusations against him by the outraged husbands. An outraged husband usually begins his charges late at night when the camps are quiet. At such a time he begins to yell his accusations through the darkness at the top of his voice, naming the seducer,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

of the oldest and most respected seniors, particularly of Tu'untalumi and those swayed by his opinion. It follows from this that Tip though given to jokes and pranks cannot be written off as merely a privileged buffoon. On the contrary his wit and gaiety earned him friends and his friends gave him influence out of proportion to his youth. Some insight into this is supplied by the shadow of the ubiquitous Louis. Tipperary, through the missionaries' efforts on behalf of monogamy, had obtained a wife at a much earlier age than would have been possible under pre-white conditions, and according to the women, who have their own sources of information about such things, Louis was strongly attracted by Tipperary's wife. Since Louis was not noted for restraint or self-discipline in these matters the obvious question was why he did not press his attention on her as he had done on numerous other women, including the wife of Tip's younger brother Bob. "Oh no, he doesn't dare chase after Tipperary's wife. The old men would be very angry if he did anything to her," was the reply of the old hags who were the local gossip columnists. This belief that the "old men" would undoubtedly protect Tip's wife while they had noticeably failed to protect Bob's wife from a similar threat (see below) is a pretty clear indication that the two young men had very different places in tribal estimation—a fact that in turn can be correlated with no status differential between them and leaves only the "personality" difference between the two men to account for it. Tip was popular with the control groups, Bob was not, therefore the control groups would support Tip because they liked him. They were indifferent toward Bob.[10]

To summarize Tipperary is relatively easy. He was a cheery, relaxed, fun-loving young man who enjoyed his own humor but enjoyed it all the more if it were shared by an appreciative audience. He was therefore gregarious, friendly, outgoing and extroverted. He would have been a good Rotarian or a better disk-jockey. Because of these traits he was noticed a great deal more by his elders than his age justified and the notice he received was usually favorable. He was popular in a way none of his brothers were, and because of this popularity was able to express opinions and exert influence to an extent unusual for one of his years. In a society where men under 30 are expected to be seen and not heard, Tip was constantly being heard. This was only possible because his natural gaiety and warmth prejudiced almost everybody in his favor. He was the sort of man about whom it is often said in our culture "he always makes a party go," or, "he is the sort of person who just naturally makes friends."

BOB

The youngest brother, Bob, needs only two words to describe him—complete nonentity. About 27 or 28 when I knew him and, because of the Mission's efforts, married a good deal younger than he would have been under pre-white conditions, Bob, whatever the occasion or circumstances, was always part of the background. Like many of the younger Tiwi he was inclined to spend part of each year in Darwin working for the white men, and by them he was regarded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 O120 Tiwi O120

614 Each of these *ommya*, sometimes called Pukui (sun),[3] has a number of cult
778 centres and in them resides the "old woman" of the clan; these are also called *ommya*. The sacred site of the Tukambani clan is at Morapeanga, Cape Keith; of the Miatui, Irapulanwa, Buchanan Island in the Apsley Straits; of the Kudjali, Padupi; Sanke Bay, or as the natives say in their quaint pidjin, Djesakabe, which is on the north of Melville Island, an old trepang site.

As far as could be ascertained, no fixed belief is associated with these clan centres. They are not burial caves invested with a ritual significance such as we find in parts of the mainland (Wadaman and other tribes), yet the shade or spirit of the dead does
[775] follow the track made by the natives as they come from the sacred centre to "show it the road." Only some natives know this. It is probably a ritual that has become lost with the advent of new ideas.

614 *Clan Relationship.* To marry within a major clan or phratry, *aramipi*, is taboo,
615 *kimiyari*. A person of one phratry can only marry into the other two major clans.
601 Thus, all Tukambani and their kindred sub-clans are mother, mother's brother, mother's mother, mother's mother's brother, sister's son and daughter, brother and sister. They call people in the other two clans father, father's sister, son, daughter,
[611] wife, wife's brother, wife's mother, wife's mother's brother, wife's mother's mother and wife's mother's brother. In other words, descent is matrilineal.

582 *Marriage Law.* The marriage law is the same as in most tribes: a man marries his mother's mother's brother's daughter's daughter or, as the natives would say, "a man marries his group sister's son's daughter." They have equal exchange in marriage, that is "opposite brothers exchange sisters." An "uncle" (mother's brother) takes his (group) nephew's daughter, and the group nephew receives the uncle's daughter in exchange (cross-cousin type). There are neither subsections nor
[616] sections and indeed, no moieties. A reason may be suggested for this: being isolated on the island, each person knew his or her relationship to the others, and as there was no intertribal exchange, the need for this type of classification never arose. One of the important functions of the section and subsection systems is to facilitate intercourse between tribal groups.

582 The marriage system with relationship terms is explained in the following table:
601
614

		1		2
A	.. *ubunga* m.m.m.m. or sr.	*UWANI* M.M.M.M.B. or B. (Ego)	*yarbunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.
B	.. *yamoriy* m.m.m.	*YARMURDI* M.M.M.B.	*umbreniwa* w.m.	*YAPINAWINI* W.M.B.
C	.. *imaninga* m.m.	*IMANANI* M.M.B.	*tumaliya* w.m.m.	*TAMALITI* W.M.M.B.
D	.. *imari* m.	*ILAMANI* M.B.	*umarani* w.m.m.m.	*IMERANINGA* W.M.M.M.B.
A	.. *ubunga* sr.	*UWANE* B.	*yabunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.

[3] These natives have numerous names for the same object, the result of the taboo on certain words after a death.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

All those in number one group belong to the same clan, and are "opposite" to those of number two group, who also belong to one clan. The lines A, B, C and D are intermarrying groups, i.e. Ego marries his *yabunaiya*, etc. 582 614

Of course, relationship terms also include others denoting the type of relation or blood tie. For instance, a mother's brother or a sister's son (group) when distantly related to Ego could be his father-in-law and would then be called *YUNARENIWA*. A true father is *ERINGANI*, a father's sister, *yunaniya*; father's father *ARMINI*; father's mother, *arnuma*; mother's brother's own daughter, *yamuina*, and one son, *YAMUWANINI*[4]; half brother is *INGULABINI* and a half-sister *inguleba*.[5]

This system of marriage is not unlike the Murngin and Anula system and also is the same as the *wadji wadji* (wrong side marriage) of the Mudbara. In one, cross-cousins—not *inguleba*—can marry, while in the true Mudbara cross-cousin marriage is prohibited. 582

Rites. The rituals centre around the Kulama. The underlying principle of this is to ensure that the Kulama (a small hot yam that embodies the spirit of the "old woman" and guardian of the horde) is cooked correctly, for this ensures her protection against Maradji, the rainbow snake, another old woman who can cause evil to come upon them and "swallow them" up. It is performed during the wet season by each family, and is said to bring about a plentiful supply of food. The Kulama is also used to pass the initiates, both male and female, from a lower to a higher order in the social scale, although I myself could not see that any important results were obtained by the initiates through the ritual.[6] 796 561

Some result, or at least protection, however, is obtained: if the Kulama is not sung or danced at the prescribed time or place, the Marakarti (spear grass) and also the ring used for cooking the Kulama yams at the ritual, would give rise to a poison, *Tani*, which would pass into the air and cause sickness; perhaps a youth who had not passed through the Kulama would sicken and die. On the other hand, a youth who has passed through the ritual may gain a certain satisfaction by believing that he can drive the sickness away and protect the family. In addition, the Kulama is not only an increase ritual for yams; in it the father also "sings" the name of his child in a form of song, *apa*, and foretells in a dream that a certain spirit "shade" will be incarnated through one of his wives at some future date; for these children are waiting at that "spirit dreaming" place called Bilawuwi. In other words, it is a human increase ritual. 751 842

[4] These are true cousins and cannot marry.

[5] This *inguleba* native is the term for persons who are taboo to Ego; they cannot approach Ego's wives, as their sweat must not touch. They are people who are "out of line" in relationship. For instance, if a Kudjarli man marries two women, one a Tukambani and the other a Mintai, his children would be of two different *pubui* or totems. These children, half-brothers and half-sisters, are *inguleba* to each other.

[6] It is unlike the Karawadi of the subjected people, in which the initiate is freed of certain food taboos, and again in the Kudidjingara, through which the old men receive magical power to levy tribute from the young people of the tribe, who have not passed through that ritual.

emphasized, are presented from the point of view of a female Ego, for I strongly feel that it is only by using a female Ego that one can see the Tiwi marriage "game" as a "system." Following this, I present the kinship terminology together with some comments on the system of kin classification that are relevant to the marriage system. The last section discusses some aspects of the exchange of women between descent groups and local groups. 121 128

I am only too well aware that I do not have all the facts necessary to make a complete analysis of Tiwi social organization. It must also be stated that the relative-age analysis was a desk study based largely on what I believe to be logical deductions from the collected factual information pertaining to the age differences between spouses.[4] More field work is obviously necessary, and I hope that others who become interested in the problems of analysis and classification raised by this paper will comment and thereby suggest what they consider to be crucial areas for reinvestigation. 121

The Factor of Relative Age in Marriage Contracts

Hart and Pilling (1960) have described the dynamic nature of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a male Ego. My study supports their conclusion that for a Tiwi male the acquisition of wives and the acquisition of prestige are dependant variables. A Tiwi male will rarely acquire a wife through any form of contract before the age of 30. A bestowed wife, one who is promised before birth and becomes a cohabiting wife before puberty, is a valuable prestige symbol, but difficult to acquire. Thus a young man will frequently start his household with the acquisition of a less valuable but more easily obtainable type of wife, i.e., a widow, often of advanced age. Some Tiwi males never obtain sufficient prestige or political power to become involved in a bestowal contract, while others who are more fortunate may be involved in several such contracts. 554 554 582 [587]

My study of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a female Ego reveals some interesting differences in perspective. First and foremost is the fact that, while involvement in a bestowal contract is a cultural ideal, albeit rarely realized, for a male's first marriage, it is an inescapable norm for every Tiwi woman's first marriage. Thus, while this type of contract can be considered "preferential" but not normative from the point of a male Ego, it is acknowledged by Tiwi women as an inflexible "rule" governing their first marriage before puberty to a man whom they describe as "the one who grew me up, treated me like a father, and made me a woman."[5] 183 582

Thus a marriage contract for a man's first wife need not be—and frequently is not—the same as the initial contract leading to a girl's primary marriage. Furthermore, the form of the contract for a man's first wife is apt to vary considerably, whereas the form of the initial

5 [The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche. Cf. p.465, cat. 116 -- Analyst.]

183 contract for a girl's primary marriage follows a consistent cultural
● 582 pattern.

In any discussion of a marriage system all the varieties of
[121] marriage contracts must be considered. If, however, one variety is found to be more frequent, preferred, prescribed, or invariable, then that is the one to which all the others must be related. In the Tiwi marriage system there is no difficulty in determining which type of contract should be considered basic to the others. The initial contract which leads to a first marriage of a Tiwi girl is prescribed and invariable and is thus necessarily the most frequent from the point of view of a female Ego, and it is also a preferred contract from the point of view of a male Ego. In the following discussion, I shall refer to this type of contract as a Type A contract. Types B, C, and D are all contracts leading to secondary marriages of Tiwi widows and will be briefly discussed later.

584 A Type A contract is made during the five-day period in which a girl is isolated in the bush at the time of her first menstrual period.
606 Although she has been living with her first husband, she is separated
[88] from him at this time. When she again returns to her husband's camp, she is not only considered to have reached the status of a woman but also that of a mother-in-law. While she is in the bush, her father places a spear between her legs as she sleeps and then presents it to a boy or man whom he selects to serve his daughter as a son-in-law. The spear is regarded by the recipient as a symbol of a bestowed wife yet to be born to his young mother-in-law. By accepting the spear, the son-in-law becomes obligated to his mother-in-law; from that moment on he must supply her with food and goods and such services as she may request at any time. In return, she is held solely responsible for seeing that her first daughter is sent to his
[582] camp when she reaches the wifely age of eight or ten. After receiving the first daughter, the son-in-law is expected to continue his services to his wife's mother, in return for which he can expect to receive other daughters subsequently born to her. The initial contract continues until either the son-in-law or mother-in-law dies. If either fails to honor his obligation, however, the other may terminate the contract. A Type A contract is therefore essentially a contract between a mother-in-law and a son-in-law. The arranger of the contract is the mother-in-law's father.

582 The Tiwi, like the majority of Australian societies, consider cross-cousin marriage to be the proper form of marriage arrangements. For the sake of simplicity, I shall conduct the following analysis as if the preferential marriage pattern involved first cousins, although in fact it generally involves second cousins. For the purpose of viewing the system from the standpoint of relative age the distinction between a first and a second cousin is irrelevant. The question of classificatory cousins will be deferred until the kinship terminology is discussed.

The following analysis of Type A contracts in terms of the factor of relative age will show that the selection of a *FaSiSo* rather than a

MoBrSo to be the first husband of a girl is not merely a question of preferential choice; a FaSiSo is actually the only cross-cousin of the appropriate age to be considered as a party to a Type A contract. 582

As a first step, let us consider the expected relative ages of the principal parties to a Type A contract: the mother-in-law, the son-in-law, and the expected daughter-wife. A girl becomes a mother-in-law at puberty. For the sake of convenience we may consider this to be at the absolute minimum age of ten. A boy becomes a son-in-law at an age of not less than ten, and he may well be older than this. The minimum age of a Tiwi male is determined by his physical ability to hunt for and otherwise serve his mother-in-law in order to fulfill his part of the contract. 582 606 [581]

We cannot expect the future daughter and wife to be born, on the average, for at least five years and conceivably not for twenty years after the contract is made. However, again for convenience, let us assume that, on the average, the promised daughter will be born ten years from the date of the contract, i.e., when both the mother and the son-in-law are about twenty years old. The young girl will not become a cohabiting wife for approximately another eight or ten years, at which time her promised husband will be at least 28 to 30 years of age. Thus an average difference of twenty years between the ages of a girl and her first husband is to be expected—a difference which is dictated solely by the form and nature of the initial Type A contract. 582

Hart (1930: 282) believed that this twenty-year age difference was largely a result of the excessive practice of polygyny quite evident in his time (ca. 1930). However, in 1954, when most polygynous households had been broken up, an analysis of age differences for all primary unions for women in my sample still reflected the same disparity. Few men under the age of 30 had received wives, and only one girl over the age of ten had not yet been given to her promised husband. The average age difference between wives and first husbands was 18.9 years, with a range of from three to 54 years (Goodale 1959: 72). [114] [595] [593]

I shall next consider the expected relative ages of parents, siblings, and the children of siblings (cousins). If there is a twenty-year age difference between husbands and wives, it logically follows that the same age difference will also exist between the mothers and fathers of children. A woman can expect to have children by the age of twenty, while a man will not be expected to have legitimate children until about the age of 40. If we assume that siblings are of the same relative age (there being a 50/50 chance that brothers and sisters are older or younger), then we can expect that a sister will, on the average, have a child twenty years before her brother has a child. Thus it can be expected that the FaSiSo of a female Ego will be twenty years older than she is, and that her MoBrSo will be twenty years younger. In arranging the primary marriage of a girl, it is thus virtually impossible that she be promised to a MoBrSo who by expectation is twenty years younger than she, and who indeed is 582 593 582 605

582 probably not even born when she reaches the wifely age of ten. A
605 FaSiSo, on the other hand, is a cross-cousin belonging to the correct age group to be a party to the initial marriage contract. Relative age, therefore, determines that a Type A marriage contract, which is culturally universal for a woman's primary marriage and preferential from the point of view of male prestige, results almost inevitably in unilateral cross-cousin marriage between a MoBrDa and her FaSiSo.

The preferred form for widow remarriage among the Tiwi is to a
582 younger brother of the deceased husband. This type of remarriage
587 contract stems directly from the Type A contract and may be considered a continuation thereof. It is therefore here classified as a Type A2 contract. As a woman grows older, when and if her Type A contract or its continuation runs out, alternative choices for secondary husbands are available to her, and acceptable to the Tiwi, among other cross-cousins.

582 A comparable method of analysis indicates that, as between the sons of a father's elder and younger sisters, a woman's primary marriage under a Type A contract is very much more likely to be with
[595] her FaElSiSo, and that under these circumstances she will probably enter her husband's household as a second and junior wife. Her elder co-wives play an important part in her education as a wife.
582 After she becomes a widow, however, she may become the first wife,
587 with the title of *taramaguta*, of a FaYoSiSo or of a MoElBrSo through a Type A2 or B contract. A MoYoBrSo, however, may be expected
593 to be considerably younger than Ego, and my analysis of all marriages in 1954 showed that only after the age of 30 do we find women married to husbands younger than they. Such a marriage can never be the result of a Type A contract but may occur under contracts of Types B, C, or D (see below).

Not only does the twenty-year average age difference between husband and wife under a Type A contract have the effect of practically limiting the choice among cross-cousins for a woman's first husband to a father's elder sister's son; it also means that a woman may expect to have at least two husbands during her lifetime. Indeed, she is likely to have a series of husbands whose ages relative to her own are successively younger until, as an elderly widow, she may well become the first wife of a man very much younger than herself.

Classification of Tiwi Marriage Contracts

584 The form and nature of Tiwi marriage contracts cannot be understood merely by looking at the results of the contract, i.e., who marries whom. One must also look at who has the authority to make the contract, who are parties to the contract, who implements the contract, and who can change a contract. Among the Tiwi the rights, duties, and obligations that pertain to all these aspects of a marriage contract are specified and reside in different individuals at different times in a woman's life. Here again the age factor must be considered, for while these rights, duties, and obligations lie in the

hands of a limited number of specified relatives of the woman, the 584
privilege of exercising a particular role in a marriage contract depends on the individual's age relative to others holding similar rights and relative to the woman involved in the contract. I have chosen to base the following classification of contracts on the single factor of who has the right to make the contract.

Type A Contracts

A Type A contract involves four individuals. The authority to [603]
make the contract resides solely in the hands of the bride's mother's father. At the time the contract is made, this man is at the expected age of 50—the age when a man is at the height of his political career. Acquiring wives for himself to further his career and maintain his [554 595]
prestige is only one of the activities involving marriage contracts in which a Tiwi male is engaged at this time of life. As a father, he has [593]
a duty to look after the welfare of his daughters even after they are married. As an elder in a matrilineal descent group, he has a similar [614]
duty toward all younger members of that descent group, male and female. By arranging a correct Type A marriage contract, a Tiwi man can fulfill two duties at the same time. He can provide his daughter with a son-in-law, whom he selects on the basis of potential economic and political ability and who, if of roughly the same age as the daughter, can be expected to provide her, under the terms of the contract, with continued support throughout her life. By selecting a young man in his own descent group (his sister's daughter's son) to provide this support, he at the same time assures this young man that he will eventually obtain a bestowed and preferred type of wife which will help him on his road to prestige.

The arranger of a Type A contract may be dead by the time the bride is of an age to be given over to her selected groom. The rights to implement the contract, consequently, do not permanently reside with the arranger, but rather they are the duty of the mother of the bride. They are not given to the mother's husband, even if he is also the bride's father. In the space of time that may well elapse between the arrangement of the contract and its implementation, the bride's mother may have a number of husbands, each of whom may have different axes to grind and varying motives for changing the selection of the groom. The right to change any Type A contract belongs to both the mother of the bride and to the groom; if either does not live up to the obligations of the contract the other may consider it void.

A Type A contract, therefore, is one which preferentially and [614]
frequently results in a marriage of a MoFaSiDaSo to a MoMoBrDaDa and in a marital union between two matrilineal descent groups. This arrangement is unaffected either by the death of the arranger or by any secondary marriage of the bride's mother to a man who, though the real father of the bride, might possibly belong to a descent group other than the two originally involved in the contract.

The enduring quality of a Type A contract over a span of two 582
generations is a most important aspect of the total marriage system

582 of the Tiwi. Any variation from the proper, preferred form of a marriage contract in one generation will not normally have any effect on the marriages of the succeeding generation (indeed, there may not be any succeeding generation if the woman is past child-bearing age). When and if the effect is felt in the marriage contracts of the second descending generation, approximately 80 years will have elapsed, i.e., time enough for necessary social adjustments to have been made and accepted. And since a woman's husbands have no control over their daughters' initial marriages, variation from the patterned norm of unilateral cross-cousin and descent-group exchange is not only allowed but is a frequent occurrence. While certain alternatives are preferable, such as a cross-cousin from a different descent group, marriage with relatives other than cross-cousins is permitted with certain limitations.

Type B Contracts

584 A Type B marriage is one which is arranged by a bride's father or mother's husband. A bride's father has a right and a duty to arrange a daughter's marriage if, and only if, her Type A contract has become void, either because of the death of her promised husband and the lack of any legitimate (A2) heirs to her Type A contract, or because her mother has deemed the contract void because of non-fulfillment of obligations on the part of the promised husband. Although a marriage resulting from a Type B contract may in fact be
582 the first actual marriage of the bride, it is considered a secondary
587 marriage by the Tiwi, and therefore the selection of a groom by the bride's father need not necessarily be confined to the preferential category of FaSiSo. Because the bride's father also has obligations to his own descent group, he may well give his daughter to a member of his matrilineal sib. This may or may not be the same descent group as that from which the first groom was selected. The bride's
[593] father, if he is a man "on the way up," may also make "daughter exchange" an essential part of a Type B contract.

Type C Contracts

584 A Type C contract is one which is arranged by a woman's brothers. When a woman's father dies, her brothers inherit the duty
587 to look after her welfare, and, as this duty applies to their sister's
593 marriage, they may well find themselves in a position to arrange a secondary marriage for her. Since they usually belong to the same descent group as their sister, they need not necessarily consider descent-group obligations in the choice of a groom. Brothers, like fathers, may well make the direct exchange of women an essential part of a Type C contract.

Type D Contracts

A Type D contract is one which is ostensibly arranged by a woman's sons, after the death of her brothers. If a young man who

601 It became apparent to me, when I was collecting kinship terminology, that actual genealogical connection was an important
582 factor in Tiwi kin classification and also, of course, in determining expected behavior. It is perhaps for this reason that I have always viewed the system of preferential marriage as concerned with actual second cross-cousins rather than with classificatory cross-cousins however distantly removed. First cross-cousins are definitely considered a "little-bit-wrong-way." Unfortunately my actual genealogies are too few and too shallow to shed much statistical light on the problem. It has also occurred to me that with extreme polygyny and obligatory remarriage there should be more first and second cross-cousins available to Ego than with monogamy or limited polygyny.

601 With their strong preference for unilateral cross-cousin marriage it might be expected that the Tiwi would have a Sudanese type of cousin terminology in which cross-cousins would be terminologically differentiated on the basis of whom one could and could not marry. When I phrased this question to my women informants, however, I could find no such discrimination. Women do, nevertheless, make a terminological distinction between cross-cousins to whom they are technically married before birth and those whom they may marry in the future when and if their Type A contract lapses.

585 Here I must interject some additional ethnographic information.
881 At the conclusion of a girl's puberty ceremony, she returns to the camp of her husband (*imbunei*), where she is painted. Then her husband and his brothers, all of whom she also calls *imbunei*, line up with the youngest first and the actual husband last. One by one they hit her with a feather pompom (*tokwiinga*) until the husband's turn arrives. At this point the girl runs, and her husband pursues her, catches her, and makes her kneel by a tree, which is marked. I have chosen to regard this ritual as a marriage ceremony in which the Type A contract is finally validated with all its ramifications. The
[582] fact that the husband's brothers are terminologically classed even at this time with the actual husband and play a part in the marriage ceremony may be regarded as validating the continuance of the Type A contract through successive remarriages (of Type A2) to the younger brothers of the original holder of the contract.

587 If a woman survives all her *imbunei*, she becomes eligible to marry any of her other cross-cousins, either matrilateral or patri-
601 lateral, through contracts of Types B, C, or D. It is these cross-cousins, who did not become auxiliary "husbands" under her Type A contract, to whom she applies the term *mawaninya* or its variant, *mawanini*.

601 ***Terminology in the First Ascending Generation***

11 *iringani:* father; also FaBr, FaFaBo, FaFaBrSo, MobloFa, MobloFaBr. Affinal application: MoHu, MoMoMoHu, HoMoBr.

12 *ingnari:* mother; also MoSi, MobloDa, MobloSiDa, FaFaSiDa. Affinal application: FaWi, MobloFaWi, HoFaSi.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

13 *ilimani:* mother's brother; also MoMoSo, MoMoSiSo, MoFaFa. Affinal application: HuFa, FaSiHu, MoFaMoHu. 601

14 *intinganinga:* father's sister; also FaFaDa, FaFaSiDa, MoFaSiDa. Affinal application: HuMo, "MoBr" Wi.

15 *timandinga:* classificatory "father's sister"; also MoMoBrDa. Affinal application: MoBrWi, WiMo (before contract).

16 *ambrinua:* wife's mother (after contract); also DaHu (ws) after contract.

While the Tiwi make no terminological distinction between an actual and a classificatory MoBr (*ilimani*), they do distinguish between an actual FaSi (*intinganinga*), with whom the wife of a classificatory MoBr is classed, and a classificatory "FaSi" (*timandinga*) who is the wife of an actual MoBr. Female informants say: "We cannot marry the son of a real mother's brother, but a long-way mother's brother's son is all right." Male informants phrase the rule differently: "We cannot marry the daughter of a real father's sister; we call our mother-in-law *timandinga* before the contract and *ambrinua* afterwards." This terminology, together with the informants' statements, rather clearly implies unilateral cross-cousin marriage. 582 601

Terminology in the First Descending Generation

17 *imerani:* son (ms); also BrSo (ws), MoBrDaSo, DaDaSo (ms), BrDaDaSo (ws). Affinal application: DaHu (ws) before contract, SiDaHu (ms), SiDaDaDaHu (ms), DaDaDaHu (ws). 601

18 *imeraninga:* daughter (ms); also BrDa (ws), MoBrDaDa, DaDaDa (ms), BrDaDaDa (ws). Affinal application: SoWi (ws), SiSoWi (ms) DaDaSoWi (ws), SiDaDaSoWi (ms).

19 *merti:* son (ws); also SiSo (ms), DaDaSo (ws), SiDaDaSo (ms). Affinal application: DaHu (ms), BrDaHu (ws), DaDaDaHu (ms), BrDaDaDaHu (ws), MoBrDaDaHu.

20 *maringa:* daughter (ws); also SiDa (ms), DaDaDa (ws), SiDaDaDa (ms). Affinal application: SoWi (ms), BrSoWi (ws), DaDaSoWi (ms), MoBrDaSoWi.

Although the terms appropriate to the first ascending and first descending generations are in general kept distinct, they are to some extent interchangeable when warranted by differences in relative age and the behavior associated therewith.

The applications of the terms *merti* and *maringa*, in contrast to those of the terminology in the first ascending generation, suggest a rule of bilateral cross-cousin marriage with sister exchange. The rest of my analysis, however, indicates a strong preference for unilateral cross-cousin marriage and the impossibility of sister exchange in Type A contracts. The seeming inconsistencies may, of course, reflect a period of uncompleted change in social structure, but this lies outside the province of the present paper, which is concerned with showing how the system operates today. 182 582 583

Terminology in the Second Ascending Generation

21 *amini:* mother's father; also MoFaBr, FaMoBr. Affinal application: MoMoHu, FaMaSiHu. 601

22 *ama:* father's mother; also FaMoSi, MoFaSi. Affinal application; MoFaWi, MoMoBrWi.

601 23 *angamani:* father's father; also FaFaBr, MoMoBr. Affinal application: MaMoHu, MoFaSiHu.

24 *imaninga:* mother's mother; also MoMoSi, FaFaSi. Affinal application: MoFaWi, FaMoBrWi.

Unlike *amini* and *ama*, the terms *angamani* and *imaninga* are not indefinitely extended collaterally, the more distant collateral kin being classed as elder siblings, i.e., *iwuni* or *imbunga*.

Terminology in the Second Descending Generation

25 *inimini:* daughter's son (ms); also BrDaSo (ws). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ws), SiDaDaHu (ms), "Si"Hu.

26 *inimunga:* daughter's daughter (ms); also BrDaDa (ws). Affinal application: DaSoWi (ws), SiDaSoWi (ms), "Br"Wi.

27 *intamili:* daughter's child (ws); also SiDaCh (ms). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ms), DaSoWi (ms), BrDaDaHu (ws), BrDaSoWi (ws). This term is used self-reciprocally and is quite often replaced by sibling terms (*iwini* or *imboka*) for distant kin.

Exchange Between Descent Groups

582 614 Consideration of symmetrical versus asymmetrical cross-cousin marriage is but one way of looking at the Tiwi marriage system. Let us now look at marriage as a system of exchange between descent groups and between local groups.

From both the male and female points of view, the preferred marriage is to a member of Ego's father's matrilineal sib. Of all the marriages I recorded in 1954, 66 per cent were to members of the father's matrisib, and there was no significant difference by sex. These figures were substantiated by statements from informants expressing the preference for the exchange of spouses between two sibs. As in some of the kinship terminology, there is no indication here of asymmetry in the system.

Let us examine some of the ethnographic ramifications of sib exchange. Though a girl can be said to marry into her father's sib, it is more correct to view this as a marriage into her mother's father's sib, for it is her actual MoFa who arranges her Type A marriage, and this man is obligated to the men of his sib to help them acquire wives. If Ego's mother has also married correctly, then Ego's father's sib and her mother's father's sib will be the same. However, it is possible that her MoHu may not be a member of the same sib as her MoFa. This might well account for some of the 34 per cent of "incorrect" marriages in my original analysis, which only took account of the father's sib.

614 [842] [775] From the point of view of a male Ego it is also important, but for different reasons, to marry a woman of his father's sib. A man's children come to him first in a dream and are then directed by him to their proper mothers. Unborn children (*pitapitui*) already have matrilineal sib affiliations and thus must be born to mothers of the same sib. Tiwi fathers call this dreaming of children "finding," and, if a man is unable to "find" any children, his deceased father is ex-

pected to help him. If a man has married a woman in his father's 614
matrisib, then his father and his children will be in the same sib. 775
Since only a dead father can so help his son, we have here an expression of the unity and mutual support of a sib and its members in the previous life and the afterlife as well as in the present life. It is important, I believe, to add here that the Tiwi do not believe in reincarnation.

It is interesting to speculate, on the basis of the above, what 582
happens if a man marries women of different sibs. If his mother has 614
also married men of different sibs, Ego will have "fathers" in different sibs to help him find children for his various wives.

Thus, as far as sib exchange is concerned, the Tiwi marriage system is a symmetrical one. When we consider the entire social system of the Tiwi, we see a tendency toward atomism. There are 22 matrisibs, grouped today into five exogamous phratries. Sib [615]
membership in phratries is subject to change (Pilling 1957), and the phratries themselves have segmented twice since Hart's visit in 1929. We consequently cannot consider the phratries as stable units in the social organization, and indeed the Tiwi themselves do not. If all marriages were correctly arranged as exchanges between two sibs, we would have eleven independent and symmetrical marriage systems. When this possibility is considered in relation to the data on Tiwi local organization, the potentialities for further symmetry and atomism are quite evident.

Exchange Between Local Groups 621

There are ten major land divisions on Melville and Bathurst 631
Islands, called by the Tiwi *tungarima* or "countries." Rights to the land of the *tungarima* are determined, for both males and females, [591]
by the location of the grave of one's father, and there is a marked preference for patrilocal residence. The *tungarima* are, in themselves, agamous. They are, however, subdivided into smaller districts, each inhabited either by a single large patrilocal extended family or by a group of closely related smaller households. Since incest regulations [582]
dictate that extended families are exogamous, we may consider that in many cases, if not all, the local group will also be exogamous.

Unilateral Type A marriage contracts will therefore involve a 582
minimum of three such households or local groups. But the marriage system might still be symmetrical within the *tungarima* or country 614
organization, and the total effect might be to localize the matrisibs in pairs. Each country could then be considered as comprising an independent marriage system. The *tungarima* do reveal marked political, economic, and ceremonial independence, but at least today the matrisibs are not localized. The mythology on the origin of the sibs (Mountford 1958), however, strongly indicates that they were at one time conceived as being localized, and this would account for the stated existence of local spirit-child centers with sib affiliations

●582 and for Tiwi fathers' statements that they can only "find" children
614 in their own country.

Today, with nonlocalized sibs, both the sib and the local group are
582 considered in the exchange of woman, which is direct with reference
614 to sibs but indirect with reference to local groups. Such exchange may in some cases involve sibs and countries or *tungarima*, in others
621 sibs and districts or subcountries. I found that approximately 50 per cent of local-group exchanges were between *tungarima* and 50 per cent within the *tungarima*.

582 With local-group exchange and unilateral cross-cousin marriage preferred and predominant, we have an indirect but circular marriage exchange system. We cannot, however, consider the entire society as being involved in a single marriage exchange system. The system is best seen from the point of view of a single male Ego, whose marriages are systematized according to rules which are society wide, but whose actual marriages are determined by past affiliations which can be and often are variable with respect to sib and local-group exchange.

That the Tiwi system is Ego-oriented is most evident when a
554 male Ego dies and his relatives foregather for his funeral ceremonies (Goodale 1959). If such an Ego has lived a full life, he will be affiliated
571 at the time of his death with a number of social groups. He is affili-
764 ated by birth with a matrilineal sib. By his father's death he is affiliated with a local group and a *tungarima*, which may or may not be the same as the group with whom he currently resides; in either case he is affiliated with the latter and will be buried among them. Through marriage, Ego is likewise affiliated with one or more additional sibs and local groups.

Only those persons who belong to the several above-mentioned
601 groups with which the deceased is actually affiliated are expected to
764 honor him by attending his funeral ceremony. When death occurs, these individuals are terminologically reclassified into four cate-
602 gories, from the members of each of which similar behavior is expected. The spouse and spouse's siblings become *ambarui*. Cross-cousins, MoFa, FaMo, BrDaCh (ws), and SiSöCh (ms) all become *yempi*. Siblings and parallel cousins, MoMo, FaFa, BrSoCh (ws), and SiDaCh (ms), regardless of their sib affiliations, are classed together as *pudawi*. All kinsmen in the first ascending and first descending generations are classed as *unandawi*. Since, however, there is a distinct role differentiation between Fa, FaSi, and SoCh (ms), on the one hand, and Mo, MoBr, and SiCh (ms), on the other, I suspect there may be a terminological distinction which escaped me, inasmuch as these "funeral terms," with the exception of *ambarui*, are no longer in use.

Conclusion

582 In this paper I have considered the form and nature of the varying types of contracts that lead to marriage among the Tiwi. I have

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

discussed the factor of relative age as a major determinant of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in the particular type of contract which is universal for first marriages among females and is also the preferred contract for males. I have also described several variant patterns of Tiwi marriage contracts and have shown that these cannot be considered as alternatives to the preferred type but rather as additional patterns which apply only to a woman's secondary marriages. These additional types of contracts are also, to some extent, conditioned by the relative ages of the participants, but the resultant form of marriage may vary from a continuance of patrilateral cross-cousin marriage to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and even to marriage with certain relatives who are not cross-cousins. The wide variation in contracts leading to secondary marriages for women does not affect the continuance of preferred unilateral cross-cousin marriage or the exchange of wives between particular descent and local groups until the second generation after the variant marriage. Consequently, any change in the social organization of the Tiwi brought about by variations in marriage contracts is a gradual change, but it is also an inevitable and accepted form of change. The Tiwi rightly consider that as individuals they have considerable freedom in the selection of mates from almost any descent and local group and even from among a number of categories of kinsmen. Their Ego-oriented marriage system provides both stability and flexibility, and this is reflected in their system of kin classification.

NOTES

1. The field work on which this paper is based was undertaken in 1954 at the Snake Bay Native Settlement on Melville Island and was jointly financed by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.
2. In 1959, I used the relative age of spouses in a preliminary analysis of Tiwi unilateral cross-cousin marriage (Goodale 1959). It was with considerable pleasure that I found that a similar analysis by Rose (1960) had quite independently arrived at the same conclusions. Even more interesting was the fact that in cases where I had to calculate expected ages for many of my kin relations, Rose, with more complete age data, could give the average and range in ages for the same relatives, and that in most cases his "average" and my "estimated" ages were the same or within one or two years of one another.
3. For their valuable comments, criticisms, and advice I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Robbins Burling, Ward H. Goodenough, Edward B. Harper, Barbara S. Lane, and George P. Murdock.
4. Unfortunately, since the only age data collected in the field were for husbands and wives, I have had to use expected ages rather than average or mean ages throughout most of this paper (see note 2 above).
5. The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche.

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SHARK DANCE is among traditional, imitative figures that are performed during ritual preparation of toxic Kulama yams.

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ceived additional instruction in spear-fishing and birding, while girls were taught more intensively to locate and identify edible plants. The children, as a result, were generally independent economically in their early teens, by which time the girls were already married. Young males contributed to their parents' larder and to other households, but did not marry and acquire households until they were more than thirty years old. Even now, this late marriage age obtains in theory, but not always in practice.

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[183]

885 THUS, to the Tiwi, economic independence and/or marriage did not alone signify adulthood. The Tiwi adult was intellectually, rather than physiologically, a mature individual who was expected to join actively in the non-economic affairs of the community. An adult was also expected to be almost entirely responsible for his own health, wealth, and future prospects. This included attaining success in hunting and in war and, for the men, in wife-collecting. If an adult became ill or was injured or, as a Tiwi would say, was unlucky in the pursuit of life's benefits, he alone was responsible for not behaving as an adult should.

884 The annual Kulama ceremony, held by each community in April at the end of the rainy season, was a most important event to insure individual success. Although a collec-

[P. 11, (c)]
[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 12(c)]

797 The couples marry young without any thought for the future. They just marry as, and when, they feel inclined, and the mission
582 fathers provide the new home. Under the palms beside the
342 Strait are many of the queer little iron humpies provided, just a roof, as it were, sloping on each side from the ridge-pole to the ground. The whole can be picked up and moved to a fresh position when fleas become too numerous and the surroundings otherwise unpleasant. These humpies scarcely seem attractive to white folk, but the islanders like them, and they are at least a great improvement on the dog-kennels of old iron that the blacks persist in erecting for themselves on the beach at Darwin.

797 Proper houses are provided in the Kahlin compound there, but the blacks despise them; and, although the miserable humpies on
342 the beach are demolished from time to time by the authorities, they are all up again by next evening. The good fathers know what the islanders prefer, and they have given the married couples the kind of accommodation in which they feel most happy. The humpies may be hot and stuffy, but they are dry inside when it rains.

142 The island blacks, in many respects, differ considerably from the tribes of the mainland. They are excessively hirsute, and,
144 on attaining maturity, the men grow long beards, many being of truly patriarchal proportions. The upper lip is kept bare, which practice seems to emphasize the magnificence of the beard. Shocks of hair, sometimes standing six inches high, add to a wildly impressive appearance. They are tall and muscular, and, as they stride along, they seem the very acme of physical development, a living advertisement for the natural, open-air existence.
302 The hairs, by the way, are plucked from the upper lip one by one, and this painful proceeding is undertaken in the calmest manner, certainly with less fuss and facial distortion than the average white man makes during his morning shave.

171 The use of the woomera for throwing spears, and of the
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[p. 15 (A)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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The Collective Life

Legal Affairs

THE MOST SATISFACTORY overall view of Tiwi culture is that, within the general framework of mainland patterns, it had developed along its own distinctive lines. Some of these distinctive lines of development are traceable to the relatively favorable food and rainfall situation; others are traceable to the absence of neighbors. The unusually large polygamous households are, we think, attributable to the good food supply. But the large households of the Tiwi, economically efficient as we judge them to have been, involved certain social costs, the most obvious of which was the enforced celibacy of the younger men. This compulsory celibacy did not, of course, mean chastity. Not only were there the endless charges of seduction against young men, but there was also the more objective fact that most young wives continued to become pregnant with monotonous regularity, no matter how ancient and senile their husbands. (The Tiwi belief that babies came from spirits prevented pregnancies from being used against young wives as proofs of unfaithfulness.) Despite the numerous cases of seduction or alleged seduction, few young men ever took the most straightforward way of escaping from their state of compulsory celibacy—namely, abducting a young wife and running off with her. Here we encounter the other factor of the Tiwi natural environment that explains so much about their cultural development—and that is the absence of neighbors. Young men did not elope with young wives because there was no place to elope to. On the mainland such elopements were common, and the couple sought refuge with a neighboring tribe. But an eloping Tiwi couple could only take refuge with other more remote Tiwi bands where the system was the same as that which they had rebelled against back home, and the people with whom they sought shelter were interrelated with those whom they had defied back home. Hence, no matter where they fled, the Tiwi system, embodied in a war party of the girl's husband's friends and

182 [837] 182 583

[Ep. 78: blank]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 relatives, soon caught up with them. Several cases of such elopements occurred
583 during the period of fieldwork, including the case of one young couple (Peanut and Jumbo's wife) who made repeated attempts to elope over a period of
[624] several years. But despite the relaxation of standards that white contact had brought, as long as they remained on the islands these violators of the system were soon forced back into conformity by outraged public opinion and its punitive sanctions. Unless he fled to the mainland with his girl, the young bachelor who stole an old man's young wife had to restore her sooner or later to her rightful husband. Under pre-white conditions they could not flee to the mainland; if they tried, they both probably drowned on the way or at least were never heard of again.

Thus the isolation of the Tiwi made the rule of the gerontocracy much
182 more absolute, and the enforcement of it much more effective than was possible
691 for any of the mainland tribes where violators of the rules could skip across the border. Tiwi bachelors had to be satisfied, by and large, with casual and temporary liaisons and even in these, because of the constant suspicion of the old husbands and the constant spying and scandalmongering of the old wives, they had to be prepared to be often caught and, when caught, to be punished.
[578] Thus we come to another of the main emphases in Tiwi culture—the enormous frequency of disputes, fights, duels, and war parties arising directly or indirectly out of cases of seduction. If we may call this area of life the legal area, then over 90 percent of legal affairs were matters in which women were in some way involved.

THE DUEL The Tiwi formula for handling seduction was very
627 straightforward and clear-cut in its formal outline. Since senior men had young
684 wives and young men had not, seduction was necessarily viewed as an offense by a young man against a senior man. Hence the charge was always laid by the senior and the younger man was always the defendant.[1] At night in camp the accuser hurled his charges at the offender. We described earlier the alternatives available at this stage to both parties. Two of those alternatives were for the old man to press the matter to a public "trial," either the next day, if the camp was already a large one, or else on the next occasion when both men were present in a big gathering.

The basic shape of all Tiwi trials was standardized in the form that we have been calling the duel. Everybody present—men, women, children, and dogs—formed a rough circle in an open space, sitting or standing according to their degree of excitement at the moment. At one end stood the accuser,
[302 the old man, covered from head to foot in white paint, with his ceremonial
411] spears in one hand and a bundle of the more useful hunting spears in the

[1] Under pre-white conditions this had to be so. After the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, some young men through Mission manipulation got a young wife at an age that would have been impossible earlier. This resulted in an occasional case around the Mission where a *young* husband charged a man older than himself with seducing his wife. The resulting duel, with an older man as defendant, was regarded by the Tiwi as both embarrassing and ludicrous, perhaps analogous to the average American's attitude toward female professional wrestlers. (See Hart 1954 for a case of this sort, the duel of Bob v. Louis.)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 177 584 797 male of her choice and the couple soon set up housekeeping with Father Gsell's blessing. This was, at least, how the missionary saw it.

But what were the real circumstances surrounding this "free choice" by Polly? Her real father—that is, the husband to whom her mother Rita was married when Polly was born—had promised Polly to Kardu. Timalarua had "stolen" Polly from Kardu, her rightful husband. Nor is this the whole story. Rita had been "stolen" by Puti from Polly's father Turimpi. After several fights between Puti and the aging Turimpi and after Rita's complete refusal to return to Turimpi, Turimpi allowed Puti to keep Rita as his wife. Polly, however, was ultimately to go to the man to whom she had been promised, Kardu. But Puti, as the potential next father of Polly, had promised Cabbagee that as soon as Kardu died Polly was to be Cabbagee's wife. That is, when Polly chose Cabbagee as her mate she was only bypassing Kardu and taking as her husband the next normal alternative open to her.

When one considers what parts of Father Gsell's reform were significant in this case, one finds that only late consummation of marriage, monogamy, and marriage between agemates were important. A female did not actually have a "free choice" of her mate as Father Gsell had hoped and, in fact, had specified. She selected a youth to whom one of her relatives had at least tentatively promised her. Or (to put it in Hart's terms) she married—under Mission auspices—a young man who had at least a second or third mortgage on her.

159 177 595 797 Let us follow the case of Cabbagee's marriage further. He married Polly when he was about 23; he was too young to be married in the old pattern and was, therefore, happy to get a wife and be on his way up the social ladder. But when the next female promised to him (before her birth) came of age and he collected her, Polly made a terrific row. She did not want any younger female around her household as a second wife and told the priest at the Mission so. He in turn deprived Cabbagee of all gifts of tobacco and food and sent him and his family to the bush to think over the matter. After a few months, Cabbagee decided that he wanted tobacco and that after all the only place he could get it was at the Mission. He and his family returned and he gave up his second wife to Father Gsell, for a payment of food.

Younger men who were getting wives from among Father Gsell's convent girls thus found that they were unwise to accept a second wife from any other source. But such a young man, married under Catholic auspices, soon 584 557 found that he could enhance his prestige without invoking criticism from the Mission if he gathered around him his own female relatives, the younger of whom he could give away later, one at a time, to men of his choice. A married man like Cabbagee, who gave another man his sister or sister's daughter, was in a position to ask all sorts of favors from the recipient, especially gifts of food, tobacco, and trade goods, and support in politics.

177 583 By the end of World War II, even these newer concepts of marriage agreement had begun to alter. There were many young Christian females desiring to have husbands whose fathers and brothers were not asking further wives as repayment. The fathers began to ask for new types of concessions

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

from their future sons-in-law and demands which look very much like bride price and bride service developed as a basis for marriage arrangement. A young girl had a relatively "free choice" of her future spouse. But following this selection, her father let it be known to the young man what he expected. The desired payment was often stated in Australian money by the 1950's; some men were asking as much as a hundred pounds for a daughter. (This was a very high sum, since Tiwi males working for the Army received four pounds a week as normal wages.) Other men were asking that their sons-in-law live with them, thus leaving their own parental home, and contribute regularly to the upkeep of the household of the father-in-law. This was, indeed, quite a practical arrangement, for when such a young man went to work in Darwin his wife had to be supervised at home and, further, his employer was supposed to send home to the Mission part of the young man's wages.

Thus, by 1954, the following type of marriage agreement was initiated by the great majority of Tiwi with marriageable daughters, specifically those who centered their activities at Bathurst Island Mission and Garden Point. A young girl chose her future husband from her single, male agemates, sometimes with a suggestion from her father. Her father informed his future son-in-law of the obligations incumbent upon him, which normally included matrilocal postmarital residence and a bride price. An older woman with children, or even one without any offspring, who became a widow, was discouraged from remarrying by her father, if he survived, and by her brother after her father's death. The father or eldest brother of a widow with a daughter reaped the benefits of allowing that daughter to marry the young man whom she desired. The widow herself did not remarry but stayed in the household of her father or brother.

Residence Patterns

By 1953, traditional Tiwi residence patterns had undergone major modifications, some of which have already been mentioned. The old residence areas of the bands had been depopulated; in fact, nearly all the Tiwi were located around one of four European establishments—those at Darwin, Bathurst Island Mission, Garden Point, or Snake Bay. In each of these areas a centralized village pattern had developed. Within the Tiwi communities at Snake Bay, Garden Point, and Bathurst Island Mission there remained a few of the old large households with a polygamous base. But in all these camps the household heads were well past sixty and in most cases past seventy. Polygamous households were dying out by 1953.

But what was replacing them? One might assume that the European pattern of the single family household based upon neolocal residence would have emerged as the new Tiwi system. This was not the case, however. Just as Hart found in 1928-29 that successful Tiwi men were the heads of large establishments, so in 1953-54 the younger male leaders had gathered around

582 of the Tiwi. Any variation from the proper, preferred form of a marriage contract in one generation will not normally have any effect on the marriages of the succeeding generation (indeed, there may not be any succeeding generation if the woman is past child-bearing age). When and if the effect is felt in the marriage contracts of the second descending generation, approximately 80 years will have elapsed, i.e., time enough for necessary social adjustments to have been made and accepted. And since a woman's husbands have no control over their daughters' initial marriages, variation from the patterned norm of unilateral cross-cousin and descent-group exchange is not only allowed but is a frequent occurrence. While certain alternatives are preferable, such as a cross-cousin from a different descent group, marriage with relatives other than cross-cousins is permitted with certain limitations.

Type B Contracts

A Type B marriage is one which is arranged by a bride's father
584 or mother's husband. A bride's father has a right and a duty to arrange a daughter's marriage if, and only if, her Type A contract has become void, either because of the death of her promised husband and the lack of any legitimate (A2) heirs to her Type A contract, or because her mother has deemed the contract void because of non-fulfillment of obligations on the part of the promised husband. Although a marriage resulting from a Type B contract may in fact be
582 the first actual marriage of the bride, it is considered a secondary
587 marriage by the Tiwi, and therefore the selection of a groom by the bride's father need not necessarily be confined to the preferential category of FaSiSo. Because the bride's father also has obligations to his own descent group, he may well give his daughter to a member of his matrilineal sib. This may or may not be the same descent group as that from which the first groom was selected. The bride's
[583] father, if he is a man "on the way up," may also make "daughter exchange" an essential part of a Type B contract.

Type C Contracts

584 A Type C contract is one which is arranged by a woman's
587 brothers. When a woman's father dies, her brothers inherit the duty to look after her welfare, and, as this duty applies to their sister's
593 marriage, they may well find themselves in a position to arrange a secondary marriage for her. Since they usually belong to the same descent group as their sister, they need not necessarily consider descent-group obligations in the choice of a groom. Brothers, like fathers, may well make the direct exchange of women an essential part of a Type C contract.

Type D Contracts

A Type D contract is one which is ostensibly arranged by a woman's sons, after the death of her brothers. If a young man who

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

13 *ilimani:* mother's brother; also MoMoSo, MoMoSiSo, MoFaFa. Affinal application: HuFa, FaSiHu, MoFaMoHu. 601
14 *intinganinga:* father's sister; also FaFaDa, FaFaSiDa, MoFaSiDa. Affinal application: HuMo, "MoBr" Wi.
15 *timandinga:* classificatory "father's sister"; also MoMoBrDa. Affinal application: MoBrWi, WiMo (before contract).
16 *ambrinua:* wife's mother (after contract); also DaHu (ws) after contract.

While the Tiwi make no terminological distinction between an actual and a classificatory MoBr (*ilimani*), they do distinguish between an actual FaSi (*intinganinga*), with whom the wife of a classificatory MoBr is classed, and a classificatory "FaSi" (*timandinga*) who is the wife of an actual MoBr. Female informants say: "We cannot 582
marry the son of a real mother's brother, but a long-way mother's 601
brother's son is all right." Male informants phrase the rule differently: "We cannot marry the daughter of a real father's sister; we call our mother-in-law *timandinga* before the contract and *ambrinua* afterwards." This terminology, together with the informants' statements, rather clearly implies unilateral cross-cousin marriage.

Terminology in the First Descending Generation

17 *imerani:* son (ms); also BrSo (ws), MoBrDaSo, DaDaSo (ms), BrDaDaSo (ws). Affinal application: DaHu (ws) before contract, SiDaHu (ms), SiDaDaDaHu (ms), DaDaDaHu (ws). 601
18 *imeraniaga:* daughter (ms); also BrDa (ws), MoBrDaDa, DaDaDa (ms), BrDaDaDa (ws). Affinal application: SoWi (ws), SiSoWi (ms) DaDaSoWi (ws), SiDaDaSoWi (ms).
19 *morti:* son (ws); also SiSo (ms), DaDaSo (ws), SiDaDaSo (ms). Affinal application: DaHu (ms), BrDaHu (ws), DaDaDaHu (ms), BrDaDaDaHu (ws), MoBrDaDaHu.
20 *maringa:* daughter (ws); also SiDa (ms), DaDaDa (ws), SiDaDaDa (ms). Affinal application: SoWi (ms), BrSoWi (ws), DaDaSoWi (ms), MoBrDaSoWi.

Although the terms appropriate to the first ascending and first descending generations are in general kept distinct, they are to some extent interchangeable when warranted by differences in relative age and the behavior associated therewith.

The applications of the terms *morti* and *maringa*, in contrast to 182
those of the terminology in the first ascending generation, suggest a 582
rule of bilateral cross-cousin marriage with sister exchange. The rest 583
of my analysis, however, indicates a strong preference for unilateral cross-cousin marriage and the impossibility of sister exchange in Type A contracts. The seeming inconsistencies may, of course, reflect a period of uncompleted change in social structure, but this lies outside the province of the present paper, which is concerned with showing how the system operates today.

Terminology in the Second Ascending Generation

601
21 *emini:* mother's father; also MoFaBr, FaMoBr. Affinal application: MoMoHu, FaMoSiHu.
22 *ema:* father's mother; also FaMoSi, MoFaSi. Affinal application; MaFaWi, MoMoBrWi.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 hold rather than the family. There was no ambiguity about its "living together" aspect; there were many ambiguities about its kinship aspects. To some of these unusual domestic usages we now turn.

Marriage by Betrothal

589 In many nonliterate societies, including most, if not all of the mainland Australian tribes, there is a tendency to believe that the main purpose in life for a female is to get married. The Tiwi subscribed to this idea, but firmly carried it to its logical conclusion; namely, that all females must get married, regardless of age, condition, or inclination. They (and they almost alone among human societies) took the very slight step from saying "All females *should* be married" to saying "All females *must* be married." As a result, in aboriginal times there was no concept of an unmarried female in Tiwi ideology, no word for such a condition in their language, and in fact, no female in the population without at least a nominal husband. Their own explanation of this unique situation was connected with their beliefs about conception and where
581 babies come from. Anthropologists have long been aware that the Australian
842 aborigines generally (and indeed some of the Melanesians, such as the famous case of the Trobriand Islands) ignored the role of the male in human conception and firmly believed that a woman becomes pregnant because a spirit has entered into her body. The Tiwi were no exception, but went a step further than the mainlanders in dealing with the dangerous situation created by the unpredictability of the spirits. Since any female was liable to be impregnated by a spirit at any time, the sensible step was to insist that every female have a husband *all the time* so that if she did become pregnant, the child would always have a father. As a result of this logical thinking, all
[584] Tiwi babies were betrothed before or as soon as they were born; females were thus the "wives" of their betrothed husbands from the moment of birth onward. For similar reasons, widows were required to remarry at the gravesides
[587] of their late husbands, and this rule applied even to ancient hags who had already buried half a dozen previous husbands in the course of a long life. It can readily be seen that these rules—prenatal betrothal of female infants and immediate remarriage of all widows—effectively eliminated all possibility of an unmarried female from Tiwi society. They also eliminated any possibility of an unmarried mother or a fatherless child. No matter where the unpredictable spirit chose to create a baby, whether it was in the body of a pretty young woman, a toothless old hag, or a little girl of six or seven, the pregnant
[711 female would have a husband, and the children when born would have a
848] father. The Tiwi were thus probably the only society in the world with an illegitimacy rate of zero.

584 The practical application of these two unusual rules had certain unusual
851 consequences. The rule of prenatal betrothal obviously gave a great deal of
593 power to the person with the right to betroth, and in Tiwi this right belonged

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to the husband of the pregnant woman. We carefully say "the husband of the pregnant woman" rather than "the father of the child" because the right resided in the male head of the household at the time of the birth. Although he was ordinarily both the father of the child and the husband of its mother, there were naturally occasions when a child was born after the death of its father, in which case the right of betrothal unquestionably belonged to the mother's new husband. The clearest statement of this rule is to say that the right of betrothal of all newly born females resided in the husband of the mother at the time of the girl's birth. "He who named the child bestowed it." 584 851 593

In most human societies the proportion of males and females in the population is approximately equal, except in the older age-groups where women predominate owing to their tendency to live longer than men. The Tiwi conformed to this norm biologically, but their cultural insistence that all females of every age be married resulted in further unusual features of the domestic situation. No such compulsory marriage was required or expected of males. Hence, the total female population, but only part of the male population, was married. Mathematically this permitted, indeed required, a high degree of plural marriage. The men who held the right to betroth—namely, the fathers of the female babies—could, within certain limits imposed by the kinship system, bestow their about-to-be-born or newly born daughters where they wished, and they certainly did not bestow them on about-to-be-born or newly born males. On the contrary, they bestowed them, generally speaking, where some tangible return was to be anticipated. Put bluntly, in Tiwi culture daughters were an asset to their father, and he invested these assets in his own welfare. He therefore bestowed his newly born daughter on a friend or an ally, or on somebody he wanted as a friend or an ally. Such a person was apt to be a man near his own age or at least an adult man, and hence perhaps forty years or so older than the newly born baby bestowed upon him as a wife. Or, the father might bestow an infant daughter on a man—or some close relative of such a man—who had already bestowed an infant daughter upon him, thus in effect swapping infant daughters. Obviously, the fathers who did the swapping, even if they were not quite the same age themselves, were bound to be many years older than the infant wives they thus received from each other. Or, thirdly, a father looking for a suitable male upon whom to bestow his infant daughter's hand might decide to use her as old-age insurance—in which case he selected as her future husband not one of the older adult men who would be old when he himself was old, but a likely looking youngster "with promise"; that is, a youth in his late twenties or thirties who showed signs of being a good hunter and a good fighting man, and who was clearly on his way up in tribal power and influence. Such a youth, in his late twenties at the time of betrothal, would, with luck, be in his prime as "a big man" in about twenty years—a time when the father of the infant daughter would be getting old and decrepit and much in need of an influential son-in-law who was obligated to him. 162 [581 595] [584 593 582 581] [562] [572] [606 888]

There were other bases upon which infant daughters were betrothed, 582 593

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Tiwi household head is shown by the genealogies of the grandfathers of the present generation. Turimpi, who was born in the 1830's and died in the early 1900's, was at his death the most powerful old man among the Tiklauila. Some of his sons are still alive, and all of them were in the prime of life around 1930.[4] A complete list of Turimpi's wives, not all of them living in his household at the same time or necessarily alive at the same time, contains more than twenty names. But Turimpi was outshone in this regard by several of his contemporaries in other bands. A prominent Turupula of the same generation had a list of twenty-five; the father of Finger of the Wilrangwila had twenty-nine; the father of Tamboo and Puti had twenty-two. As late as 1930, men with lists of ten, eleven, and twelve wives were still plentiful, and Tu'untalumi, who was aged about seventy in that year and was a man of great influence, had by then accumulated no less than twenty-one.[5] 595

Such numbers of wives as these per husband are very much higher than usually prevail even among the most polygymous hunting tribes. Obviously, a domestic unit with twelve or more wives in it makes for a very large household. Among the Tiwi, a household even of such men as those just named did not contain all these wives at the same time, mainly because of the very great variation in the ages of a man's wives. As far as bestowed or betrothed wives were concerned, such wives arrived at their husband's household to take up wifely duties therein when they reached the age of about fourteen. Hence the first of them to arrive (typically when their husband was nearly forty) would be women of nearly forty by the time the latest of them arrived (typically when the husband was well into his sixties). Even when the husband died, let us say at the ripe old age of seventy-five, there would probably be some of his bestowed wives still under the age of fourteen who were as yet too young to join his household. Tu'untalumi, the man of twenty-one wives, was already about seventy in 1930, yet in his list of twenty-one wives five were still *al'ings*—that is, little girls not yet approaching puberty—and two were still babies at their mothers' breast. On the other hand, some of his earliest bestowed wives, who had taken up residence with him when he was in his late thirties, were already dead. 592 582 595

Because of this wide variation in the ages of a man's wives, it is necessary to distinguish between a "list" of a man's wives and those actually in residence in his household at any given time. The resident or active wives—one might almost say the working wives—were always fewer than the listed wives. This would necessarily be so even if marriage by betrothal were the only way by which a Tiwi man could obtain a wife. But while it was the most prestigeful form of marriage and the only respectable way in which a man could obtain a *young* wife, there were other ways of setting up a household. 595 584 587

[4] See Hart 1954.

[5] Finger, Tamboo, and Puti were elders prominent in tribal affairs at the time of Hart's fieldwork. Puti was still alive in 1953-54 and well known to Pilling. Tu'untalumi, held in great affection by Hart, but anathema to the Mission Station, died in 1935.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

584 587 The most important way is one which we have already mentioned—namely, widow remarriage.

Widow Remarriage

595 557 587 To become "a big man" a Tiwi had, among other things, to accumulate a lot of wives. This required time, in addition to everything else. A rising star who accumulated by bestowal seven or eight wives by his middle forties and then died, merely left a lot of widows to be redistributed at his graveside, and by the process of wealth attracting more wealth, or capital creating more capital, these widows were most likely to be redistributed among his rivals and competitors of his own age group or among men even older than he. Hence, the largest number of wives ultimately accrued to the successful man who lived longest, since he was likely to gather up at least a few of the widows of each of his contemporaries or seniors as they predeceased him.

There was thus a close correlation between increasing age and the number of wives a man had, and the largest households belonged to a few surviving old men in each band. The two conditions, therefore, which were necessary to accumulate a large household were (1) to attract prospective fathers-in-law to invest their infant daughters in you while you were a young man, and then (2) to live long enough to reap the dividends. The longer you lived, the more dividends would accrue to you from one source or another, provided you started off right by attracting betrothals in your twenties and thirties.

But what about the unimpressive young men, the "noncomers," who somehow failed as young men to attract any prospective fathers-in-law to invest an infant daughter in them? As we have seen, even the most highly regarded and well-connected Tiwi young man had to wait until his late thirties or longer before his first bestowed wife was old enough to join him in domestic bliss, but at least while waiting he knew the time was coming. The overlooked or unbetrothed young man had no such prospects. Since the only source of supply of new females was through the birth of female infants whose hands only their fathers could bestow, it would appear as if a young Tiwi male overlooked or ignored by all fathers of bestowable female daughters had no alternative except permanent bachelorhood. Doubtless Tiwi fathers, as a class, would have regarded this as an ideal situation and would have said that permanent bachelorhood was a proper fate for such friendless and hence useless young men, but no social system of such rigidity has ever been discovered by anthropologists. Tiwi fathers were able rigidly to control the marriages of their infant daughters, but they were not able to control with the same rigidity the remarriages of their own widows, and it was widow remarriage that supplied the loophole in the system, or the cultural alternative that took care of young men.

587 A Tiwi husband was unavoidably and necessarily always much older than a bestowed wife. Therefore he usually died much earlier than she. A girl of fourteen who entered into residence with her first husband when he was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 him a second wife, also, of course, a widow. This marriage is of further interest
[595] when we discover that Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, the main sons of Bongdadu by a previous marriage, had some influence in arranging this marriage of their mother to a contemporary and satellite of theirs, and that a year or two before, Antonio had married the ancient mother of Dominico when *she* became a widow. In other words, Antonio and Dominico had married each other's mothers; Antonio while waiting for his oldest bestowed wife to grow up, Dominico with no bestowed wife in sight. The approximate ages of the parties at the time of these marriages were:

Antonio	37	Dominico's mother	55
Dominico	38	Bongdadu (Antonio's mother)	60+

584 Earlier, we mentioned the practice of fathers swapping their daughters within
587 the infant bestowal system; here we find sons swapping their mothers within the widow remarriage system.

This is a relatively simple example of the complexity of Tiwi domestic arrangements, and we hesitate to complicate matters further. But clearly the last remarriage of Bongdadu (to Dominico) and the remarriage around the same time of Dominico's mother to one of Bongdadu's sons, a friend of Dominico, raise some important issues of social structure, particularly the question of whether widow remarriages of this type are to be regarded as a subspecies of bestowal marriages, with the sons having a right of bestowal over their mothers parallel or similar to the right of bestowal possessed by fathers over their infant daughters. Space does not permit any adequate discussion of this fascinating theoretical issue, but we can point out two factors which strongly deter us from regarding Tiwi widow remarriage as a special case of bestowal marriage. One is the self-evident and empirically observed fact that Tiwi widows, who remarried as Bongdadu and Dominico's mother remarried in the quoted case, were usually highly vocal and pretty tough old ladies who were not easily pushed around by anybody, even by their adult and ambitious sons. Whom they remarried in their old age was a matter upon which they had themselves a good deal to say. Secondly, to any anthropologist familiar with the kinship structures of Southeast Asia and the Pacific countries, there
584 is a great deal of difference, in a society with matrilineal clans such as the
587 Tiwi had, between a father making marriage decisions for his daughters, who
614 do not belong to his clan, and sons making marriage decisions for their widowed mothers, who do belong to the same clan as their sons. We prefer, therefore, to view the overall Tiwi marriage situation and the interrelationship of their two forms of marriage as essentially a system wherein the matrilineal clan had lost its right to make marriage decisions for its female children, that right having been taken over (usurped) by the fathers of those children. The daughters of the clan were disposed of, not where fellow clansmen decided, but where an outsider (the father) decided—thus, bestowal or betrothal marriage. But when the female no longer had a father—that is, when she was old and could only be remarried through widow remarriage—then the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

right of her clansmen and more specifically her sons (in consultation with 584
her own wishes) to arrange her remarriage became restored as a sort of 587
residual or reanimated right. Moreover, as we shall see, it was in line with 614
their own political interests for the sons to insist on exercising such a right.

Naming Rules

Such a way of integrating the two forms of marriage is supported by 553
the Tiwi rules for naming children, which are very relevant to the issue. We 768
mentioned earlier that the right to bestow a daughter was vested, strictly 587
speaking, not in the actual father, but in the man who named her. Personal names were important in the Tiwi value system[8] and were given to every child a few weeks after its birth by its father or the man currently married to its mother. But whenever a husband died and the widows remarried, all the personal names given to their children by the dead man became strictly taboo, and the new husbands of the widows had the duty (or right) of providing all the children with new names. Since most women were widowed several times in their lives, most children were thus renamed several times in *their* lives, and the names given them by the earlier husbands of their mother dropped completely out of use.[9] Logically under this system nobody would get a permanent name until his or her mother was dead, since as long as she were alive she would remarry and her new husband would rename all her children, no matter how aged they might be. The Tiwi insisted that logically this was how the naming system was supposed to work, and, in fact, the personal names of even prominent senior men did become taboo whenever their mothers' current husbands died. But convenience proved stronger than logic and the personal names of most men and women became well established in their early adulthood as people became used to them. While such names did become taboo [183]
when the man who had given them died, the taboo in such cases was temporary
rather than permanent, and after a decent interval the name would creep back [551]
into use replacing some new and unfamiliar one which might be bestowed by the widow's new husband. In general, the name which thus became permanently or irrevocably attached to a person was the name which a person held when he or she first emerged into tribal prominence or first began to get talked about. For a male, this was most usually the name he was bearing in his late twenties and early thirties; for a female, the name she was known by in her early adolescence when she first left her father's household to take up residence with her earliest husband.

That convenience thus overbore logic in the Tiwi naming system by

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[8] See Hart 1931.

[9] It can easily be seen what headaches this naming system created for an anthropologist trying to collect genealogies. Individuals would occur in one genealogy under one name and in another under another name, making the task of cross-indexing and cross-checking enormously difficult. [124]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

553 768 587 attaching some one semipermanent name to a person despite the rules of name taboo should not cause us to overlook the importance of these rules. In theory, at least, every new husband renamed all his wives' children by all their previous marriages—thus, at least symbolically, canceling out the signs of title of all the previous "fatherhoods" in those children and asserting his own fatherhood right as a new and exclusive one. A widow's new husband was the new household head for all her children, and he took over this position by renaming them all, thus becoming their legal father. If we can stop thinking of "father" as a biological or kin relationship, and think of the word as meaning only "head of the household," the Tiwi concept will become understandable. We will also realize that there is no contradiction or illogic involved in the Tiwi beliefs that male parents were not necessary for conception, but that every child born must be born to a woman with a husband. All they meant was that every child must be born into a household with a male at its head who belonged to a different clan from its mother—in other words, a "father," in Tiwi context.

584 592 768 The renaming of the children by the new household head was not, of course, sufficient to wipe out the commitments made by previous titleholders. Although the new father could and did change his step-daughters' names, he could not change their bestowals. The men upon whom the daughters had been bestowed by the previous father made sure of this. The new father was compelled to carry out the marriage arrangements for the daughters made by his predecessors in the fatherhood role, and there was sure to be a terrific row if he tried to alter them. Nevertheless, he acquired some power over the future of the daughters. The man to whom one of them had been promised by the previous father might die, thus making redisposal of the girl possible for him, or some new deal might be arrangeable in which he could use his new assets—for these new step-daughters were assets, regardless of the fact that their immediate matrimonial future was already settled. The new father could delay his decision as to whether they were yet old enough to join their betrothed husband or even drop a few hints that he did not think the betrothed husband's right to them was quite as certain as was generally believed. Such actions, of course, were liable to lead to violent reprisals by the betrothed husband, but there was always a chance that he would be open to a deal; for example, by giving an option on one of the women in whom he had an interest, he would seek to hasten the appearance of the girl in his own household or seek to clear whatever shadow upon his title to her the step-father sought to cast. Even the last husband of an elderly widow who had already passed through the hands of six or eight husbands and all of whose daughters were grown up and married two or three times already, gained some shadowy rights in the future remarriages of those daughters by marrying their ancient mother. And the validation of these shadowy rights was the fact that as their mother's new husband he had renamed the daughters and he who named them could bestow them. The only catch was, that while he could wipe out all the names bestowed by his predecessors, he could not equally readily wipe out their commitments. All he could do was maneuver within the network created by their

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

commitments so as to try and advantage himself as much as possible by a skillful use of whatever shadowy right in the daughters he had obtained by becoming their current "father." 584 592 768

It is within such a context that the apparent swapping of mothers by Dominico and Antonio must be viewed. By marrying Bongdadu in her dotage, Dominico had acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters, the sisters of Antonio, but since his marriage to her had been, partly at least, arranged by Antonio and her other sons, he would have to share with them his disposal rights to their sisters. Similarly, the marriage of Dominico's ancient mother to Antonio (part, so to speak, of the same "package deal") meant that Antonio as current father had some say in the future disposal of Dominico's sisters when they became widowed, since he had the power of renaming them. 587 584

What in effect occurred in this, as in many other cases, was that men of different clans and of about the same age formed a partnership or close alliance wherein "sons" and "husbands" cooperated in arranging the remarriages of their "mothers" and "sisters" by acting as quasi-fathers and treating their mothers and sisters as "quasi-daughters." The partnership or "firm" of Dominico (of the Crane clan) and Antonio, Mariano, and their brothers (of the Red Paint clan) had already arranged the remarriages of Bongdadu (Red Paint clan) and of Dominico's mother (Crane clan), and stood ready to take care of all future remarriages of any of Bongdadu's daughters (Red Paint) or Dominico's sisters (Crane) whenever any of these women became widowed. Each member of the firm was trying to maximize his own self-interest in this and all the other alliances he had a share in, but operations had to be carried out in this partnership form because the marriage of any woman had to be arranged by her "father," and the father, in the Tiwi rules, had to be a nonclansman of the woman whose marriage he arranged. Hence the Red Paint men needed Dominico, a Crane, as a front man to arrange the remarriages of their sisters, and he in turn used Antonio, a Red Paint man, to arrange the remarriages of his sisters. When clansmen made decisions about the remarriages of their sisters, they could only do it by using agreeable nonclansmen as nominal "fathers" and cooperating with them—and the agreeable nonclansmen would of course only come in on the deal if there was something in it for them, as there was for the obscure and unimportant Dominico in the present case. In return for acting as a front for the Red Paint brothers, he got himself a second wife, an excellent food provider though no longer beautiful; he became the ally, even if junior, of some men with assured futures; and he acquired some shadowy residual rights in the future remarriages of several potential widows. Dominico did himself a lot of good by marrying Bongdadu; if he hadn't married her, he would never have attracted much tribal notice and hence would not have warranted mention in these pages. 571 584 587 614

We find that the whole complex situation makes most theoretical sense if we see it as essentially an institutional struggle between clan rights and the father's rights in women. Tiwi fathers, as suggested above, had taken away from the clan the right to make marriage decisions for newly born female members of the clan. As mechanisms validating this success of father's rights 584 592 614

As mechanisms validating this success of fathers rights

584 against clan rights there existed two rules: he who bestowed the name had
592 the right to dispose in marriage; and all names given by a woman's previous
614 husband were cancelled by his death and a new set of names given to all her
[553] children by her new husband. Strictly and universally enforced, such rules
would put *all* control over the marriages of *all* women, of every age, in the
hands of their mother's husbands—that is, men from outside the clan of the
women being disposed of, in other words, fathers in the Tiwi sense. But the
Tiwi system failed to achieve such a result though their rules are pointed
toward it. They achieved something close to it as far as infant or even young
girls were concerned, since the fellow clansmen of such girls were either (as
brothers) too young and unimportant to have any power to resist this alien
control over their sisters' hands, or (as mothers' brothers and hence older
men) too involved and absorbed in their own activities *as fathers* to take any
position asserting clan rights as against fathers' rights. To be successful in
581 tribal life, an ambitious young Tiwi male was best advised to forget his mother
557 and his sisters' daughters (all members of his clan) and concentrate on getting
584 wives for himself. Only by getting wives could he have daughters, and only
[614] by having daughters could he build alliances and obtain influence, power, and
more wives. To get wives for himself, he could not use his mother or his
sisters or his sisters' daughters, since their disposal was in the hands of the men
who had named them—that is, their fathers. But there came a time in the life
of an older man when his mother was old, and *her* mother was dead, and there-
fore the rights of the last man to name his mother had lapsed. And a similar
situation would arise in the case of his sisters when their mother's last husband
died. By this age, a man so situated was likely to be powerful enough and
skilled enough in the rules of the game to exert some control over the late
remarriages of his elderly sisters and even of his mother, were she still alive.
592 Whenever this occurred, although the resulting situation might have the super-
ficial appearance of clan solidarity—with sons, mothers, brothers, and sisters
584 all acting and planning together as a partnership—such a surface appearance
587 was illusory. The motivations involved in it were scarcely altruistic desires on
the part of the brothers to look after their mothers and elderly sisters, but
rather efforts by the brothers to use to advantage, in their intricate political
schemes, some women of their own clan (their mothers and elderly sisters).
Earlier in life these men had been prevented from such manipulation by the
control over those women exercised by nonclansmen (their husbands or fath-
ers) through the naming rules. Put another way, we might say that Tiwi men
as a group had acquiesced to the system wherein "the father" had control over
all marriages of his "daughters," because every Tiwi man hoped to be a
"father" himself; but having acquiesced, every Tiwi male tried to beat the
system, especially as he became older and more influential, by intriguing in the
remarriages of his mother and elderly sisters—matters in which, according to
the strict letter of the law, he had no right to interfere, since bestowal rights
resided with the "father" or "fathers" of these women. One factor which
[182 greatly contributed to the setting aside of the rights involved in the naming
582] system was the fact that since, on the whole, old men married young women

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

and young men married old women, in many cases the nominal "father" of an elderly woman was very much younger and less influential than were her brothers, or her sons by an earlier husband. The brothers and/or sons, therefore, were able to override the wishes of their sisters' nominal father since the seniority system was on their side in such contests, even though the renaming rules were not. 582 582 581 587 592

Although it was very rare indeed for any Tiwi male to have a resident young wife until he was nearly forty, long before that age he was likely to acquire an ancient widow or two. In at least ninety out of every hundred cases a man's first resident wife was a widow very much older than himself. According to a complete genealogical census carried out in 1928-29, nearly every man in the tribe in the age group from thirty-two to thirty-seven was married to an elderly widow. Many of them had two elderly widows and a few had three. But very few of them, and certainly not more than one out of five of them, had a resident *young* wife. About half of them had bestowed wives, but these were mostly toddling infants who would not come into residence with them for another ten years or more. Even for the most promising and rapidly rising young man, the first young bestowed wife was not likely to arrive until several years after his marriage to a widow. 582 587

To get a start in life as a household head and thus to get his foot on the first rung of the prestige ladder, a Tiwi man in his thirties had first of all to get himself married to an elderly widow, preferably one with married daughters. This was the beginning of his career as a responsible adult. The widow did several things for him. She became his food provider and housekeeper. She served as a link to ally him with her sons. As her husband, he acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters when they became widowed. And she, as the first resident wife in his household, stood ready to be the teacher, trainer, and guardian of his young bestowed wives when they began to join him after they reached puberty. [593] [595]

Levirate, Sororate, and Cross-Cousin Marriage

We have emphasized infant bestowal and widow remarriage because it was the elaborate development of these two matrimonial mechanisms that brought about the unusual, perhaps unique, character of the Tiwi household. Other matrimonial mechanisms, more usual in preliterate societies, were also used by the Tiwi but always in combination with or as minor adjuncts to the two basic mechanisms. Thus, a man often remarried his dead brother's wives, or at least some of them, within the institution of widow remarriage. Such a practice is known to anthropologists as the levirate, and tribes are said "to have" the levirate or "not to have" it. The Tiwi, with their pluralistic approach to the whole area of marriage relationships, can hardly be said to fall into either category. To them, every widow had to remarry and among the many possible candidates for her, the brothers of the dead husband were recognized as having a reasonable, but far from automatic, claim. Whether the brothers 587

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 jointly, or any one of them singly, were able to translate that claim into marriage depended on the other claims. Brotherhood in itself gave no exclusive right to widows, but of course a brother, being necessarily of the same clan and frequently of the same band as the deceased husband, was well in line to assert a claim to the widow if he could make the claim good. Cursory inspection of the genealogies reveals, however, a surprisingly small number of cases of men taking over the widows of their deceased brothers. At best it was a very minor factor in Tiwi marriage customs.

The parallel custom of the sororate—that is, of sisters being married to the same husband—was more common. It occurred both in connection with infant bestowal, by a father promising *all* his daughters by a particular wife [595] to the same husband, or in connection with widow remarriage, whereby two or [584] more full sisters, previously married to the same husband, passed together on his death to the same new husband. The sororate occurred more frequently in the first form than in the second, largely because, as already mentioned, widows had more say in their own marriages than baby girls had, but there was nothing obligatory nor required about it, as is shown by the frequent cases in which a father bestowed all his daughters by one wife on the same man but on the early death of that man rebestowed them *seriatim* on several different husbands. One got the impression, though no Tiwi ever made the point explicit, that within the Tiwi bestowal system the prevailing high rate 165 of infantile and child mortality was an important factor in sustaining the soro- 182 rate principle to the extent that it did exist. A father who bestowed upon a 587 man the first daughter borne by a certain wife was almost obliged to bestow upon the same man the second daughter of the same wife if the first one died in infancy. Moreover, since most fathers bestowed their daughters with an eye to their own advantage, it was clearly desirable if he wanted to cement the goodwill of a prospective son-in-law, to promise him *all* the daughters produced by a certain wife, so that even though most of them died in infancy, at least one or two would be delivered in good condition at the age of puberty. [557] The aim of bestowal was to win friends and influence people, and a bestowal of a child who died before she reached the son-in-law did a father little good. A shrewd father could avoid this risk by following the sororate principle; a stupid or feckless father who scattered his daughters widely could well end up with as many disappointed sons-in-law as friendly ones, as the infantile and child mortality took its heavy toll of his young daughters. In the genealogies, sororate marriages in some form occur much more frequently than levirate marriages, but nonetheless their incidence is such as to indicate that they were a relatively minor feature in Tiwi marriages and that their occurrence was most frequently due to careful fathers trying to insure sons-in-law against disappointment, and themselves against charges of nondelivery.

171 No account of marriage in any Australian tribe can go very far without 582 raising the difficult matter of the kinship system, since all the accounts we have of mainland Australian tribes tell us that all marriages there took place within a rigid kinship framework which required everybody to marry somebody who was automatically his or her cross-cousin (for example, a man and a daughter

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was still a bachelor and why Banana had acted so impulsively and thereby 159
gotten himself in the bad graces of the elders. The two men were the eldest 554
of four brothers without any full sisters and as such they were necessarily
handicapped in their career struggle. Elders seeking satellites or contempo- [557]
raries seeking allies looked askance at men without sisters, for such men could
have no sisters' daughters to use in the marriage-arrangements struggle.
The mother of Tiberun and Banana was dead, but even were she still alive, [562
few men would have been interested in marrying a widow whose only living 581]
children were sons. Widows without daughters and bachelors without sisters
rated very low in the scale of desirable assets sought either by elders or by
contemporaries.

Tiberun was thus the only bachelor in the 30-42 age group. Of the 169
remainder we select Teapot as an example of another man who failed to get 554
started. Teapot was at least 35, and about seven years previously he had "stolen" 626
a wife from an elder. This wife was no ancient and shop-worn widow like
the wife Banana had "stolen," but a young girl who had been betrothed in
due form to an elder by her father. How Teapot had managed to get away with
her is too complicated an incident to unravel here, and in any case it hadn't
done Teapot much good. After presenting Teapot with a baby boy the young
woman died, and Teapot, with a now six-year-old son, was more or less an
outcast among the Malauila. No elder wanted him as a satellite and none of
his contemporaries wanted him as an ally. His mother was dead and his only
sister was married to a Munupula elder. This sister in Munupi was his only
asset and one which a different man might have used as a means to better
himself. But Teapot, instead of using this small asset to get started on a
career, had chosen to defy the rules and "steal" an elder's bestowed wife.
"Stealing" an old widow was reprehensible conduct in the eyes of the elders;
stealing a young bestowed wife was unforgivable. Hence Teapot, since his
crime, had received no bestowal, had been able to marry no widow, and was
wanted by no one as an ally.

A complete contrast to these two unsuccessful men in their thirties was 159
provided by the case of Gitjara, who was about the same age as Tiberun. 557
Gitjara, it is true, had sisters, and that was always a help. Using his sisters 562
(already married and bearing children to an elder) as bait, Gitjara when he 584
was about 28 proposed an alliance to L. F. B., a rather feeble man about five
years older than himself, who was not doing very well in the influence race.
The gist of the proposal was that, since both their mothers were still alive and
each married to an old man who could not last much longer, Gitjara should
marry the ancient mother of L. F. B. when she became a widow, and L. F. B.
should marry Gitjara's mother when that old lady became a widow. Perhaps
the idea originated with the two old women rather than with either of the
young men. Since such arrangements were essentially plots or schemes, it is
impossible to determine who conceived them in the first place—old women
ambitious to aid their sons or young men ready to use their mothers as long-
term gambits to ultimately provide themselves with young wives. Mother-
exchange operations were probably first conceived at high-level strategy con-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 [562]

ferences in which smart mothers and dull mothers, smart sons and dull sons were all present, and the final plan emerged from consensus.

In this case the former husbands of the two old women both died conveniently soon and within about three years of each other and, according to plan, there came into existence a household of two men in their thirties each married to the elderly mother of the other. Gitjara and L. F. B. thus set up jointly the foundations of their households and began their careers as a joint enterprise.

Gitjara had two sisters, both married to White Man, an elder, and already the mothers of daughters to him. By marrying Gitjara's mother, L. F. B. automatically became the nominal father of these women, and in the event of White Man's death would have, as such, some say in where they remarried. But the right of the step-father to redispose widowed step-daughters was always disputed by the brothers (or even sons) of the step-daughters, provided those brothers (or sons) were old enough or influential enough for their wishes to be taken seriously. Thus we may say that in putting L. F. B. into position as his own step-father, Gitjara's main object had been to get a satellite or henchman of his own into the position of step-father of his sisters (the wives of White Man) so that when they became widows there would be no conflict between the wishes of their brother and the wishes of their step-father as to whom they should remarry. L. F. B. as step-father was, so to speak, a stooge for Gitjara the brother.

Conversely, L. F. B. had two sisters both married to Ki-in-kumi, the most powerful elder in Malau. By marrying the mother of L. F. B., Gitjara [606] became the step-father of two of Ki-in-kumi's wives, thus immediately (despite his youth) becoming technically the father-in-law of that powerful old man, and a man with some say in where those two wives of Ki-in-kumi would remarry on Ki-in-kumi's death. As step-father of such widows, Gitjara would have to make his wishes prevail as against the wishes of their brothers, but the only brother was L. F. B. and his vote was obviously in Gitjara's pocket.

By engineering this double shuffle of two elderly widows, each with daughters, Gitjara had launched his career as a marriage manipulator. Almost before it was concluded he became involved in another widow operation. We will omit the intricate details, but can say that he emerged from this with a second wife for himself, this one (naturally) also a widow but quite a young widow. This woman had already borne four sons and one daughter to her previous husband but was still young enough when Gitjara took her over in 1926 to bear him a son (her last) in 1927. In Tiwi terms the acquisition of this widow by Gitjara was a real achievement for the young man, not because of her comparative youth nor because of the son she bore him but because among the children by her previous marriage was a daughter aged about nine [554] at the time she remarried Gitjara. To become the step-father of such a young girl was a real asset for the young operator. Her dead father had bestowed this child on Summit, another of the same Malauila age group of 30-year-olds and hence one of Gitjara's rivals and competitors in the influence struggle.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

This created an intriguing situation since Summit, having had this child bestowed on him at her birth some nine years previously, had thus acquired a bestowed wife at about age 27; Gitjara now 33 or so still had not received a bestowal. By remarrying the mother of Summit's young bestowed wife, Gitjara had turned the tables on one of his chief competitors among his age group. He could not, of course, alter the bestowal; in five or six years' time the girl would take up residence with Summit. But as the step-father who renamed the girl and the head of the household in which she would live for the next five years, Gitjara was in an excellent position to make Summit enter into a deal or two with him. He could drag his feet as to the time of the delivery of the girl to Summit; he could drop hints that there was something irregular about the bestowal to Summit in the first place, and so on; but whatever form of pressure he chose to exert on Summit, the latter well knew that all Gitjara wanted was to be cut in on some of Summit's deals and to be included in the network of Summit's alliances. The next move was now clearly up to Summit. 159 557 584

If Summit wished the nine-year-old girl now in Gitjara's household to be transferred promptly and without argument, he would be well advised to give some consideration to Gitjara, perhaps even the promise of one of his still-to-be-born daughters either as a wife or as a ward. Although not necessary, it would be a politically wise gesture. If he did so, both men would be gambling in futures. Since Summit's young wife was now nine years old, it would be at least six or seven years before she could produce a daughter (if at all) and another fourteen or fifteen years before any such daughter (if she lived) would be old enough to join Gitjara's household either as a wife or ward. Hence, under any such arrangement between the two young men, Summit would be giving something to Gitjara but in such a way that the latter could not collect for at least twenty years and might never collect.

Anthropologists will note that such arrangements still conformed to the patterns of cross-cousin marriage. Gitjara as *de jure* father delivers his "daughter" to Summit and thus becomes technically Summit's mother's brother or wife's father. Twenty years later (if all goes well) Summit delivers his daughter (by Gitjara's daughter) to Gitjara, thus becoming technically the mother's brother or wife's father of Gitjara. Gitjara himself might marry this daughter of Summit by his own step-daughter or treat her as a ward given to him by Summit and bestow her on some other man selected by himself; in the latter case he would be acting as father to his step-daughter's daughter. There were no clan barriers to such an arrangement, since fathers had to belong to clans different from those of their wives and of their daughters, step-daughters and daughters' daughters. 159 602 [582] [584] [614]

There were, of course, alternative actions or "deals" open to Summit and also to Gitjara, depending upon their plans in other directions. The pattern described above, however, was extremely common in Tiwi marriage arrangements, and often it was the reason why some very old man would receive some female infant as a wife: an agreement of this type had been made twenty or thirty years before, when the now senile old man was in his 159 557 584

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 thirties and when the mother of the baby he was now receiving was married to some man long since dead. The circumstances were certainly right for such an arrangement in the Gitjara-Summit case of 1928.

159 557 582 If we now pause and look at the marriage career of Gitjara at the point it had reached by the time he was 33, we can separate out three distinct types of operation in which this admirable young man had engaged. His first marriage, with L. F. B.'s elderly mother, had brought into existence a joint household of young men and elderly widows which not only was a very satisfactory housekeeping arrangement but also put Gitjara and his ally, L. F. B., in a position to exert some influence on all the subsequent remarriages of their respective sisters.

Gitjara's marriage a few years later to a second widow put him in a position to enter into marriage arrangements even more directly, since the second widow had a daughter promised to Summit but still too young to take up residence with him. By dragging his feet on the fulfilment of this promise, Gitjara could put pressure on Summit and extract from the latter some sort [584] of consideration to facilitate the delivery of the girl. Gitjara was thus well in the marriage-broker business before he had any children of his own and indeed before he had received any bestowal. This was the second type of operation for an up-and-coming young man, and it was one wherein a shrewd and aggressive operator would use the daughters of other men (that is, of a widow's previous husbands) in such a way as to attach all sorts of codicils and contingent interests and second mortgages to the original bestowal of those daughters, many of these collectable in full only in the far distant future, after all prior interests had been satisfied or had lapsed.

The third type of operation engaged in by Gitjara was, of course, to try and attract bestowed wives of his own. His vigorous operations, by age 33, in the widow remarriage field, were not only ends in themselves but also were the type of operation that attracted the approval of older men with daughters to bestow. Hence it is not surprising to find that by 1929 Gitjara, married to the two widows already mentioned, had received two bestowals. The older of these was a girl of ten rebestowed on Gitjara in 1927 when the man died upon whom she had been bestowed at birth. The second was a baby born in 1927 whose father was Tomitari of the Rangwila. (The choice of Gitjara as a son-in-law by Tomitari was so interesting that we shall discuss it later in this chapter.) Both these bestowals were made *after* Gitjara had engineered his remarriage of the two widows and as far as kinship was concerned had no connection whatever with these widows or their close relatives. We conclude, therefore, that widow remarriage could be used by alert and aggressive men in their early thirties for three purposes: (1) to establish households and obtain elderly housekeepers; (2) to establish low-priority rights in the daughters of the widows' previous husbands; and (3) to attract attention to themselves as smart operators and gain the attention and approval of older men. As an outgrowth of the third purpose, they were likely to attract bestowals. Hence we may say that among the Tiwi the best road to obtaining a [587] young wife or several young wives was for a young man to be first successful

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the manipulation of the remarriages of elderly widows, who were always in large supply. If a man showed skill and know-how in his early thirties among the widows, then in his late thirties and early forties young wives would be bestowed upon him in abundance. Such a lesson could not have a better exemplar than Gitjara. By age 33 he had done so well among the widows that his first *young* wife would be joining his household by the time he was thirty-eight or thirty-nine, and another was already a year old. Clearly he was a young man of promise and one to be watched—and cultivated. 159 557 582 587

Summit, a man slightly older than Gitjara, must be dealt with very briefly, since the reasons for his success would take us too far afield. In 1929 he had a list of six wives, the only resident one being an elderly widow. The other five were bestowals and the eldest of these was the girl of ten whom we have already mentioned as being in the household of her step-father, Gitjara. Two more, younger than the ten-year-old, were in the household of Padimo (see below) and the remaining two were in the household of one of the elders of the Rangwila band. Summit, in Tiwi reckoning, was a Rangwila himself and had only moved to Malau a few years before. Some four years previously he had been a young Rangwila with no less than five bestowed child-wives. Three of these had been given him by an elder in Malau, two by an elder of his own band. The Malauila girls were older than the two Rangwila girls and his Malauila father-in-law was older than his Rangwila father-in-law. Summit therefore moved north to supervise personally his interests in Malau. He had, however, been out-maneuvered when the Malauila father-in-law died, since Gitjara had then been able to remarry the mother of Summit's eldest child-wife and Padimo had been able to remarry the mother of the other two little girls. Having thus moved to Malau to be near to and a satellite of his elderly Malauila father-in-law, Summit now found himself the technical son-in-law of two young men of his own age group who were among his keen competitors in the influence struggle. To ensure that his three promised Malauila child-wives joined his household when old enough, he now needed to make some arrangements with Gitjara and Padimo. Summit had gotten his bestowals rather early and rather easily but he still had the problem of nailing them down. 159 584 [557 587]

While thus engaged in acquiring five bestowed young wives and trying to promote their safe delivery when ready, Summit had married a widow not much more than forty years old but childless by her two previous husbands.[a] Such a widow at least provided him with a food-getter and housekeeper and enabled him to establish a household into which his five bestowed wives would enter as they successively reached the proper age. Thus Summit's household in 1929 consisted only of himself and his *palimaringa* wife. Within the next fifteen years it would be increased by the addition of at least five young wives, 159 587 592 592 159

[a] Such women who had reached middle age without surviving children were called by a special term, *palimaringa*, in Tiwi and the term referred to childlessness rather than barrenness. Summit's widow, for example, had borne two children, both of whom had died in infancy, and she was classified as a *palimaringa*. When a *palimaringa* became very, very old indeed, the word changed to *timaringa*. [842]

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 plus any new bestowals, plus any further widows Summit might find it to his interest (and power) to remarry.

159 584 557 Padimo, who thus enters our story as one of Summit's rivals and one of his nominal fathers-in-law, was also a Rangwila who had moved to Malau at the call of an elderly father-in-law. He presents another pattern of Tiwi upward mobility and one that was statistically more frequent than the rather tortuous road followed by men like Gitjara. Padimo had been chosen as a nephew worth supporting by old Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest of the Malauila. The earliest proof of Ki-in-kumi's patronage of Padimo had come in 1925-26 when an old man died, leaving eight widows of very diverse ages. Three of these "widows," aged respectively 17, 13, and 9 at the time of the death of their first husband, were daughters of Ki-in-kumi. Being so young and their brothers being equally young, their father's right to arrange their remarriage was unchallenged and Ki-in-kumi reassigned[4] them as wives to young Padimo, then aged about thirty-three. The eldest of the three girls had already borne two female children to the dead man, these being the two girl babies mentioned above as having been promised to Summit.

As well as the three young widows, Padimo had also obtained at the same redistribution the oldest and most haggish of the dead man's eight wives. It was at the same redistribution that Gitjara had obtained his second widow (the mother of the girl promised to Summit). Thus through Ki-in-kumi's influence, Padimo had obtained four "widows" of the eight left by the man who died in 1925-26; Gitjara, working without a powerful patron, had been lucky to obtain one.

159 595 Ki-in-kumi had subsequently followed up this initial selection of Padimo as a favored sister's son by giving further daughters to him as they were born. Consequently, by 1929 Padimo's wife list consisted of the following:

[604]
A. One extremely ancient widow.
B. One wife aged about 20, daughter of Ki-in-kumi, mother already of two daughters by a previous husband who, before his death, bestowed these daughters on Summit.
C. One wife aged about 17, daughter of Ki-in-kumi; had just had her first child (who lived only a week); had previously been bestowed on the dead husband of wife B, but was too young to join his household before he died.
D. Three more girls, daughters of Ki-in-kumi, the eldest about 12 and hence old enough to have been bestowed on the same previous husband as wives B and C; the other two aged 2 and 1 and hence born since his death. All three of these were still resident in their father's household.

[584 587] [4] It is difficult to decide whether such reassignments of female children by their father, on the death of the man to whom he had first betrothed them, should be called "rebestowals" or "remarriages." We prefer the first word since such "child-widows" were usually reassigned by their fathers (if still alive) without any challenge to his rights to do so. They therefore do not differ from original bestowals at birth except for the awkward semantic fact that the man to whom such a "child-wife" was reassigned was technically her second husband.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

With a lineup such as this by the time he was thirty-six, Padimo was clearly in 159
process of going places in Tiwi society. The only weakness one could see in 557
his position was that it all derived from the favor of one patron, and no old 595
man with daughters, other than Ki-in-kumi, had seen fit to bestow a girl
upon him. It should be noted that in 1929, though Padimo had two young
wives resident in his household, he still had no children of his own. His first 159
child, born that year, lived only a few days. The only children in residence were
the two girls promised to Summit by the previous husband of their mother. 557
Their bestowal on Summit was a matter beyond Padimo's control though he 592
could use them to force some concessions from Summit just as Gitjara could 584
with the girl in his household. But as Padimo's young wives began to bear
daughters of his own, his bestowal of them would be less encumbered by the
commitments of any predecessor. While Ki-in-kumi lived, Padimo would have
to consider his obligations to that old man and at least consult with Ki-in-kumi
as to how he should bestow his female children, since any such children would
be the daughters' daughters of the old man. Nor would the death of Ki-in-kumi
leave Padimo entirely free to bestow his own daughters anywhere he wished.
Many of the girls already given to him as wives by Ki-in-kumi had mothers
who possibly, and brothers who certainly, would outlive Ki-in-kumi. On the [587]
old man's death, all of his numerous wives would remarry—some of the older
ones probably to ambitious younger men—and these new husbands of the
widows of Ki-in-kumi would begin interfering with and trying to alter the
arrangements made for his daughters by the old man during his lifetime. Thus [606]
Padimo would find himself stuck with a group of new and antagonistic fathers-
in-law in place of the old, indulgent father-in-law who had been responsible
for his success so far. Padimo's problem was basically how to hold, after
Ki-in-kumi's death, the favored position he had gained during the old man's
lifetime through the old man's favor.

In the meantime, with Ki-in-kumi still alive and powerful, Padimo had 159
the biggest and fastest expanding household among the Malauila men in their 592
thirties. The only remaining man in this age group was Boya who was the 557
oldest of them all, being at least 42 years old in 1928. As might be expected,
his career illustrates some new facets of the Tiwi influence struggle.

Structurally the position of Boya was simple but politically it was com- 159
plex. His father had been a henchman and satellite of Ki-in-kumi in the early
career of that old operator and roughly had had somewhat the same relation-
ship to the young Ki-in-kumi as L. F. B. had to Gitjara. Boya's father, the
satellite, left only two widows (an indication of his mediocrity) and these
two widows had been remarried by Ki-in-kumi, the patron. One of these
widows was Boya's mother, and Boya was too young at the time to have any
say in where his mother remarried. Ki-in-kumi's interest in marrying Boya's
mother was not of course because he thus acquired Boya as a step-son, but
because he acquired Boya's sisters as step-daughters. Step-sons were liabilities [562]
which new husbands had to take over in order to get rights in the real assets
—the step-daughters.

159 593 [587] Some years later, when Boya had reached a reasonable age like 30, Ki-in-kumi had arranged for him to marry a very ancient and childless widow (*palimaringa*) more than twenty years older than himself. This was all that Ki-in-kumi considered he needed to do for his step-son, and in Tiwi terms it was almost a gesture of contempt and an open indication that Ki-in-kumi, by providing him with an old woman who was childless but could cook, was not interested in helping Boya toward a career. Since the joining up of Boya to [768] the crone took place shortly after the death of Boya's mother, who had lived with her sons in Ki-in-kumi's household, Ki-in-kumi by producing the old widow for Boya was telling him in effect to get out and start his own household now that his mother was dead.

159 ●584 593 [592] In 1928 we found Boya aged about 42 married to the crone of 65. But he, she, and Boya's younger brother of 24 were still living in Ki-in-kumi's household. Ki-in-kumi's detestation of him was notorious and yet Boya had by now no less than four young bestowed child-wives growing up elsewhere. No one of these bestowals had come from Malau but were bestowals from different fathers of baby girls in other bands. At first sight this presented a curious situation. Within his own band Boya appeared a complete failure, suffering [554] so severely from Ki-in-kumi's hostility that he had received no bestowals and at age 42 did not even have a separate household of his own. But how could this judgment be squared with the four bestowals from elders of other bands? Clearly none of the causes of success so far analyzed fitted the case of Boya.

159 591 592 Further research into who lived with whom as distinct from who was married to whom revealed that not only was "the household" of Boya, his elderly wife, and his younger brother an integral part of the Ki-in-kumi "establishment," but also that Padimo with his "household" was part of that establishment. Padimo, like Boya, had one elderly wife but he also had five bestowed wives, all daughters of Ki-in-kumi. We said above that the two eldest of these five girls being now aged 20 and 17 respectively were in residence with their husband, while the three youngest, not having reached puberty, were still "with their father." Actual observation showed that this was an academic distinction, since the households of Padimo, the son-in-law, and Ki-in-kumi, the father-in-law, were parts of the same establishment. When one of Ki-in-kumi's daughters bestowed on Padimo became old enough to "leave her father and join her husband," she did not have to move her residence or even change her daily work routines. She merely sat at night around the campfire of her older sisters (Padimo's wives) instead of around the campfire of her younger sisters (Ki-in-kumi's daughters). She remained part of the same establishment.

Padimo, it will be remembered, was the young man whom Ki-in-kumi had attracted from Rangu to Malau by liberally bestowing him with child-wives. Padimo had thus moved into the northern band and by 1928 had moved right into Ki-in-kumi's camp, where he functioned as a sort of executive officer and heir apparent to the old man. In the same camp, though in a very different capacity, was Boya, the 42-year-old despised step-son. Many roads thus 592 led to Ki-in-kumi's household, but before discussing the large establishment

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

of that wealthy elder, we will first summarize, in Table I, the marital conditions of the eight young men we have been discussing. 592

TABLE I
THE MALAUILA YOUNG MEN IN 1928-29

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Name	Age	Resident Old Wives (Ex-widows)	Resident Young Wives (Bestowals)	Promised Wives (Under 14)	Own Children
Tiberun	33	0	0	0	0
Banana	28	1	0	0	0
Teapot	35	0[a]	0	0	1
Gitjara	33	2	0	2	1
L. F. B.	38	1	0	1	0
Summit	36	1	0	5	0
Padimo	36	1	2	3	0[b]
Boya	42	1	0	4	0

[a] Teapot's "stolen" wife was dead.
[b] Padimo's first child, born in 1929, lived only a few days.

This table presents a summary of many of our earlier attempts at generalization. The only Malauila under the age of 43 who had a bestowed young wife old enough to live with him was Padimo, who was thus exceptionally lucky. Leaving out young Banana, five of the seven men between the ages of 30 and 42 had young females promised to them, but these were mostly babies or children who would not come into residence for several years. Six of the seven had married widows, mostly elderly widows, well in advance of the arrival of young wives and before any father had bestowed a daughter on them. Finally, and a point not made before, men of this age group rarely had any children of their own. The only entries in the last column of Table I are the irregularly born son of Teapot; Padimo's first daughter who died virtually at birth; and the 1-year-old son of Gitjara who was the last child born to his second ex-widow. Tiwi men rarely had young wives until they were around forty; they even more rarely had any children of their own before that age. Padimo's dead baby and Gitjara's 1-year-old son were exceptional; the zeros in the last column against the names of Boya (42), L. F. B. (38), and Summit (36) represent the normal situation for Tiwi men of such ages. 561 582

In terms of success (as measured by bestowals) Padimo and Summit (largely through the patronage of elders) and Boya and Gitjara (largely through their own operations) were the coming young men among the Malauila. Of the others, L. F. B. was approaching forty with few assets and no influence, and the other three, Tiberun, Banana, and Teapot, had not even got started in the influence race. 554 584

A Very Successful Elder: Ki-in-kumi

The most influential man in Malau and the head of the biggest household was Ki-in-kumi. Since he had been born around 1863-64 and had been 159 557

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

557 587 would become involved or make any soundings among the widows unless there was something in it for them. Hence the client had to find out whether a promise of general goodwill and friendship was all that Boya (or Padimo) would ask in return for his services or whether the price would be much [584] higher—perhaps as high as the bestowal of the client's next baby daughter. It was in such ways that widow-remarriage arrangements and infant bestowals were intertwined; a much-delayed bestowal to an apparently unrelated individual would be the ultimate pay-off to the broker or agent who had engineered a widow remarriage for the bestower years before.

[561] This role of agent in the disposal of a dead man's widows was a type of operation best suited to men in the first stages of their own married lives —that is, to men in their middle thirties or very early forties who had perhaps married their first or second widows and who had as yet no young wives of their own in residence. Having no young wives to guard, they were able to get around easily on diplomatic missions and they had their own listening posts inside the world of women in the person of their own mothers (if still alive) and in the elderly widows whom they themselves had married. The ambitious young brokers were tipped off by their mothers and elderly wives as to how the young wives wished to be distributed and what the competing young brokers were trying to arrange. Thus when a wealthy old man like Ki-in-kumi died, the redistribution of his wives through remarriage was a matter that had been decided beforehand by an extraordinary complex tangle of semisecret arrangements and deals and promises, but the people most influential in arranging the redistribution were the young brokers who usually got few, if any, of the young widows for themselves but who collected their rewards in reputation, influence, alliances, and future bestowals from the men for whom they had acted as agents.

[768] Thus the death of Ki-in-kumi or of any other old man with many wives tended to disperse the wives all over the tribe, with only one or two, or at most three, going to any one new husband. A large estate was almost always fragmented by the death of the old man who had built it up, and any one of his contemporaries was able to take over only a very small fraction of it at best. The levirate and sororate principles, though present, worked very feebly. The men who benefited most—not immediately, but eventually—were the young operators.[7] In such a manner Padimo and Boya were sure to be the long-term beneficiaries of Ki-in-kumi's death though neither of them could remarry any of his widows. The real heirs of the wealthy old men of sixty and over were the young men who happened to be between thirty-two and forty-
554 two when those old men got near to death. The men between forty-five and
557 fifty-five whose brokerage business ten years earlier had not been very skillfully
587

[7] At least some of the so-called "stolen" or disputed wives were widows who had insisted on marrying the younger agent instead of the older client, which put the young broker in the embarrassing position of saying to his client, "I cannot make delivery of the widow I acquired on your account; she insists on marrying me instead." Such an incident did not do his agency business much good but tended rather to frighten off clients.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

handled, or who happened to be at the brokering age when no big households were being liquidated, found themselves in the position that Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai occupied in 1928-29. We know they had not been successful dealers in their thirties because we found them around the age of fifty with only one resident wife each and relatively few bestowals in prospect. Their earlier dealings in widows had not laid the right foundations for successful careers as elders. Even before he was forty, Padimo had five or six bestowed wives either in residence or in prospect, and Boya, not much over forty, had several already promised. The death of Ki-in-kumi in the near future would bring both of them more reputation and ultimately more bestowals in return for their skill (if they showed it) in the disposition of the estate. The inferiority of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai to these younger men in the marriage and influence struggle was already apparent and would be even more accentuated by Ki-in-kumi's death. 554 557 587

The Politics of Bestowal

The above discussion of how younger men were indirectly benefited by the deaths or impending deaths of wealthy older men does not pretend to give an exhaustive list of all the considerations that went into the reallocation of a dead man's widows. We built our analysis around those factors which were paramount in the case of Ki-in-kumi's household. Other cases were different to the extent that there were real adult sons involved in them rather than a nominal "son" like Boya, or because in them the old man had not chosen a clear-cut executor as Ki-in-kumi had chosen Padimo, or because an old man had surviving brothers close to him in age and alliance who would emphasize the levirate principle and seek to have it followed in the relocation of their dead brother's widows. The few points we are seeking to emphasize among the many that might be emphasized in any exhaustive treatment of Tiwi widow remarriage are: 1) that widow remarriage was a very flexible area in which the ultimate disposition of the widows was decided by the manipulations and wishes of a wide range of individuals including both relatives and nonrelatives. The dead man himself; the fathers of the wives, if still alive; the brothers of the widows, if adults; the widows themselves, if strong minded; the executors of the dead man, if clearly nominated; and the numerous dealers and brokers on behalf of remote clients or even on their own account—all tried to make their own wishes prevail. The result was that no two cases were ever alike, but on balance 2) it was younger men rather than older men who were most likely to enhance their reputations and increase their assets in the long run as the results of these widow redeals, even though in the short run it was the older men who remarried most of the widows, especially the younger widows. 587 [561]

We have briefly discussed what we have labeled the politics of widow remarriage before discussing the politics of infant bestowal, although logically it might appear that infant bestowal should be taken up first. We have ful- 584 163

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20.

584 lowed this order because, in Tiwi life, infant bestowal was reserved for fathers,
163 and a Tiwi was at least a middle-aged man before he became a father at all. Before he could have a daughter to bestow, he had to be the father of one; and before he could become a father, he had to have a baby girl bestowed upon him and wait for her to grow up to child-bearing age. The much-married Ki-in-kumi did not have his first actual daughter (as distinct from wives' daughters begotten by previous husbands) until he was forty-five, and Enquirio was closer to fifty than to forty when his first real daughter was born. We are inclined to call such daughters free or unencumbered daughters since the step-daughters brought into a man's household by widows, even young widows, were already bestowed by act of the widows' previous husbands and the new husband's control over their marriage was therefore encumbered by the dispositions made by his predecessors.

584 Thus most men did not have and could not expect to have any free or unencumbered daughters to bestow until they were well into their forties. By that time a man was a prisoner of his past. When at last he had free daughters he was no longer a free man but a junior elder with a mass of obligations both to older men and to younger men, which he had contracted in the previous twenty or thirty years. Even his initiation, which had started when he
[881] was only about fifteen, left him under obligation to the older men who had initiated him. Any bestowals he had received had almost necessarily come to him from older men. In his thirties, it is true, he had operated in the widow remarriage area and put some older men under obligation to him by acting as their agent. But in his agency activities he had also contracted debts, usually in fee-splitting or log-rolling agreements with other agents of about his own age. Thus all his past activities, from his initiation at fifteen until the arrival of his first free daughter at (let us say) age forty-five, were on balance a story of obligations contracted and debts of gratitude assumed in his career of upward mobility. The more successful he had been up to now, the stronger the pressure on him to begin paying off those who had helped him, since it was assumed that his very success was a clear indication of how much obligation he must have to other men, especially older men and contemporaries.

584 If this line of reasoning had been the only relevant one, a Tiwi of age
557 forty-five just presented with his first free daughter would have had problem enough deciding which of his many obligations to liquidate first by his bestowal decision for that daughter. Unfortunately he was at the age when he had to consider the future as well as the past. Some of his old obligations were to men who were very old and unlikely to live much longer. Others were to men of his own age with whom he had been partners ten years before, but by now it was clear that some of these would never amount to much and paying them
[654] off would reap no dividends for the future. Failure to meet the obligation might incur their enmity, but in view of their lack of success, perhaps their hostility was a lesser evil. In 1929, Gitjara, who had needed L. F. B. to get his own career launched, was ready to drop him as a partner now that Gitjara had attracted favorable notice in the form of two bestowals. The junior elders, though obligated to older men like Ki-in-kumi, were not bestowing their scanty

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

free daughters on the older men but upon each other while waiting for the power alignment in Malau to change with Ki-in-kumi's death. Perhaps the clearest case of the pull between the obligations of the past and the planning for the future in the bestowal of free daughters was provided by Merapanui. He was a man who owed or thought he owed very little to his elders. None of them had ever bestowed a girl on him, and he reached fifty with nothing but an ancient widow. The fortunate death of an elder brother had suddenly provided him with bestowable daughters rather later in life than the average. By 1929 he had been able to bestow no less than four, and every one of them went to men much younger than himself and in other bands. Merapanui, being relatively free of old debts, was investing his daughters in young men with a future, but unlike Ki-in-kumi who had invested most of his daughters in one younger man, Padimo, old Merapanui believed in diversifying his investments. 557 584

Thus the politics of bestowal marriage were just as complicated as the politics of widow remarriage but, since a man was ten or more years older when he became involved in the former than when he became involved in the latter, a rather different set of motivations prevailed. At thirty-five as a mobile operator in the widow field, a man was trying to launch a career, and if he had no obvious assets—no living sisters or mother or important mother's brothers—he was often trying to launch it on a shoestring. By forty-five the same man was well along in his career and was a junior elder—the head of a household with at least one young wife in residence and a man beginning to have bestowable daughters of his very own. He now saw tribal politics and reputation building in different perspective from the way they had looked to him ten years earlier. Then he had put his services and his wits and his diplomatic skills at the disposal of older men in order to gain favorable notice from the elders. But now that he was an elder himself, albeit still low in the pecking order of elders, he was no longer their satellite but rather one of them and therefore in competition with them. Now he no longer wanted to build up his client's business; he wanted to build up his own household and his own influence. With the arrival of his first free daughters he was no longer content to work for and accept the leadership of older clients; he was in business as an elder for himself. His free daughters were therefore bestowed not as acknowledgments of his obligations to older men but as inducements to younger men to accept him as their patron. With his first free daughters a man was in position to become emancipated from the dominance of the elders because with the arrival of those daughters he could start bidding against them for the allegiance of men younger than himself.

One of the neatest examples of the switch in life career was provided in 1928 by the case of Tomitari. All Tiwi life careers and marriage arrangements were so tangled that one was delighted to find a relatively open and shut case. Some of the principals involved were relatives of Padimo, who was originally a Rangwila before Ki-in-kumi, his patron, lured him to Malau. Padimo and three sisters were the children of a Rangwila man and woman whom for simplicity's sake we will call Padimo's real father and real mother. The father bestowed the three girls on another Rangwila named Inglis who was 159 557 584

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 about the same age as himself. (If we tried to answer *why* he did, the case would no longer be simple.) Padimo's father died while the four children were still young, and their mother remarried a relatively young man named Tomitari. This occurred in about 1914 and the situation then was as follows:

GENEALOGY I
THE INGLIS-TOMITARI RELATIONSHIP 1914
(Males are in italics; ages are in brackets)

Padimo's Father (just dead) 1. = Padimo's Mother (40) = 2. *Tomitari* (30)

Inglis (44) = Sister I (21) | *Padimo* (20) | Sister II (13) | Sister III (10)

Fifteen years or so later, all parties were still alive; the two youngest sisters had joined Inglis as wives and all three sisters had borne children to him, including girls. Thus the situation in 1928-29 was:

GENEALOGY II
(1928-29)

Padimo's Mother (55) = *Tomitari* (45)

Padimo

Sister I wife of *Inglis* (59)
Sister II wife of *Inglis*
Sister III wife of *Inglis*
+
Daughter A (11)
Daughter B (8)
Daughter C (5)
Daughter D (2)
Daughter E (1)

The three sisters of Padimo had borne five daughters to Inglis and as they were successively born Inglis had bestowed the first three on Tomitari. He did not bestow the fourth or fifth nor any of his daughters by other wives.

The master clue to the whole matter was the marriage in 1914 of Padimo's widowed mother to Tomitari, then little more than thirty. His function had been to act as trustee or stand-in for Inglis' interest, not in the [58] widow but in her daughters who had been bestowed on Inglis by their dead father. The young Tomitari as step-father of the girls had to ensure their safe delivery to Inglis' household. (One was there already but the other two were not.) Tomitari accomplished his mission, acquiring the widow, of course, as a wife in the process; the girls arrived safely in Inglis' household and Inglis paid off handsomely by bestowing their daughters on his honest agent who had held off the competitors.

But by 1923 or thereabouts Inglis had stopped paying off. Tomitari by then had received three bestowals from Inglis. (Actually he had received about six, but three died in infancy). Moreover, he was no longer a young man but

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was entering the junior elder class and, having received wives from other sources than Inglis, was getting to the point where he would soon have free daughters of his own. He had no intention of performing any more services for Inglis who was now nearly sixty. Hence Inglis had not bestowed any daughters on Tomitari since 1923; those of his daughters who had been born since that year were bestowed on men other than Tomitari and men who were younger and less successful than he. 159 584 557

As we see it, the deals involving widows, particularly the pay-offs to young agents for acting to promote the interests of older men, had distorted what might be called the pure theory of Tiwi bestowal. According to the pure theory, mothers' brothers bestowed their daughters on selected sisters' sons, and the older man who gave a young man a wife and became his wife's father, was performing a kindness toward a favorite nephew for which the nephew should be grateful. But the Inglis-Tomitari operation shows how the theory had become distorted in practice. In order that Inglis might have some young daughters whom he would be free to bestow on his favored young nephew, Tomitari, in 1914 he had had to arrange the young man's marriage with an elderly widow to ensure safe delivery to him (Inglis) of some young wives who would bear him those daughters. Everything went smoothly and no slip-up occurred, yet by the time Inglis was in a position to give a wife to his favored young nephew, he found that the latter was no longer a dependent young man but a successful junior elder competing with him in his own field of identifying and using talent among the younger men. Tomitari's first daughter, born in 1927—not to any daughter of Inglis but to an older wife—was bestowed by its father on the distant but very promising Gitjara, a man of thirty-two. Gitjara was thus selected by Tomitari as a promising satellite at about the same age as Tomitari in 1914 had been selected by Inglis. Moreover, Tomitari by this time, far from being the grateful nephew of old Inglis (as the theory stipulated), was looking forward with anticipation to the old man's death, since when that occurred, among the widows of Inglis would be the three sisters of Padimo of whom he was still the nominal father. It was by acting as their step-father when they were children that he had got his own career started. They were indeed the foundation stone of his own career and, having profited so much from them as children, he was keenly interested in their redisposition whenever Inglis' death should put them on the market again. Thus he was simultaneously the husband of some of Inglis' daughters and nominal father of some of Inglis' wives. In the first status, he was expected by the theory to be a grateful son-in-law of Inglis; in the second status, the facts of Tiwi life required him to see Inglis' death as providing him with an opportunity to derive some new benefits for himself from his position as nominal father of the three wives of Inglis whose delivery to Inglis' household he had himself engineered. 183 581 604 159 183 584 604 [557 593]

Thus the politics of bestowal cannot be separated from the politics of widow remarriage. Every case of one had endless repercussions in the other. Sisters' sons who were promised young wives by their mothers' brothers were always too old to be grateful by the time the bestowal occurred or by the even later time when the bestowed child was old enough to come into residence. 182 557 584 604

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 Mothers' brothers, in turn, were unable to endow their nephews any earlier
557 because they as younger men had been caught in the same trap. The only way
584 out was by deals in which older men and younger men collaborated. Ideally
604 such collaborative efforts should always have been between mothers' brothers and sisters' sons, but amid such fierce competition and endless log rolling this was not possible, and in many cases the mother's-brother—sister's-son relationship was a *result* of collaboration between older man and younger man rather than a cause. The bond arose from the deal rather than from their original kinship, particularly when the two men involved were very close in age.

The collaborative deals between older men and younger men were essentially designed to compensate for the older man's inability to bestow a young wife upon the younger man at a reasonable age. As was stated before, not until he was about forty-five would the older man have a free or unencumbered daughter. By then his younger collaborator and satellite had attracted the attention of older and wealthier men with many unencumbered daughters. After
159 performing all his services to Inglis, young Tomitari had not had to depend
557 on him for his first bestowal. A wealthier man than Inglis had reached over
571 Inglis' head, so to speak, and bought Tomitari's allegiance by the bestowal of
584 a young wife who provided Tomitari with a free daughter several years earlier than any child the daughters of Inglis could provide. With this first unencumbered daughter, Tomitari promptly bid for the allegiance of Gitjara. Put in terms of allegiances, Tomitari had from 1914 until about 1923 been the henchman of Inglis. During those years he passed from about age thirty to age forty, and his main patron was Inglis, who passed from about forty-four and on the fringes of the elder group to about fifty-four and accepted among the elder group. Then—and this was typical of the shift of allegiance that occurred in most life careers—a senior elder more wealthy in wives and daughters than Inglis bid for Tomitari's allegiance, and Tomitari became his henchman. Five years later, in 1928, Tomitari was a coming junior elder in Rangu and a man of influence in his own right. His oldest bestowed wife had already borne him a daughter whom he used to make Gitjara *his* henchman. The three wives (daughters A, B, and C) of Inglis were nearing the stage when they would join his household and he had other bestowals from other quarters. His relation to Inglis was no longer that of henchman but of rival, since they were now both successful elders in the same band and competitors in the struggle to make younger men dependent on them. Far from bestowing any more daughters on Tomitari, Inglis was bestowing his daughters (now plentiful) on men of Gitjara's generation (though not on Gitjara). Having more free daughters than Tomitari, he had more men of that generation to patronize, but since Inglis was sixty and Tomitari only forty-five, time was obviously on the side of the latter.

557 Thus the crux of the Tiwi system of influence-satelliteship-marriage ar-
571 rangement-wealth centered around what happened to a man in his thirties. This
584 is what we meant when we said earlier that old men with many daughters bestowed them on young men who looked to them like "comers." Old men

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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with many free daughters were usually men well over fifty. "Comers" were 557
men in their thirties. In so choosing the "comers," the old and wealthy men 571
reached right over the junior elders and the forty-year-old group down to the 584
ranks of the young operators. In this way we may say that the real power [888]
group, the successful old gerontocrats, chose their own successors. They chose
young men twenty or more years younger than themselves (as Ki-in-kumi chose
Padimo) because men at such an age were not rivals or competitors. A man so
chosen in his thirties could be already powerful and fairly wealthy by his
middle forties (like Tomitari in 1928) and very wealthy in his fifties. Such
men went up fast because of their selection by the group in power. Those not
so chosen had to go up the hard way by accumulating what position and in-
fluence they could by manipulations of the few available females not con-
trolled by the wealthy old men. The "haves" left a small minority of women
available to the "have-not" men to keep them quiet, but the great majority of
females were concentrated in the hands of a few old men and these old men
chose their own successors. Thus the Tiwi system actually deserves to be called 561
a primitive oligarchy as much as it deserves to be called a gerontocracy. It was 887
run by a few old men who ruled it not so much because they were old but
because as young men they had been clever and then had lived long enough
to reap the rewards of their cleverness. These rewards made up Tiwi wealth—
many wives, much leisure, many daughters to bestow, many satellites and
henchmen, and much power and influence over other people and tribal affairs.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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months after the attack on Darwin. Many of the older Tiwi who were in Darwin during the bombing did not survive the war; the psychological strain and lack of sufficient food was too much for them. Genealogies show that an unusual number of deaths occurred among Tiwi between 1942 and 1946.

When Western food supplies again became available, the old Tiwi bush living seems to have departed. The Tiwi suddenly realized their full dependence upon the products which only the whites could provide. As the war came to an end and one after another of the temporary military bases were abandoned, the missionaries and the Tiwi salvaged what they could, transporting large amounts of corrugated iron to Bathurst Island Mission for native huts. The Tiwi were drawn together around the Mission in larger numbers than ever before, their camps ranging in a line along the Mission beach. The majority of the Tiwi, about 600, considered Bathurst Island Mission their home, although some of the young adult males spent most of the year in Darwin. About 50 islanders lived adjacent to the half-caste Melville Island Mission at Garden Point. Another 150 were permanently located at the government settlement at Snake Bay. The remaining Tiwi, about 150, were year-round residents of Darwin; over one hundred lived at Bagot Native Compound and at an unsupervised native camp at Point Gunn directly opposite the southernmost tip of Melville Island; the rest were inmates at the leper colony. The resulting total population of about 950, in 1954, is only about a hundred less than the figure of 1062 which Hart obtained in his census of 1928-29.

Marriage Arrangements

We have discussed how, under the traditional Tiwi pattern of life, the greatest energies of mature males were expended in bargaining with each other for new wives. The old social system was one which had as normal features prenatal and early childhood engagements for females, remarriage for all widows, considerable age difference between marriage partners, and polygamy. The new Catholic system introduced by Father Gsell outlawed, or at least discouraged, polygamous marriages, nuptial unions between persons of greatly differing ages, and all prenatal or childhood betrothals. As indicated, Father Gsell initiated his new policies by purchasing young females and then allowing them to choose their own partners from among their single agemates.

It is of interest to inspect the actual circumstances surrounding one of the earliest unions which took place under Father Gsell's supervision. About 1914, Polly, an attractive young female who had already had a rather checkered career, having been stolen by a Yuwatja male from her rightful mate, was "stolen back" by another Tiwi, Timalarua of the Rangwila. Polly, however, decided that she did not want an old husband like Timalarua, so she ran away to the sisters and Father Gsell. In time, old Timalarua allowed Father Gsell to buy this wife who did not want to live with him. Shortly afterward, Father Gsell asked Polly whom she wanted to marry. Polly named Cabbagee as the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 177 584 797 male of her choice and the couple soon set up housekeeping with Father Gsell's blessing. This was, at least, how the missionary saw it.

But what were the real circumstances surrounding this "free choice" by Polly? Her real father—that is, the husband to whom her mother Rita was married when Polly was born—had promised Polly to Kardu. Timalarua had "stolen" Polly from Kardu, her rightful husband. Nor is this the whole story. Rita had been "stolen" by Puti from Polly's father Turimpi. After several fights between Puti and the aging Turimpi and after Rita's complete refusal to return to Turimpi, Turimpi allowed Puti to keep Rita as his wife. Polly, however, was ultimately to go to the man to whom she had been promised, Kardu. But Puti, as the potential next father of Polly, had promised Cabbagee that as soon as Kardu died Polly was to be Cabbagee's wife. That is, when Polly chose Cabbagee as her mate she was only bypassing Kardu and taking as her husband the next normal alternative open to her.

When one considers what parts of Father Gsell's reform were significant in this case, one finds that only late consummation of marriage, monogamy, and marriage between agemates were important. A female did not actually have a "free choice" of her mate as Father Gsell had hoped and, in fact, had specified. She selected a youth to whom one of her relatives had at least tentatively promised her. Or (to put it in Hart's terms) she married—under Mission auspices—a young man who had at least a second or third mortgage on her.

159 177 595 797 Let us follow the case of Cabbagee's marriage further. He married Polly when he was about 23; he was too young to be married in the old pattern and was, therefore, happy to get a wife and be on his way up the social ladder. But when the next female promised to him (before her birth) came of age and he collected her, Polly made a terrific row. She did not want any younger female around her household as a second wife and told the priest at the Mission so. He in turn deprived Cabbagee of all gifts of tobacco and food and sent him and his family to the bush to think over the matter. After a few months, Cabbagee decided that he wanted tobacco and that after all the only place he could get it was at the Mission. He and his family returned and he gave up his second wife to Father Gsell, for a payment of food.

Younger men who were getting wives from among Father Gsell's convent girls thus found that they were unwise to accept a second wife from any other source. But such a young man, married under Catholic auspices, soon [584 557] found that he could enhance his prestige without invoking criticism from the Mission if he gathered around him his own female relatives, the younger of whom he could give away later, one at a time, to men of his choice. A married man like Cabbagee, who gave another man his sister or sister's daughter, was in a position to ask all sorts of favors from the recipient, especially gifts of food, tobacco, and trade goods, and support in politics.

177 583 By the end of World War II, even these newer concepts of marriage agreement had begun to alter. There were many young Christian females desiring to have husbands whose fathers and brothers were not asking further wives as repayment. The fathers began to ask for new types of concessions

them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few uncomfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Carmel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a listing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent. Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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177 604 584

riage with a boy who was willing to become the "worker" of the girl's controller.[9]

From the economic standpoint, the large household has much the same function as before the days of the Mission. The younger women go out together and gather food; the old women stay home with the young children. The younger men bring home choice items, which now are trade goods and money from Darwin. The "boss" of the great household is wealthy; today, he has food, tobacco, clothes, and usually sufficient money to gamble. The composition of the great households has altered, but their function is very much the same. The establishment of the monogamous Catholic Cabbagee is even larger than that of the polygamous old pagan, Ki-in-kumi, described in an earlier chapter; Cabbagee, with only one wife, has more women under his "control" than ever Ki-in-kumi had, despite his list of twenty-one wives. The Tiwi have thus been able to retain their large households even under the Mission-imposed system of monogamy.

177 182 592

The Change from Patriliny to Matriliny

In the pre-Cooper era of feuding, the largest significant units among the Tiwi were the bands; the Tiwi never, in that by-gone day, acted as a tribe, even in their attacks upon such outsiders as the British. In the 1950's, when informants talked of the old days they commonly mentioned that male members of old bands came together as units to go on war parties. These old bands did not have a strict rule of descent. But, as has already been indicated, the majority of the males were regarded all their lives as members of the band to which their father belonged. That is, the major unit of the old Tiwi social structure was patrilineal in emphasis.

621 [611]

There also existed in the old Tiwi pattern a strictly matrilineal clan organization, related primarily to totemism. One of the totemic animals of a clan stood for a member of that clan in the song composed to commemorate his death; for instance, the first line of the mourning song for a deceased male of the Red Paint Clan might be "I am red paint." Occasionally, several members of a clan helped one of their number in a fight, but this was apparently not very common before the Mission era. This clan-organization pattern prevailed among the Tiwi through about 1930. Then major and most unpredictable changes began.

614 [533] [165]

What does one expect to happen when a society which has a patrilineal emphasis, like the old Tiwi one, comes into contact with a European society where, if there is any emphasis, it is a patrilineal one? Although one would ordinarily expect a strengthening of patriliny, such was not the case among the Tiwi. The old social unit which was predominantly patrilineal was a territorial group with its major functions in the system of feuding. When the

177 611 614 621

[9] By 1953, the terms "boss" and "worker" had come into the local Tiwi dialect to indicate superordinate and subordinate status interrelationships.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

how a slow canoe journey had made him late for a recent *pukamuni* ceremony. 177

(*b*) "I was sick in the Darwin hospital. Sister Philips said it was because I had had too much grog." 533 539 881

(*c*) "There was a man at Cockle Point (opposite the Bathurst Island Mission), who wanted to kill me with a spear. So I changed myself into a mullet and he didn't see me."

Another singer chanted,

(*a*) "I am a goose and a man cast his throwing stick and hit me." 533

(*b*) "I want that girl from Bathurst Island to wash her with fresh water to make it square for giving away my sister."[86] 539 881

Another *Mikingula*, *Palitara*, aired his differences with a woman, *Batali*, in the following song.

(*a*) "I fed *Batali*, but she did not give her daughter to me as a wife."[87]

(3) *Collecting the Kulama Yam*

Early on the following morning, the *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikintaras*, the *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, went to the ceremonial ground of the previous evening. They first dipped their hands in a bark container filled with water, throwing some over their bodies; then, taking a mouthful, they squirted water into the air in imitation of rain, afterwards calling out "Oom-oom", to symbolize thunderstorms. Taking two small sticks, one in each hand, the men used them to clean the wax from their ears, afterwards standing the sticks upright in the ground.[88] 881 [515]

Placing their palms on a sheet of bark covered with white paint, the men patted their hair, chest, wrists and pubes (Pl. 44c), turning toward the north as they again called out "Oom-oom", in imitation of thunder.

Following this ritual, each *kulama* man painted another with a design in white (Pl. 42L). The leader then picked up the bark basket, held it on his arm, and facing north, south, east and west, again called "Oom-oom", while he made a drum-like sound, symbolical of thunder, by hitting the basket with his hand. After this the men set out to collect the *kulama* yams. They were

[86] I did not find out the significance of this ritual.

[87] When a woman promises her daughter to a man, it is the duty of the future son-in-law to give her continuous presents of food. On this occasion, the woman had accepted *Palitara's* gifts, but when her daughter was old enough, she gave the girl to another man. [584]

Quarrelling at a *kulama* ceremony is forbidden, otherwise *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, will destroy all the participants. This prohibition allows an aboriginal, such as *Palitara*, to air his grievances without causing a quarrel, even though, as on this occasion, the defaulting person was present. [626] [753]

[88] The meaning of this ritual is obscure. According to the aborigines it prevents trouble and quarrelling during the *kulama* rituals.

183 contract for a girl's primary marriage follows a consistent cultural
582 pattern.

In any discussion of a marriage system all the varieties of
[121] marriage contracts must be considered. If, however, one variety is found to be more frequent, preferred, prescribed, or invariable, then that is the one to which all the others must be related. In the Tiwi marriage system there is no difficulty in determining which type of contract should be considered basic to the others. The initial contract which leads to a first marriage of a Tiwi girl is prescribed and invariable and is thus necessarily the most frequent from the point of view of a female Ego, and it is also a preferred contract from the point of view of a male Ego. In the following discussion, I shall refer to this type of contract as a Type A contract. Types B, C, and D are all contracts leading to secondary marriages of Tiwi widows and will be briefly discussed later.

● 584 A Type A contract is made during the five-day period in which
606 a girl is isolated in the bush at the time of her first menstrual period. Although she has been living with her first husband, she is separated
[88] from him at this time. When she again returns to her husband's camp, she is not only considered to have reached the status of a woman but also that of a mother-in-law. While she is in the bush, her father places a spear between her legs as she sleeps and then presents it to a boy or man whom he selects to serve his daughter as a son-in-law. The spear is regarded by the recipient as a symbol of a bestowed wife yet to be born to his young mother-in-law. By accepting the spear, the son-in-law becomes obligated to his mother-in-law; from that moment on he must supply her with food and goods and such services as she may request at any time. In return, she is
[582] held solely responsible for seeing that her first daughter is sent to his camp when she reaches the wifely age of eight or ten. After receiving the first daughter, the son-in-law is expected to continue his services to his wife's mother, in return for which he can expect to receive other daughters subsequently born to her. The initial contract continues until either the son-in-law or mother-in-law dies. If either fails to honor his obligation, however, the other may terminate the contract. A Type A contract is therefore essentially a contract between a mother-in-law and a son-in-law. The arranger of the contract is the mother-in-law's father.

582 The Tiwi, like the majority of Australian societies, consider cross-cousin marriage to be the proper form of marriage arrangements. For the sake of simplicity, I shall conduct the following analysis as if the preferential marriage pattern involved first cousins, although in fact it generally involves second cousins. For the purpose of viewing the system from the standpoint of relative age the distinction between a first and a second cousin is irrelevant. The question of classificatory cousins will be deferred until the kinship terminology is discussed.

The following analysis of Type A contracts in terms of the factor of relative age will show that the selection of a FaSiSo rather than a

582 probably not even born when she reaches the wifely age of ten. A
605 FaSiSo, on the other hand, is a cross-cousin belonging to the correct age group to be a party to the initial marriage contract. Relative age, therefore, determines that a Type A marriage contract, which is culturally universal for a woman's primary marriage and preferential from the point of view of male prestige, results almost inevitably in unilateral cross-cousin marriage between a MoBrDa and her FaSiSo.

582 The preferred form for widow remarriage among the Tiwi is to a
587 younger brother of the deceased husband. This type of remarriage contract stems directly from the Type A contract and may be considered a continuation thereof. It is therefore here classified as a Type A2 contract. As a woman grows older, when and if her Type A contract or its continuation runs out, alternative choices for secondary husbands are available to her, and acceptable to the Tiwi, among other cross-cousins.

582 A comparable method of analysis indicates that, as between the sons of a father's elder and younger sisters, a woman's primary marriage under a Type A contract is very much more likely to be with
[595] her FaElSiSo, and that under these circumstances she will probably enter her husband's household as a second and junior wife. Her elder co-wives play an important part in her education as a wife.
582 After she becomes a widow, however, she may become the first wife,
587 with the title of *taramaguta*, of a FaYoSiSo or of a MoElBrSo through a Type A2 or B contract. A MoYoBrSo, however, may be expected
593 to be considerably younger than Ego, and my analysis of all marriages in 1954 showed that only after the age of 30 do we find women married to husbands younger than they. Such a marriage can never be the result of a Type A contract but may occur under contracts of Types B, C, or D (see below).

Not only does the twenty-year average age difference between husband and wife under a Type A contract have the effect of practically limiting the choice among cross-cousins for a woman's first husband to a father's elder sister's son; it also means that a woman may expect to have at least two husbands during her lifetime. Indeed, she is likely to have a series of husbands whose ages relative to her own are successively younger until, as an elderly widow, she may well become the first wife of a man very much younger than herself.

Classification of Tiwi Marriage Contracts

584 The form and nature of Tiwi marriage contracts cannot be understood merely by looking at the results of the contract, i.e., who marries whom. One must also look at who has the authority to make the contract, who are parties to the contract, who implements the contract, and who can change a contract. Among the Tiwi the rights, duties, and obligations that pertain to all these aspects of a marriage contract are specified and reside in different individuals at different times in a woman's life. Here again the age factor must be considered, for while these rights, duties, and obligations lie in the

hands of a limited number of specified relatives of the woman, the 584
privilege of exercising a particular role in a marriage contract depends on the individual's age relative to others holding similar rights and relative to the woman involved in the contract. I have chosen to base the following classification of contracts on the single factor of who has the right to make the contract.

Type A Contracts

A Type A contract involves four individuals. The authority to [603]
make the contract resides solely in the hands of the bride's mother's father. At the time the contract is made, this man is at the expected age of 50—the age when a man is at the height of his political career. Acquiring wives for himself to further his career and maintain his [554 595]
prestige is only one of the activities involving marriage contracts in which a Tiwi male is engaged at this time of life. As a father, he has a duty to look after the welfare of his daughters even after they are [593]
married. As an elder in a matrilineal descent group, he has a similar [614]
duty toward all younger members of that descent group, male and female. By arranging a correct Type A marriage contract, a Tiwi man can fulfill two duties at the same time. He can provide his daughter with a son-in-law, whom he selects on the basis of potential economic and political ability and who, if of roughly the same age as the daughter, can be expected to provide her, under the terms of the contract, with continued support throughout her life. By selecting a young man in his own descent group (his sister's daughter's son) to provide this support, he at the same time assures this young man that he will eventually obtain a bestowed and preferred type of wife which will help him on his road to prestige.

The arranger of a Type A contract may be dead by the time the bride is of an age to be given over to her selected groom. The rights to implement the contract, consequently, do not permanently reside with the arranger, but rather they are the duty of the mother of the bride. They are not given to the mother's husband, even if he is also the bride's father. In the space of time that may well elapse between the arrangement of the contract and its implementation, the bride's mother may have a number of husbands, each of whom may have different axes to grind and varying motives for changing the selection of the groom. The right to change any Type A contract belongs to both the mother of the bride and to the groom; if either does not live up to the obligations of the contract the other may consider it void.

A Type A contract, therefore, is one which preferentially and [614]
frequently results in a marriage of a MoFaSiDaSo to a MoMoBrDaDa and in a marital union between two matrilineal descent groups. This arrangement is unaffected either by the death of the arranger or by any secondary marriage of the bride's mother to a man who, though the real father of the bride, might possibly belong to a descent group other than the two originally involved in the contract.

The enduring quality of a Type A contract over a span of two 582
generations is a most important aspect of the total marriage system

582 of the Tiwi. Any variation from the proper, preferred form of a marriage contract in one generation will not normally have any effect on the marriages of the succeeding generation (indeed, there may not be any succeeding generation if the woman is past child-bearing age). When and if the effect is felt in the marriage contracts of the second descending generation, approximately 80 years will have elapsed, i.e., time enough for necessary social adjustments to have been made and accepted. And since a woman's husbands have no control over their daughters' initial marriages, variation from the patterned norm of unilateral cross-cousin and descent-group exchange is not only allowed but is a frequent occurrence. While certain alternatives are preferable, such as a cross-cousin from a different descent group, marriage with relatives other than cross-cousins is permitted with certain limitations.

Type B Contracts

A Type B marriage is one which is arranged by a bride's father
584 or mother's husband. A bride's father has a right and a duty to arrange a daughter's marriage if, and only if, her Type A contract has become void, either because of the death of her promised husband and the lack of any legitimate (A2) heirs to her Type A contract, or because her mother has deemed the contract void because of non-fulfillment of obligations on the part of the promised husband. Although a marriage resulting from a Type B contract may in fact be
582 the first actual marriage of the bride, it is considered a secondary
587 marriage by the Tiwi, and therefore the selection of a groom by the bride's father need not necessarily be confined to the preferential category of FaSiSo. Because the bride's father also has obligations to his own descent group, he may well give his daughter to a member of his matrilineal sib. This may or may not be the same descent group as that from which the first groom was selected. The bride's
[583] father, if he is a man "on the way up," may also make "daughter exchange" an essential part of a Type B contract.

Type C Contracts

584 A Type C contract is one which is arranged by a woman's brothers. When a woman's father dies, her brothers inherit the duty
587 to look after her welfare, and, as this duty applies to their sister's
593 marriage, they may well find themselves in a position to arrange a secondary marriage for her. Since they usually belong to the same descent group as their sister, they need not necessarily consider descent-group obligations in the choice of a groom. Brothers, like fathers, may well make the direct exchange of women an essential part of a Type C contract.

Type D Contracts

A Type D contract is one which is ostensibly arranged by a woman's sons, after the death of her brothers. If a young man who

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

is desirous of starting his household has inherited the right of arranging his mother's remarriage, he may well enter into a contract involving an exchange of mothers with another youth in a similar position. While a son is accorded this right, I suspect that in many of the cases of mother exchange the real arrangers are the mothers. 584 587 593

Tiwi Kinship Terminology

For the sake of the record, I present herewith the kinship terms which I collected in 1954. It must be understood that my major informants on the classification of kin were women. Although most of the terms were also checked with male informants, through oversight this was not done in a few instances. Although a full discussion of the terminology would perhaps be valuable, limitations of time and space compel me to limit my comments to matters directly pertinent to my discussion of the marriage system. Unless otherwise indicated, all the terms listed are employed by male as well as female speakers. 601 [124]

Sibling Terminology

1 *iwuni:* elder brother. Affinal application: WiSiHu, MoBrDaHu (ws).
2 *iwini:* younger brother. Affinal application: WiSiHu, FaSiDaHu (ms).
3 *imbunga:* elder sister. Affinal application: HuBrWi, MoBrSoWi (ws).
4 *imboka:* younger sister. Affinal application: HuBrWi, FaSiSoWi (ms).
5 *inggalabini:* half brother (see discussion below).
6 *inggalabunga:* half sister (see discussion below).

The regular sibling terms (1 to 4) are differentiated on the basis of sex and relative age, and they are extended on Ego's generation to all parallel cousins, including remote ones. A special set of terms (5 and 6) is restricted to some siblings and parallel cousins. The criterion for their differentiation, as stated by the Tiwi, is that they refer to half siblings by the same father whose mothers belong to different matrisibs. The only parallel cousins to whom they apply, I believe, are first cousins; distant parallel cousins are definitely called by the regular sibling terms (1 to 4) regardless of their sib affiliations.

The terms for full siblings are also extended to certain collateral relatives on the second ascending and descending generations. Thus the distant parallel cousins of MoMo and FaFa are called by the terms for elder sibling, *iwuni* or *imbunga*, and the distant parallel cousins of SoCh (ms), DaCh (ws), SiDaCh (ms), and BrDaCh (ws) are called *iwini* or *imboka* (younger brother or sister).

Cross-cousin Terminology

7 *imbuni.* Affinal application only: Hu, HuBr, SiHu (ws), WiBr.
8 *imbunjaga.* Affinal application only: Wi, WiSi, BrWi (ms), HuSi.
9 *mamaniaya* (or *mamanini*): MoBrSo (ws), FaSiSo (ws). Affinal application: "Si" Hu (ws). My data are inconclusive as to whether male speakers use this and the following term in the same way.
10 *mamanya:* MoBrDa (ws), FaSiDa (ws). Affinal application: "Br" Wi (ws).

601 It became apparent to me, when I was collecting kinship ter-
582 minology, that actual genealogical connection was an important factor in Tiwi kin classification and also, of course, in determining expected behavior. It is perhaps for this reason that I have always viewed the system of preferential marriage as concerned with actual second cross-cousins rather than with classificatory cross-cousins however distantly removed. First cross-cousins are definitely considered a "little-bit-wrong-way." Unfortunately my actual genealogies are too few and too shallow to shed much statistical light on the problem. It has also occurred to me that with extreme polygyny and obligatory remarriage there should be more first and second cross-cousins available to Ego than with monogamy or limited polygyny.

601 With their strong preference for unilateral cross-cousin marriage it might be expected that the Tiwi would have a Sudanese type of cousin terminology in which cross-cousins would be terminologically differentiated on the basis of whom one could and could not marry. When I phrased this question to my women informants, however, I could find no such discrimination. Women do, nevertheless, make a terminological distinction between cross-cousins to whom they are technically married before birth and those whom they may marry in the future when and if their Type A contract lapses.

585 Here I must interject some additional ethnographic information.
881 At the conclusion of a girl's puberty ceremony, she returns to the camp of her husband (*imbunei*), where she is painted. Then her husband and his brothers, all of whom she also calls *imbunei*, line up with the youngest first and the actual husband last. One by one they hit her with a feather pompom (*tokwiinga*) until the husband's turn arrives. At this point the girl runs, and her husband pursues her, catches her, and makes her kneel by a tree, which is marked. I have chosen to regard this ritual as a marriage ceremony in which the Type A contract is finally validated with all its ramifications. The
[582] fact that the husband's brothers are terminologically classed even at this time with the actual husband and play a part in the marriage ceremony may be regarded as validating the continuance of the Type A contract through successive remarriages (of Type A2) to the younger brothers of the original holder of the contract.

587 If a woman survives all her *imbunei*, she becomes eligible to marry any of her other cross-cousins, either matrilateral or patri-
601 lateral, through contracts of Types B, C, or D. It is these cross-cousins, who did not become auxiliary "husbands" under her Type A contract, to whom she applies the term *mawaninya* or its variant, *mawanini*.

601 ***Terminology in the First Ascending Generation***

11 *iringani:* father; also FaBr, FaFaSo, FaFaBrSo, MoMoFa, MoMoFaBr. Affinal application: MoHu, MoMoMoHu, HuMoBr.

12 *ingnari:* mother; also MoSi, MoMoDa, MoMoSiDa, FaFaSiDa. Affinal application: FaWi, MoMoFaWi, HuFaSi.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

542 hold rather than the family. There was no ambiguity about its "living together" aspect; there were many ambiguities about its kinship aspects. To some of these unusual domestic usages we now turn.

Marriage by Betrothal

589 In many nonliterate societies, including most, if not all of the mainland Australian tribes, there is a tendency to believe that the main purpose in life for a female is to get married. The Tiwi subscribed to this idea, but firmly carried it to its logical conclusion; namely, that all females must get married, regardless of age, condition, or inclination. They (and they almost alone among human societies) took the very slight step from saying "All females *should* be married" to saying "All females *must* be married." As a result, in aboriginal times there was no concept of an unmarried female in Tiwi ideology, no word for such a condition in their language, and in fact, no female in the population without at least a nominal husband. Their own explanation of this unique situation was connected with their beliefs about conception and where
581 babies come from. Anthropologists have long been aware that the Australian
842 aborigines generally (and indeed some of the Melanesians, such as the famous case of the Trobriand Islands) ignored the role of the male in human conception and firmly believed that a woman becomes pregnant because a spirit has entered into her body. The Tiwi were no exception, but went a step further than the mainlanders in dealing with the dangerous situation created by the unpredictability of the spirits. Since any female was liable to be impregnated by a spirit at any time, the sensible step was to insist that every female have a husband *all the time* so that if she did become pregnant, the child would always have a father. As a result of this logical thinking, all
[584] Tiwi babies were betrothed before or as soon as they were born; females were thus the "wives" of their betrothed husbands from the moment of birth onward. For similar reasons, widows were required to remarry at the gravesides
[587] of their late husbands, and this rule applied even to ancient hags who had already buried half a dozen previous husbands in the course of a long life. It can readily be seen that these rules—prenatal betrothal of female infants and immediate remarriage of all widows—effectively eliminated all possibility of an unmarried female from Tiwi society. They also eliminated any possibility of an unmarried mother or a fatherless child. No matter where the unpredictable spirit chose to create a baby, whether it was in the body of a pretty young woman, a toothless old hag, or a little girl of six or seven, the pregnant
[71 female would have a husband, and the children when born would have a
848] father. The Tiwi were thus probably the only society in the world with an illegitimacy rate of zero.

584 The practical application of these two unusual rules had certain unusual
851 consequences. The rule of prenatal betrothal obviously gave a great deal of
593 power to the person with the right to betroth, and in Tiwi this right belonged

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Tiwi household head is shown by the genealogies of the grandfathers of the present generation. Turimpi, who was born in the 1830's and died in the early 1900's, was at his death the most powerful old man among the Tiklauila. Some of his sons are still alive, and all of them were in the prime of life around 1930.[4] A complete list of Turimpi's wives, not all of them living in his household at the same time or necessarily alive at the same time, contains more than twenty names. But Turimpi was outshone in this regard by several of his contemporaries in other bands. A prominent Turupula of the same generation had a list of twenty-five; the father of Finger of the Wilrangwila had twenty-nine; the father of Tamboo and Puti had twenty-two. As late as 1930, men with lists of ten, eleven, and twelve wives were still plentiful, and Tu'untalumi, who was aged about seventy in that year and was a man of great influence, had by then accumulated no less than twenty-one.[5] 595

Such numbers of wives as these per husband are very much higher than usually prevail even among the most polygymous hunting tribes. Obviously, a domestic unit with twelve or more wives in it makes for a very large household. Among the Tiwi, a household even of such men as those just named did not contain all these wives at the same time, mainly because of the very great variation in the ages of a man's wives. As far as bestowed or betrothed wives were concerned, such wives arrived at their husband's household to take up wifely duties therein when they reached the age of about fourteen. Hence the first of them to arrive (typically when their husband was nearly forty) would be women of nearly forty by the time the latest of them arrived (typically when the husband was well into his sixties). Even when the husband died, let us say at the ripe old age of seventy-five, there would probably be some of his bestowed wives still under the age of fourteen who were as yet too young to join his household. Tu'untalumi, the man of twenty-one wives, was already about seventy in 1930, yet in his list of twenty-one wives five were still *al'inga*—that is, little girls not yet approaching puberty—and two were still babies at their mothers' breast. On the other hand, some of his earliest bestowed wives, who had taken up residence with him when he was in his late thirties, were already dead. 592 582 595

Because of this wide variation in the ages of a man's wives, it is necessary to distinguish between a "list" of a man's wives and those actually in residence in his household at any given time. The resident or active wives—one might almost say the working wives—were always fewer than the listed wives. This would necessarily be so even if marriage by betrothal were the only way by which a Tiwi man could obtain a wife. But while it was the most prestigeful form of marriage and the only respectable way in which a man could obtain a *young* wife, there were other ways of setting up a household 595 584 587

[4] See Hart 1954.

[5] Finger, Tamboo, and Puti were elders prominent in tribal affairs at the time of Hart's fieldwork. Puti was still alive in 1953-54 and well known to Pilling. Tu'untalumi, held in great affection by Hart, but anathema to the Mission Station, died in 1935.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

584 The most important way is one which we have already mentioned—namely,
587 widow remarriage.

Widow Remarriage

595 To become "a big man" a Tiwi had, among other things, to accumulate
557 a lot of wives. This required time, in addition to everything else. A rising star
587 who accumulated by bestowal seven or eight wives by his middle forties and then died, merely left a lot of widows to be redistributed at his graveside, and by the process of wealth attracting more wealth, or capital creating more capital, these widows were most likely to be redistributed among his rivals and competitors of his own age group or among men even older than he. Hence, the largest number of wives ultimately accrued to the successful man who lived longest, since he was likely to gather up at least a few of the widows of each of his contemporaries or seniors as they predeceased him.

There was thus a close correlation between increasing age and the number of wives a man had, and the largest households belonged to a few surviving old men in each band. The two conditions, therefore, which were necessary to accumulate a large household were (1) to attract prospective fathers-in-law to invest their infant daughters in you while you were a young man, and then (2) to live long enough to reap the dividends. The longer you lived, the more dividends would accrue to you from one source or another, provided you started off right by attracting betrothals in your twenties and thirties.

But what about the unimpressive young men, the "noncomers," who somehow failed as young men to attract any prospective fathers-in-law to invest an infant daughter in them? As we have seen, even the most highly regarded and well-connected Tiwi young man had to wait until his late thirties or longer before his first bestowed wife was old enough to join him in domestic bliss, but at least while waiting he knew the time was coming. The overlooked or unbetrothed young man had no such prospects. Since the only source of supply of new females was through the birth of female infants whose hands only their fathers could bestow, it would appear as if a young Tiwi male overlooked or ignored by all fathers of bestowable female daughters had no alternative except permanent bachelorhood. Doubtless Tiwi fathers, as a class, would have regarded this as an ideal situation and would have said that permanent bachelorhood was a proper fate for such friendless and hence useless young men, but no social system of such rigidity has ever been discovered by anthropologists. Tiwi fathers were able rigidly to control the marriages of their infant daughters, but they were not able to control with the same rigidity the remarriages of their own widows, and it was widow remarriage that supplied the loophole in the system, or the cultural alternative that took care of young men.

587 A Tiwi husband was unavoidably and necessarily always much older than a bestowed wife. Therefore he usually died much earlier than she. A girl of fourteen who entered into residence with her first husband when he was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

fifty was likely to be left a widow by him within the next fifteen years, and 587
even if she remarried a man of the same age as her first husband, she could easily be widowed for the second time while still herself a comparatively young woman. There were several different patterns, most of them intermingled in the same household, for a female matrimonial career, but the situation may be illustrated by the concrete case of one of Turimpi's widows, an ancient crone (in 1930) named Bongdadu. Born about 1865, she was betrothed at birth to a powerful old man named Walitaumi who was at least the same age as her father, if not older. Not unnaturally, he died while she was still a child and well before she was old enough to join his household. Her betrothal was then reassigned, so to speak, to Walitaumi's half-brother, Turimpi, then in his early forties. About seven years later, she joined Turimpi's household as a blushing bride of fourteen, her husband then being close to fifty. In the next twenty years she became Turimpi's most prolific wife and bore numerous children, three of whom, Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, all born between 1883 and 1900, were men of importance in Tiwi politics in 1930, and one of whom, Louis, is still alive today.[6] Around 1900, when Bongdadu was still only about thirty-five, she passed to M., a middle-aged Tiklauila, and was his wife until his death around 1925. By this date, Bongdadu was over sixty and had borne ten children, four of whom died young. Not unnaturally, she was beginning to approach the hag or crone stage of Tiwi womanhood. Nonetheless, she had to remarry, but by now all of the people who might have claimed any rights of bestowal in her were long since dead, her eldest sons were adult men of some importance and able to protect their mother's interests, and clearly she was unlikely to produce any more children.[7] Her chief value was as a food producer and housekeeper and female politician, roles for which she had been well trained in her long years as wife of Turimpi and M.

Old women in Bongdadu's position had to remarry, but they were in 587
a good position to exercise some choice of their own as to whom they re- 888
married, especially if they had strong influential sons to support them in their wishes. There was a frequent pattern in such cases for the widow, aided and abetted (or perhaps even forced) by her sons, to arrange a marriage of convenience with some obscure nonentity much younger than herself and usually a friend or contemporary of her sons. In 1925, then, Bongdadu, widowed [554]
three times already, married as her fourth husband one Dominico, a man of no importance whatever, as was shown by the fact that at this time he was nearly forty and had not been able to attract even one bestowed wife. He had, 587
however, already married one widow, so that his marriage to Bongdadu gave 595

[6] Tiwi personal names are polysyllabic and hard for the reader to remember; hence, wherever possible, we have used "whiteman names" for individuals. The frequency of Spanish names among these "whiteman names," such as Mariano or Dominico, derives from the fact that the original buildings for the Mission Station were built by a number of Filipino workmen whom the priests brought with them. [551 128 797]

[7] The Tiwi saw no inconsistency between believing in spirit impregnation and believing at the same time that an old woman was unlikely to bear children. It was to them a matter of probabilities, and of course with them as with us, occasionally an elderly lady did—disconcertingly—have a baby, proving the logic of their position. [842]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 him a second wife, also, of course, a widow. This marriage is of further interest
[595] when we discover that Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, the main sons of Bongdadu by a previous marriage, had some influence in arranging this marriage of their mother to a contemporary and satellite of theirs, and that a year or two before, Antonio had married the ancient mother of Dominico when *she* became a widow. In other words, Antonio and Dominico had married each other's mothers; Antonio while waiting for his oldest bestowed wife to grow up, Dominico with no bestowed wife in sight. The approximate ages of the parties at the time of these marriages were:

Antonio	37	Dominico's mother	55
Dominico	38	Bongdadu (Antonio's mother)	60+

584 Earlier, we mentioned the practice of fathers swapping their daughters within
587 the infant bestowal system; here we find sons swapping their mothers within the widow remarriage system.

This is a relatively simple example of the complexity of Tiwi domestic arrangements, and we hesitate to complicate matters further. But clearly the last remarriage of Bongdadu (to Dominico) and the remarriage around the same time of Dominico's mother to one of Bongdadu's sons, a friend of Dominico, raise some important issues of social structure, particularly the question of whether widow remarriages of this type are to be regarded as a subspecies of bestowal marriages, with the sons having a right of bestowal over their mothers parallel or similar to the right of bestowal possessed by fathers over their infant daughters. Space does not permit any adequate discussion of this fascinating theoretical issue, but we can point out two factors which strongly deter us from regarding Tiwi widow remarriage as a special case of bestowal marriage. One is the self-evident and empirically observed fact that Tiwi widows, who remarried as Bongdadu and Dominico's mother remarried in the quoted case, were usually highly vocal and pretty tough old ladies who were not easily pushed around by anybody, even by their adult and ambitious sons. Whom they remarried in their old age was a matter upon which they had themselves a good deal to say. Secondly, to any anthropologist familiar with the kinship structures of Southeast Asia and the Pacific countries, there
584 is a great deal of difference, in a society with matrilineal clans such as the
587 Tiwi had, between a father making marriage decisions for his daughters, who
614 do not belong to his clan, and sons making marriage decisions for their widowed mothers, who do belong to the same clan as their sons. We prefer, therefore, to view the overall Tiwi marriage situation and the interrelationship of their two forms of marriage as essentially a system wherein the matrilineal clan had lost its right to make marriage decisions for its female children, that right having been taken over (usurped) by the fathers of those children. The daughters of the clan were disposed of, not where fellow clansmen decided, but where an outsider (the father) decided—thus, bestowal or betrothal marriage. But when the female no longer had a father—that is, when she was old and could only be remarried through widow remarriage—then the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

right of her clansmen and more specifically her sons (in consultation with her own wishes) to arrange her remarriage became restored as a sort of residual or reanimated right. Moreover, as we shall see, it was in line with their own political interests for the sons to insist on exercising such a right. 584 587 614

Naming Rules

Such a way of integrating the two forms of marriage is supported by the Tiwi rules for naming children, which are very relevant to the issue. We mentioned earlier that the right to bestow a daughter was vested, strictly speaking, not in the actual father, but in the man who named her. Personal names were important in the Tiwi value system[8] and were given to every child a few weeks after its birth by its father or the man currently married to its mother. But whenever a husband died and the widows remarried, all the personal names given to their children by the dead man became strictly taboo, and the new husbands of the widows had the duty (or right) of providing all the children with new names. Since most women were widowed several times in their lives, most children were thus renamed several times in *their* lives, and the names given them by the earlier husbands of their mother dropped completely out of use.[9] Logically under this system nobody would get a permanent name until his or her mother was dead, since as long as she were alive she would remarry and her new husband would rename all her children, no matter how aged they might be. The Tiwi insisted that logically this was how the naming system was supposed to work, and, in fact, the personal names of even prominent senior men did become taboo whenever their mothers' current husbands died. But convenience proved stronger than logic and the personal names of most men and women became well established in their early adulthood as people became used to them. While such names did become taboo when the man who had given them died, the taboo in such cases was temporary rather than permanent, and after a decent interval the name would creep back into use replacing some new and unfamiliar one which might be bestowed by the widow's new husband. In general, the name which thus became permanently or irrevocably attached to a person was the name which a person held when he or she first emerged into tribal prominence or first began to get talked about. For a male, this was most usually the name he was bearing in his late twenties and early thirties; for a female, the name she was known by in her early adolescence when she first left her father's household to take up residence with her earliest husband. 553 768 587 [183] [551]

That convenience thus overbore logic in the Tiwi naming system by

[8] See Hart 1931.

[9] It can easily be seen what headaches this naming system created for an anthropologist trying to collect genealogies. Individuals would occur in one genealogy under one name and in another under another name, making the task of cross-indexing and cross-checking enormously difficult. [124]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

553 attaching some one semipermanent name to a person despite the rules of
768 name taboo should not cause us to overlook the importance of these rules.
587 In theory, at least, every new husband renamed all his wives' children by all their previous marriages—thus, at least symbolically, canceling out the signs of title of all the previous "fatherhoods" in those children and asserting his own fatherhood right as a new and exclusive one. A widow's new husband was the new household head for all her children, and he took over this position by renaming them all, thus becoming their legal father. If we can stop thinking of "father" as a biological or kin relationship, and think of the word as meaning only "head of the household," the Tiwi concept will become understandable. We will also realize that there is no contradiction or illogic involved in the Tiwi beliefs that male parents were not necessary for conception, but that every child born must be born to a woman with a husband. All they meant was that every child must be born into a household with a male at its head who belonged to a different clan from its mother—in other words, a "father," in Tiwi context.

584 The renaming of the children by the new household head was not, of
592 course, sufficient to wipe out the commitments made by previous titleholders.
768 Although the new father could and did change his step-daughters' names, he could not change their bestowals. The men upon whom the daughters had been bestowed by the previous father made sure of this. The new father was compelled to carry out the marriage arrangements for the daughters made by his predecessors in the fatherhood role, and there was sure to be a terrific row if he tried to alter them. Nevertheless, he acquired some power over the future of the daughters. The man to whom one of them had been promised by the previous father might die, thus making redisposal of the girl possible for him, or some new deal might be arrangeable in which he could use his new assets—for these new step-daughters were assets, regardless of the fact that their immediate matrimonial future was already settled. The new father could delay his decision as to whether they were yet old enough to join their betrothed husband or even drop a few hints that he did not think the betrothed husband's right to them was quite as certain as was generally believed. Such actions, of course, were liable to lead to violent reprisals by the betrothed husband, but there was always a chance that he would be open to a deal; for example, by giving an option on one of the women in whom he had an interest, he would seek to hasten the appearance of the girl in his own household or seek to clear whatever shadow upon his title to her the step-father sought to cast. Even the last husband of an elderly widow who had already passed through the hands of six or eight husbands and all of whose daughters were grown up and married two or three times already, gained some shadowy rights in the future remarriages of those daughters by marrying their ancient mother. And the validation of these shadowy rights was the fact that as their mother's new husband he had renamed the daughters and he who named them could bestow them. The only catch was, that while he could wipe out all the names bestowed by his predecessors, he could not equally readily wipe out their commitments. All he could do was maneuver within the network created by their

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

commitments so as to try and advantage himself as much as possible by a skillful use of whatever shadowy right in the daughters he had obtained by becoming their current "father." 584 592 768

It is within such a context that the apparent swapping of mothers by Dominico and Antonio must be viewed. By marrying Bongdadu in her dotage, Dominico had acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters, the sisters of Antonio, but since his marriage to her had been, partly at least, arranged by Antonio and her other sons, he would have to share with them his disposal rights to their sisters. Similarly, the marriage of Dominico's ancient mother to Antonio (part, so to speak, of the same "package deal") meant that Antonio as current father had some say in the future disposal of Dominico's sisters when they became widowed, since he had the power of renaming them. 587 584

What in effect occurred in this, as in many other cases, was that men of different clans and of about the same age formed a partnership or close alliance wherein "sons" and "husbands" cooperated in arranging the remarriages of their "mothers" and "sisters" by acting as quasi-fathers and treating their mothers and sisters as "quasi-daughters." The partnership or "firm" of Dominico (of the Crane clan) and Antonio, Mariano, and their brothers (of the Red Paint clan) had already arranged the remarriages of Bongdadu (Red Paint clan) and of Dominico's mother (Crane clan), and stood ready to take care of all future remarriages of any of Bongdadu's daughters (Red Paint) or Dominico's sisters (Crane) whenever any of these women became widowed. Each member of the firm was trying to maximize his own self-interest in this and all the other alliances he had a share in, but operations had to be carried out in this partnership form because the marriage of any woman had to be arranged by her "father," and the father, in the Tiwi rules, had to be a nonclansman of the woman whose marriage he arranged. Hence the Red Paint men needed Dominico, a Crane, as a front man to arrange the remarriages of their sisters, and he in turn used Antonio, a Red Paint man, to arrange the remarriages of his sisters. When clansmen made decisions about the remarriages of their sisters, they could only do it by using agreeable nonclansmen as nominal "fathers" and cooperating with them—and the agreeable nonclansmen would of course only come in on the deal if there was something in it for them, as there was for the obscure and unimportant Dominico in the present case. In return for acting as a front for the Red Paint brothers, he got himself a second wife, an excellent food provider though no longer beautiful; he became the ally, even if junior, of some men with assured futures; and he acquired some shadowy residual rights in the future remarriages of several potential widows. Dominico did himself a lot of good by marrying Bongdadu; if he hadn't married her, he would never have attracted much tribal notice and hence would not have warranted mention in these pages. 571 584 587 614

We find that the whole complex situation makes most theoretical sense if we see it as essentially an institutional struggle between clan rights and the father's rights in women. Tiwi fathers, as suggested above, had taken away from the clan the right to make marriage decisions for newly born female members of the clan. As mechanisms validating this success of father's rights 584 592 614

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

As mechanisms validating this success of fathers rights

584 against clan rights there existed two rules: he who bestowed the name had
592 the right to dispose in marriage; and all names given by a woman's previous
614 husband were cancelled by his death and a new set of names given to all her
[553] children by her new husband. Strictly and universally enforced, such rules would put *all* control over the marriages of *all* women, of every age, in the hands of their mother's husbands—that is, men from outside the clan of the women being disposed of, in other words, fathers in the Tiwi sense. But the Tiwi system failed to achieve such a result though their rules are pointed toward it. They achieved something close to it as far as infant or even young girls were concerned, since the fellow clansmen of such girls were either (as brothers) too young and unimportant to have any power to resist this alien control over their sisters' hands, or (as mothers' brothers and hence older men) too involved and absorbed in their own activities *as fathers* to take any
581 position asserting clan rights as against fathers' rights. To be successful in
557 tribal life, an ambitious young Tiwi male was best advised to forget his mother
584 and his sisters' daughters (all members of his clan) and concentrate on getting
[614] wives for himself. Only by getting wives could he have daughters, and only by having daughters could he build alliances and obtain influence, power, and more wives. To get wives for himself, he could not use his mother or his sisters or his sisters' daughters, since their disposal was in the hands of the men who had named them—that is, their fathers. But there came a time in the life of an older man when his mother was old, and *her* mother was dead, and therefore the rights of the last man to name his mother had lapsed. And a similar situation would arise in the case of his sisters when their mother's last husband died. By this age, a man so situated was likely to be powerful enough and skilled enough in the rules of the game to exert some control over the late remarriages of his elderly sisters and even of his mother, were she still alive.
592 Whenever this occurred, although the resulting situation might have the super-
584 ficial appearance of clan solidarity—with sons, mothers, brothers, and sisters
587 all acting and planning together as a partnership—such a surface appearance was illusory. The motivations involved in it were scarcely altruistic desires on the part of the brothers to look after their mothers and elderly sisters, but rather efforts by the brothers to use to advantage, in their intricate political schemes, some women of their own clan (their mothers and elderly sisters). Earlier in life these men had been prevented from such manipulation by the control over those women exercised by nonclansmen (their husbands or fathers) through the naming rules. Put another way, we might say that Tiwi men as a group had acquiesced to the system wherein "the father" had control over all marriages of his "daughters," because every Tiwi man hoped to be a "father" himself; but having acquiesced, every Tiwi male tried to beat the system, especially as he became older and more influential, by intriguing in the remarriages of his mother and elderly sisters—matters in which, according to the strict letter of the law, he had no right to interfere, since bestowal rights resided with the "father" or "fathers" of these women. One factor which
[582 greatly contributed to the setting aside of the rights involved in the naming
582] system was the fact that since, on the whole, old men married young women

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

and young men married old women, in many cases the nominal "father" of an elderly woman was very much younger and less influential than were her brothers, or her sons by an earlier husband. The brothers and/or sons, therefore, were able to override the wishes of their sisters' nominal father since the seniority system was on their side in such contests, even though the renaming rules were not. 182 582 584 587 592

Although it was very rare indeed for any Tiwi male to have a resident young wife until he was nearly forty, long before that age he was likely to acquire an ancient widow or two. In at least ninety out of every hundred cases a man's first resident wife was a widow very much older than himself. According to a complete genealogical census carried out in 1928-29, nearly every man in the tribe in the age group from thirty-two to thirty-seven was married to an elderly widow. Many of them had two elderly widows and a few had three. But very few of them, and certainly not more than one out of five of them, had a resident *young* wife. About half of them had bestowed wives, but these were mostly toddling infants who would not come into residence with them for another ten years or more. Even for the most promising and rapidly rising young man, the first young bestowed wife was not likely to arrive until several years after his marriage to a widow. 582 587

To get a start in life as a household head and thus to get his foot on the first rung of the prestige ladder, a Tiwi man in his thirties had first of all to get himself married to an elderly widow, preferably one with married daughters. This was the beginning of his career as a responsible adult. The widow did several things for him. She became his food provider and housekeeper. She served as a link to ally him with her sons. As her husband, he acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters when they became widowed. And she, as the first resident wife in his household, stood ready to be the teacher, trainer, and guardian of his young bestowed wives when they began to join him after they reached puberty. [593] [595]

Levirate, Sororate, and Cross-Cousin Marriage

We have emphasized infant bestowal and widow remarriage because it was the elaborate development of these two matrimonial mechanisms that brought about the unusual, perhaps unique, character of the Tiwi household. Other matrimonial mechanisms, more usual in preliterate societies, were also used by the Tiwi but always in combination with or as minor adjuncts to the two basic mechanisms. Thus, a man often remarried his dead brother's wives, or at least some of them, within the institution of widow remarriage. Such a practice is known to anthropologists as the levirate, and tribes are said "to have" the levirate or "not to have" it. The Tiwi, with their pluralistic approach to the whole area of marriage relationships, can hardly be said to fall into either category. To them, every widow had to remarry and among the many possible candidates for her, the brothers of the dead husband were recognized as having a reasonable, but far from automatic, claim. Whether the brothers 587

587 jointly, or any one of them singly, were able to translate that claim into marriage depended on the other claims. Brotherhood in itself gave no exclusive right to widows, but of course a brother, being necessarily of the same clan and frequently of the same band as the deceased husband, was well in line to assert a claim to the widow if he could make the claim good. Cursory inspection of the genealogies reveals, however, a surprisingly small number of cases of men taking over the widows of their deceased brothers. At best it was a very minor factor in Tiwi marriage customs.

The parallel custom of the sororate—that is, of sisters being married to the same husband—was more common. It occurred both in connection with infant bestowal, by a father promising *all* his daughters by a particular wife [595] to the same husband, or in connection with widow remarriage, whereby two or [584] more full sisters, previously married to the same husband, passed together on his death to the same new husband. The sororate occurred more frequently in the first form than in the second, largely because, as already mentioned, widows had more say in their own marriages than baby girls had, but there was nothing obligatory nor required about it, as is shown by the frequent cases in which a father bestowed all his daughters by one wife on the same man but on the early death of that man rebestowed them *seriatim* on several different husbands. One got the impression, though no Tiwi ever made the point explicit, that within the Tiwi bestowal system the prevailing high rate 165 of infantile and child mortality was an important factor in sustaining the soro- 182 rate principle to the extent that it did exist. A father who bestowed upon a 587 man the first daughter borne by a certain wife was almost obliged to bestow upon the same man the second daughter of the same wife if the first one died in infancy. Moreover, since most fathers bestowed their daughters with an eye to their own advantage, it was clearly desirable if he wanted to cement the goodwill of a prospective son-in-law, to promise him *all* the daughters produced by a certain wife, so that even though most of them died in infancy, at least one or two would be delivered in good condition at the age of puberty. [557] The aim of bestowal was to win friends and influence people, and a bestowal of a child who died before she reached the son-in-law did a father little good. A shrewd father could avoid this risk by following the sororate principle; a stupid or feckless father who scattered his daughters widely could well end up with as many disappointed sons-in-law as friendly ones, as the infantile and child mortality took its heavy toll of his young daughters. In the genealogies, sororate marriages in some form occur much more frequently than levirate marriages, but nonetheless their incidence is such as to indicate that they were a relatively minor feature in Tiwi marriages and that their occurrence was most frequently due to careful fathers trying to insure sons-in-law against disappointment, and themselves against charges of nondelivery.

171 No account of marriage in any Australian tribe can go very far without raising the difficult matter of the kinship system, since all the accounts we have 582 of mainland Australian tribes tell us that all marriages there took place within a rigid kinship framework which required everybody to marry somebody who was automatically his or her cross-cousin (for example, a man and a daughter

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

2

Life in the Bush

Organization: Band and Household

THE PRECEDING CHAPTER should convey something of what a Tiwi band really was. The casual way in which people left one band and joined another shows that the band was in no sense a tight political or legal group. Old men preferred, on the whole, to bestow their daughters on men in other bands, but far from this indicating any tendency towards patrilocality, there was at the same time a strong tendency on the part of such selected sons-in-law, especially if they were young and mobile, to move into the band of the father-in-law, partly, at least, to ensure that the donor did not change his mind. Even the faint prospect of a wife was sufficient to cause young men to change bands, and change of band residence by senior men was not at all rare. 621 591

The emphasis on widow remarriage was another factor that influenced band residence and made the whole matter of band affiliation extremely fluid and arbitrary. For widow remarriage not only caused elderly women to move perhaps several times in their lifetimes, but also caused their younger sons to move with them. Such unmarried sons preferred home cooking and followed their elderly mothers outside the band if remarriage required the widows to move. Almost invariably the question "Why is So and So (a youth of 15-25) living in Turupi if he is really a Malauila?" evoked the response (obvious to a Tiwi) "Because his mother is there." Conversely, mothers often followed their sons, especially when the son began to acquire young wives who needed senior female supervision. Such mothers divided their time between the household of the son (or even several sons) and the household of the nominal husband, and if such part-time residence in two (or more) households involved part-time residence in two (or more) bands, the arrangement did not provoke any comment, nor was it thought to be in any way odd. [587] [182]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 The matter of men traveling to distant camps for ceremonials illumi-
595 nates again, and from a new angle, the great value of elderly widows in the
587 household. Tu'untalumi, during his visit to Malau in August, was able to split his household efficiently by taking a couple of old wives with him to supervise his young wives on the journey and leaving other old wives at home in Tangio to begin storing up food for the grass-burning project which he intended to stage on his return. It will be noticed in the account of his movements that he began issuing invitations to the grass burning on his way home from Malau, showing his confidence that the elderly wives he had left at home would [224 251] have the preparations well in hand during his absence. A big man with a big household really needed three or four elderly widows because these enabled him to split his work force in various ways as his various political and social obligations required and to be sure of trustworthy supervision of each of the segments. A man without widows in his household, or with only one, could not do this; in fact, it was hard for a man without widows to attend ceremonials at all, or even to receive a large party of visitors to his household. And, as we have already pointed out, since such a man would probably go hungry very often because he would not dare to send his unsupervised young wives into the bush to gather food, there were practically no such men nor such households. Widows were indispensable to a senior Tiwi, both in his public and in his private life.

Making Things

592 Throughout this chapter we have been stressing the contrast between
887 the dull routine of life in an isolated Tiwi household during the greater part of the year and the sort of life typical on those relatively rare occasions when something special—a festival, a funeral, a fight, a grass burning, a naming ceremony, some collective phase of men's initiation—required the assembling together of several households for joint activity. Before leaving the daily life of the isolated camp, we should mention one other area of activity—namely, the manufacturing activities of the tribe. The Tiwi did not manufacture much, [32] but spears, throwing sticks, canoes, digging sticks, baskets, bodily ornaments, graveposts, and all the miscellaneous paraphernalia used in ceremonials had to be made in whatever leisure time people could find during the long weeks and months when each of the households lived more or less in isolation from the others. Crude and simple as these artifacts were, their construction required time, and only the older men had the time and the skill based on experience to make the more important of them.

[147] Largely because of their failing eyesight, the older men hunted very little and hence tended to remain in camp all day while the young men were hunting and the women were gathering. There were, of course, some old men who took advantage of this time to do little except doze in the shade, but 182 most of the household heads spent a fairly active day in camp engaged in 511 making things. Here we find another aspect of Tiwi culture that results from 531

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Women were, however, a form of capital that possessed the power of talking back to the investors. As daughters or as wives they were quite thoroughly subordinate to the wishes of their fathers or husbands, and Tiwi wives were as frequently and as brutally beaten by their husbands as wives in any other savage society. But as mothers and as sisters the women were not coerced by their sons and their brothers. On the contrary, sons or brothers wishing to use their mothers or their sisters in their political schemes (typically when those mothers or sisters became or were about to become widows) could only do so with the active collaboration of the women concerned. Tough-minded young widows could drive a hard bargain with their brothers as to where they remarried, since each needed the other to make the remarriage acceptable to the tribe at large and to beat down the other competitors (the dead husbands' brothers, for example) who wished to control the remarriage of the widows. Young girls thus had no bargaining power but young widows had a good deal. Old mothers with influential senior sons were extremely powerful. Any affront to an old woman was an affront to her sons, and some of the strongest influence networks were alliances of several senior brothers, in which their old mother seemed to be the mastermind and the senior sons largely the enforcers of what the old mother and her middle-aged daughters (their sisters) had decided among themselves.

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Thus, for women, as for men, age and political skill were the crucial factors in determining their position. Young girls were chattels and as such were passed around from husband to husband. But with increasing age, smart young women, especially in alliance with their smart young brothers, could control their own fate with some firmness, and if they and their brothers had a shrewd old mother (also with powerful senior brothers still alive) to advise them and support them, then the decisions of such a group as to where the girls remarried were very difficult decisions for anybody else to combat or oppose. Not as independent operators, but as behind-the-scenes allies of their sons and brothers, Tiwi mothers and sisters enjoyed much more essential freedom in their own careers as often-remarried widows than would appear at first sight in a culture which ostensibly treated all women as currency in the political careers of the men. No matter how males, both old and young, might connive, they were constantly aware that no remarriage of a widow could ever be arranged and made to stick unless the widow herself was agreeable.

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In the limited space available, all we can offer are a few samples of how the influence game was played by a few selected individuals of various ages. Age was of great importance in Tiwi careers and therefore we select our samples from all the adult male age-groups. We have selected them all from the same band—the Malauila—so as to show as clearly as possible the interplay between one career and another for men of the same band. And finally we select men of the Malauila band for our examples because in 1928-29 it was a band little affected as yet by the outside influences—Catholic missionaries and Japanese pearl divers—which were beginning to modify Tiwi marriage customs among some of the other bands.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 thirties and when the mother of the baby he was now receiving was married to some man long since dead. The circumstances were certainly right for such an arrangement in the Gitjara-Summit case of 1928.

159 557 582 If we now pause and look at the marriage career of Gitjara at the point it had reached by the time he was 33, we can separate out three distinct types of operation in which this admirable young man had engaged. His first marriage, with L. F. B.'s elderly mother, had brought into existence a joint household of young men and elderly widows which not only was a very satisfactory housekeeping arrangement but also put Gitjara and his ally, L. F. B., in a position to exert some influence on all the subsequent remarriages of their respective sisters.

Gitjara's marriage a few years later to a second widow put him in a position to enter into marriage arrangements even more directly, since the second widow had a daughter promised to Summit but still too young to take up residence with him. By dragging his feet on the fulfilment of this promise, Gitjara could put pressure on Summit and extract from the latter some sort [584] of consideration to facilitate the delivery of the girl. Gitjara was thus well in the marriage-broker business before he had any children of his own and indeed before he had received any bestowal. This was the second type of operation for an up-and-coming young man, and it was one wherein a shrewd and aggressive operator would use the daughters of other men (that is, of a widow's previous husbands) in such a way as to attach all sorts of codicils and contingent interests and second mortgages to the original bestowal of those daughters, many of these collectable in full only in the far distant future, after all prior interests had been satisfied or had lapsed.

The third type of operation engaged in by Gitjara was, of course, to try and attract bestowed wives of his own. His vigorous operations, by age 33, in the widow remarriage field, were not only ends in themselves but also were the type of operation that attracted the approval of older men with daughters to bestow. Hence it is not surprising to find that by 1929 Gitjara, married to the two widows already mentioned, had received two bestowals. The older of these was a girl of ten rebestowed on Gitjara in 1927 when the man died upon whom she had been bestowed at birth. The second was a baby born in 1927 whose father was Tomitari of the Rangwila. (The choice of Gitjara as a son-in-law by Tomitari was so interesting that we shall discuss it later in this chapter.) Both these bestowals were made *after* Gitjara had engineered his remarriage of the two widows and as far as kinship was concerned had no connection whatever with these widows or their close relatives. We conclude, therefore, that widow remarriage could be used by alert and aggressive men in their early thirties for three purposes: (1) to establish households and obtain elderly housekeepers; (2) to establish low-priority rights in the daughters of the widows' previous husbands; and (3) to attract attention to themselves as smart operators and gain the attention and approval of older men. As an outgrowth of the third purpose, they were likely to attract bestowals. Hence we may say that among the Tiwi the best road to obtaining a [587] young wife or several young wives was for a young man to be first successful

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the manipulation of the remarriages of elderly widows, who were always in large supply. If a man showed skill and know-how in his early thirties among the widows, then in his late thirties and early forties young wives would be bestowed upon him in abundance. Such a lesson could not have a better exemplar than Gitjara. By age 33 he had done so well among the widows that his first *young* wife would be joining his household by the time he was thirty-eight or thirty-nine, and another was already a year old. Clearly he was a young man of promise and one to be watched—and cultivated. 159 557 582 587

Summit, a man slightly older than Gitjara, must be dealt with very briefly, since the reasons for his success would take us too far afield. In 1929 he had a list of six wives, the only resident one being an elderly widow. The other five were bestowals and the eldest of these was the girl of ten whom we have already mentioned as being in the household of her step-father, Gitjara. Two more, younger than the ten-year-old, were in the household of Padimo (see below) and the remaining two were in the household of one of the elders of the Rangwila band. Summit, in Tiwi reckoning, was a Rangwila himself and had only moved to Malau a few years before. Some four years previously he had been a young Rangwila with no less than five bestowed child-wives. Three of these had been given him by an elder in Malau, two by an elder of his own band. The Malauila girls were older than the two Rangwila girls and his Malauila father-in-law was older than his Rangwila father-in-law. Summit therefore moved north to supervise personally his interests in Malau. He had, however, been out-maneuvered when the Malauila father-in-law died, since Gitjara had then been able to remarry the mother of Summit's eldest child-wife and Padimo had been able to remarry the mother of the other two little girls. Having thus moved to Malau to be near to and a satellite of his elderly Malauila father-in-law, Summit now found himself the technical son-in-law of two young men of his own age group who were among his keen competitors in the influence struggle. To ensure that his three promised Malauila child-wives joined his household when old enough, he now needed to make some arrangements with Gitjara and Padimo. Summit had gotten his bestowals rather early and rather easily but he still had the problem of nailing them down. 159 584 [557 587]

While thus engaged in acquiring five bestowed young wives and trying to promote their safe delivery when ready, Summit had married a widow not much more than forty years old but childless by her two previous husbands.[8] Such a widow at least provided him with a food-getter and housekeeper and enabled him to establish a household into which his five bestowed wives would enter as they successively reached the proper age. Thus Summit's household in 1929 consisted only of himself and his *palimaringa* wife. Within the next fifteen years it would be increased by the addition of at least five young wives, 159 587 592 592 159

[8] Such women who had reached middle age without surviving children were called by a special term, *palimaringa*, in Tiwi and the term referred to childlessness rather than barrenness. Summit's widow, for example, had borne two children, both of whom had died in infancy, and she was classified as a *palimaringa*. When a *palimaringa* became very, very old indeed, the word changed to *timaringa*. [842]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 plus any new bestowals, plus any further widows Summit might find it to his interest (and power) to remarry.

159 584 557 Padimo, who thus enters our story as one of Summit's rivals and one of his nominal fathers-in-law, was also a Rangwila who had moved to Malau at the call of an elderly father-in-law. He presents another pattern of Tiwi upward mobility and one that was statistically more frequent than the rather tortuous road followed by men like Gitjara. Padimo had been chosen as a nephew worth supporting by old Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest of the Malauila. The earliest proof of Ki-in-kumi's patronage of Padimo had come in 1925-26 when an old man died, leaving eight widows of very diverse ages. Three of these "widows," aged respectively 17, 13, and 9 at the time of the death of their first husband, were daughters of Ki-in-kumi. Being so young and their brothers being equally young, their father's right to arrange their remarriage was unchallenged and Ki-in-kumi reassigned[4] them as wives to young Padimo, then aged about thirty-three. The eldest of the three girls had already borne two female children to the dead man, these being the two girl babies mentioned above as having been promised to Summit.

As well as the three young widows, Padimo had also obtained at the same redistribution the oldest and most haggish of the dead man's eight wives. It was at the same redistribution that Gitjara had obtained his second widow (the mother of the girl promised to Summit). Thus through Ki-in-kumi's influence, Padimo had obtained four "widows" of the eight left by the man who died in 1925-26; Gitjara, working without a powerful patron, had been lucky to obtain one.

159 595 Ki-in-kumi had subsequently followed up this initial selection of Padimo as a favored sister's son by giving further daughters to him as they were born. Consequently, by 1929 Padimo's wife list consisted of the following:

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A. One extremely ancient widow.

B. One wife aged about 20, daughter of Ki-in-kumi, mother already of two daughters by a previous husband who, before his death, bestowed these daughters on Summit.

C. One wife aged about 17, daughter of Ki-in-kumi; had just had her first child (who lived only a week); had previously been bestowed on the dead husband of wife B, but was too young to join his household before he died.

D. Three more girls, daughters of Ki-in-kumi, the eldest about 12 and hence old enough to have been bestowed on the same previous husband as wives B and C; the other two aged 2 and 1 and hence born since his death. All three of these were still resident in their father's household.

[584 587] [4] It is difficult to decide whether such reassignments of female children by their father, on the death of the man to whom he had first betrothed them, should be called "rebestowals" or "remarriages." We prefer the first word since such "child-widows" were usually reassigned by their fathers (if still alive) without any challenge to his rights to do so. They therefore do not differ from original bestowals at birth except for the awkward semantic fact that the man to whom such a "child-wife" was reassigned was technically her second husband.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

With a lineup such as this by the time he was thirty-six, Padimo was clearly in 159
process of going places in Tiwi society. The only weakness one could see in 557
his position was that it all derived from the favor of one patron, and no old 595
man with daughters, other than Ki-in-kumi, had seen fit to bestow a girl
upon him. It should be noted that in 1929, though Padimo had two young
wives resident in his household, he still had no children of his own. His first 159
child, born that year, lived only a few days. The only children in residence were
the two girls promised to Summit by the previous husband of their mother. 557
Their bestowal on Summit was a matter beyond Padimo's control though he 592
could use them to force some concessions from Summit just as Gitjara could 584
with the girl in his household. But as Padimo's young wives began to bear
daughters of his own, his bestowal of them would be less encumbered by the
commitments of any predecessor. While Ki-in-kumi lived, Padimo would have
to consider his obligations to that old man and at least consult with Ki-in-kumi
as to how he should bestow his female children, since any such children would
be the daughters' daughters of the old man. Nor would the death of Ki-in-kumi
leave Padimo entirely free to bestow his own daughters anywhere he wished.
Many of the girls already given to him as wives by Ki-in-kumi had mothers
who possibly, and brothers who certainly, would outlive Ki-in-kumi. On the [587]
old man's death, all of his numerous wives would remarry—some of the older
ones probably to ambitious younger men—and these new husbands of the
widows of Ki-in-kumi would begin interfering with and trying to alter the
arrangements made for his daughters by the old man during his lifetime. Thus [606]
Padimo would find himself stuck with a group of new and antagonistic fathers-
in-law in place of the old, indulgent father-in-law who had been responsible
for his success so far. Padimo's problem was basically how to hold, after
Ki-in-kumi's death, the favored position he had gained during the old man's
lifetime through the old man's favor.

In the meantime, with Ki-in-kumi still alive and powerful, Padimo had 159
the biggest and fastest expanding household among the Malauila men in their 592
thirties. The only remaining man in this age group was Boya who was the 557
oldest of them all, being at least 42 years old in 1928. As might be expected,
his career illustrates some new facets of the Tiwi influence struggle.

Structurally the position of Boya was simple but politically it was com- 159
plex. His father had been a henchman and satellite of Ki-in-kumi in the early
career of that old operator and roughly had had somewhat the same relation-
ship to the young Ki-in-kumi as L. F. B. had to Gitjara. Boya's father, the
satellite, left only two widows (an indication of his mediocrity) and these
two widows had been remarried by Ki-in-kumi, the patron. One of these
widows was Boya's mother, and Boya was too young at the time to have any
say in where his mother remarried. Ki-in-kumi's interest in marrying Boya's
mother was not of course because he thus acquired Boya as a step-son, but
because he acquired Boya's sisters as step-daughters. Step-sons were liabilities [562]
which new husbands had to take over in order to get rights in the real assets
—the step-daughters.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 Some years later, when Boya had reached a reasonable age like 30,
593 Ki-in-kumi had arranged for him to marry a very ancient and childless widow
(*palimarluga*) more than twenty years older than himself. This was all that
[587] Ki-in-kumi considered he needed to do for his step-son, and in Tiwi terms
it was almost a gesture of contempt and an open indication that Ki-in-kumi, by
providing him with an old woman who was childless but could cook, was not
interested in helping Boya toward a career. Since the joining up of Boya to
[768] the crone took place shortly after the death of Boya's mother, who had lived
with her sons in Ki-in-kumi's household, Ki-in-kumi by producing the old
widow for Boya was telling him in effect to get out and start his own household
now that his mother was dead.

159 In 1928 we found Boya aged about 42 married to the crone of 65.
584 But he, she, and Boya's younger brother of 24 were still living in Ki-in-kumi's
household. Ki-in-kumi's detestation of him was notorious and yet Boya had by
593 now no less than four young bestowed child-wives growing up elsewhere. No
[592] one of these bestowals had come from Malau but were bestowals from different
fathers of baby girls in other bands. At first sight this presented a curious
situation. Within his own band Boya appeared a complete failure, suffering
[554] so severely from Ki-in-kumi's hostility that he had received no bestowals and
at age 42 did not even have a separate household of his own. But how could
this judgment be squared with the four bestowals from elders of other bands?
Clearly none of the causes of success so far analyzed fitted the case of Boya.

159 Further research into who lived with whom as distinct from who was
591 married to whom revealed that not only was "the household" of Boya, his
elderly wife, and his younger brother an integral part of the Ki-in-kumi
592 "establishment," but also that Padimo with his "household" was part of that
establishment. Padimo, like Boya, had one elderly wife but he also had five
bestowed wives, all daughters of Ki-in-kumi. We said above that the two eldest
of these five girls being now aged 20 and 17 respectively were in residence
with their husband, while the three youngest, not having reached puberty,
were still "with their father." Actual observation showed that this was an
academic distinction, since the households of Padimo, the son-in-law, and Ki-in-
kumi, the father-in-law, were parts of the same establishment. When one of
Ki-in-kumi's daughters bestowed on Padimo became old enough to "leave her
father and join her husband," she did not have to move her residence or even
change her daily work routines. She merely sat at night around the campfire
of her older sisters (Padimo's wives) instead of around the campfire of her
younger sisters (Ki-in-kumi's daughters). She remained part of the same es-
tablishment.

Padimo, it will be remembered, was the young man whom Ki-in-kumi
had attracted from Rangu to Malau by liberally bestowing him with child-
wives. Padimo had thus moved into the northern band and by 1928 had
moved right into Ki-in-kumi's camp, where he functioned as a sort of executive
officer and heir apparent to the old man. In the same camp, though in a very
different capacity, was Boya, the 42-year-old despised step-son. Many roads thus
592 led to Ki-in-kumi's household, but before discussing the large establishment

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

554 of Units I and II and made their wives available for redistribution. The working of the Tiwi system made this possibility unlikely. Unsuccessful junior elders could not expect to step into the shoes of successful senior elders merely by [888] outliving them; nor could one rise to power in the gerontocratic system [555] merely by living past fifty-five. What was necessary was age *plus* ability, and the time to demonstrate the ability was in one's thirties. If it was not demonstrated and recognized by then, a man could not forge ahead in his middle forties and early fifties, for by then it was too late. This fact gave a certain cyclical quality to the transfer of influence in Tiwi. The influence of successful 557 senior elders, to the extent that such an intangible thing was transferable at 587 all, tended to skip a decade and bypass the men currently in the junior elder category in favor of the men in the current "young operator" category. Since Ki-in-kumi was already quite old, there was in 1929 a great deal of political maneuvering going on in Malau and elsewhere in anticipation of his death, and it was clear that the people most likely to profit by his death and the redistribution of his twelve resident wives (one-third of all resident wives in [561] the band) were the men aged from thirty-two to forty-two such as Padimo, Boya, Summit, and Gitjara, all of whom were jockeying for position to take advantage of the death of any old man, especially such a wealthy elder as Ki-in-kumi. Some of the widows would undoubtedly remarry into other bands, but these younger Malauila, living with or near the old man's establishment, were already taking advantage of their strategic location to make some preliminary deals and marriage arrangements for the old man's widows even before his death. Neither Padimo, as Ki-in-kumi's son-in-law, nor Boya, as his nominal "son," could themselves marry any of the widows, but as resident members of his establishment and the only two men so situated, each was in an excellent spot to act as an honest broker in the disposal of Ki-in-kumi's large estate. Anybody interested in obtaining a widow or two at the death of Ki-in-kumi was well advised to have a few quiet words with either Padimo or Boya well ahead of time. Both of them had wives who lived and worked every day alongside Ki-in-kumi's womenfolk and thus they each had ideal communication systems to the women's side of the band. This was why they had held off setting up their own separate establishments though they were both married men. Neither were "heirs" of Ki-in-kumi in any strict Western use of that word, but it was obvious that it was their careers that would be promoted and their spheres of influence that would be enhanced by the death of Ki-in-kumi. The junior elders, all approaching or past the age of fifty with only small establishments and small spheres of influence, were being bypassed in the transfer of the old man's assets.

Every Tiwi anxious to obtain a Ki-in-kumi widow recognized the strategic positions of Padimo and Boya; the problem was to decide which broker to retain, since the positions of the two men in relation to Ki-in-kumi were so different. For the past four or five years Padimo had been the right-hand man and trusted lieutenant and undoubtedly it was he upon whom Ki-in-kumi was relying to carry out his own wishes about the distribution of his widows. We said earlier that old men found it difficult to control the remarriage of their

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

widows with the same unchallenged authority with which they bestowed their daughters. Nevertheless they tried hard in many cases to do so. Ki-in-kumi was one who tried hard to make the decisions for his widows, by selecting Padimo as his trusted executor. If Padimo faithfully carried out the old man's wishes after he died, then the widows were not likely to come on the open market; they would be redistributed in accordance with the terms of Ki-in-kumi's will (in both senses of the word "will").

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Though, of course, Padimo might prove to be a dishonest executor of the estate, there was a safeguard provided in that the new husbands whom Ki-in-kumi had selected for his wives were all aware of his wishes and hence if Padimo tried to depart from those wishes the cheated heirs would bring charges of double dealing and broken promises against him. But regardless of Padimo's honesty after the death, his position as Ki-in-kumi's trusted lieutenant clearly made him an unsuitable agent before the death for those numerous men who wanted some of Ki-in-kumi's future widows and who had not seen any indication that Ki-in-kumi had included them among his beneficiaries. The obvious young man for such men to use as their go-between and agent was Boya. Ki-in-kumi was hostile to him and had given him nothing willingly. Boya's presence in the old man's establishment was based on the nominal tie of Ki-in-kumi being the last husband of his mother to rename him before she died. Viewed thus, the two young men in Ki-in-kumi's household can be said to have become agents for two different networks of intrigue. Padimo was the manager and agent for all the men, including Ki-in-kumi himself, who wanted to perpetuate and continue the existing alliances and arrangements that Ki-in-kumi had built or helped to build during his long and successful career; Boya was the natural agent for all the men who, being outside that set of alliances, had nothing to gain from Ki-in-kumi's death unless his death dissolved the network of alliances and arrangements of which Ki-in-kumi had been the main architect. Padimo's responsibility was necessarily a sort of holding-together and preserving operation as the executor of an existing estate; Boya's clients were men hoping for fragmentation and subdivision not only of Ki-in-kumi's widows but also of the alliances and deals of which the widows were a part.

It is incidentally amusing, and also indicative of how the ever-present kinship ties affected all such deals and redeals, to note that if some of Boya's clients succeeded in grabbing off some of Ki-in-kumi's widows—despite the opposition, before his death, of Ki-in-kumi and the presumed opposition, after the death, of Padimo the executor—they were very liable thus to become automatically fathers-in-law of Padimo, since several of Ki-in-kumi's wives already had daughters who were bestowed on Padimo.

The question then of which agent was employed by the numerous men yearning to acquire one or more of Ki-in-kumi's widows was fairly well settled by the respective roles which the two young men occupied in the household. Men already well inside the Ki-in-kumi-centered alliances were relying on Padimo; men outside those alliances were relying on Boya to engineer a fluid situation and a more open market. In choosing an agent in this as in any other "deal," there was also the question of fee. Neither Padimo nor Boya

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

557 would become involved or make any soundings among the widows unless there
587 was something in it for them. Hence the client had to find out whether a promise of general goodwill and friendship was all that Boya (or Padimo) would ask in return for his services or whether the price would be much
[584] higher—perhaps as high as the bestowal of the client's next baby daughter. It was in such ways that widow-remarriage arrangements and infant bestowals were intertwined; a much-delayed bestowal to an apparently unrelated individual would be the ultimate pay-off to the broker or agent who had engineered a widow remarriage for the bestower years before.

[561] This role of agent in the disposal of a dead man's widows was a type of operation best suited to men in the first stages of their own married lives —that is, to men in their middle thirties or very early forties who had perhaps married their first or second widows and who had as yet no young wives of their own in residence. Having no young wives to guard, they were able to get around easily on diplomatic missions and they had their own listening posts inside the world of women in the person of their own mothers (if still alive) and in the elderly widows whom they themselves had married. The ambitious young brokers were tipped off by their mothers and elderly wives as to how the young wives wished to be distributed and what the competing young brokers were trying to arrange. Thus when a wealthy old man like Ki-in-kumi died, the redistribution of his wives through remarriage was a matter that had been decided beforehand by an extraordinary complex tangle of semisecret arrangements and deals and promises, but the people most influential in arranging the redistribution were the young brokers who usually got few, if any, of the young widows for themselves but who collected their rewards in reputation, influence, alliances, and future bestowals from the men for whom they had acted as agents.

[768] Thus the death of Ki-in-kumi or of any other old man with many wives tended to disperse the wives all over the tribe, with only one or two, or at most three, going to any one new husband. A large estate was almost always fragmented by the death of the old man who had built it up, and any one of his contemporaries was able to take over only a very small fraction of it at best. The levirate and sororate principles, though present, worked very feebly. The men who benefited most—not immediately, but eventually—were the young operators.[7] In such a manner Padimo and Boya were sure to be the long-term beneficiaries of Ki-in-kumi's death though neither of them could remarry any of his widows. The real heirs of the wealthy old men of sixty and over were the young men who happened to be between thirty-two and forty-
554 two when those old men got near to death. The men between forty-five and
557 fifty-five whose brokerage business ten years earlier had not been very skillfully
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[7] At least some of the so-called "stolen" or disputed wives were widows who had insisted on marrying the younger agent instead of the older client, which put the young broker in the embarrassing position of saying to his client, "I cannot make delivery of the widow I acquired on your account; she insists on marrying me instead." Such an incident did not do his agency business much good but tended rather to frighten off clients.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

handled, or who happened to be at the brokering age when no big households were being liquidated, found themselves in the position that Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai occupied in 1928-29. We know they had not been successful dealers in their thirties because we found them around the age of fifty with only one resident wife each and relatively few bestowals in prospect. Their earlier dealings in widows had not laid the right foundations for successful careers as elders. Even before he was forty, Padimo had five or six bestowed wives either in residence or in prospect, and Boya, not much over forty, had several already promised. The death of Ki-in-kumi in the near future would bring both of them more reputation and ultimately more bestowals in return for their skill (if they showed it) in the disposition of the estate. The inferiority of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai to these younger men in the marriage and influence struggle was already apparent and would be even more accentuated by Ki-in-kumi's death. 554 557 587

The Politics of Bestowal

The above discussion of how younger men were indirectly benefited by the deaths or impending deaths of wealthy older men does not pretend to give an exhaustive list of all the considerations that went into the reallocation of a dead man's widows. We built our analysis around those factors which were paramount in the case of Ki-in-kumi's household. Other cases were different to the extent that there were real adult sons involved in them rather than a nominal "son" like Boya, or because in them the old man had not chosen a clear-cut executor as Ki-in-kumi had chosen Padimo, or because an old man had surviving brothers close to him in age and alliance who would emphasize the levirate principle and seek to have it followed in the relocation of their dead brother's widows. The few points we are seeking to emphasize among the many that might be emphasized in any exhaustive treatment of Tiwi widow remarriage are: 1) that widow remarriage was a very flexible area in which the ultimate disposition of the widows was decided by the manipulations and wishes of a wide range of individuals including both relatives and nonrelatives. The dead man himself; the fathers of the wives, if still alive; the brothers of the widows, if adults; the widows themselves, if strong minded; the executors of the dead man, if clearly nominated; and the numerous dealers and brokers on behalf of remote clients or even on their own account—all tried to make their own wishes prevail. The result was that no two cases were ever alike, but on balance 2) it was younger men rather than older men who were most likely to enhance their reputations and increase their assets in the long run as the results of these widow redeals, even though in the short run it was the older men who remarried most of the widows, especially the younger widows. 587 [561]

We have briefly discussed what we have labeled the politics of widow remarriage before discussing the politics of infant bestowal, although logically it might appear that infant bestowal should be taken up first. We have ful- 584 163

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 about the same age as himself. (*If* we tried to answer *why* he did, the case would no longer be simple.) Padimo's father died while the four children were still young, and their mother remarried a relatively young man named Tomitari. This occurred in about 1914 and the situation then was as follows:

GENEALOGY I
THE INGLIS-TOMITARI RELATIONSHIP 1914
(Males are in italics; ages are in brackets)

Padimo's Father (just dead) — 1. =

Padimo's Mother (40) = 2. *Tomitari* (50)

Inglis (44) = Sister I (21) | *Padimo* (20) | Sister II (13) | Sister III (10)

Fifteen years or so later, all parties were still alive; the two youngest sisters had joined Inglis as wives and all three sisters had borne children to him, including girls. Thus the situation in 1928-29 was:

GENEALOGY II
(1928-29)

Padimo's Mother (55) = *Tomitari* (45)

Padimo

Sister I wife of *Inglis* (59)
Sister II wife of *Inglis*
Sister III wife of *Inglis*
+
Daughter A (11)
Daughter B (8)
Daughter C (5)
Daughter D (2)
Daughter E (1)

The three sisters of Padimo had borne five daughters to Inglis and as they were successively born Inglis had bestowed the first three on Tomitari. He did not bestow the fourth or fifth nor any of his daughters by other wives.

The master clue to the whole matter was the marriage in 1914 of Padimo's widowed mother to Tomitari, then little more than thirty. His function had been to act as trustee or stand-in for Inglis' interest, not in the widow but in her daughters who had been bestowed on Inglis by their dead father. The young Tomitari as step-father of the girls had to ensure their safe delivery to Inglis' household. (One was there already but the other two were not.) Tomitari accomplished his mission, acquiring the widow, of course, as a wife in the process; the girls arrived safely in Inglis' household and Inglis paid off handsomely by bestowing their daughters on his honest agent who had held off the competitors.

But by 1923 or thereabouts Inglis had stopped paying off. Tomitari by then had received three bestowals from Inglis. (Actually he had received about six, but three died in infancy). Moreover, he was no longer a young man but

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

from their future sons-in-law and demands which look very much like bride price and bride service developed as a basis for marriage arrangement. A young girl had a relatively "free choice" of her future spouse. But following this selection, her father let it be known to the young man what he expected. The desired payment was often stated in Australian money by the 1950's; some men were asking as much as a hundred pounds for a daughter. (This was a very high sum, since Tiwi males working for the Army received four pounds a week as normal wages.) Other men were asking that their sons-in-law live with them, thus leaving their own parental home, and contribute regularly to the upkeep of the household of the father-in-law. This was, indeed, quite a practical arrangement, for when such a young man went to work in Darwin his wife had to be supervised at home and, further, his employer was supposed to send home to the Mission part of the young man's wages.

Thus, by 1954, the following type of marriage agreement was initiated by the great majority of Tiwi with marriageable daughters, specifically those who centered their activities at Bathurst Island Mission and Garden Point. A young girl chose her future husband from her single, male agemates, sometimes with a suggestion from her father. Her father informed his future son-in-law of the obligations incumbent upon him, which normally included matrilocal postmarital residence and a bride price. An older woman with children, or even one without any offspring, who became a widow, was discouraged from remarrying by her father, if he survived, and by her brother after her father's death. The father or eldest brother of a widow with a daughter reaped the benefits of allowing that daughter to marry the young man whom she desired. The widow herself did not remarry but stayed in the household of her father or brother.

Residence Patterns

By 1953, traditional Tiwi residence patterns had undergone major modifications, some of which have already been mentioned. The old residence areas of the bands had been depopulated; in fact, nearly all the Tiwi were located around one of four European establishments—those at Darwin, Bathurst Island Mission, Garden Point, or Snake Bay. In each of these areas a centralized village pattern had developed. Within the Tiwi communities at Snake Bay, Garden Point, and Bathurst Island Mission there remained a few of the old large households with a polygamous base. But in all these camps the household heads were well past sixty and in most cases past seventy. Polygamous households were dying out by 1953.

But what was replacing them? One might assume that the European pattern of the single family household based upon neolocal residence would have emerged as the new Tiwi system. This was not the case, however. Just as Hart found in 1928-29 that successful Tiwi men were the heads of large establishments, so in 1953-54 the younger male leaders had gathered around

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 render his name tabu. This is the case among the Tiwi. All the names of a dead man become strictly *pukimani* (=tabu) immediately upon his death. Anyone in the tribe who uses a name of a dead person at any time for years after his death but especially in the period—usually about five to six months—that always elapses between the death and the funeral corroboree, violates one of the strictest social sanctions the tribe possesses.
192 And this prohibition extends to all words in the ordinary language—
551 though curiously enough not in the sacred language—which bear any
765 resemblance in sound to any one of the names of the dead man. It applies equally to English names in use by the tribe with resemblances to native or English words and to native words which resemble either English or native words. Thus a boy named *Tipuki* having died "tobacco," "baccy," *Tiparkitimiri* all equally became *pukimani*. Similarly when *Mulankina*, one of the Mandeimbula horde died, *mulikina*, one of the commonest words in the language, meaning "plenty," "full," "enough," was dropped completely from the language.

551 Nor does the *pukimani* stop here. Not only is the use of any of the
553 names of the dead man prohibited, but there is an equally strong rule against the use of any of the personal names he has bestowed upon other people, be they his own children or the children of others. A young child may only have one name, that given him by his father, but should his father die he must become nameless until he gets a new name from somewhere. This aspect of the *pukimani* does not extend to similar words in either the ordinary or the sacred language. For instance although
[192 765] *Tambu*, a proper name bestowed by an old man became *pukimani* on the latter's death, the ordinary word *tamu* (imperative form of verb 'to sit down') was not affected.

582 On account chiefly of the extreme form of polygyny practised by the
595 Tiwi whereby most of the girls and young women belong to a comparatively few old men, the father of a family is almost invariably much older than his wife. While a woman goes to live with her husband at about the age of 13, a man is lucky to get his first wife under the age of 35. It follows that in the great majority of cases the father of children dies
587 long before the mother. Therefore as a woman without a husband is unknown amongst the Tiwi, a woman passes through the possession of quite a number of different men during her lifetime and does not remain in an unmarried state for more than a day or two. A widow

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

normally gets a new husband as soon as her previous husband is dead, 587
frequently on the same day. Certainly she does not remain single for more than a week, save in exceptional circumstances as when the man to whom by common consent of the horde she is to pass, is absent. She will then remain with her brothers or with the other wives of her husband-elect until his return.

It can now be seen whence the people with tabued names derive their 553
new names. A child who is nameless because his father has died and there- 587
by rendered *pukimani* those names which he has given the child, gets a new name immediately from the new husband of his mother. It is important to notice that this new husband renames not only the children of the recently dead man by his new wife, but all her children no matter who may have been their father.[8]

These newly acquired names then become the ordinary names of the individuals concerned and are retained until the new husband in turn dies, when once more the names are changed by the next husband of the mother. Thus it is literally true that no one has a permanent name until the death of his mother.

The names themselves are rather interesting. With a few exceptions 551
they can be classified into groups by their endings. A full list of these groups is hardly important enough to warrant inclusion here, and a few examples will suffice. The commonest ending of all is *-miri* as in such names as *Timatalotimiri*, *Pripanyimiri*, *Tipilamberanjitimiri*. This is distinctly a masculine ending. There is a corresponding feminine suffix *-mo*, *Kidjibonkimo*, *Munjilatimo* being examples.

These suffixes *-miri* and *-mo* are the only two with a definite signification of sex; the others are indeterminate. For example, *Ilimatirimiini* is a man while *Punjilantamiini* is a woman. Similarly with *Pripanyimirli* who is a man and *U-lau-undimirli* who is a woman.

To understand the coining of the names it must be understood that 198
amongst the Tiwi there are two languages, one the ordinary language in 192
everyday use, the other a sacred language used only in ceremonies, songs and ritual formulae. The latter is composed entirely of words that

[8] Thus A marries B who has children M and N by the recently dead X, and older children P and Q by T who died years before. When X married B he renamed P and Q, and now on X's death A proceeds not only to rename M and N but also to rename P and Q once more.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

she were dead in fact and for the time being no longer his wife. She 551
is in touch with the spirits and the result will be a child for her husband. 844
Since he is too close to the mystery for comfort they abstain from mentioning it in his presence.

The result of the childbirth is a child and that child was recently a spirit. Therefore the name must come from the sacred language.

Initiation ceremonies also involve a very close contact with the spirit 553
world. Initiation is a sacred rite and sacred names must be taken when 881
passing through its various stages. When *Timalaŋkumi* is seized by men of his sister's husband's totem and yellow grease is smeared on his chest he ceases to be *Timalaŋkumi* and becomes *Maru-kumani*, a person in touch with unseen forces, and he therefore must have a sacred name. His previous name came from the sacred language, but this is a change of status and is expressed by giving him a new name, one that is only used on such occasions.

The fact that death renders sacred all the concepts closely associated 553
with the dead man does no doubt play a large part in causing the tabu 587
on names he has bestowed upon other people. There is I think another 768
factor which is even more important in the causation of this particular 593
tabu. When a man marries a widow he becomes to the tribe not the foster father of her children but the actual father. It cannot be pointed out too often that the Australian blackfellow does not distinguish physiological and social fatherhood. The new husband is married to the widow, he therefore must be the father of her children. Her children change their position in the tribe, and the function of the changing of their names is to show this change and the new social relationships that have been imposed upon them by it. It will be remembered in this connection that the husband changes the names of *all* the woman's children whether of her last husband or not, and also that words in either the sacred or the ordinary language which are similar in sound to the former names of the children do not become tabu. That is, it is a social not a sacred change of name.

It might be argued that the widow changes her status also, yet her 587
name is not changed. But in point of fact she does not alter her status; 768
her new husband is usually of the same clan as her last one, and frequently 553
he is an actual brother of the dead man. In any case her new husband cannot change her name as she is not one of the people he can bestow names upon. Nor does her name mean to the tribe any relation to her

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

553
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previous husband; he did not bestow it, therefore there is no necessity for her successor to change it.

In conclusion it seems almost superfluous to point out the necessity in such a society for a large number of personal names for the individual. When such a number of tabu on names exist a man with only one name would be constantly having to live for long periods nameless, but with multiple names it is almost a certainty at any particular time that some of them will be free from any of the prevailing tabu.

C. W. M. HART.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

emphasized, are presented from the point of view of a female Ego, for I strongly feel that it is only by using a female Ego that one can see the Tiwi marriage "game" as a "system." Following this, I present the kinship terminology together with some comments on the system of kin classification that are relevant to the marriage system. The last section discusses some aspects of the exchange of women between descent groups and local groups. 121 128

I am only too well aware that I do not have all the facts necessary to make a complete analysis of Tiwi social organization. It must also be stated that the relative-age analysis was a desk study based largely on what I believe to be logical deductions from the collected factual information pertaining to the age differences between spouses.[4] More field work is obviously necessary, and I hope that others who become interested in the problems of analysis and classification raised by this paper will comment and thereby suggest what they consider to be crucial areas for reinvestigation. 121

The Factor of Relative Age in Marriage Contracts

Hart and Pilling (1960) have described the dynamic nature of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a male Ego. My study supports their conclusion that for a Tiwi male the acquisition of wives and the acquisition of prestige are dependant variables. A Tiwi male will rarely acquire a wife through any form of contract before the age of 30. A bestowed wife, one who is promised before birth and becomes a cohabiting wife before puberty, is a valuable prestige symbol, but difficult to acquire. Thus a young man will frequently start his household with the acquisition of a less valuable but more easily obtainable type of wife, i.e., a widow, often of advanced age. Some Tiwi males never obtain sufficient prestige or political power to become involved in a bestowal contract, while others who are more fortunate may be involved in several such contracts. 554 554 582 [587]

My study of Tiwi marriage contracts from the point of view of a female Ego reveals some interesting differences in perspective. First and foremost is the fact that, while involvement in a bestowal contract is a cultural ideal, albeit rarely realized, for a male's first marriage, it is an inescapable norm for every Tiwi woman's first marriage. Thus, while this type of contract can be considered "preferential" but not normative from the point of a male Ego, it is acknowledged by Tiwi women as an inflexible "rule" governing their first marriage before puberty to a man whom they describe as "the one who grew me up, treated me like a father, and made me a woman."[5] 183 582

Thus a marriage contract for a man's first wife need not be—and frequently is not—the same as the initial contract leading to a girl's primary marriage. Furthermore, the form of the contract for a man's first wife is apt to vary considerably, whereas the form of the initial

5 [The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche. Cf. p.465, cat. 116 -- Analyst.]

582 probably not even born when she reaches the wifely age of ten. A
605 FaSiSo, on the other hand, is a cross-cousin belonging to the correct age group to be a party to the initial marriage contract. Relative age, therefore, determines that a Type A marriage contract, which is culturally universal for a woman's primary marriage and preferential from the point of view of male prestige, results almost inevitably in unilateral cross-cousin marriage between a MoBrDa and her FaSiSo.

582 The preferred form for widow remarriage among the Tiwi is to a
587 younger brother of the deceased husband. This type of remarriage contract stems directly from the Type A contract and may be considered a continuation thereof. It is therefore here classified as a Type A2 contract. As a woman grows older, when and if her Type A contract or its continuation runs out, alternative choices for secondary husbands are available to her, and acceptable to the Tiwi, among other cross-cousins.

582 A comparable method of analysis indicates that, as between the sons of a father's elder and younger sisters, a woman's primary marriage under a Type A contract is very much more likely to be with
[595] her FaElSiSo, and that under these circumstances she will probably enter her husband's household as a second and junior wife. Her elder co-wives play an important part in her education as a wife.
582 After she becomes a widow, however, she may become the first wife,
587 with the title of *taramaguta*, of a FaYoSiSo or of a MoElBrSo through a Type A2 or B contract. A MoYoBrSo, however, may be expected
593 to be considerably younger than Ego, and my analysis of all marriages in 1954 showed that only after the age of 30 do we find women married to husbands younger than they. Such a marriage can never be the result of a Type A contract but may occur under contracts of Types B, C, or D (see below).

Not only does the twenty-year average age difference between husband and wife under a Type A contract have the effect of practically limiting the choice among cross-cousins for a woman's first husband to a father's elder sister's son; it also means that a woman may expect to have at least two husbands during her lifetime. Indeed, she is likely to have a series of husbands whose ages relative to her own are successively younger until, as an elderly widow, she may well become the first wife of a man very much younger than herself.

Classification of Tiwi Marriage Contracts

584 The form and nature of Tiwi marriage contracts cannot be understood merely by looking at the results of the contract, i.e., who marries whom. One must also look at who has the authority to make the contract, who are parties to the contract, who implements the contract, and who can change a contract. Among the Tiwi the rights, duties, and obligations that pertain to all these aspects of a marriage contract are specified and reside in different individuals at different times in a woman's life. Here again the age factor must be considered, for while these rights, duties, and obligations lie in the

582 of the Tiwi. Any variation from the proper, preferred form of a marriage contract in one generation will not normally have any effect on the marriages of the succeeding generation (indeed, there may not be any succeeding generation if the woman is past child-bearing age). When and if the effect is felt in the marriage contracts of the second descending generation, approximately 80 years will have elapsed, i.e., time enough for necessary social adjustments to have been made and accepted. And since a woman's husbands have no control over their daughters' initial marriages, variation from the patterned norm of unilateral cross-cousin and descent-group exchange is not only allowed but is a frequent occurrence. While certain alternatives are preferable, such as a cross-cousin from a different descent group, marriage with relatives other than cross-cousins is permitted with certain limitations.

Type B Contracts

A Type B marriage is one which is arranged by a bride's father
584 or mother's husband. A bride's father has a right and a duty to arrange a daughter's marriage if, and only if, her Type A contract has become void, either because of the death of her promised husband and the lack of any legitimate (A2) heirs to her Type A contract, or because her mother has deemed the contract void because of non-fulfillment of obligations on the part of the promised husband. Although a marriage resulting from a Type B contract may in fact be
582 the first actual marriage of the bride, it is considered a secondary
587 marriage by the Tiwi, and therefore the selection of a groom by the bride's father need not necessarily be confined to the preferential category of FaSiSo. Because the bride's father also has obligations to his own descent group, he may well give his daughter to a member of his matrilineal sib. This may or may not be the same descent group as that from which the first groom was selected. The bride's
[583] father, if he is a man "on the way up," may also make "daughter exchange" an essential part of a Type B contract.

Type C Contracts

584 A Type C contract is one which is arranged by a woman's
587 brothers. When a woman's father dies, her brothers inherit the duty to look after her welfare, and, as this duty applies to their sister's
593 marriage, they may well find themselves in a position to arrange a secondary marriage for her. Since they usually belong to the same descent group as their sister, they need not necessarily consider descent-group obligations in the choice of a groom. Brothers, like fathers, may well make the direct exchange of women an essential part of a Type C contract.

Type D Contracts

A Type D contract is one which is ostensibly arranged by a woman's sons, after the death of her brothers. If a young man who

is desirous of starting his household has inherited the right of arranging his mother's remarriage, he may well enter into a contract involving an exchange of mothers with another youth in a similar position. While a son is accorded this right, I suspect that in many of the cases of mother exchange the real arrangers are the mothers. 584 587 593

Tiwi Kinship Terminology

For the sake of the record, I present herewith the kinship terms which I collected in 1954. It must be understood that my major informants on the classification of kin were women. Although most of the terms were also checked with male informants, through oversight this was not done in a few instances. Although a full discussion of the terminology would perhaps be valuable, limitations of time and space compel me to limit my comments to matters directly pertinent to my discussion of the marriage system. Unless otherwise indicated, all the terms listed are employed by male as well as female speakers. 601 [124]

Sibling Terminology

1 *iwuni:* elder brother. Affinal application: WiSiHu, MoBrDaHu (ws).
2 *iwini:* younger brother. Affinal application: WiSiHu, FaSiDaHu (ms).
3 *imbunga:* elder sister. Affinal application: HuBrWi, MoBrSoWi (ws).
4 *imboka:* younger sister. Affinal application: HuBrWi, FaSiSoWi (ms).
5 *inggalabini:* half brother (see discussion below).
6 *inggalabunga:* half sister (see discussion below).

The regular sibling terms (1 to 4) are differentiated on the basis of sex and relative age, and they are extended on Ego's generation to all parallel cousins, including remote ones. A special set of terms (5 and 6) is restricted to some siblings and parallel cousins. The criterion for their differentiation, as stated by the Tiwi, is that they refer to half siblings by the same father whose mothers belong to different matrisibs. The only parallel cousins to whom they apply, I believe, are first cousins; distant parallel cousins are definitely called by the regular sibling terms (1 to 4) regardless of their sib affiliations.

The terms for full siblings are also extended to certain collateral relatives on the second ascending and descending generations. Thus the distant parallel cousins of MoMo and FaFa are called by the terms for elder sibling, *iwuni* or *imbunga*, and the distant parallel cousins of SoCh (ms), DaCh (ws), SiDaCh (ms), and BrDaCh (ws) are called *iwini* or *imboka* (younger brother or sister).

Cross-cousin Terminology

7 *imbunei.* Affinal application only: Hu, HuBr, SiHu (ws), WiBr.
8 *imbuniuga.* Affinal application only: Wi, WiSi, BrWi (ms), HuSi.
9 *mamuniuga* (or *mamunini*): MoBrSo (ws), FaSiSo (ws). Affinal application: "Si" Hu (ws). My data are inconclusive as to whether male speakers use this and the following term in the same way.
10 *mamunga:* MoBrDa (ws), FaSiDa (ws). Affinal application: "Br" Wi (ws).

601 It became apparent to me, when I was collecting kinship ter-
582 minology, that actual genealogical connection was an important factor in Tiwi kin classification and also, of course, in determining expected behavior. It is perhaps for this reason that I have always viewed the system of preferential marriage as concerned with actual second cross-cousins rather than with classificatory cross-cousins however distantly removed. First cross-cousins are definitely considered a "little-bit-wrong-way." Unfortunately my actual genealogies are too few and too shallow to shed much statistical light on the problem. It has also occurred to me that with extreme polygyny and obligatory remarriage there should be more first and second cross-cousins available to Ego than with monogamy or limited polygyny.

601 With their strong preference for unilateral cross-cousin marriage it might be expected that the Tiwi would have a Sudanese type of cousin terminology in which cross-cousins would be terminologically differentiated on the basis of whom one could and could not marry. When I phrased this question to my women informants, however, I could find no such discrimination. Women do, nevertheless, make a terminological distinction between cross-cousins to whom they are technically married before birth and those whom they may marry in the future when and if their Type A contract lapses.

585 Here I must interject some additional ethnographic information.
881 At the conclusion of a girl's puberty ceremony, she returns to the camp of her husband (*imbunei*), where she is painted. Then her husband and his brothers, all of whom she also calls *imbunei*, line up with the youngest first and the actual husband last. One by one they hit her with a feather pompom (*tokwiinga*) until the husband's turn arrives. At this point the girl runs, and her husband pursues her, catches her, and makes her kneel by a tree, which is marked. I have chosen to regard this ritual as a marriage ceremony in which the Type A contract is finally validated with all its ramifications. The
[582] fact that the husband's brothers are terminologically classed even at this time with the actual husband and play a part in the marriage ceremony may be regarded as validating the continuance of the Type A contract through successive remarriages (of Type A2) to the younger brothers of the original holder of the contract.

587 If a woman survives all her *imbunei*, she becomes eligible to
601 marry any of her other cross-cousins, either matrilateral or patrilateral, through contracts of Types B, C, or D. It is these cross-cousins, who did not become auxiliary "husbands" under her Type A contract, to whom she applies the term *mawanini* or its variant, *mawanini*.

601 *Terminology in the First Ascending Generation*

11 *ingani:* father; also FaBr, FaFaSo, FaFaBrSo, MoMoFa, MoMoFaBr. Affinal application: MoHu, MoMoMoHu, HuMoBr.

12 *ingani:* mother; also MoSi, MoMoDa, MoMoSiDa, FaFaSiDa. Affinal application: FaWi, MoMoFaWi, HuFaSi.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

discussed the factor of relative age as a major determinant of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in the particular type of contract which is universal for first marriages among females and is also the preferred contract for males. I have also described several variant patterns of Tiwi marriage contracts and have shown that these cannot be considered as alternatives to the preferred type but rather as additional patterns which apply only to a woman's secondary marriages. These additional types of contracts are also, to some extent, conditioned by the relative ages of the participants, but the resultant form of marriage may vary from a continuance of patrilateral cross-cousin marriage to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and even to marriage with certain relatives who are not cross-cousins. The wide variation in contracts leading to secondary marriages for women does not affect the continuance of preferred unilateral cross-cousin marriage or the exchange of wives between particular descent and local groups until the second generation after the variant marriage. Consequently, any change in the social organization of the Tiwi brought about by variations in marriage contracts is a gradual change, but it is also an inevitable and accepted form of change. The Tiwi rightly consider that as individuals they have considerable freedom in the selection of mates from almost any descent and local group and even from among a number of categories of kinsmen. Their Ego-oriented marriage system provides both stability and flexibility, and this is reflected in their system of kin classification.

NOTES

1. The field work on which this paper is based was undertaken in 1954 at the Snake Bay Native Settlement on Melville Island and was jointly financed by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.
2. In 1959, I used the relative age of spouses in a preliminary analysis of Tiwi unilateral cross-cousin marriage (Goodale 1959). It was with considerable pleasure that I found that a similar analysis by Rose (1960) had quite independently arrived at the same conclusions. Even more interesting was the fact that in cases where I had to calculate expected ages for many of my kin relations, Rose, with more complete age data, could give the average and range in ages for the same relatives, and that in most cases his "average" and my "estimated" ages were the same or within one or two years of one another.
3. For their valuable comments, criticisms, and advice I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Robbins Burling, Ward H. Goodenough, Edward B. Harper, Barbara S. Lane, and George P. Murdock.
4. Unfortunately, since the only age data collected in the field were for husbands and wives, I have had to use expected ages rather than average or mean ages throughout most of this paper (see note 2 above).
5. The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

601 by the same term (*Kaga,* usually translated as mother's brother); and all the mothers of such girls by the same term (*Toa,* usually translated father's sister or mother's brother's wife). When he married one of these girls he still called her *Nuba,* he still called his wife's father *Kaga,* and still called his wife's mother *Toa.* But not in Tiwi. For them, all potential wives were, in theory, mothers' brothers' daughters and all potential wives' fathers were mothers' brothers. But when a man married any such girl, he immediately called her by a new and different kinship term which can only be translated as "wife," and corresponding new and separate terms were used for the actual wife's father, actual wife's mother, and even for the actual wife's father's sister. Thus marriage introduced for a Tiwi a new set of relatives with new kinship terms different from those he used toward his general run of cross-cousins, mother's brothers, father's sisters, and so on, and these "relatives by actual marriage" terms, being based on actual marriages rather than kinship categories, were capable of handling in a fairly orderly manner all the complexities introduced into Tiwi domestic life by such customs as old men exchanging infant daughters or young men marrying each other's mothers. We may sum it up briefly by saying that Tiwi marriages operated within a general framework of cross-cousin marriage kinship categories identical with the 152 categories of the Kariera, but that females had become such important assets 582 in power and prestige relationships among the senior men—marriage had be- 601 come, so to speak, such a political affair—that a new set of kinship terms based on actual marriages had to be superimposed on the terms geared to cross-cousin marriage; in cases of conflict or anomaly or confusion in the cross-cousin terms, the terms based on actual marriages were controlling or took precedence. Which is only another way of saying that in theory all Tiwi marriages were rather idealistically approximated to marriages between cross-cousins, but in practice they departed quite far from such an ideal; so far, in fact, that extra kinship terms had been introduced to take care of the relationships created by such departures.

"Disputed" Wives

● 588 There is still one more category of wives to be mentioned, a category for which the Tiwi had no name in their own language but which in pidgin English they referred to as "stolen" wives. A few women so labeled were likely to turn up in the "list" of the wives of most big men, but analysis of the circumstances in each case makes it clear that "stolen" was an unsuitable label and that wives so designated were most often in a status that should be called either "disputed" or "shared." In legal terms they were wives in which there was or had been a divided interest. To explain fully the nature of these cases would carry us over into both the Tiwi legal and sexual systems, and here we are trying to confine our analysis to those aspects of marriage that have consequences for household organization. Since these disputed or shared wives had

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

to at least reside in some household and had at least a nominal current husband at any given moment of time, all we need to note about them at this point is that in any listing of a man's wives we have to include "disputed" wives in addition to all the other categories of wives mentioned previously. 588

The Household: An Overview

In the discussion so far we have selected only those aspects of the Tiwi family complex that had close bearing on the nature of the household. These aspects can be briefly summarized as follows: 582 592

1. the high number of wives per husband that a successful man was likely to acquire if he lived long enough.

2. the two distinct mechanisms by which wives were acquired—infant bestowal and widow remarriage.

3. the operation of the bestowal system in such a way as to prevent even the most promising young man from achieving coresidence with a bestowed wife until he was at least nearly forty years old.

4. the tendency for success to lead to more success, whereby *some* astute men received into their households a number of young wives in rapid succession after the age of forty. [554 595]

5. the tendency of younger men and of nonbetrothed younger men in particular to marry elderly widows while waiting for betrothed wives to grow up or, in the case of those with no bestowals in sight, to enable them to start a household of their own.

6. as a result of the integrated operation of all these customs, the strong tendency in Tiwi households for husbands to be very much older than their wives (as a result of infant bestowal) or very much younger than their wives (as a result of widow remarriage) or—what was commonest of all in the bigger households—some combination of both. Hence many a Tiwi husband had some wives much older than himself, including some already dead (but still counted), and some very much younger than himself, including some who were still babies in their mothers' wombs (with their sex still undetermined). All these dead wives, current wives, nominal wives, "disputed" wives, not-yet-joined-the-household wives, and not-yet-born wives were still counted in a husband's list, and the length of his list was a measure of his influence, power, and importance as a household head. [554 595]

It is now perhaps clear why we chose to begin our account of Tiwi culture with some discussion of Tiwi marriage. Compulsory marriage for all females, carried out through the twin mechanisms of infant bestowal and widow remarriage, resulted in a very unusual type of household, in which old successful men had twenty wives each, while men under thirty had no wives at all and men under forty were married mostly to elderly crones. This unusual household structure was the focal point of Tiwi culture. It linked together in an explicable unity the kinship system, the food-gathering system, the political 592 182 592

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

About the Authors

C. W. M. HART was born in Australia and became an American citizen in 1953. He studied at the Universities of Sydney, Chicago, and London; and has taught anthropology at the London School of Economics, University of Toronto, and the University of Wisconsin where he is now professor of anthropology. He was associate editor of the *American Anthropologist* from 1949 to 1952 and was recently elected president of the Society for Applied Anthropology. 114

Arnold R. Pilling, a Californian, studied at the University of California at Berkeley. He was a Fulbright Fellow to Australia in 1953 and 1954 and spent most of that time studying the culture of the Tiwi. He is now a member of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Wayne State University in Detroit.

About the Book

This is a case study of a system of influence and power which is based on a strange currency. The currency is woman. Newborn females, nubile marriageable females, toothless old hags — all are valuable in Tiwi terms. Because men compete for prestige and influence through their control over women, women have the value of a scarce commodity. Under this system there are no illegitimate children, no unmarried females of any age, and wives are either very much older or very much younger than their husbands. 562 [557] [848 589]

A vivid picture of Tiwi life, as viewed from within the culture, emerges in this book. The reader is not made an outsider, left to peer into a dimly understood, formalized, alien way of life. Rather, he is taken inside the family group, by the night's campfire. He becomes a witness to angry quarrels, a participant in involved machinations aimed at success — as defined by the Tiwi. He comes to know individual Tiwi as real people. 114

This book is a study of social interaction. But it is also a study of culture change. Much happened between Hart's and Pilling's visits to the Tiwi. These changes are described, and we see them in the context of the period of Tiwi contacts with the outside world. 121

GEORGE AND LOUISE SPINDLER
General Editors

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tribe, owned also the country on the opposite side of Apsley Strait at the 423
southeast corner of Bathurst, while the Malauila, the band in the northern
half of Bathurst Island, conversely overlapped their ownership across the 621
strait to take in a thin strip of coastline on the northwest corner of Melville.

These details illustrate the fact that the band was the land-owning, workaday, territorially organized group which controlled the hunting, the food supply, and the warfare. Until the white man arrived in force in the 619
coastal waters of North Australia, the average Tiwi regarded the nine bands as the main functional units of his existence, and his loyalty to and identification 621
with his band were given much greater opportunity for exercise than any loyalty to or identification with the whole Tiwi tribe. He did many things as a member of a band, but he did little as a member of a tribe. Only when an outsider turned up did he need to think of himself as a Tiwi, and outsiders were very rare. For the rest of the time he thought of himself as a member of his band, thought of his band as his people, and of his band territory as his country.

The Household

Since the band consisted of anything from one hundred to three hundred people, it could not live together in one place, except for very short periods of time. Hunting and gathering in almost any part of the world (ex- [361]
cept the northwest coast of America in pre-white times) require the human population to disperse itself very thinly over the countryside and live from day to day in small hunting and camping units. Such small primary groups 592
are usually in one sense families and in another sense households, and this is the case among the Tiwi. We propose to call such units households rather than families for reasons that will soon become apparent. It is true that Tiwi "houses," especially in the long dry season (from March to October), were the flimsiest and most temporary of structures, but the group of people in question was the group who lived together day after day, hunted as a unit, [342]
pooled the results of their food getting, and ate and slept together. Functionally this group is identical with an American household, even though the "house" they used was nothing more than a few piled-up tree branches, used as shelter for a night or two and then abandoned. Like the American household also, the Tiwi household usually consisted of a man, his wife (or wives), and their children, though in many would also be included a few leftovers or [574]
extras, common to all cultures, such as bachelor uncles, visiting cousins, ancient widowers, and ambiguous "men who came to dinner" and were still there. (Tiwi households did not, however, include maiden aunts, female orphans, or [589]
ancient widows, since these could not exist in Tiwi culture.)

Thus the Tiwi household was more or less the same thing as the Tiwi family group, but Tiwi family organization had such a number of unusual twists that we find it desirable to insist upon calling such a group the house-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 hold rather than the family. There was no ambiguity about its "living together" aspect; there were many ambiguities about its kinship aspects. To some of these unusual domestic usages we now turn.

Marriage by Betrothal

589 In many nonliterate societies, including most, if not all of the mainland Australian tribes, there is a tendency to believe that the main purpose in life for a female is to get married. The Tiwi subscribed to this idea, but firmly carried it to its logical conclusion; namely, that all females must get married, regardless of age, condition, or inclination. They (and they almost alone among human societies) took the very slight step from saying "All females *should* be married" to saying "All females *must* be married." As a result, in aboriginal times there was no concept of an unmarried female in Tiwi ideology, no word for such a condition in their language, and in fact, no female in the population without at least a nominal husband. Their own explanation of this unique situation was connected with their beliefs about conception and where 581 babies come from. Anthropologists have long been aware that the Australian 842 aborigines generally (and indeed some of the Melanesians, such as the famous case of the Trobriand Islands) ignored the role of the male in human conception and firmly believed that a woman becomes pregnant because a spirit has entered into her body. The Tiwi were no exception, but went a step further than the mainlanders in dealing with the dangerous situation created by the unpredictability of the spirits. Since any female was liable to be impregnated by a spirit at any time, the sensible step was to insist that every female have a husband *all the time* so that if she did become pregnant, the child would always have a father. As a result of this logical thinking, all [584] Tiwi babies were betrothed before or as soon as they were born; females were thus the "wives" of their betrothed husbands from the moment of birth onward. For similar reasons, widows were required to remarry at the gravesides [587] of their late husbands, and this rule applied even to ancient hags who had already buried half a dozen previous husbands in the course of a long life. It can readily be seen that these rules—prenatal betrothal of female infants and immediate remarriage of all widows—effectively eliminated all possibility of an unmarried female from Tiwi society. They also eliminated any possibility of an unmarried mother or a fatherless child. No matter where the unpredictable spirit chose to create a baby, whether it was in the body of a pretty young woman, a toothless old hag, or a little girl of six or seven, the pregnant [771 female would have a husband, and the children when born would have a 848] father. The Tiwi were thus probably the only society in the world with an illegitimacy rate of zero.

584 The practical application of these two unusual rules had certain unusual 851 consequences. The rule of prenatal betrothal obviously gave a great deal of 593 power to the person with the right to betroth, and in Tiwi this right belonged

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

162 [621] The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

561 [858 882] [591] Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

561 589 884 [582] [177] The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

561 884 557 [582] The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

159 554 [588] In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

177 them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now
592 only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that
159 his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few un-
177 comfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped
592 with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose
[736 deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother
968] had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased
[584 younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Car-
589] mel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally
[607] her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1]
[602] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

177 We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led
162 by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a listing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration
571 in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent.
[768 Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had
604 daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the
584 "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-
177

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

621 Tiklauila" or "My wife is a Munupula woman"; a mourner would say, "He
619 died when visiting the Munupula and therefore we will have to go to Munupi for the funeral"; an old man would reminisce about being brought up as a youth by his mother's brother, who was a Turupula, and the good times he had in Turupi; and another would recount details of big battles between the Munupula and the Malauila. All of these were band names or band territories. The nine bands thus acted, psychologically, as small tribelets or semisovereign groups, since it was with one of them that every Tiwi most closely identified in his day-to-day life on the islands. It is only when, as nowadays, he leaves the islands to go to work for the white man in Darwin that he has to think of himself as a Tiwi, since there he mingles with men of other tribes. Even then,
[177] work and residence in the white man's town does not entirely obliterate band identification. A Tiklauila in Darwin prefers to work with and to consort in the evenings with other Tiklauila, and Malauila with Malauila.[8]

Because of certain peculiar features of Tiwi domestic life, to be dis-
621 cussed below, it is difficult to sum up the Tiwi band in any simple formula.
591 People, especially women, changed their band residence frequently in the course of their lives, and being born into a band did not at all require permanent residence with that band, either for males or for females. Thus the district (for example, Tiklaru or Malau) was a firm, fixed, known quantity, but the people who "owned" the district (for example, Tiklauila or Malauila) were a flexible and constantly shifting collection of individuals.

The territorial boundaries between bands were clear and well known
423 to everybody, though they were not the sharp lines on a map such as we
621 regard as essential for a frontier or a land boundary. All pieces of country—clumps of jungle, stretches of grassland, sections of thick woods—had names. One such piece of country, say a thickly wooded area, belonged to one band, while the more open country that began where the woods thinned out belonged to another; thus the boundary was not a sharp line but a transitional zone—
[137] perhaps of several miles—where the change from trees to open savannah became noticeable, with the band territories thus fusing into one another rather
[823] than being separated by sharp lines. The Tiwi, so to speak, thought of the landscape as a sort of spectrum where a man moved gradually out of one district into another as he passed from one type of horizon to the next. Since
[133] rivers, and even Apsley Strait, a very narrow arm of the sea separating Melville from Bathurst Island, usually have similar types of vegetation on *both* sides or banks, none of the island rivers nor Apsley Strait was a boundary or frontier between bands. The Mandiimbula, predominantly a Melville Island

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[8] In the early 1930's the situation at the Government Hospital in Darwin offered
177 a good illustration of this. The hospital authorities said they gave preference for house-
797 boy jobs to "Melville Islanders because of their greater intelligence and reliability." In
181 point of fact, some of the younger Tiklauila had established a monopoly on hospital jobs and no Tiwi other than a Tiklauila was ever hired there. The whites thought they were hiring Tiwi but the Tiklauila saw to it that they hired only Tiklauila and felt no vestige of obligation to other Tiwi to help them get these desirable jobs. The alleged greater intelligence of the islanders was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Tiklauila, having had a Catholic mission in their territory since 1911, were more used to white requirements.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

2

Life in the Bush

Organization: Band and Household

THE PRECEDING CHAPTER should convey something of what a Tiwi band really was. The casual way in which people left one band and joined another shows that the band was in no sense a tight political or legal group. Old men preferred, on the whole, to bestow their daughters on men in other bands, but far from this indicating any tendency towards patrilocality, there was at the same time a strong tendency on the part of such selected sons-in-law, especially if they were young and mobile, to move into the band of the father-in-law, partly, at least, to ensure that the donor did not change his mind. Even the faint prospect of a wife was sufficient to cause young men to change bands, and change of band residence by senior men was not at all rare. 621 591

The emphasis on widow remarriage was another factor that influenced band residence and made the whole matter of band affiliation extremely fluid and arbitrary. For widow remarriage not only caused elderly women to move perhaps several times in their lifetimes, but also caused their younger sons to move with them. Such unmarried sons preferred home cooking and followed their elderly mothers outside the band if remarriage required the widows to move. Almost invariably the question "Why is So and So (a youth of 15-25) living in Turupi if he is really a Malauila?" evoked the response (obvious to a Tiwi) "Because his mother is there." Conversely, mothers often followed their sons, especially when the son began to acquire young wives who needed senior female supervision. Such mothers divided their time between the household of the son (or even several sons) and the household of the nominal husband, and if such part-time residence in two (or more) households involved part-time residence in two (or more) bands, the arrangement did not provoke any comment, nor was it thought to be in any way odd. [587] [182]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 Some years later, when Boya had reached a reasonable age like 30,
593 Ki-in-kumi had arranged for him to marry a very ancient and childless widow (*palimaringa*) more than twenty years older than himself. This was all that
[587] Ki-in-kumi considered he needed to do for his step-son, and in Tiwi terms it was almost a gesture of contempt and an open indication that Ki-in-kumi, by providing him with an old woman who was childless but could cook, was not interested in helping Boya toward a career. Since the joining up of Boya to
[768] the crone took place shortly after the death of Boya's mother, who had lived with her sons in Ki-in-kumi's household, Ki-in-kumi by producing the old widow for Boya was telling him in effect to get out and start his own household now that his mother was dead.

159 In 1928 we found Boya aged about 42 married to the crone of 65.
584 But he, she, and Boya's younger brother of 24 were still living in Ki-in-kumi's
593 household. Ki-in-kumi's detestation of him was notorious and yet Boya had by now no less than four young bestowed child-wives growing up elsewhere. No
[592] one of these bestowals had come from Malau but were bestowals from different fathers of baby girls in other bands. At first sight this presented a curious situation. Within his own band Boya appeared a complete failure, suffering
[554] so severely from Ki-in-kumi's hostility that he had received no bestowals and at age 42 did not even have a separate household of his own. But how could this judgment be squared with the four bestowals from elders of other bands? Clearly none of the causes of success so far analyzed fitted the case of Boya.

159 Further research into who lived with whom as distinct from who was
married to whom revealed that not only was "the household" of Boya, his
591 elderly wife, and his younger brother an integral part of the Ki-in-kumi
592 "establishment," but also that Padimo with his "household" was part of that establishment. Padimo, like Boya, had one elderly wife but he also had five bestowed wives, all daughters of Ki-in-kumi. We said above that the two eldest of these five girls being now aged 20 and 17 respectively were in residence with their husband, while the three youngest, not having reached puberty, were still "with their father." Actual observation showed that this was an academic distinction, since the households of Padimo, the son-in-law, and Ki-in-kumi, the father-in-law, were parts of the same establishment. When one of Ki-in-kumi's daughters bestowed on Padimo became old enough to "leave her father and join her husband," she did not have to move her residence or even change her daily work routines. She merely sat at night around the campfire of her older sisters (Padimo's wives) instead of around the campfire of her younger sisters (Ki-in-kumi's daughters). She remained part of the same establishment.

Padimo, it will be remembered, was the young man whom Ki-in-kumi had attracted from Rangu to Malau by liberally bestowing him with child-wives. Padimo had thus moved into the northern band and by 1928 had moved right into Ki-in-kumi's camp, where he functioned as a sort of executive officer and heir apparent to the old man. In the same camp, though in a very different capacity, was Boya, the 42-year-old despised step-son. Many roads thus
512 led to Ki-in-kumi's household, but before discussing the large establishment

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

sister's son being initiated, the attitude of a Tiwi toward the whole *pukimani* state was essentially a passive attitude. *Pukimani* behavior was something one accepted and conformed to when required; it was in no way an active attempt to change nature, people, food, gods, spirits, or anything else in the universe. It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that since their *pukimani* system offered them no handle by which to seek actively to alter the universe in which they lived, the Tiwi found that universe to their liking as it was. Unlike the tribes of central Australia who lavished a lot of thought upon magical methods of improving the food supply or the rainfall, the Tiwi believed and acted on the belief that as long as they observed their *pukimani* taboos, the food would continue to be as abundant and the rains as regular as they had always been. The central Australians, by seeking to coerce nature through magic, suggest that they found nature unsatisfactory; the Tiwi, by relying upon passive taboo-observance alone, suggest rather that their relationship to nature was an acceptable equilibrium that they wanted to preserve, not change. And if everybody observed his *pukimani* taboos when required, that equilibrium would remain undisturbed. Hence the antisocial man in Tiwi was not the maker of individual magic (he was unknown, anyway) but the nonobserver of taboo. By his nonobservance he threatened to upset the normally satisfactory equilibrium between man and nature. For a senior Tiwi male to be charged publicly with breaking *pukimani* rules was a disgrace and a blow to his prestige and his position in public opinion. His behavior was possibly a sin against the spirits but it was certainly a shame in the eyes of his fellows. *Pukimani* observance was thus a matter of respectability to a much greater degree than it was a matter of pleasing the spirits.

DEATH As was mentioned above, death is the natural phenomenon around which the Tiwi had woven their most elaborate web of ritual. The most frequent and most important Tiwi ceremonies were the mourning ceremonies, and they came in three sizes—small, medium, and large—depending on the age, sex, and importance of the dead person. The mourning ceremonies which drew the crowds were not held until some time after the death and burial. All bodies of dead persons were buried within twenty-four hours of their death by digging a hole near the camp where the death had occurred and placing the body, wrapped in bark, in it. Near most well-used camping spots there was already a graveyard marked by old graveposts, and the latest corpse was buried there or near there. Seldom was the body carried any distance for burial. If a person died even less than a mile from an old burial ground, there was little inclination to carry the body that far. He would be buried, instead, within perhaps a hundred yards of where he died. This had certain awkward repercussions for social organization, since occasionally a person died while away from his home district and, being buried where he died, his ceremonies were held and his posts erected in a district in which his immediate family did not live. Young men often used this to validate a change of residence, giving as their reason for living in a band territory in which they had not grown up, the location there of their father's graveposts.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

from their future sons-in-law and demands which look very much like bride price and bride service developed as a basis for marriage arrangement. A young girl had a relatively "free choice" of her future spouse. But following this selection, her father let it be known to the young man what he expected. The desired payment was often stated in Australian money by the 1950's; some men were asking as much as a hundred pounds for a daughter. (This was a very high sum, since Tiwi males working for the Army received four pounds a week as normal wages.) Other men were asking that their sons-in-law live with them, thus leaving their own parental home, and contribute regularly to the upkeep of the household of the father-in-law. This was, indeed, quite a practical arrangement, for when such a young man went to work in Darwin his wife had to be supervised at home and, further, his employer was supposed to send home to the Mission part of the young man's wages.

Thus, by 1954, the following type of marriage agreement was initiated by the great majority of Tiwi with marriageable daughters, specifically those who centered their activities at Bathurst Island Mission and Garden Point. A young girl chose her future husband from her single, male agemates, sometimes with a suggestion from her father. Her father informed his future son-in-law of the obligations incumbent upon him, which normally included matrilocal postmarital residence and a bride price. An older woman with children, or even one without any offspring, who became a widow, was discouraged from remarrying by her father, if he survived, and by her brother after her father's death. The father or eldest brother of a widow with a daughter reaped the benefits of allowing that daughter to marry the young man whom she desired. The widow herself did not remarry but stayed in the household of her father or brother.

Residence Patterns

By 1953, traditional Tiwi residence patterns had undergone major modifications, some of which have already been mentioned. The old residence areas of the bands had been depopulated; in fact, nearly all the Tiwi were located around one of four European establishments—those at Darwin, Bathurst Island Mission, Garden Point, or Snake Bay. In each of these areas a centralized village pattern had developed. Within the Tiwi communities at Snake Bay, Garden Point, and Bathurst Island Mission there remained a few of the old large households with a polygamous base. But in all these camps the household heads were well past sixty and in most cases past seventy. Polygamous households were dying out by 1953.

But what was replacing them? One might assume that the European pattern of the single family household based upon neolocal residence would have emerged as the new Tiwi system. This was not the case, however. Just as Hart found in 1928-29 that successful Tiwi men were the heads of large establishments, so in 1953-54 the younger male leaders had gathered around

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

period is the prelude to the complete lapsing of the title to the district. 423
The prominent part played in this institution by the father's father and the 628
fact that most of the present districts held on such a title are held from the 613
father's father whereas comparatively few are held through an ancestor 685
(necessarily more remote) who has been forgotten, seems to indicate that *yirt' amini* holdings do not last more than three generations before they lapse for want of sufficient able-bodied men to enforce them.

It must not be imagined that the whole of Melville and Bathurst 423
Islands are divided into such holdings nor indeed that everyone in the tribe 613
belongs to such a group. The main obstacle to this lies in the self- 621
evident fact that if one's father's father dies in the territory of another horde, as must have quite frequently have happened in the days of marauding expeditions between hordes, there can be no such thing as a *yirt' amini* holding of the district wherein he died. Moreover there are numbers of the Tiwi whose fathers and grandfathers died young, and the essence of the system is that the grandfather should have been old enough to have sufficient male children and grandchildren to enforce the claim.

It can easily be seen from the above how it comes about that each horde has a number of names, since each one of the *yirt' amini* group-names 621
is liable to be applied to the whole horde merely by adding *-ila* or *-ula* to 101
the name of the district they control.

Spencer's list of horde names is at variance with mine, because he 101
did not realize this. Out of six men of the *Tiklauwila*, one might easily 114
get six different answers to his question as to their "country," each 103
giving the name of his *yirt' amini* group. It is quite possible that the 621
horde names that are used here—*Tiklauwila*, *Munupula*, etc.—are really *yirt' amini* names that have become extended to include a whole horde either by the identification of a very powerful *yirt' amini* group with a horde in the eyes of the rest of the tribe or by the former horde name becoming tabu and a *yirt' amini* name being substituted. This view is strengthened by the fact that in one or two of the hordes, the horde name is still in use as the name of a district. Thus whereas the whole of the territory of the *Wilraŋgwila* on the north of Melville is technically *Wilraŋgu*, the native name for Karslake Island, a small portion of that territory, is *Wilraŋgu*. Similarly *Malau* is a creek in the territory of the *Malauila* horde.

A man is born into the horde of his father. Should his father die and 591
his mother be taken by a member of another horde he goes with her, and [611]
WHILE THE WOMAN WILL ALWAYS BE LOOKED UPON 621
AS BELONGING TO HER FORMER HORDE, THE CHILD [768]
CHANGES HIS, TAKING THAT OF HIS STEPFATHER.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

591 621 [882] while the woman will always be looked upon as belonging to her former horde, the child changes his, taking that of his step-father. Very often when a boy is aged about 14 or 15 he is taken by his mother's brother of another horde to live with that horde for some years. Often he is initiated there and not quite so often he will spend the rest of his life there. It is no uncommon occurrence for a man to have spent his adolescent years in two or three different hordes in addition to the one into which he was born, always under the supervision of one or other of his classificatory mother's brothers. Two cases at least occurred in the last few years of young unmarried men who had been reared and initiated in one horde leaving that horde of their own free will and going to live permanently in another because they considered they had there more chance of obtaining a wife.[8]

On the other hand, a woman will usually be looked upon as belonging to the same horde all her life, even though she marries young and goes to live with another horde. To the tribe at large such a woman is for example a *Tiklawila*, though she has lived with the *Yeimpi* ever since her marriage, and her *Tiklawila* origin will never be forgotten.

As a result of these conflicting customs it is difficult to lay down any definite rule in regard to membership of the horde. The best generalization is perhaps to say that a woman retains all her life a connection with the horde into which she is born no matter where patrilocal marriage may lead her, while a man on the other hand belongs to whatever horde he is living with at the moment, this being normally but not at all invariably his father's horde.

TOTEMISM

614 The Tiwi have a system of matrilineal totemic clans. Each clan has a special relation to one or sometimes to two and in two instances to three species of natural objects. The members of the clan have a solidarity of their own, helping each other in tribal fights, speaking of each other as "brother" despite the variation in their actual blood relationship, and not marrying women of their own totem. There are, 101 614 however, few of the distinctive features of Australian totemism as known 771 from other parts of the continent. They eat their totem without any

[8] It was hardly a logical proceeding as one left the *Tiklawila* for the *Mumupula* and the other (quite independently) left the *Mumupula* for the *Tiklawila*.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

pected to help him. If a man has married a woman in his father's matrisib, then his father and his children will be in the same sib. Since only a dead father can so help his son, we have here an expression of the unity and mutual support of a sib and its members in the previous life and the afterlife as well as in the present life. It is important, I believe, to add here that the Tiwi do not believe in reincarnation. 614 775

It is interesting to speculate, on the basis of the above, what happens if a man marries women of different sibs. If his mother has also married men of different sibs, Ego will have "fathers" in different sibs to help him find children for his various wives. 582 614

Thus, as far as sib exchange is concerned, the Tiwi marriage system is a symmetrical one. When we consider the entire social system of the Tiwi, we see a tendency toward atomism. There are 22 matrisibs, grouped today into five exogamous phratries. Sib membership in phratries is subject to change (Pilling 1957), and the phratries themselves have segmented twice since Hart's visit in 1929. We consequently cannot consider the phratries as stable units in the social organization, and indeed the Tiwi themselves do not. If all marriages were correctly arranged as exchanges between two sibs, we would have eleven independent and symmetrical marriage systems. When this possibility is considered in relation to the data on Tiwi local organization, the potentialities for further symmetry and atomism are quite evident. [615]

Exchange Between Local Groups 621

There are ten major land divisions on Melville and Bathurst Islands, called by the Tiwi *tungarima* or "countries." Rights to the land of the *tungarima* are determined, for both males and females, by the location of the grave of one's father, and there is a marked preference for patrilocal residence. The *tungarima* are, in themselves, agamous. They are, however, subdivided into smaller districts, each inhabited either by a single large patrilocal extended family or by a group of closely related smaller households. Since incest regulations dictate that extended families are exogamous, we may consider that in many cases, if not all, the local group will also be exogamous. 631 [591] [582]

Unilateral Type A marriage contracts will therefore involve a minimum of three such households or local groups. But the marriage system might still be symmetrical within the *tungarima* or country organization, and the total effect might be to localize the matrisibs in pairs. Each country could then be considered as comprising an independent marriage system. The *tungarima* do reveal marked political, economic, and ceremonial independence, but at least today the matrisibs are not localized. The mythology on the origin of the sibs (Mountford 1938), however, strongly indicates that they were at one time conceived as being localized, and this would account for the stated existence of local spirit-child centers with sib affiliations 582 614

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tribe, owned also the country on the opposite side of Apsley Strait at the southeast corner of Bathurst, while the Malauila, the band in the northern half of Bathurst Island, conversely overlapped their ownership across the strait to take in a thin strip of coastline on the northwest corner of Melville. 423 621

These details illustrate the fact that the band was the land-owning, workaday, territorially organized group which controlled the hunting, the food supply, and the warfare. Until the white man arrived in force in the coastal waters of North Australia, the average Tiwi regarded the nine bands as the main functional units of his existence, and his loyalty to and identification with his band were given much greater opportunity for exercise than any loyalty to or identification with the whole Tiwi tribe. He did many things as a member of a band, but he did little as a member of a tribe. Only when an outsider turned up did he need to think of himself as a Tiwi, and outsiders were very rare. For the rest of the time he thought of himself as a member of his band, thought of his band as his people, and of his band territory as his country. 619 621

The Household

Since the band consisted of anything from one hundred to three hundred people, it could not live together in one place, except for very short periods of time. Hunting and gathering in almost any part of the world (except the northwest coast of America in pre-white times) require the human population to disperse itself very thinly over the countryside and live from day to day in small hunting and camping units. Such small primary groups are usually in one sense families and in another sense households, and this is the case among the Tiwi. We propose to call such units households rather than families for reasons that will soon become apparent. It is true that Tiwi "houses," especially in the long dry season (from March to October), were the flimsiest and most temporary of structures, but the group of people in question was the group who lived together day after day, hunted as a unit, pooled the results of their food getting, and ate and slept together. Functionally this group is identical with an American household, even though the "house" they used was nothing more than a few piled-up tree branches, used as shelter for a night or two and then abandoned. Like the American household also, the Tiwi household usually consisted of a man, his wife (or wives), and their children, though in many would also be included a few leftovers or extras, common to all cultures, such as bachelor uncles, visiting cousins, ancient widowers, and ambiguous "men who came to dinner" and were still there. (Tiwi households did not, however, include maiden aunts, female orphans, or ancient widows, since these could not exist in Tiwi culture.) [361] 592 [342] [574] [589]

Thus the Tiwi household was more or less the same thing as the Tiwi family group, but Tiwi family organization had such a number of unusual twists that we find it desirable to insist upon calling such a group the house-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

● 592 hold rather than the family. There was no ambiguity about its "living together" aspect; there were many ambiguities about its kinship aspects. To some of these unusual domestic usages we now turn.

Marriage by Betrothal

589 In many nonliterate societies, including most, if not all of the mainland Australian tribes, there is a tendency to believe that the main purpose in life for a female is to get married. The Tiwi subscribed to this idea, but firmly carried it to its logical conclusion; namely, that all females must get married, regardless of age, condition, or inclination. They (and they almost alone among human societies) took the very slight step from saying "All females *should* be married" to saying "All females *must* be married." As a result, in aboriginal times there was no concept of an unmarried female in Tiwi ideology, no word for such a condition in their language, and in fact, no female in the population without at least a nominal husband. Their own explanation of this unique situation was connected with their beliefs about conception and where
581 babies come from. Anthropologists have long been aware that the Australian
842 aborigines generally (and indeed some of the Melanesians, such as the famous case of the Trobriand Islands) ignored the role of the male in human conception and firmly believed that a woman becomes pregnant because a spirit has entered into her body. The Tiwi were no exception, but went a step further than the mainlanders in dealing with the dangerous situation created by the unpredictability of the spirits. Since any female was liable to be impregnated by a spirit at any time, the sensible step was to insist that every female have a husband *all the time* so that if she did become pregnant, the child would always have a father. As a result of this logical thinking, all
[584] Tiwi babies were betrothed before or as soon as they were born; females were thus the "wives" of their betrothed husbands from the moment of birth onward. For similar reasons, widows were required to remarry at the gravesides
[587] of their late husbands, and this rule applied even to ancient hags who had already buried half a dozen previous husbands in the course of a long life. It can readily be seen that these rules—prenatal betrothal of female infants and immediate remarriage of all widows—effectively eliminated all possibility of an unmarried female from Tiwi society. They also eliminated any possibility of an unmarried mother or a fatherless child. No matter where the unpredictable spirit chose to create a baby, whether it was in the body of a pretty young woman, a toothless old hag, or a little girl of six or seven, the pregnant
[71 female would have a husband, and the children when born would have a
848] father. The Tiwi were thus probably the only society in the world with an illegitimacy rate of zero.

584 The practical application of these two unusual rules had certain unusual
851 consequences. The rule of prenatal betrothal obviously gave a great deal of
593 power to the person with the right to betroth, and in Tiwi this right belonged

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Tiwi household head is shown by the genealogies of the grandfathers of the present generation. Turimpi, who was born in the 1830's and died in the early 1900's, was at his death the most powerful old man among the Tiklauila. Some of his sons are still alive, and all of them were in the prime of life around 1930.[4] A complete list of Turimpi's wives, not all of them living in his household at the same time or necessarily alive at the same time, contains more than twenty names. But Turimpi was outshone in this regard by several of his contemporaries in other bands. A prominent Turupula of the same generation had a list of twenty-five; the father of Finger of the Wilrangwila had twenty-nine; the father of Tamboo and Puti had twenty-two. As late as 1930, men with lists of ten, eleven, and twelve wives were still plentiful, and Tu'untalumi, who was aged about seventy in that year and was a man of great influence, had by then accumulated no less than twenty-one.[5] 595

Such numbers of wives as these per husband are very much higher than usually prevail even among the most polygymous hunting tribes. Obviously, a domestic unit with twelve or more wives in it makes for a very large household. Among the Tiwi, a household even of such men as those just named did not contain all these wives at the same time, mainly because of the very great variation in the ages of a man's wives. As far as bestowed or betrothed wives were concerned, such wives arrived at their husband's household to take up wifely duties therein when they reached the age of about fourteen. Hence the first of them to arrive (typically when their husband was nearly forty) would be women of nearly forty by the time the latest of them arrived (typically when the husband was well into his sixties). Even when the husband died, let us say at the ripe old age of seventy-five, there would probably be some of his bestowed wives still under the age of fourteen who were as yet too young to join his household. Tu'untalumi, the man of twenty-one wives, was already about seventy in 1930, yet in his list of twenty-one wives five were still *al'ingu*—that is, little girls not yet approaching puberty—and two were still babies at their mothers' breast. On the other hand, some of his earliest bestowed wives, who had taken up residence with him when he was in his late thirties, were already dead. 592 582 595

Because of this wide variation in the ages of a man's wives, it is necessary to distinguish between a "list" of a man's wives and those actually in residence in his household at any given time. The resident or active wives—one might almost say the working wives—were always fewer than the listed wives. This would necessarily be so even if marriage by betrothal were the only way by which a Tiwi man could obtain a wife. But while it was the most prestigeful form of marriage and the only respectable way in which a man could obtain a *young* wife, there were other ways of setting up a household 595 584 587

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[4] See Hart 1954.

[5] Finger, Tamboo, and Puti were elders prominent in tribal affairs at the time of Hart's fieldwork. Puti was still alive in 1953-54 and well known to Pilling. Tu'untalumi, held in great affection by Hart, but anathema to the Mission Station, died in 1935.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

553 attaching some one semipermanent name to a person despite the rules of
768 name taboo should not cause us to overlook the importance of these rules.
587 In theory, at least, every new husband renamed all his wives' children by all their previous marriages—thus, at least symbolically, canceling out the signs of title of all the previous "fatherhoods" in those children and asserting his own fatherhood right as a new and exclusive one. A widow's new husband was the new household head for all her children, and he took over this position by renaming them all, thus becoming their legal father. If we can stop thinking of "father" as a biological or kin relationship, and think of the word as meaning only "head of the household," the Tiwi concept will become understandable. We will also realize that there is no contradiction or illogic involved in the Tiwi beliefs that male parents were not necessary for conception, but that every child born must be born to a woman with a husband. All they meant was that every child must be born into a household with a male at its head who belonged to a different clan from its mother—in other words, a "father," in Tiwi context.

584 The renaming of the children by the new household head was not, of course, sufficient to wipe out the commitments made by previous titleholders.
● 592 Although the new father could and did change his step-daughters' names, he
768 could not change their bestowals. The men upon whom the daughters had been bestowed by the previous father made sure of this. The new father was compelled to carry out the marriage arrangements for the daughters made by his predecessors in the fatherhood role, and there was sure to be a terrific row if he tried to alter them. Nevertheless, he acquired some power over the future of the daughters. The man to whom one of them had been promised by the previous father might die, thus making redisposal of the girl possible for him, or some new deal might be arrangeable in which he could use his new assets—for these new step-daughters were assets, regardless of the fact that their immediate matrimonial future was already settled. The new father could delay his decision as to whether they were yet old enough to join their betrothed husband or even drop a few hints that he did not think the betrothed husband's right to them was quite as certain as was generally believed. Such actions, of course, were liable to lead to violent reprisals by the betrothed husband, but there was always a chance that he would be open to a deal; for example, by giving an option on one of the women in whom he had an interest, he would seek to hasten the appearance of the girl in his own household or seek to clear whatever shadow upon his title to her the step-father sought to cast. Even the last husband of an elderly widow who had already passed through the hands of six or eight husbands and all of whose daughters were grown up and married two or three times already, gained some shadowy rights in the future remarriages of those daughters by marrying their ancient mother. And the validation of these shadowy rights was the fact that as their mother's new husband he had renamed the daughters and he who named them could bestow them. The only catch was, that while he could wipe out all the names bestowed by his predecessors, he could not equally readily wipe out their commitments. All he could do was maneuver within the network created by their

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

commitments so as to try and advantage himself as much as possible by a skillful use of whatever shadowy right in the daughters he had obtained by becoming their current "father." 584 592 768

It is within such a context that the apparent swapping of mothers by Dominico and Antonio must be viewed. By marrying Bongdadu in her dotage, Dominico had acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters, the sisters of Antonio, but since his marriage to her had been, partly at least, arranged by Antonio and her other sons, he would have to share with them his disposal rights to their sisters. Similarly, the marriage of Dominico's ancient mother to Antonio (part, so to speak, of the same "package deal") meant that Antonio as current father had some say in the future disposal of Dominico's sisters when they became widowed, since he had the power of renaming them. 587 584

What in effect occurred in this, as in many other cases, was that men of different clans and of about the same age formed a partnership or close alliance wherein "sons" and "husbands" cooperated in arranging the remarriages of their "mothers" and "sisters" by acting as quasi-fathers and treating their mothers and sisters as "quasi-daughters." The partnership or "firm" of Dominico (of the Crane clan) and Antonio, Mariano, and their brothers (of the Red Paint clan) had already arranged the remarriages of Bongdadu (Red Paint clan) and of Dominico's mother (Crane clan), and stood ready to take care of all future remarriages of any of Bongdadu's daughters (Red Paint) or Dominico's sisters (Crane) whenever any of these women became widowed. Each member of the firm was trying to maximize his own self-interest in this and all the other alliances he had a share in, but operations had to be carried out in this partnership form because the marriage of any woman had to be arranged by her "father," and the father, in the Tiwi rules, had to be a nonclansman of the woman whose marriage he arranged. Hence the Red Paint men needed Dominico, a Crane, as a front man to arrange the remarriages of their sisters, and he in turn used Antonio, a Red Paint man, to arrange the remarriages of his sisters. When clansmen made decisions about the remarriages of their sisters, they could only do it by using agreeable nonclansmen as nominal "fathers" and cooperating with them—and the agreeable nonclansmen would of course only come in on the deal if there was something in it for them, as there was for the obscure and unimportant Dominico in the present case. In return for acting as a front for the Red Paint brothers, he got himself a second wife, an excellent food provider though no longer beautiful; he became the ally, even if junior, of some men with assured futures; and he acquired some shadowy residual rights in the future remarriages of several potential widows. Dominico did himself a lot of good by marrying Bongdadu; if he hadn't married her, he would never have attracted much tribal notice and hence would not have warranted mention in these pages. 571 584 587 614

We find that the whole complex situation makes most theoretical sense if we see it as essentially an institutional struggle between clan rights and the father's rights in women. Tiwi fathers, as suggested above, had taken away from the clan the right to make marriage decisions for newly born female members of the clan. As mechanisms validating this success of father's rights 584 592 614

As mechanisms validating this success of fathers rights

584 against clan rights there existed two rules: he who bestowed the name had
592 the right to dispose in marriage; and all names given by a woman's previous
614 husband were cancelled by his death and a new set of names given to all her
[553] children by her new husband. Strictly and universally enforced, such rules
would put *all* control over the marriages of *all* women, of every age, in the
hands of their mother's husbands—that is, men from outside the clan of the
women being disposed of, in other words, fathers in the Tiwi sense. But the
Tiwi system failed to achieve such a result though their rules are pointed
toward it. They achieved something close to it as far as infant or even young
girls were concerned, since the fellow clansmen of such girls were either (as
brothers) too young and unimportant to have any power to resist this alien
control over their sisters' hands, or (as mothers' brothers and hence older
men) too involved and absorbed in their own activities *as fathers* to take any
position asserting clan rights as against fathers' rights. To be successful in
581 tribal life, an ambitious young Tiwi male was best advised to forget his mother
557 and his sisters' daughters (all members of his clan) and concentrate on getting
584 wives for himself. Only by getting wives could he have daughters, and only
[614] by having daughters could he build alliances and obtain influence, power, and
more wives. To get wives for himself, he could not use his mother or his
sisters or his sisters' daughters, since their disposal was in the hands of the men
who had named them—that is, their fathers. But there came a time in the life
of an older man when his mother was old, and *her* mother was dead, and there-
fore the rights of the last man to name his mother had lapsed. And a similar
situation would arise in the case of his sisters when their mother's last husband
died. By this age, a man so situated was likely to be powerful enough and
skilled enough in the rules of the game to exert some control over the late
remarriages of his elderly sisters and even of his mother, were she still alive.
592 Whenever this occurred, although the resulting situation might have the super-
584 ficial appearance of clan solidarity—with sons, mothers, brothers, and sisters
587 all acting and planning together as a partnership—such a surface appearance
was illusory. The motivations involved in it were scarcely altruistic desires on
the part of the brothers to look after their mothers and elderly sisters, but
rather efforts by the brothers to use to advantage, in their intricate political
schemes, some women of their own clan (their mothers and elderly sisters).
Earlier in life these men had been prevented from such manipulation by the
control over those women exercised by nonclansmen (their husbands or fath-
ers) through the naming rules. Put another way, we might say that Tiwi men
as a group had acquiesced to the system wherein "the father" had control over
all marriages of his "daughters," because every Tiwi man hoped to be a
"father" himself; but having acquiesced, every Tiwi male tried to beat the
system, especially as he became older and more influential, by intriguing in the
remarriages of his mother and elderly sisters—matters in which, according to
the strict letter of the law, he had no right to interfere, since bestowal rights
resided with the "father" or "fathers" of these women. One factor which
[582 greatly contributed to the setting aside of the rights involved in the naming
582] system was the fact that since, on the whole, old men married young women

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

and young men married old women, in many cases the nominal "father" of an elderly woman was very much younger and less influential than were her brothers, or her sons by an earlier husband. The brothers and/or sons, therefore, were able to override the wishes of their sisters' nominal father since the seniority system was on their side in such contests, even though the renaming rules were not. 582 582 581 587 592

Although it was very rare indeed for any Tiwi male to have a resident young wife until he was nearly forty, long before that age he was likely to acquire an ancient widow or two. In at least ninety out of every hundred cases a man's first resident wife was a widow very much older than himself. According to a complete genealogical census carried out in 1928-29, nearly every man in the tribe in the age group from thirty-two to thirty-seven was married to an elderly widow. Many of them had two elderly widows and a few had three. But very few of them, and certainly not more than one out of five of them, had a resident *young* wife. About half of them had bestowed wives, but these were mostly toddling infants who would not come into residence with them for another ten years or more. Even for the most promising and rapidly rising young man, the first young bestowed wife was not likely to arrive until several years after his marriage to a widow. 582 587

To get a start in life as a household head and thus to get his foot on the first rung of the prestige ladder, a Tiwi man in his thirties had first of all to get himself married to an elderly widow, preferably one with married daughters. This was the beginning of his career as a responsible adult. The widow did several things for him. She became his food provider and housekeeper. She served as a link to ally him with her sons. As her husband, he acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters when they became widowed. And she, as the first resident wife in his household, stood ready to be the teacher, trainer, and guardian of his young bestowed wives when they began to join him after they reached puberty. [593] [595]

Levirate, Sororate, and Cross-Cousin Marriage

We have emphasized infant bestowal and widow remarriage because it was the elaborate development of these two matrimonial mechanisms that brought about the unusual, perhaps unique, character of the Tiwi household. Other matrimonial mechanisms, more usual in preliterate societies, were also used by the Tiwi but always in combination with or as minor adjuncts to the two basic mechanisms. Thus, a man often remarried his dead brother's wives, or at least some of them, within the institution of widow remarriage. Such a practice is known to anthropologists as the levirate, and tribes are said "to *have" the levirate or "not to have" it. The Tiwi, with their pluralistic approach* to the whole area of marriage relationships, can hardly be said to fall into either category. To them, every widow had to remarry and among the many possible candidates for her, the brothers of the dead husband were recognized as having a reasonable, but far from automatic, claim. Whether the brothers 587

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to at least reside in some household and had at least a nominal current husband at any given moment of time, all we need to note about them at this point is that in any listing of a man's wives we have to include "disputed" wives in addition to all the other categories of wives mentioned previously. 588

The Household: An Overview

In the discussion so far we have selected only those aspects of the Tiwi family complex that had close bearing on the nature of the household. These aspects can be briefly summarized as follows: 582 592

1. the high number of wives per husband that a successful man was likely to acquire if he lived long enough.

2. the two distinct mechanisms by which wives were acquired—infant bestowal and widow remarriage.

3. the operation of the bestowal system in such a way as to prevent even the most promising young man from achieving coresidence with a bestowed wife until he was at least nearly forty years old.

4. the tendency for success to lead to more success, whereby *some* astute men received into their households a number of young wives in rapid succession after the age of forty. [554 595]

5. the tendency of younger men and of nonbetrothed younger men in particular to marry elderly widows while waiting for betrothed wives to grow up or, in the case of those with no bestowals in sight, to enable them to start a household of their own.

6. as a result of the integrated operation of all these customs, the strong tendency in Tiwi households for husbands to be very much older than their wives (as a result of infant bestowal) or very much younger than their wives (as a result of widow remarriage) or—what was commonest of all in the bigger households—some combination of both. Hence many a Tiwi husband had some wives much older than himself, including some already dead (but still counted), and some very much younger than himself, including some who were still babies in their mothers' wombs (with their sex still undetermined). All these dead wives, current wives, nominal wives, "disputed" wives, not-yet-joined-the-household wives, and not-yet-born wives were still counted in a husband's list, and the length of his list was a measure of his influence, power, and importance as a household head. [554 595]

It is now perhaps clear why we chose to begin our account of Tiwi culture with some discussion of Tiwi marriage. Compulsory marriage for all females, carried out through the twin mechanisms of infant bestowal and widow remarriage, resulted in a very unusual type of household, in which old successful men had twenty wives each, while men under thirty had no wives at all and men under forty were married mostly to elderly crones. This unusual household structure was the focal point of Tiwi culture. It linked together in an explicable unity the kinship system, the food-gathering system, the political 592 182 592

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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592

and prestige system, the totemic system, the seniority system, the sexual system, and the legal-moral-religious system of the tribe. Or perhaps all these should be labeled as subsystems under the household structure, the master system which unified them. We turn therefore to consider the Tiwi household as it affected the food-gathering and leisure-time activities of the people.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

621 The fluidity of band affiliation was so constant a feature of Tiwi life that almost the only firm generalization that can be made about it is that when "a big man" with a large household had lived most of his adult life in the territory of a band, and had been up to the time of his death one of the dominating elders of that band, his children, both male and female, would be regarded as "really" members of that band during *their* lifetimes, regardless of where marriage took the girls, or where their own life careers or the remarriages of their mothers took the boys. Thus in 1928 the three oldest men of Malau—Ki-in-kumi, Enquirio, and Merapanui—were regarded as core members of the Malauila band. Reference to their family trees reveals that the latter two had been born in Malau to a big man of that band in the previous generation and had resided in Malau all their lives. Ki-in-kumi, however, always thought of as equally a Malauila, in fact had been born in Rangu to a Rangwila father and had moved to Malau as a youth when his marriage prospects had seemed to him best in that district. This move had happened so long ago that only old people remembered it, and as a result all three old men were generally regarded as "real" Malauila and the children of all three would so be regarded all their lives. Such identification would hardly carry over for more than one, or at best, two generations. In explaining the matter, we have had to use the English word "really" in quotation marks because the Tiwi themselves had no corresponding concept. If one asked "Why is he a Malauila when he never seems to live there?" the answer would be "Because his father was, and he grew up there." It was only in pidgin English that one could talk of a "real Malauila" or a "real Rangwila." In Tiwi language and thought, Malau or Rangu was a firm, fixed, unchanging piece of country; the Malauila or Rangwila were the households, of constantly changing personnel, who hunted there, and a man had to belong to one of those households practically all his life and have his father before him also a permanent resident of the same district before his identification with that district was sufficiently close to approximate the degree of identification that is implied in the European concept of a "real" Malauila or "really" a Rangwila.

592 [621] The crux, then, of Tiwi territorial organization was not the band but the household.[1] A band was merely the temporary concentration in one district of semiautonomous households which were the food-collecting, living-together, and sleeping-together units of Tiwi life. People were not members

[1] There has been a prolonged argument in the anthropological journals about the Australian territorial unit, especially as to whether it was patrilineal or matrilineal. For the Tiwi, such a problem could not arise. A father bestowed his daughters where he wished and at puberty they joined their husbands. Where his sons found wives was no concern of the father, and hence where they established their households was of no interest to him either. The father would wish, however, that they would establish their households as far away from his as possible since then he would not have to worry about them interfering with his young wives. On the other hand, it was thought to be "unfatherly" actually to throw sons out. See G. P. Murdock and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and A. P. Elkin in *American Anthropologist* (*passim*) for the main contributions to the mainland argument, which we think becomes pointless when dominance of the household tie over band ties existed, as it did among the Tiwi.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of bands as part of any political or legal system; they were members of households as part of a domestic system. What held the unit together was the central position and dominance of the father or husband, and hence the life of a household was only as long as his lifetime. When he died, the household broke up and the surviving members joined other households, perhaps in the same district, perhaps in some other band territory. Such change of household was carried out by the individuals concerned, not quite at will, but certainly not with sufficient uniformity for any political or legal label to be put upon it. 593 [621] [768]

Uniformity was derived from the fact that every Tiwi had to live in a household. The universal prohibition on unmarried females was obviously one expression of that requirement. For men, the requirement was less firm, and if a young man wanted to live entirely alone he was free to try—although there is no record of any man having tried it for more than a few weeks at a time. Even if his mother were dead and his father or step-father did not welcome him, he attached himself to some household since, apart from any question of loneliness, this was the only way by which he could eat regularly. For Tiwi households were primarily autonomous food-producing and food-consumption units. A household made its own decisions, camped where it saw fit to camp, moved on when the food quest made it advantageous or necessary to move on. A large household, such as that of Ki-in-kumi or any other big man, was a complete community in itself, with the old man as executive director. He laid down the daily, weekly, and monthly work and travel schedules for the women, the young men, and the children. Most of the time the work went automatically because all the adults and the older children knew their jobs.

Daily Activities

By shortly after dawn each day, the household was up, and after a light breakfast, usually of leftovers from the previous night, everybody left camp to go to work. The women and children (except perhaps the five- to ten-year-old boys, who were rather useless at that age) scattered in every direction from the camp with baskets and/or babies on their backs, to spend the day gathering food, chiefly vegetable foods, grubs, worms, and anything else edible. Since they had spent their lives doing it, the old women knew all about gathering and preparing vegetable foods, and they supervised the younger women. This was one important reason for men marrying widows, and even a man with many young wives was quite likely to remarry an elderly widow or two nonetheless. A husband with only young wives might have a satisfactory sex life, but he still needed a household manager if he wished to eat well. The supervision of the female members of the household was left to the old women and, provided the returns were good, the husband did not attempt to interfere nor to give orders concerning the details of women's work. 512 [857] [482 854] [222] [592]

After the women had scattered out in a wide circuit from the camp, the husband might hunt, but only if he were not too old. In hunting kanga- 224 887

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

224 roos,[8] wildfowl, and other game, keen eyesight is essential, hence Tiwi men
[887 did very little hunting once they were past about forty-five, though they hated to admit their hunting days were over. The meat, fish, and game provided for the large household of an old man was obtained by the young men, and this was about the only thing an old man thought his sons or his step-sons were good for. Typically the young man, when he returned at nightfall with a kangaroo which he had spent most of the day tracking down and spearing,
[592 would ignore the old man and dump the carcass at the feet of his mother as
888] if to say, "I brought this back for you, not for that old So and So."

As the women straggled back to camp toward sundown with the results
512 of their day's gathering and the young hunters brought in their bags, cooking
595 began and the main meal of the day (usually the only hot meal) was eaten. The Tiwi themselves had no doubt about the close relationship between plural marriage and good eating. "If I had only one or two wives I would starve,"
[797] the head of a large household once told the missionary who was preaching against plural marriage, "but with my present ten or twelve wives I can send them out in all directions in the morning and at least two or three of them are likely to bring something back with them at the end of the day, and then
262 we can all eat." This was a realistic appraisal of the economic situation and it is to be noted that he put the emphasis on the food obtained by the women
[222 gatherers rather than that supplied by the male hunters. Based on the observations of 1928-29, it would appear that the Tiwi ate pretty well, especially in the larger households. Kangaroo and other marsupials, and some of the larger lizards (for example, the goanna) were very plentiful in the bush, as were fish and turtles and dugong on the coasts and wild geese in many districts. But all these were extras or dividends; the staple everyday foods were the vegetable foods gathered day after day in apparently unending quantities by the women. For most months of the year there was always plenty of *kwoka*,
[252 a porridgelike dish prepared by soaking and mashing the small nuts of a native palm. These nuts grew in such quantity that in every large camp baskets or dishes of *kwoka*, at various stages of preparation, were always available, even for midnight snacks if anybody woke up hungry. *Kwoka* was about as dull and tasteless as Scotch porridge, but equally filling, and naked small boys full of *kwoka* had stomachs distended like balloons. In the wet season the place of *kwoka* was taken by *kolema*, a yam whose ripening and growing season was much shorter than that of the nuts from which *kwoka* was made. It was
[796 on the abundance of the *kolema* yams during January and February that the Tiwi supported the more elaborate of their collective ceremonials.

The abundance of these and other vegetable foods, plus the ample supply of game and fish in many places, meant that under aboriginal conditions the Tiwi lived at a food-consumption level much further above the near-

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[8] Actually there are no kangaroos on Melville and Bathurst Islands; the chief meat animal is a slightly smaller species of marsupial technically called the wallaby. As the distinction is important only to zoologists, and as many of the so-called kangaroos in American zoos are in fact wallabies, we prefer to use the more familiar word.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

starvation level than was the case with many of the mainland tribes.[8] Even to talk about the Tiwi in near-starvation terms seems quite incongruous, for there was an abundance of native food available the whole year around and their only problem was to collect or catch it. We regard the development of their large multiple-wife household as essentially their own evolutionary solution to the problem of finding the most efficient unit of food production. Abundant food was there in the bush in its raw state; the most efficient way to extract it was by a work unit represented by such households as those of Ki-in-kuni, or Tu'untalumi, with the old remarried widows directing the young women and the hunting and fish spearing being done by the younger males. 262 182 121 592

Even the smallest households nearly always contained at least one old female veteran of the food quest who knew the bush like the palm of her hand and could wrestle some food out of the most inhospitable district. The only households that ever went hungry—and they only overnight or at worst for twenty-four hours or so—were the small households of only one or two wives, especially if both wives were young and inexperienced or young and flighty or both. Such households were uneconomic and were rare. On the other hand, the apparently absurd households such as those in which two young men shared their respective elderly mothers as wives, made good economic sense. Any attempt by two such young men to substitute two young wives or even four young wives for the two old ladies would have drastically reduced the standard of living of the household. When young wives arrived in Tiwi households they were not regarded as replacements for the old crones but joined as reinforcements and apprentices to the skilled workers—the veterans. The sexual aspects of marriage were necessarily subordinated to the housekeeping or food-production aspects, which is why in the previous section we spoke of every young man laying the foundation of his household by marrying an elderly widow usually long before there was any young wife in sight. 592

Since the bigger the household the more food it produced for its own consumption, there was a tendency for the smaller and therefore hungrier households to hang around the fringes of the bigger ones. Though every household was autonomous and could camp and collect food anywhere in the band territory in which it roamed, it was rare to find all the households in a band distributed evenly over the available territory. In Malau, Enquirio's household and that of Merapanui were usually to be found camped together, since the two men were full brothers and not in competition with each other. Also camped with or near them on any given occasion would be a few other small households. Such a combined group as this would, all told, amount to between forty and fifty people camping at the same spot and remaining together for weeks at a time. Under mainland conditions in most areas, a gathering of forty people for ten days at a time in the same locality was unheard of, except on 361 592 [171]

[8] As was pointed out earlier, the best-watered and most fertile areas of the mainland were the areas attractive to white settlement, and the tribes who inhabited such areas (for example, Victoria or coastal Queensland) were wiped out quickly. Most of the mainland tribes who survived long enough to be studied by modern anthropologists were tribes whose habitats were unfavorable both for native and for white occupation.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

361 special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply.
● 592 The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general
[171] thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably
592 smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during
574 supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger
[593 household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece
602] of meat or a dish of *kwoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the
[561 general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through
578] all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all
512 resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated
517 with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive
[562] work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the
[513] shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an
[578] argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

578 Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion
182 with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part
837 of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic
592 efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

he was at the same time the executive director of a work unit which he expected 578
to work for him, and the husband of many of its members whom he expected 182
to be faithful to him. The young wives were willing, under supervision, to 837
meet his first expectation, but found it difficult, even under the strictest super- 592
vision, to meet the second. Successful supervision of the morals of young wives
was easy to achieve at night because each camp was then gathered together
and it was relatively easy for the husband and his senior wives to guard the
young wives closely. But during the daytime matters were different. Then the 837
young women of the household were widely scattered through the fairly dense
bush and it was impossible for the old wives to watch them every minute of
the day. And the young men of other households, or even of their own house-
hold, were hunting game in the same neighborhood. Encounters, whether by
chance or by previous arrangement, were likely to occur and probably occurred
with a high degree of frequency. We say "probably" because no anthropologist
working with a tribe which has neither courts nor written records can ever
know how often casual extramarital offenses take place. (There is even some
difficulty in obtaining reliable statistics on such matters in our own society,
as the attacks on the late Dr. Kinsey's statistics indicate.) We therefore make
no statement about how common the act of adultery was in Tiwi culture, but
we can say that, judging by the public accusations of adultery, its practice
must have been widespread indeed. In any Tiwi camp comprising more than 578
two households, few weeks went by without an outraged and angry old hus- 837
band shouting accusations at one of the younger men sitting by another camp
fire a few yards away. The young man accused would (usually) deny it; the
old women of both households would enter the argument, the young man's [595]
mother protesting his innocence, the old man's elderly wives (who had of
course been the informers) giving details of time and place and circumstance;
the young man would produce, or try to produce, an alibi and appeal to a
friend to bear him out; the old man would call the friend a liar and the youth's
mother an old witch; the youth's mother would retaliate by shouting things
she knew (but had never before revealed) about the private lives of everybody
in the old man's household, including the old man himself when he was a
young bachelor. A good time would be had by all, including the listening
anthropologist, but nobody would get much sleep. Such nocturnal uproars, al-
ways starting with accusations hurled by an older husband against a younger
man and always involving incidents that had allegedly occurred while the
young wife was somehow left unchaperoned for a short period during her
daytime wandering in search of food, were a commonplace of nightlife among
the Tiwi; but no case was ever reported, observed, or hinted at in which even
the most adventurous and enterprising bachelor had succeeded in seducing,
or had even attempted to seduce, a young wife when she was back in camp [833]
after nightfall. The deeds were always done in the secrecy of the bush during
the daytime; it was the recriminations and accusations that occurred in the
public glare of the campfires at nighttime.

Sometimes these disputes or accusations went no further than the noc- 578
turnal shouting of charges. Often the young man accused the previous night 684

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

●592 595 587 The matter of men traveling to distant camps for ceremonials illuminates again, and from a new angle, the great value of elderly widows in the household. Tu'untalumi, during his visit to Malau in August, was able to split his household efficiently by taking a couple of old wives with him to supervise his young wives on the journey and leaving other old wives at home in Tangio to begin storing up food for the grass-burning project which he intended to stage on his return. It will be noticed in the account of his movements that he began issuing invitations to the grass burning on his way home from Malau, [224 251] showing his confidence that the elderly wives he had left at home would have the preparations well in hand during his absence. A big man with a big household really needed three or four elderly widows because these enabled him to split his work force in various ways as his various political and social obligations required and to be sure of trustworthy supervision of each of the segments. A man without widows in his household, or with only one, could not do this; in fact, it was hard for a man without widows to attend ceremonials at all, or even to receive a large party of visitors to his household. And, as we have already pointed out, since such a man would probably go hungry very often because he would not dare to send his unsupervised young wives into the bush to gather food, there were practically no such men nor such households. Widows were indispensable to a senior Tiwi, both in his public and in his private life.

Making Things

592 887 Throughout this chapter we have been stressing the contrast between the dull routine of life in an isolated Tiwi household during the greater part of the year and the sort of life typical on those relatively rare occasions when something special—a festival, a funeral, a fight, a grass burning, a naming ceremony, some collective phase of men's initiation—required the assembling together of several households for joint activity. Before leaving the daily life of the isolated camp, we should mention one other area of activity—namely, the manufacturing activities of the tribe. The Tiwi did not manufacture much, [32] but spears, throwing sticks, canoes, digging sticks, baskets, bodily ornaments, graveposts, and all the miscellaneous paraphernalia used in ceremonials had to be made in whatever leisure time people could find during the long weeks and months when each of the households lived more or less in isolation from the others. Crude and simple as these artifacts were, their construction required time, and only the older men had the time and the skill based on experience to make the more important of them.

[147] Largely because of their failing eyesight, the older men hunted very little and hence tended to remain in camp all day while the young men were hunting and the women were gathering. There were, of course, some old men who took advantage of this time to do little except doze in the shade, but 182 511 531 most of the household heads spent a fairly active day in camp engaged in making things. Here we find another aspect of Tiwi culture that results from

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the relatively favorable food supply. Some of the Tiwi artifacts, particularly the 182
highly decorative graveposts and ceremonial spears, are unique among Aus- 511
tralian tribes, and the carving and painting of these graveposts and spears 531
were skills possessed only by the senior men. They were provided with the 517
leisure time necessary to develop and use these skills by the efficiency in food 887
production of the large household which all old men were expected to accumu- 592
late with age, and which many old men did succeed in accumulating. We said earlier that the bigger the household, the better its members ate. We now add the further correlation that the bigger the household, the more leisure time was provided for its head to engage in manufacturing and artistic production. Tu'untalumi has been cited as an example of a large household head (twelve resident wives and thirteen children at home in 1928-29) who loved ceremonial affairs. It would be wrong to infer from this that Tu'untalumi only loved going to parties. He also loved preparing for them, and this preparation (for him as for all other senior men) included the manufacture of ceremonial spears, the preparation of graveposts, and the composition of songs and dances. In the long dull periods between trips outside his home district, he spent most of the days and many of the nights in the creation of these ceremonial necessities. He was not a full-time specialist in the sense that he made spears or posts to exchange with other men who had neither the time nor the skill—the rules of kinship required that every senior man make his own ceremonial spears and contract for his own posts. Tu'untalumi manufactured his graveposts to meet [431]
his own ritual obligations, but he took a more magnanimous view of those obligations than did most men. Put in our terms, we might say that he was wealthy enough (in the size of his household) to be generous with his own productions. One example of this attitude was his attendance at funerals that other men of equal kinship to the deceased did not find it necessary to attend; his frequent contribution of an extra gravepost to those provided by the chief mourners of the deceased was a similar gesture. "Tu'untalumi not only came to our mother's funeral, he also made a gravepost for it" was a very gratifying reflection for an obscure group of mourners to cherish among their memories, and of course it was acts of this sort that made the old man so well liked and admired. The economic point of the matter, however, is that only a man with as large a household as his could afford the gesture of giving away, in a situation where kinship obligations did not demand it, a gravepost that required about a week's full-time work.

It was, however, sad to observe that as an artistic producer Tu'unta- 517
lumi, like many intellectuals in other cultures, tended to operate in too many 887
media. His work as a composer of songs and dances was universally admired, but his graveposts, while appreciated, were not regarded as being as outstanding, technically speaking, as those of another old man, his crony Timalarua. In personality, Timalarua, a successful household head (eleven living wives, ten children at home), was quiet spoken, placid, and only mildly gregarious, and he is mainly of interest because in his leisure-time activity he paid but routine attention to song and dance compositions and concentrated rather single mindedly on making canoes, ceremonial spears, and graveposts. Fre-

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the manipulation of the remarriages of elderly widows, who were always in large supply. If a man showed skill and know-how in his early thirties among the widows, then in his late thirties and early forties young wives would be bestowed upon him in abundance. Such a lesson could not have a better exemplar than Gitjara. By age 33 he had done so well among the widows that his first *young* wife would be joining his household by the time he was thirty-eight or thirty-nine, and another was already a year old. Clearly he was a young man of promise and one to be watched—and cultivated. 159 557 582 587

Summit, a man slightly older than Gitjara, must be dealt with very briefly, since the reasons for his success would take us too far afield. In 1929 he had a list of six wives, the only resident one being an elderly widow. The other five were bestowals and the eldest of these was the girl of ten whom we have already mentioned as being in the household of her step-father, Gitjara. Two more, younger than the ten-year-old, were in the household of Padimo (see below) and the remaining two were in the household of one of the elders of the Rangwila band. Summit, in Tiwi reckoning, was a Rangwila himself and had only moved to Malau a few years before. Some four years previously he had been a young Rangwila with no less than five bestowed child-wives. Three of these had been given him by an elder in Malau, two by an elder of his own band. The Malauila girls were older than the two Rangwila girls and his Malauila father-in-law was older than his Rangwila father-in-law. Summit therefore moved north to supervise personally his interests in Malau. He had, however, been out-maneuvered when the Malauila father-in-law died, since Gitjara had then been able to remarry the mother of Summit's eldest child-wife and Padimo had been able to remarry the mother of the other two little girls. Having thus moved to Malau to be near to and a satellite of his elderly Malauila father-in-law, Summit now found himself the technical son-in-law of two young men of his own age group who were among his keen competitors in the influence struggle. To ensure that his three promised Malauila child-wives joined his household when old enough, he now needed to make some arrangements with Gitjara and Padimo. Summit had gotten his bestowals rather early and rather easily but he still had the problem of nailing them down. 159 584 [557 587]

While thus engaged in acquiring five bestowed young wives and trying to promote their safe delivery when ready, Summit had married a widow not much more than forty years old but childless by her two previous husbands.[8] Such a widow at least provided him with a food-getter and housekeeper and enabled him to establish a household into which his five bestowed wives would enter as they successively reached the proper age. Thus Summit's household in 1929 consisted only of himself and his *palimaringa* wife. Within the next fifteen years it would be increased by the addition of at least five young wives, 159 587 592 592 159

[8] Such women who had reached middle age without surviving children were called by a special term, *palimaringa*, in Tiwi and the term referred to childlessness rather than barrenness. Summit's widow, for example, had borne two children, both of whom had died in infancy, and she was classified as a *palimaringa*. When a *palimaringa* became very, very old indeed, the word changed to *timaringa*. [842]

●592 plus any new bestowals, plus any further widows Summit might find it to his interest (and power) to remarry.

159 584 557 Padimo, who thus enters our story as one of Summit's rivals and one of his nominal fathers-in-law, was also a Rangwila who had moved to Malau at the call of an elderly father-in-law. He presents another pattern of Tiwi upward mobility and one that was statistically more frequent than the rather tortuous road followed by men like Gitjara. Padimo had been chosen as a nephew worth supporting by old Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest of the Malauila. The earliest proof of Ki-in-kumi's patronage of Padimo had come in 1925-26 when an old man died, leaving eight widows of very diverse ages. Three of these "widows," aged respectively 17, 13, and 9 at the time of the death of their first husband, were daughters of Ki-in-kumi. Being so young and their brothers being equally young, their father's right to arrange their remarriage was unchallenged and Ki-in-kumi reassigned[4] them as wives to young Padimo, then aged about thirty-three. The eldest of the three girls had already borne two female children to the dead man, these being the two girl babies mentioned above as having been promised to Summit.

As well as the three young widows, Padimo had also obtained at the same redistribution the oldest and most haggish of the dead man's eight wives. It was at the same redistribution that Gitjara had obtained his second widow (the mother of the girl promised to Summit). Thus through Ki-in-kumi's influence, Padimo had obtained four "widows" of the eight left by the man who died in 1925-26; Gitjara, working without a powerful patron, had been lucky to obtain one.

159 595 [604] Ki-in-kumi had subsequently followed up this initial selection of Padimo as a favored sister's son by giving further daughters to him as they were born. Consequently, by 1929 Padimo's wife list consisted of the following:

A. One extremely ancient widow.

B. One wife aged about 20, daughter of Ki-in-kumi, mother already of two daughters by a previous husband who, before his death, bestowed these daughters on Summit.

C. One wife aged about 17, daughter of Ki-in-kumi; had just had her first child (who lived only a week); had previously been bestowed on the dead husband of wife B, but was too young to join his household before he died.

D. Three more girls, daughters of Ki-in-kumi, the eldest about 12 and hence old enough to have been bestowed on the same previous husband as wives B and C; the other two aged 2 and 1 and hence born since his death. All three of these were still resident in their father's household.

[584 587] [4] It is difficult to decide whether such reassignments of female children by their father, on the death of the man to whom he had first betrothed them, should be called "rebestowals" or "remarriages." We prefer the first word since such "child-widows" were usually reassigned by their fathers (if still alive) without any challenge to his rights to do so. They therefore do not differ from original bestowals at birth except for the awkward semantic fact that the man to whom such a "child-wife" was reassigned was technically her second husband.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

With a lineup such as this by the time he was thirty-six, Padimo was clearly in 159
process of going places in Tiwi society. The only weakness one could see in 557
his position was that it all derived from the favor of one patron, and no old 595
man with daughters, other than Ki-in-kumi, had seen fit to bestow a girl
upon him. It should be noted that in 1929, though Padimo had two young
wives resident in his household, he still had no children of his own. His first 159
child, born that year, lived only a few days. The only children in residence were 557
the two girls promised to Summit by the previous husband of their mother. 592
Their bestowal on Summit was a matter beyond Padimo's control though he 584
could use them to force some concessions from Summit just as Gitjara could
with the girl in his household. But as Padimo's young wives began to bear
daughters of his own, his bestowal of them would be less encumbered by the
commitments of any predecessor. While Ki-in-kumi lived, Padimo would have
to consider his obligations to that old man and at least consult with Ki-in-kumi
as to how he should bestow his female children, since any such children would
be the daughters' daughters of the old man. Nor would the death of Ki-in-kumi
leave Padimo entirely free to bestow his own daughters anywhere he wished.
Many of the girls already given to him as wives by Ki-in-kumi had mothers
who possibly, and brothers who certainly, would outlive Ki-in-kumi. On the [587]
old man's death, all of his numerous wives would remarry—some of the older
ones probably to ambitious younger men—and these new husbands of the
widows of Ki-in-kumi would begin interfering with and trying to alter the
arrangements made for his daughters by the old man during his lifetime. Thus [606]
Padimo would find himself stuck with a group of new and antagonistic fathers-
in-law in place of the old, indulgent father-in-law who had been responsible
for his success so far. Padimo's problem was basically how to hold, after
Ki-in-kumi's death, the favored position he had gained during the old man's
lifetime through the old man's favor.

In the meantime, with Ki-in-kumi still alive and powerful, Padimo had 159
the biggest and fastest expanding household among the Malauila men in their 592
thirties. The only remaining man in this age group was Boya who was the 557
oldest of them all, being at least 42 years old in 1928. As might be expected,
his career illustrates some new facets of the Tiwi influence struggle.

Structurally the position of Boya was simple but politically it was com- 159
plex. His father had been a henchman and satellite of Ki-in-kumi in the early
career of that old operator and roughly had had somewhat the same relation-
ship to the young Ki-in-kumi as L. F. B. had to Gitjara. Boya's father, the
satellite, left only two widows (an indication of his mediocrity) and these
two widows had been remarried by Ki-in-kumi, the patron. One of these
widows was Boya's mother, and Boya was too young at the time to have any
say in where his mother remarried. Ki-in-kumi's interest in marrying Boya's
mother was not of course because he thus acquired Boya as a step-son, but
because he acquired Boya's sisters as step-daughters. Step-sons were liabilities [562]
which new husbands had to take over in order to get rights in the real assets
—the step-daughters.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 593 [587] Some years later, when Boya had reached a reasonable age like 30, Ki-in-kumi had arranged for him to marry a very ancient and childless widow (*palimaringa*) more than twenty years older than himself. This was all that Ki-in-kumi considered he needed to do for his step-son, and in Tiwi terms it was almost a gesture of contempt and an open indication that Ki-in-kumi, by providing him with an old woman who was childless but could cook, was not interested in helping Boya toward a career. Since the joining up of Boya to [768] the crone took place shortly after the death of Boya's mother, who had lived with her sons in Ki-in-kumi's household, Ki-in-kumi by producing the old widow for Boya was telling him in effect to get out and start his own household now that his mother was dead.

159 584 593 [592] In 1928 we found Boya aged about 42 married to the crone of 65. But he, she, and Boya's younger brother of 24 were still living in Ki-in-kumi's household. Ki-in-kumi's detestation of him was notorious and yet Boya had by now no less than four young bestowed child-wives growing up elsewhere. No one of these bestowals had come from Malau but were bestowals from different fathers of baby girls in other bands. At first sight this presented a curious situation. Within his own band Boya appeared a complete failure, suffering [554] so severely from Ki-in-kumi's hostility that he had received no bestowals and at age 42 did not even have a separate household of his own. But how could this judgment be squared with the four bestowals from elders of other bands? Clearly none of the causes of success so far analyzed fitted the case of Boya.

159 591 592 Further research into who lived with whom as distinct from who was married to whom revealed that not only was "the household" of Boya, his elderly wife, and his younger brother an integral part of the Ki-in-kumi "establishment," but also that Padimo with his "household" was part of that establishment. Padimo, like Boya, had one elderly wife but he also had five bestowed wives, all daughters of Ki-in-kumi. We said above that the two eldest of these five girls being now aged 20 and 17 respectively were in residence with their husband, while the three youngest, not having reached puberty, were still "with their father." Actual observation showed that this was an academic distinction, since the households of Padimo, the son-in-law, and Ki-in-kumi, the father-in-law, were parts of the same establishment. When one of Ki-in-kumi's daughters bestowed on Padimo became old enough to "leave her father and join her husband," she did not have to move her residence or even change her daily work routines. She merely sat at night around the campfire of her older sisters (Padimo's wives) instead of around the campfire of her younger sisters (Ki-in-kumi's daughters). She remained part of the same establishment.

Padimo, it will be remembered, was the young man whom Ki-in-kumi had attracted from Rangu to Malau by liberally bestowing him with child-wives. Padimo had thus moved into the northern band and by 1928 had moved right into Ki-in-kumi's camp, where he functioned as a sort of executive officer and heir apparent to the old man. In the same camp, though in a very different capacity, was Boya, the 42-year-old despised step-son. Many roads thus 512 led to Ki-in-kumi's household, but before discussing the large establishment

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

of that wealthy elder, we will first summarize, in Table I, the marital conditions of the eight young men we have been discussing. 592

TABLE I
THE MALAUILA YOUNG MEN IN 1928-29

Name	Age	Resident Old Wives (Ex-widows)	Resident Young Wives (Bestowals)	Promised Wives (Under 14)	Own Children
Tiberun	33	0	0	0	0
Banana	28	1	0	0	0
Teapot	35	0[a]	0	0	1
Gitjara	33	2	0	2	1
L. F. B.	38	1	0	1	0
Summit	36	1	0	5	0
Padimo	36	1	2	3	0[b]
Boya	42	1	0	4	0

[a] Teapot's "stolen" wife was dead.
[b] Padimo's first child, born in 1929, lived only a few days.

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This table presents a summary of many of our earlier attempts at generalization. The only Malauila under the age of 43 who had a bestowed young wife old enough to live with him was Padimo, who was thus exceptionally lucky. Leaving out young Banana, five of the seven men between the ages of 30 and 42 had young females promised to them, but these were mostly babies or children who would not come into residence for several years. Six of the seven had married widows, mostly elderly widows, well in advance of the arrival of young wives and before any father had bestowed a daughter on them. Finally, and a point not made before, men of this age group rarely had any children of their own. The only entries in the last column of Table I are the irregularly born son of Teapot; Padimo's first daughter who died virtually at birth; and the 1-year-old son of Gitjara who was the last child born to his second ex-widow. Tiwi men rarely had young wives until they were around forty; they even more rarely had any children of their own before that age. Padimo's dead baby and Gitjara's 1-year-old son were exceptional; the zeros in the last column against the names of Boya (42), L. F. B. (38), and Summit (36) represent the normal situation for Tiwi men of such ages. 561 582

In terms of success (as measured by bestowals) Padimo and Summit (largely through the patronage of elders) and Boya and Gitjara (largely through their own operations) were the coming young men among the Malauila. Of the others, L. F. B. was approaching forty with few assets and no influence, and the other three, Tiberun, Banana, and Teapot, had not even got started in the influence race. 554 584

A Very Successful Elder: Ki-in-kumi

The most influential man in Malau and the head of the biggest household was Ki-in-kumi. Since he had been born around 1863-64 and had been 159 557

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 a "young operator" somewhat before 1900, the deals by which he got his
557 career launched were difficult to reconstruct. The results of them, plus the fact that he lived long enough to draw full dividends from them, gave him by
159 1928-29 a wife-list of twenty-one. These had been accumulated as follows:
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When around 30 years old he remarried two elderly widows and a year or two later received his first bestowal. Thus by age 33 he had three wives. On that foundation he went ahead thus:

		Total
At age 33		
Had two widows and one bestowed wife		3
Between age 33 and age 43		
Remarried two more widows and had three more bestowed wives join him	+5	8
Between age 43 and age 53		
Three more bestowed wives came into residence	+3	11
(During these twenty years at least five bestowed wives died in infancy or childhood)	+5	16
Between age 53 and age 63		
Two more bestowed wives joined him and he married 2 more widows (one the mother of Boya)	+4	20
Now at age 66 there is still one more bestowed wife, aged about 9, in her father's household	+1	21

Thus his list of twenty-one wives was made up of six elderly widows and fifteen bestowed or rebestowed young wives.

By 1928-29 five of his bestowed wives had died before puberty and one was still with her father. Three of his six widows were dead. Subtracting these nine women, we find that his current household contained twelve resident and active wives: the oldest about sixty, two in their fifties, four in their forties or thirties, three in their twenties, and the two youngest around seventeen or eighteen years of age. Almost all of them had borne children since joining his household, but the death rate had been high among Ki-in-kumi's children and from all of his wives he had only eight living children of whom six were girls. Five of these six daughters he had bestowed or rebestowed on Padimo (see above) and the sixth on a middle-aged Rangwila. His oldest living daughter was the girl of 20 married to Padimo. His oldest living son was a boy of 18, despite the fact that Ki-in-kumi had been "a married man" for over thirty-five years. This was a situation which many Tiwi elders found themselves
159 in at the close of long and successful lives. With numerous wives, numerous
● 592 step-sons, large households to be managed, and large estates to be liquidated after their deaths, their oldest real sons (as distinct from step-sons) were still boys or youths and as such quite unsuitable as executive assistants while the old man lived or as heirs or executors after the old man died. Quite apart
[882 from kinship considerations, the Tiwi emphasis on age and seniority made it
888] impossible for Ki-in-kumi to utilize in any capacity his 18-year-old son. A youth of that age was a nonentity, whoever his father.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

TABLE II
KI-IN-KUMI'S ESTABLISHMENT
(Ages in brackets)

		Males	Females
Head (Ki-in-kumi	66)	1	0
Oldest step-son (Boya	42)	1	0
Sister's son (Padimo	36)	1	0
Old wives (of all three adult men)		0	5
Young wives (including Padimo's 2)		0	11
Young males (sons and step-sons)		8	0
Young females (daughters and step-daughters)		0	5
	Totals	11	21

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Confronted by this situation, Ki-in-kumi in his advancing years had summoned Padimo, a sister's son in his early thirties, to come from Rangu and become his chief lieutenant. The youth of his own son had been a factor in his selection of Padimo. The presence in his camp of an older step-son, Boya, had been another factor. Boya, the step-son, was more than twenty years older than the son, and at least six years older than Padimo, the chosen instrument. Padimo, as we have seen, moved right in, fused his own small household with Ki-in-kumi's large one, and became Ki-in-kumi's Man Friday. Boya, the step-son, though married to a widow, refused to move out. Thus, among other things, we have to distinguish between Ki-in-kumi's household of twelve resident wives enumerated above, and Ki-in-kumi's establishment which contained Padimo, Boya, and the various people attached by marriage or kinship to them. Padimo had an old wife and two young wives (daughters of Ki-in-kumi). Boya had an old wife and a younger brother. There were a number of younger step-children of both sexes also resident with Ki-in-kumi. The full size and make-up of his establishment is given in Table II.

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The Establishments of Malau

There were, besides Ki-in-kumi, six other elders of the Malauila band. Two of these, the brothers Enquirio and Merapanni, were well over sixty and deserve, both by age and by success, to be labeled senior elders. The remaining four ranged in age from about 45 to nearly 60 and since none of them were particularly successful we call them the junior elders. In Table III we have listed the seven "establishments" in which lived all the members of the band. We mean by an establishment a food-production and food-consumption unit. Ki-in-kumi's establishment contained three married men—himself, Boya, and Padimo—and therefore contained three households. Economically it was one establishment, since the sixteen wives it contained worked

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

162 as a team and the food they produced was consumed by the thirty-two total
592 members of the establishment. For comparative purposes in Table III we list
621 Ki-in-kumi's establishment as Unit I and give the personnel breakdown of the other six establishments that made up the total population of Malau. Unit II is the joint enterprise maintained by the other two senior elders, the brothers Enquirio and Merapanui. To this we have added the pathetic and ostracized Teapot and his motherless son, since when they ate at all they ate as hangers-on of the Enquirio-Merapanui menage. Unit III is the establishment jointly maintained by the brothers White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua. Since the oldest wife of Ku-nai-u-ua was Summit's mother, that young man, together with the elderly ex-widow who was so far his only resident wife, lived in this establishment. Units IV and V present no difficulty; they are the small households of the other two junior elders Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai respectively. Unit VI is the joint enterprise of Gitjara and L. F. B., containing largely old ladies and young men. Unit VII is the remarkable menage that had gathered round the elderly widow whom young Banana had illegally "married." To this couple

TABLE III
THE FOOD PRODUCTION UNITS OF MALAU

Unit	Married Males	Unmarried Males[a]	Old Wives[b]	Young Wives	Girls Under 14	Total Persons
I	3	8	5	11	5	32
II	3	9	1	7	11	31
III	3	2	2	3	5	15
IV	1	5	0	1	1	8
V	1	2	0	1	2	6
VI	2	5	3	0	1	11
VII	1?	4	1	0	0	6
Total	14	35	12	23	25	109

[a] Unmarried males include all males from male infants to men around 30, or more.
[b] The division between old wives and young wives is arbitrary. Several of the young wives were 40, others only 14 or 15.
? The question mark in Unit VII refers to the difficulty of deciding whether Banana should be classified as married.

had attached themselves Tiberun (Banana's unmarried older brother), two younger brothers, and another male orphan who had apparently moved in
[736] for want of some better place to eat. The Banana menage thus had somewhat the appearance of a case of economic polyandry and somewhat the look of a fraternity house with an elderly housemother in residence. We include it as Unit VII since by so doing we are able to include in Table III all the hundred and nine people who made up the Malauila band in 1928-29 and allocate all of them to the economic units in which they functioned as food producers and food consumers.

The data in Table III merit close study. These seven establishments illustrate in capsule form several of the more significant emphases in Tiwi career patterns; indeed each might be said to illustrate some time point in the life careers of adult men and/or some degree of success or lack of success in becoming an influential man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Politics of Widow Remarriage

Ki-in-kumi's large establishment was the sort of set-up that every Tiwi sought to achieve but few accomplished. An establishment such as his meant wealth, power, prestige, and influence for its head, and, in Malau, Ki-in-kumi was the only man with such a household. With eleven males, many of them food producing; sixteen women, all of them food producing; and several of the girls under fourteen able to assist the older women, the amount of food this unit could collect in a day provided an ample food surplus for the establishment. A man whose household was a surplus food producer was a successful man. Moreover, since the large work force that produced the food surplus contained numerous young wives who (usually) could be relied upon also to produce numerous female babies, he was doubly blessed with both the requisites—surplus food and surplus daughters—necessary to increase his influence and make more people beholden to him or dependent on him. Of the thirty-five married women in Malau, sixteen, or over 45 percent, were in this one establishment.

By comparison, the other old men of Malau were less successful.[8] Through pooling their work forces, Enquirio and Merapanui had achieved an establishment (Unit II) almost as big as that of Ki-in-kumi, and probably its members ate almost as well as the members of his, but their effort was a shared effort and their influence and prestige had to be divided between them. They had been lucky with daughters but, divided between the two fathers, the eleven daughters in their establishment were less impressive than Ki-in-kumi's eight, and the total of seven young wives between them was quite overshadowed by Ki-in-kumi's nine. The two old brothers were successful men and headed a successful operation, but their prestige and success must be rated at least one whole degree below that of Ki-in-kumi.

Another pair of elderly brothers, White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua, had also joined forces (Unit III), but the results can be judged as only fair. They were at least the best off of their age group, the 45- to 55-year-olds, but the competition in that age group was weak, as can be seen by comparison of their establishment with Units IV and V, the households of Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai. Perhaps the best indication of the respective success in life of the seven oldest men is that given in the column of Table III headed "young wives." Of the twenty-three such women in the band, eighteen were in the establishments[9] of the three oldest men (Units I and II); the next five men in age shared the remaining five (Units III, IV, and V).

It might be thought that the small establishments of the unsuccessful junior elders like White Man, Ku-nai-u-ua, Pingirimini, and Tipiperna-gerai could be expected to increase sharply in size and these men to grow in relative prestige and influence when death removed the three old men at the heads

[8] It will be noticed that as we move into the older group of men we have to use their native names, since most of them had no "whiteman" names.

[9] Two of these eighteen were of course actually married to Padimo, but still part of the establishment of their father, Ki-in-kumi, since Padimo's wives all lived with Ki-in-kumi's wives.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

from their future sons-in-law and demands which look very much like bride price and bride service developed as a basis for marriage arrangement. A young girl had a relatively "free choice" of her future spouse. But following this selection, her father let it be known to the young man what he expected. The desired payment was often stated in Australian money by the 1950's; some men were asking as much as a hundred pounds for a daughter. (This was a very high sum, since Tiwi males working for the Army received four pounds a week as normal wages.) Other men were asking that their sons-in-law live with them, thus leaving their own parental home, and contribute regularly to the upkeep of the household of the father-in-law. This was, indeed, quite a practical arrangement, for when such a young man went to work in Darwin his wife had to be supervised at home and, further, his employer was supposed to send home to the Mission part of the young man's wages.

Thus, by 1954, the following type of marriage agreement was initiated by the great majority of Tiwi with marriageable daughters, specifically those who centered their activities at Bathurst Island Mission and Garden Point. A young girl chose her future husband from her single, male agemates, sometimes with a suggestion from her father. Her father informed his future son-in-law of the obligations incumbent upon him, which normally included matrilocal postmarital residence and a bride price. An older woman with children, or even one without any offspring, who became a widow, was discouraged from remarrying by her father, if he survived, and by her brother after her father's death. The father or eldest brother of a widow with a daughter reaped the benefits of allowing that daughter to marry the young man whom she desired. The widow herself did not remarry but stayed in the household of her father or brother.

Residence Patterns

By 1953, traditional Tiwi residence patterns had undergone major modifications, some of which have already been mentioned. The old residence areas of the bands had been depopulated; in fact, nearly all the Tiwi were located around one of four European establishments—those at Darwin, Bathurst Island Mission, Garden Point, or Snake Bay. In each of these areas a centralized village pattern had developed. Within the Tiwi communities at Snake Bay, Garden Point, and Bathurst Island Mission there remained a few of the old large households with a polygamous base. But in all these camps the household heads were well past sixty and in most cases past seventy. Polygamous households were dying out by 1953.

But what was replacing them? One might assume that the European pattern of the single family household based upon neolocal residence would have emerged as the new Tiwi system. This was not the case, however. Just as Hart found in 1928-29 that successful Tiwi men were the heads of large establishments, so in 1953-54 the younger male leaders had gathered around

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now
● 592 only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that
159 his had been one of Father Geell's first marriages and, except for a few un-
177 comfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped
592 with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and [illegible]ick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose
[736 deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother
968] had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased
[584 younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Car-
589] mel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were
[607] two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1]
[602] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

177 We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led
162 by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a list-
571 ing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent.
[768 Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had
604 daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the
584 "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-
177

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

177 604 584

riage with a boy who was willing to become the "worker" of the girl's controller.[8]

From the economic standpoint, the large household has much the same function as before the days of the Mission. The younger women go out together and gather food; the old women stay home with the young children. The younger men bring home choice items, which now are trade goods and money from Darwin. The "boss" of the great household is wealthy; today, he has food, tobacco, clothes, and usually sufficient money to gamble. The composition of the great households has altered, but their function is very much the same. The establishment of the monogamous Catholic Cabbagee is even larger than that of the polygamous old pagan, Ki-in-kumi, described in an earlier chapter; Cabbagee, with only one wife, has more women under his "control" than ever Ki-in-kumi had, despite his list of twenty-one wives. The Tiwi have thus been able to retain their large households even under the Mission-imposed system of monogamy.

177 182 592

The Change from Patriliny to Matriliny

In the pre-Cooper era of feuding, the largest significant units among the Tiwi were the bands; the Tiwi never, in that by-gone day, acted as a tribe, even in their attacks upon such outsiders as the British. In the 1950's, when informants talked of the old days they commonly mentioned that male members of old bands came together as units to go on war parties. These old bands did not have a strict rule of descent. But, as has already been indicated, the majority of the males were regarded all their lives as members of the band to which their father belonged. That is, the major unit of the old Tiwi social structure was patrilineal in emphasis.

621 [611]

There also existed in the old Tiwi pattern a strictly matrilineal clan organization, related primarily to totemism. One of the totemic animals of a clan stood for a member of that clan in the song composed to commemorate his death; for instance, the first line of the mourning song for a deceased male of the Red Paint Clan might be "I am red paint." Occasionally, several members of a clan helped one of their number in a fight, but this was apparently not very common before the Mission era. This clan-organization pattern prevailed among the Tiwi through about 1930. Then major and most unpredictable changes began.

614 [533] [765]

What does one expect to happen when a society which has a patrilineal emphasis, like the old Tiwi one, comes into contact with a European society where, if there is any emphasis, it is a patrilineal one? Although one would ordinarily expect a strengthening of patriliny, such was not the case among the Tiwi. The old social unit which was predominantly patrilineal was a territorial group with its major functions in the system of feuding. When the

177 611 614 621

[8] By 1955, the terms "boss" and "worker" had come into the local Tiwi dialect to indicate superordinate and subordinate status interrelationships.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 hold rather than the family. There was no ambiguity about its "living together" aspect; there were many ambiguities about its kinship aspects. To some of these unusual domestic usages we now turn.

Marriage by Betrothal

589 In many nonliterate societies, including most, if not all of the mainland Australian tribes, there is a tendency to believe that the main purpose in life for a female is to get married. The Tiwi subscribed to this idea, but firmly carried it to its logical conclusion; namely, that all females must get married, regardless of age, condition, or inclination. They (and they almost alone among human societies) took the very slight step from saying "All females *should* be married" to saying "All females *must* be married." As a result, in aboriginal times there was no concept of an unmarried female in Tiwi ideology, no word for such a condition in their language, and in fact, no female in the population without at least a nominal husband. Their own explanation of this unique situation was connected with their beliefs about conception and where
581 babies come from. Anthropologists have long been aware that the Australian
842 aborigines generally (and indeed some of the Melanesians, such as the famous case of the Trobriand Islands) ignored the role of the male in human conception and firmly believed that a woman becomes pregnant because a spirit has entered into her body. The Tiwi were no exception, but went a step further than the mainlanders in dealing with the dangerous situation created by the unpredictability of the spirits. Since any female was liable to be impregnated by a spirit at any time, the sensible step was to insist that every female have a husband *all the time* so that if she did become pregnant, the child would always have a father. As a result of this logical thinking, all
[584] Tiwi babies were betrothed before or as soon as they were born; females were thus the "wives" of their betrothed husbands from the moment of birth on-
[587] ward. For similar reasons, widows were required to remarry at the gravesides of their late husbands, and this rule applied even to ancient hags who had already buried half a dozen previous husbands in the course of a long life. It can readily be seen that these rules—prenatal betrothal of female infants and immediate remarriage of all widows—effectively eliminated all possibility of an unmarried female from Tiwi society. They also eliminated any possibility of an unmarried mother or a fatherless child. No matter where the unpredictable spirit chose to create a baby, whether it was in the body of a pretty young woman, a toothless old hag, or a little girl of six or seven, the pregnant
[171 female would have a husband, and the children when born would have a
842] father. The Tiwi were thus probably the only society in the world with an illegitimacy rate of zero.

584 The practical application of these two unusual rules had certain unusual
851 consequences. The rule of prenatal betrothal obviously gave a great deal of
593 power to the person with the right to betroth, and in Tiwi this right belonged

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to the husband of the pregnant woman. We carefully say "the husband of the pregnant woman" rather than "the father of the child" because the right resided in the male head of the household at the time of the birth. Although he was ordinarily both the father of the child and the husband of its mother, there were naturally occasions when a child was born after the death of its father, in which case the right of betrothal unquestionably belonged to the mother's new husband. The clearest statement of this rule is to say that the right of betrothal of all newly born females resided in the husband of the mother at the time of the girl's birth. "He who named the child bestowed it." 584 851 593

In most human societies the proportion of males and females in the population is approximately equal, except in the older age-groups where women predominate owing to their tendency to live longer than men. The Tiwi conformed to this norm biologically, but their cultural insistence that all females of every age be married resulted in further unusual features of the domestic situation. No such compulsory marriage was required or expected of males. Hence, the total female population, but only part of the male population, was married. Mathematically this permitted, indeed required, a high degree of plural marriage. The men who held the right to betroth—namely, the fathers of the female babies—could, within certain limits imposed by the kinship system, bestow their about-to-be-born or newly born daughters where they wished, and they certainly did not bestow them on about-to-be-born or newly born males. On the contrary, they bestowed them, generally speaking, where some tangible return was to be anticipated. Put bluntly, in Tiwi culture daughters were an asset to their father, and he invested these assets in his own welfare. He therefore bestowed his newly born daughter on a friend or an ally, or on somebody he wanted as a friend or an ally. Such a person was apt to be a man near his own age or at least an adult man, and hence perhaps forty years or so older than the newly born baby bestowed upon him as a wife. Or, the father might bestow an infant daughter on a man—or some close relative of such a man—who had already bestowed an infant daughter upon him, thus in effect swapping infant daughters. Obviously, the fathers who did the swapping, even if they were not quite the same age themselves, were bound to be many years older than the infant wives they thus received from each other. Or, thirdly, a father looking for a suitable male upon whom to bestow his infant daughter's hand might decide to use her as old-age insurance—in which case he selected as her future husband not one of the older adult men who would be old when he himself was old, but a likely looking youngster "with promise"; that is, a youth in his late twenties or thirties who showed signs of being a good hunter and a good fighting man, and who was clearly on his way up in tribal power and influence. Such a youth, in his late twenties at the time of betrothal, would, with luck, be in his prime as "a big man" in about twenty years—a time when the father of the infant daughter would be getting old and decrepit and much in need of an influential son-in-law who was obligated to him. 162 [581] 595] [584] 593 582 581 [562] [572] [606] [888]

There were other bases upon which infant daughters were betrothed. 582 593

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

582 and indeed the father was seldom an entirely free agent, since he not only
593 had to make his choices for his daughters within the limits imposed by the kinship system, but he was also caught in an intricate network of previous commitments, residual interests, and contingent promises made by other men who had had some prior interest in the baby or the mother of the baby. To mention only the most common limiting situation of this sort, the mother of the baby might have been given to him in the first place on the understanding that when she grew up and had a female baby it was to be bestowed on so-and-so or even returned as a *quid pro quo* to its mother's father, either as wife or as ward.

582 We have oversimplified the situation, but it should be clear that Tiwi fathers, in an overwhelming number of cases, bestowed their infant daughters on husbands a great deal older than those daughters. It is hard to strike an average, but the overall situation is best expressed by saying that no Tiwi father, except in the most unusual cases, ever thought of bestowing an infant daughter upon any male below the age of at least twenty-five. Taking this lowest limit for illustration, this meant that a youth of twenty-five had his first wife betrothed or promised to him at that age but had to wait another fourteen years or so before she was old enough to leave her father's household and take up residence and marriage duties with him. By this time he was about forty and she was fourteen. An age gap between husband and wife at least as great as this, but usually greater, was a necessary and constant result of the Tiwi betrothal system.

No Tiwi young man, then, could expect to obtain his first resident wife through betrothal until he was well into his thirties, at which time this first resident wife would be around fourteen, having been betrothed to him
582a at her birth or before. But it was likely that his first wife's father, who spotted him in his twenties as a "comer," was not the only older man to want him as a
595 son-in-law. As in our own culture, where the first million is the hardest to make, so in Tiwi the first bestowed wife was the hardest to get. If some shrewd father with a daughter to invest in a twenty-year-old decided to invest her in you, his judgment was likely to attract other fathers to make a similar investment. As a result, for *some* Tiwi men, the arrival in residence of the first wife, an event for which they had to wait until their late thirties, was quickly followed by the arrival in residence of a second, third, and fourth (at least), all of them bestowed very shortly after the bestowal of the first. Thus a successful Tiwi, having had no resident wife at all until his late thirties, would accumulate perhaps half a dozen between his late thirties and his late forties as his various betrothed wives reached the age of puberty and joined his household, and from then on he was practically certain to accumulate still more wives as later bestowals grew up and as he was able to invest the daughters borne by his first crop of young wives in transactions which brought in a later crop.

595 That this is not an exaggerated or overdrawn picture of the number of wives that could be accumulated in the course of a long life by a successful

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

and young men married old women, in many cases the nominal "father" of an elderly woman was very much younger and less influential than were her brothers, or her sons by an earlier husband. The brothers and/or sons, therefore, were able to override the wishes of their sisters' nominal father since the seniority system was on their side in such contests, even though the renaming rules were not. 582 582 584 587 592

Although it was very rare indeed for any Tiwi male to have a resident young wife until he was nearly forty, long before that age he was likely to acquire an ancient widow or two. In at least ninety out of every hundred cases a man's first resident wife was a widow very much older than himself. According to a complete genealogical census carried out in 1928-29, nearly every man in the tribe in the age group from thirty-two to thirty-seven was married to an elderly widow. Many of them had two elderly widows and a few had three. But very few of them, and certainly not more than one out of five of them, had a resident *young* wife. About half of them had bestowed wives, but these were mostly toddling infants who would not come into residence with them for another ten years or more. Even for the most promising and rapidly rising young man, the first young bestowed wife was not likely to arrive until several years after his marriage to a widow. 582 587

To get a start in life as a household head and thus to get his foot on the first rung of the prestige ladder, a Tiwi man in his thirties had first of all to get himself married to an elderly widow, preferably one with married daughters. This was the beginning of his career as a responsible adult. The widow did several things for him. She became his food provider and housekeeper. She served as a link to ally him with her sons. As her husband, he acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters when they became widowed. And she, as the first resident wife in his household, stood ready to be the teacher, trainer, and guardian of his young bestowed wives when they began to join him after they reached puberty. [593] [595]

Levirate, Sororate, and Cross-Cousin Marriage

We have emphasized infant bestowal and widow remarriage because it was the elaborate development of these two matrimonial mechanisms that brought about the unusual, perhaps unique, character of the Tiwi household. Other matrimonial mechanisms, more usual in preliterate societies, were also used by the Tiwi but always in combination with or as minor adjuncts to the two basic mechanisms. Thus, a man often remarried his dead brother's wives, or at least some of them, within the institution of widow remarriage. Such a practice is known to anthropologists as the levirate, and tribes are said "to have" the levirate or "not to have" it. The Tiwi, with their pluralistic approach to the whole area of marriage relationships, can hardly be said to fall into either category. To them, every widow had to remarry and among the many possible candidates for her, the brothers of the dead husband were recognized as having a reasonable, but far from automatic, claim. Whether the brothers 587

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

361 special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply.
592 The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general
[171] thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably
592 smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during
574 supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger
[593 household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece
602] of meat or a dish of *kwoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the
[561 general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through
578] all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all
512 resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated
517 with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive
[562] work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the
[513] shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing
[578] each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

578 Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion
182 with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part
837 of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit
592 that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The mobility of people other than household heads was much less. Women and children could move only with the permission, and usually in the company, of their lord and master. Occasionally old and trusted wives might be sent, unsupervised, on a journey by their husbands or their brothers, usually to carry messages and bring back gossip, but young wives were never trusted to be out of sight either of the husband or of elderly female supervisors. Young men were less subject to their fathers' orders and hence were fairly free to come and go as they pleased, but the universal suspicion which all husbands bore toward wandering young men put severe restrictions on their mobility and prevented them attaching themselves to any household or camp in which they did not have some close relative. 562 571 [203]

The fact, then, that a man like Tu'untalumi was (in Tiwi terms) very mobile did not necessarily mean that members of his household shared his degree of mobility. When he took most of his large household with him on his journeys away from home, as he often did, it was always because he was going a considerable distance and was traveling slowly, living off the country as he went. In such cases he liked to have a large retinue to feed him on the way and also to permit him to entertain in fitting style when he arrived. For while it was true that at a funeral or at an initiation the relatives of the deceased or of the novices were supposed to take care of the feeding of all the visitors, nonetheless, wealthy and generous men like Tu'untalumi believed in taking along with them a bevy of young wives, with a couple of efficient elderly widow-wives in charge of them, to contribute to the food-getting and food-preparing activities. Of course the supervision of the young wives' morals in the strange environment was often difficult, especially in the hectic atmosphere of a big ceremonial, but this worry was compensated for by the fact that the visitor who came so attended was contributing a number of extra food providers to the labor force of the harassed hosts and thus making a generous gesture, and also by the fact that such a visitor was not dependent upon the hospitality provided by the hosts. Having his own food-producing unit with him, he could live better and stay longer than if he had come alone or only as one of a party of men. In this respect, as in so many others, a Tiwi household head's decision had to be reached by balancing against one another the two competing motives of, on the one hand, the desire to eat well and, on the other, the desire to keep his young wives safe from prowling bachelors. Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest man of the Malauila band, usually decided not only to leave his wives at home but also not even to go himself. But Ki-in-kumi was a gloomy, pessimistic old man. Tu'untalumi usually decided to do the thing in style, travel with a large retinue, have all the comforts of home while in strange districts, and take his chances on the strange bachelors. He clearly believed that a good booming ceremony with lots to eat and himself in the center directing the dancing was well worth the risk of a few of his young wives being seduced off-stage. Men like Ki-in-kumi thought Tu'untalumi an old fool for not leaving his young wives at home, and Tu'untalumi probably thought that old Ki-in-kumi might as well be dead, especially since his death would be the occasion for a really magnificent funeral. 159 222 462 527 [574] [837] 593] [184]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

557 entered in the middle of the game and found the current hands being played with all the old scores back for at least two generations influencing the play of the present hands. The game never had a beginning or an end; every new player had to start in the middle and make the best of whatever assets he had by way of kinship, clanship, household membership, and help from older players. Similarly, any attempt to describe the operations involved or the "rules" of the game must perforce start in the middle.

The "game" was one of trying to win friends and increase prestige and influence over others. The "assets," in a tribe with such minimal material possessions as the Tiwi, were mostly intangible ones such as friendship, "help," 557 goodwill, respect of others, control over others, importance, and influence. 562 Even in our culture such things are difficult to express in concrete or tangible symbols. The most concrete symbol of Tiwi success was the possession of surplus food, for this not only permitted its possessor to make gifts to others and throw large parties for which he picked up the check, but also gave him lots of leisure time to devote to social and political life. Since a man required a large number of women in his work force if he was to build up a surplus of food, in the final analysis it was control of women that was the most tangible index of power and influence. Women were the main currency of the influence struggle, the main "trumps" in the endless bridge game.

It should be noticed that we stress the value of women as women rather than as wives or bestowable daughters. To a smart Tiwi politician, wives or daughters were assets but so was his mother—if submissive to her son's wishes. So were his sisters—if amenable. A bachelor at the age of thirty who had several sisters was a lucky young man, especially if those sisters already had daughters to their current husbands. As successful old men used their infant daughters to gain influence and buy satellites, so young men used their mothers and their sisters—if they could.

Thus the psychological line between the attitude of a man toward a wife and his attitude toward a sister or a daughter was a very thin one. A Tiwi elder had many women related to him in some way—as wives, as daughters, as step-daughters, as sisters, as sisters' daughters, as wards, and as mother—and all of these were part of his assets or capital. The fact that he had sexual rights to the wives and not to the daughters or the sisters was only of minor relevance. What was of major relevance was that they were all women whom he could use—or try to use—as investment funds in his own career of influence seeking. The devious details of Tiwi prestige and influence operations are much easier to follow if one keeps in mind the crucial fact that the Tiwi men valued women as political capital available for investment in gaining the goodwill of [593] other men more than they were interested in them as sexual partners. Some of the more senile elders were quite vague about the young girls in their household; such an old man was sure only of the fact that a girl, by being in his household, was part of his capital. Which were his daughters and which were recently joined young wives was a question that had to be referred to the old wives who kept track of such academic details.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

Women were, however, a form of capital that possessed the power of talking back to the investors. As daughters or as wives they were quite thoroughly subordinate to the wishes of their fathers or husbands, and Tiwi wives were as frequently and as brutally beaten by their husbands as wives in any other savage society. But as mothers and as sisters the women were not coerced by their sons and their brothers. On the contrary, sons or brothers wishing to use their mothers or their sisters in their political schemes (typically when those mothers or sisters became or were about to become widows) could only do so with the active collaboration of the women concerned. Tough-minded young widows could drive a hard bargain with their brothers as to where they remarried, since each needed the other to make the remarriage acceptable to the tribe at large and to beat down the other competitors (the dead husbands' brothers, for example) who wished to control the remarriage of the widows. Young girls thus had no bargaining power but young widows had a good deal. Old mothers with influential senior sons were extremely powerful. Any affront to an old woman was an affront to her sons, and some of the strongest influence networks were alliances of several senior brothers, in which their old mother seemed to be the mastermind and the senior sons largely the enforcers of what the old mother and her middle-aged daughters (their sisters) had decided among themselves.

Thus, for women, as for men, age and political skill were the crucial factors in determining their position. Young girls were chattels and as such were passed around from husband to husband. But with increasing age, smart young women, especially in alliance with their smart young brothers, could control their own fate with some firmness, and if they and their brothers had a shrewd old mother (also with powerful senior brothers still alive) to advise them and support them, then the decisions of such a group as to where the girls remarried were very difficult decisions for anybody else to combat or oppose. Not as independent operators, but as behind-the-scenes allies of their sons and brothers, Tiwi mothers and sisters enjoyed much more essential freedom in their own careers as often-remarried widows than would appear at first sight in a culture which ostensibly treated all women as currency in the political careers of the men. No matter how males, both old and young, might connive, they were constantly aware that no remarriage of a widow could ever be arranged and made to stick unless the widow herself was agreeable.

In the limited space available, all we can offer are a few samples of how the influence game was played by a few selected individuals of various ages. Age was of great importance in Tiwi careers and therefore we select our samples from all the adult male age-groups. We have selected them all from the same band—the *Malauila*—so as to show as clearly as possible the interplay between one career and another for men of the same band. And finally we select men of the *Malauila* band for our examples because in 1928-29 it was a band little affected as yet by the outside influences—Catholic missionaries and Japanese pearl divers—which were beginning to modify Tiwi marriage customs among some of the other bands.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 Some years later, when Boya had reached a reasonable age like 30,
●593 Ki-in-kumi had arranged for him to marry a very ancient and childless widow
(*palimaringa*) more than twenty years older than himself. This was all that
[587] Ki-in-kumi considered he needed to do for his step-son, and in Tiwi terms
it was almost a gesture of contempt and an open indication that Ki-in-kumi, by
providing him with an old woman who was childless but could cook, was not
interested in helping Boya toward a career. Since the joining up of Boya to
[768] the crone took place shortly after the death of Boya's mother, who had lived
with her sons in Ki-in-kumi's household, Ki-in-kumi by producing the old
widow for Boya was telling him in effect to get out and start his own household
now that his mother was dead.

159 In 1928 we found Boya aged about 42 married to the crone of 65.
584 But he, she, and Boya's younger brother of 24 were still living in Ki-in-kumi's
593 household. Ki-in-kumi's detestation of him was notorious and yet Boya had by
now no less than four young bestowed child-wives growing up elsewhere. No
[592] one of these bestowals had come from Malau but were bestowals from different
fathers of baby girls in other bands. At first sight this presented a curious
situation. Within his own band Boya appeared a complete failure, suffering
[554] so severely from Ki-in-kumi's hostility that he had received no bestowals and
at age 42 did not even have a separate household of his own. But how could
this judgment be squared with the four bestowals from elders of other bands?
Clearly none of the causes of success so far analyzed fitted the case of Boya.

159 Further research into who lived with whom as distinct from who was
591 married to whom revealed that not only was "the household" of Boya, his
592 elderly wife, and his younger brother an integral part of the Ki-in-kumi
"establishment," but also that Padimo with his "household" was part of that
establishment. Padimo, like Boya, had one elderly wife but he also had five
bestowed wives, all daughters of Ki-in-kumi. We said above that the two eldest
of these five girls being now aged 20 and 17 respectively were in residence
with their husband, while the three youngest, not having reached puberty,
were still "with their father." Actual observation showed that this was an
academic distinction, since the households of Padimo, the son-in-law, and Ki-in-
kumi, the father-in-law, were parts of the same establishment. When one of
Ki-in-kumi's daughters bestowed on Padimo became old enough to "leave her
father and join her husband," she did not have to move her residence or even
change her daily work routines. She merely sat at night around the campfire
of her older sisters (Padimo's wives) instead of around the campfire of her
younger sisters (Ki-in-kumi's daughters). She remained part of the same es-
tablishment.

Padimo, it will be remembered, was the young man whom Ki-in-kumi
had attracted from Rangu to Malau by liberally bestowing him with child-
wives. Padimo had thus moved into the northern band and by 1928 had
moved right into Ki-in-kumi's camp, where he functioned as a sort of executive
officer and heir apparent to the old man. In the same camp, though in a very
different capacity, was Boya, the 42-year-old despised step-son. Many roads thus
592 led to Ki-in-kumi's household, but before discussing the large establishment

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was entering the junior elder class and, having received wives from other sources than Inglis, was getting to the point where he would soon have free daughters of his own. He had no intention of performing any more services for Inglis who was now nearly sixty. Hence Inglis had not bestowed any daughters on Tomitari since 1923; those of his daughters who had been born since that year were bestowed on men other than Tomitari and men who were younger and less successful than he. 159 584 557

As we see it, the deals involving widows, particularly the pay-offs to young agents for acting to promote the interests of older men, had distorted what might be called the pure theory of Tiwi bestowal. According to the pure theory, mothers' brothers bestowed their daughters on selected sisters' sons, and the older man who gave a young man a wife and became his wife's father, was performing a kindness toward a favorite nephew for which the nephew should be grateful. But the Inglis-Tomitari operation shows how the theory had become distorted in practice. In order that Inglis might have some young daughters whom he would be free to bestow on his favored young nephew, Tomitari, in 1914 he had had to arrange the young man's marriage with an elderly widow to ensure safe delivery to him (Inglis) of some young wives who would bear him those daughters. Everything went smoothly and no slip-up occurred, yet by the time Inglis was in a position to give a wife to his favored young nephew, he found that the latter was no longer a dependent young man but a successful junior elder competing with him in his own field of identifying and using talent among the younger men. Tomitari's first daughter, born in 1927—not to any daughter of Inglis but to an older wife—was bestowed by its father on the distant but very promising Gitjara, a man of thirty-two. Gitjara was thus selected by Tomitari as a promising satellite at about the same age as Tomitari in 1914 had been selected by Inglis. Moreover, Tomitari by this time, far from being the grateful nephew of old Inglis (as the theory stipulated), was looking forward with anticipation to the old man's death, since when that occurred, among the widows of Inglis would be the three sisters of Padimo of whom he was still the nominal father. It was by acting as their step-father when they were children that he had got his own career started. They were indeed the foundation stone of his own career and, having profited so much from them as children, he was keenly interested in their redisposition whenever Inglis' death should put them on the market again. Thus he was simultaneously the husband of some of Inglis' daughters and nominal father of some of Inglis' wives. In the first status, he was expected by the theory to be a grateful son-in-law of Inglis; in the second status, the facts of Tiwi life required him to see Inglis' death as providing him with an opportunity to derive some new benefits for himself from his position as nominal father of the three wives of Inglis whose delivery to Inglis' household he had himself engineered. 183 581 604 159 183 584 604 [557 593]

Thus the politics of bestowal cannot be separated from the politics of widow remarriage. Every case of one had endless repercussions in the other. Sisters' sons who were promised young wives by their mothers' brothers were always too old to be grateful by the time the bestowal occurred or by the even later time when the bestowed child was old enough to come into residence. 182 557 584 604

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

her camp, now a bed of oysters at *y*; her bark hut, a large boulder projecting from a sandbank, at *aa*; and her paper-bark water-carrier, now a large tree, at *r* (left). 532x 778

The body and head of a carpet snake cooked and eaten by *Mudungkala* are boulders, *x*, *w*, on the coast of Jurubulinai. One of the spots at Cockle Point, in Apsley Strait, where *Mudungkala* camped when returning from *Purukupali's pukamuni*, is now a large rock, *bb* (lower left); a spring of fresh water, where she cooked her shell-fish, is at *ff*; while at *l* (centre), there is a patch of submarine grass, the favourite food of the turtles.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mantinuria, at Rulijunga

The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Mantinuria*, created a totemic place, Rulijunga, on the headwaters of the Tjipripu River. 773 778

At Rulijunga there is a large flat plain (central black design, Pl. 18A), which *Mantinuria* cleared so that the mythical people, travelling from Bathurst and western Melville Island, to attend the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, could perform an *ilanis* (p. 32). 532x 773

The circles on the periphery of the central black disc, are the roots, and the eight long ovals, the trunks and leaves of cabbage palms which the *Mantinuria* woman created to provide food for herself and the participants of the *ilanis* ceremony.

The outer dark-coloured oval, at *a*, *a*, is the level plain surrounding the ceremonial ground, the inner black line symbolizing the red clouds at sunset and the white outer line, the cumulus clouds of the day-time. The dots represent small shrubs and tufts of grass at Rulijunga.

The Fork-tailed Kite-man, Mudati, and his wife, the Dingo-woman, Kirijuna, at Arunumpi

During *palamari* times, *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite-man and his wife, *Kirijuna*, a dingo-woman, were travelling together near Arunumpi, southern Melville Island, when *Mudati* saw his wife's brother, *Jurumu*, the eagle-man, coming towards them. *Mudati* warned his wife, for her own safety, not to speak or even look at her brother, but the woman, who had not seen her brother for many years, took a quick glance just to see how much he had grown. Instantly, she dropped dead at her husband's feet. But even as he watched he saw her change into a dingo, rise to her feet and slink away. 773 825 593

Since then, the dingo, ashamed of her actions in those early times, keeps

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

825 out of sight, while, following the command of *Mudati*, aboriginal brothers
[593] and sisters, once they become adult, never look at each other, nor converse, except through a third person.

Pl. 20A, B, describes the natural features at Arunumpi. A large rock, at *a*,
×532 was once *Mudati's* camp; a boulder, *d*, his fire; and a path, *c*, made by the
778 mythical man as he walked to and from his camp at *a*. Another path, *b*, was made by a mangrove bird-man, *Ulubingini*, whose camp is at *j*. *Mudati* is at *m*; his wife, *Kirijuna*, at *k*, and *Jurumu*, at *f* (lower left).

Nearby, at *e*, there is a deposit of yellow ochre, and another at *g*, of white, both of which *Mudati* used when he was a *wadjaniati* initiate at the first *kulama* ceremony held at Turiturina (p. 123). *Mudati's kulama* initiation ornaments, now unspecified natural features are: his cockatoo feather head-dress, *pirinitiki*, at *w*, *w*; arm ornaments, *palmatjinas*, at *x*, *x*, *x*; and cane arm ornaments, *jairinis*, at *v*. A *kulama* ground, *u*, where a ceremony was once held, is now a flat rocky surface, a half a mile in diameter, and the shelter, *t*, behind which the initiates rested during the ceremony, a large boulder.

At *h*, is a patch of jungle where *Kirijuna*, *Mudati's* wife, once collected yams. She left her palm leaf, *tulini*, basket at *l* (upper right); her small bark basket at *o*; and her larger bark basket at *i*. These are now outcropping rocks at the totemic site.

A turtle, once speared by *Mudati*, is now a submerged boulder at *m*; the sand-bank, on which he stood, is a high red cliff at *n*, and the large stream, in which he often caught fish, is indicated by the crescent-shape at *r*.

The Flying-fox man, Murungimpili, and Bamboo-woman, Kaialili, at the Kaialili lagoon

778 At the Kaialili lagoon, near the head of the De Vere creek at Muranapi, southern Melville Island, there are two totemic places, one belonging to *Murungimpili*, the flying-fox man, and the other to *Kaialili*,[44] the bamboo-
[773] woman. Together, these mythical people created many trees, plants, cat-fish, crabs and other sea creatures.

Pl. 20C, D, deals with the topography of the area. At *m*, is the Kaialili
×532 lagoon, the totem place of the bamboo-woman, at *p*, the Buliati (De Vere)
778 Creek; at *c*, *b*, are other small watercourses, and *e*, *e*, etc., springs, all of which run into the Kaialili lagoon. The cross-hatching at *o*, *o*, is a swamp, at the source of Buliati Creek, and the cross-hatched area, *f*, *f*, the grass on its

[44] I did not find out the relationships between *Murungimpili* and *Kaialili*; it is likely that they were man and wife.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(iii) *The Totemic Songs and Dances.* At the completion of the meal, both the "workers" and the *pukamuni* men and women performed a series of dances to the accompaniment of traditional totemic songs. 765

Almost without exception, these songs and dances belonged to the totemic beings of Walu, the country of *Tiparwilimiri*, the father of the dead man, *Wanimpari*.

These rituals were opened by the leader, who, standing in the centre of the *milimika*, called out the names of the totemic beings of Walu, *Andjaki* (fresh water), *Pakadringa* (thunderstorm), *Tomituka* (rain), and *Bumerali* (lightning). As before, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*" after each name was called.

The men then chanted the rain song, "The heavy rain falls and the frog calls, *poki, poki, puturaka*", while the men danced, with their fingers pointing to the ground, symbolizing falling rain (Pl. 308), and the woman, *Prupadau*, hopped along the ground in imitation of the frog-woman,[68] *Kwuk-kwuk*. As the dance proceeded, the men and *Prupadau* all imitated the actions of the frog-woman by hopping along the ground on their hands and knees. [539] 765 535

While the dance was in progress, the leader called out "*Tomituka*" (rain). *Prupadau*, picking up a sheet of paper-bark, held it over her head and shivered, and the men, their hands clasped tightly over their heads, shouted, "*Batua, batua*" (rain finish). This completed the dance. *Pulanimbuwi* danced the white-headed sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 305), before the *pumuti* began.

(iv) *The Pumuti.*[69] The *pumuti* rituals, which are always carried out with much goodwill, friendliness and laughter, were performed at most, if not all, of the *ilanias*, and, in a restricted form, at the final *pukamuni*. 765

At some stage, usually toward the end of the *ilania*, sometimes more than once, each man and woman, taking a bunch of leaves, or a roll of paper-bark and calling softly "*Ooh, ooh, ooh*", beat the wife, or husband, sisters, brothers, and all the near relatives of that particular spouse.

(v) *The Rite of Fire-jumping and the sending out of the Message Sticks.* The rite of fire-jumping, or *wandiatapinda*, carried out in the second series of *ilanias*, differed from that in the first series. Instead of the participants stepping over a fire (Pl. 248), a number of the close relatives climbed a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and leaves (Pl. 23c). As each man 765 372

[68] The frog-woman, whose totemic place is Walu, north-eastern Melville Island, is the mother of *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*.

[69] This ritual would tend to reduce tensions between the spouse and his, or her, relatives, which is considerable in some communities. [593] [578]

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

she were dead in fact and for the time being no longer his wife. She 551
is in touch with the spirits and the result will be a child for her husband. 844
Since he is too close to the mystery for comfort they abstain from mentioning it in his presence.

The result of the childbirth is a child and that child was recently a spirit. Therefore the name must come from the sacred language.

Initiation ceremonies also involve a very close contact with the spirit 553
world. Initiation is a sacred rite and sacred names must be taken when 881
passing through its various stages. When *Timalaykumi* is seized by men of his sister's husband's totem and yellow grease is smeared on his chest he ceases to be *Timalaykumi* and becomes *Maru-kumani*, a person in touch with unseen forces, and he therefore must have a sacred name. His previous name came from the sacred language, but this is a change of status and is expressed by giving him a new name, one that is only used on such occasions.

The fact that death renders sacred all the concepts closely associated 553
with the dead man does no doubt play a large part in causing the tabu 587
on names he has bestowed upon other people. There is I think another 768
factor which is even more important in the causation of this particular 593
tabu. When a man marries a widow he becomes to the tribe not the foster father of her children but the actual father. It cannot be pointed out too often that the Australian blackfellow does not distinguish physiological and social fatherhood. The new husband is married to the widow, he therefore must be the father of her children. Her children change their position in the tribe, and the function of the changing of their names is to show this change and the new social relationships that have been imposed upon them by it. It will be remembered in this connection that the husband changes the names of *all* the woman's children whether of her last husband or not, and also that words in either the sacred or the ordinary language which are similar in sound to the former names of the children do not become tabu. That is, it is a social not a sacred change of name.

It might be argued that the widow changes her status also, yet her 587
name is not changed. But in point of fact she does not alter her status; 768
her new husband is usually of the same clan as her last one, and frequently 553
he is an actual brother of the dead man. In any case her new husband cannot change her name as she is not one of the people he can bestow names upon. Nor does her name mean to the tribe any relation to her

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 (b) had each a number of wives at home, (c) had not rented any to the Japanese
548 as yet (mainly because of lack of opportunity), but (d) were all suspecting each
595 other of contemplating an early trip to the Yeimpi country and therefore were
668 in chronic indecision on the whole matter. Hence Mariano's arguments were
797 greeted with the applause that any group of people caught among a complicated set of moral alternatives will give to one of their number who has solved for himself the conflicts that beset them and has solved them moreover in a way perfectly consistent with all his previous attitudes. It was the applause and approval that is expressed in our culture by some such phrase as "I may not agree with him but at least he is sincere and you always know where he stands."

159 But like similar people elsewhere Mariano inspired no close intimate
593 loyalty. Nobody felt warmly toward him. The missionaries used him but didn't like him, the anthropologist found him invaluable as an informant but intensely irritating in his self-importance and his belief in his own indispensability; among the natives he had no intimates and no close friends. His relations with his wife were much more formal and distant than was usual among monogamous couples and she frequently criticized him both in public and in private for what she called his "failure to talk to her"—undoubtedly the Tiwi equivalent of the American wife's complaint against her husband's absorption in business or politics. He was fond of his children but played with them little and then in a silent, brooding sort of way, confining his caresses to tickling and squeezing them, unlike Antonio whose play with his children was always carried on in an endless flow of chatter and two-way conversations. Child-talk, one surmises, was beneath Mariano's dignity.

All in all, Mariano was a forceful, domineering, self-important, introverted
177 man, pursuing his dedicated way as the leader of a cause—collaboration with
159 and imitation of the whites—but having personality traits which prevented him from inspiring any of the affection or warm devotion that other types of leaders inspire. There were many Tiwi, especially among the younger men, who were ready and willing to adopt at least the easier aspects of white culture such as clothes, work in Darwin, disrespect for tribal laws, violation of taboos, but in no sense can they be described as Mariano's followers, still less his admirers. Everyone respected Mariano, everybody consulted him, everybody made use of him and listened to him, but nobody warmed to him. He was as sound, as domineering, as aggressive, as humorless, as dedicated, as admirable as one of the Old Testament prophets—and just as difficult to like.

LOUIS

159 Of the five sons of Turimpi, it may be that the two who were most similar in whatever it is that is called personality were the second and third sons, Mariano and Louis. Both were "lonely ones," both had about them a kind of gloomy, inward-focused aura which inhibited warm friendly relations with
[522] others. Among a people to whom laughter and gaiety come easily, both were completely devoid of humor. Both were men dedicated to a cause, but in the

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

preased laughter on the other side of the fire as he recalled to himself the amusing incidents of the day. Even when alone with his thoughts he was still laughing. This suggests that Tip's gaiety was "natural" rather than contrived for effect, and there is support for the suggestion in the fact that Tip was regarded as a poor hunter, because, as one critic put it, "He doesn't concentrate on killing the kangaroo but plays jokes on the kangaroo and makes a game out of hunting." Another indication that when alone he behaved in the same irresponsible manner that he exhibited in public. 159

The second ground that suggests that fun-loving and gaiety are not incompatible with increasing age and tribal status is the fact that there were many old and venerable Tiwi who loved fun and laughter just as Tipperary did. One such was Tu'untalumi, one of the most elderly of the Tiklauila, a man of weight, dignity and poise. He was a highly respected person, an expert in ceremonial performances and a rigid traditionalist in all things. But despite his age and dignity this man was as given to fun and laughter as Tip was. The main difference was that Tip's laughter was loud, boisterous and prankish; Tu'untalumi's jokes and quips were delivered in low, gentle tones and his laughter was dignified and restrained. But within the limitations imposed by his status he got as much fun and extracted as much humor out of life as Tip, illustrating the point that age and seniority in Tiwi do not at all necessarily mean sourness and lack of humor. Although the two were not related Tipperary played up to the old man and courted and valued his approval while Tu'untalumi clearly liked having Tip around him. They were kindred souls but separated by more than forty years of age. 157 522 561 159 522 572

As is probably the case in most cultures, so among the Tiwi—the genuinely gay person is popular. Tipperary though the next to youngest of Turimpi's sons was the one with most friends. Perhaps significantly, his friends were among both his seniors and juniors, but not among his brothers. Antonio was the only brother who sought Tip's company and this can be accounted for either by the fact that Antonio, when not harassed by his status, was an easy-going, friendly and none too intelligent man who laughed readily even when none too sure of what the joke was, or that he found Tip's company a relaxation from the cares of state. Of the other brothers, the self-righteous and puritanical Mariano considered Tip frivolous and deplored (or was jealous of) the tendency of white men to become fond of him. Louis actively disliked Tip perhaps because his love affairs were an obvious target for some of Tip's better quips. "Perhaps he is going into the bush to take a nap" was one of his comments when he saw Louis disappearing among the trees. With his full brother Bob, Tip had few close ties, perhaps because Bob spent much of his time in Darwin, but even more likely, one suspects, because Bob, an indefinite and colorless youngster, shrank from attracting public notice, whereas Tip was always drawing attention to himself, with the result that Bob to save himself embarrassment avoided his company. 159 593

Outside his siblings, Tipperary's gaiety earned him the liking and companionship of the younger men and made him a favorite younger man of some 159 522 572

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

MoBrSo to be the first husband of a girl is not merely a question of preferential choice; a FaSiSo is actually the only cross-cousin of the appropriate age to be considered as a party to a Type A contract. 582

As a first step, let us consider the expected relative ages of the principal parties to a Type A contract: the mother-in-law, the son-in-law, and the expected daughter-wife. A girl becomes a mother-in-law at puberty. For the sake of convenience we may consider this to be at the absolute minimum age of ten. A boy becomes a son-in-law at an age of not less than ten, and he may well be older than this. The minimum age of a Tiwi male is determined by his physical ability to hunt for and otherwise serve his mother-in-law in order to fulfill his part of the contract. 582 606 [581]

We cannot expect the future daughter and wife to be born, on the average, for at least five years and conceivably not for twenty years after the contract is made. However, again for convenience, let us assume that, on the average, the promised daughter will be born ten years from the date of the contract, i.e., when both the mother and the son-in-law are about twenty years old. The young girl will not become a cohabiting wife for approximately another eight or ten years, at which time her promised husband will be at least 28 to 30 years of age. Thus an average difference of twenty years between the ages of a girl and her first husband is to be expected—a difference which is dictated solely by the form and nature of the initial Type A contract. 582

Hart (1930: 282) believed that this twenty-year age difference was largely a result of the excessive practice of polygyny quite evident in his time (ca. 1930). However, in 1954, when most polygynous households had been broken up, an analysis of age differences for all primary unions for women in my sample still reflected the same disparity. Few men under the age of 30 had received wives, and only one girl over the age of ten had not yet been given to her promised husband. The average age difference between wives and first husbands was 18.9 years, with a range of from three to 54 years (Goodale 1959: 72). [114] [595] [593]

I shall next consider the expected relative ages of parents, siblings, and the children of siblings (cousins). If there is a twenty-year age difference between husbands and wives, it logically follows that the same age difference will also exist between the mothers and fathers of children. A woman can expect to have children by the age of twenty, while a man will not be expected to have legitimate children until about the age of 40. If we assume that siblings are of the same relative age (there being a 50/50 chance that brothers and sisters are older or younger), then we can expect that a sister will, on the average, have a child twenty years before her brother has a child. Thus it can be expected that the FaSiSo of a female Ego will be twenty years older than she is, and that her MoBrSo will be twenty years younger. In arranging the primary marriage of a girl, it is thus virtually impossible that she be promised to a MoBrSo who by expectation is twenty years younger than she, and who indeed is 582 593 582 605

582 probably not even born when she reaches the wifely age of ten. A
605 FaSiSo, on the other hand, is a cross-cousin belonging to the correct age group to be a party to the initial marriage contract. Relative age, therefore, determines that a Type A marriage contract, which is culturally universal for a woman's primary marriage and preferential from the point of view of male prestige, results almost inevitably in unilateral cross-cousin marriage between a MoBrDa and her FaSiSo.

The preferred form for widow remarriage among the Tiwi is to a
582 younger brother of the deceased husband. This type of remarriage
587 contract stems directly from the Type A contract and may be considered a continuation thereof. It is therefore here classified as a Type A2 contract. As a woman grows older, when and if her Type A contract or its continuation runs out, alternative choices for secondary husbands are available to her, and acceptable to the Tiwi, among other cross-cousins.

582 A comparable method of analysis indicates that, as between the sons of a father's elder and younger sisters, a woman's primary marriage under a Type A contract is very much more likely to be with
[595] her FaElSiSo, and that under these circumstances she will probably enter her husband's household as a second and junior wife. Her elder co-wives play an important part in her education as a wife.
582 After she becomes a widow, however, she may become the first wife,
587 with the title of *taramagata*, of a FaYoSiSo or of a MoElBrSo through a Type A2 or B contract. A MoYoBrSo, however, may be expected
593 to be considerably younger than Ego, and my analysis of all marriages in 1954 showed that only after the age of 30 do we find women married to husbands younger than they. Such a marriage can never be the result of a Type A contract but may occur under contracts of Types B, C, or D (see below).

Not only does the twenty-year average age difference between husband and wife under a Type A contract have the effect of practically limiting the choice among cross-cousins for a woman's first husband to a father's elder sister's son; it also means that a woman may expect to have at least two husbands during her lifetime. Indeed, she is likely to have a series of husbands whose ages relative to her own are successively younger until, as an elderly widow, she may well become the first wife of a man very much younger than herself.

Classification of Tiwi Marriage Contracts

584 The form and nature of Tiwi marriage contracts cannot be understood merely by looking at the results of the contract, i.e., who marries whom. One must also look at who has the authority to make the contract, who are parties to the contract, who implements the contract, and who can change a contract. Among the Tiwi the rights, duties, and obligations that pertain to all these aspects of a marriage contract are specified and reside in different individuals at different times in a woman's life. Here again the age factor must be considered, for while these rights, duties, and obligations lie in the

hands of a limited number of specified relatives of the woman, the 584
privilege of exercising a particular role in a marriage contract depends on the individual's age relative to others holding similar rights and relative to the woman involved in the contract. I have chosen to base the following classification of contracts on the single factor of who has the right to make the contract.

Type A Contracts

A Type A contract involves four individuals. The authority to [603]
make the contract resides solely in the hands of the bride's mother's father. At the time the contract is made, this man is at the expected age of 50—the age when a man is at the height of his political career. Acquiring wives for himself to further his career and maintain his [554 515]
prestige is only one of the activities involving marriage contracts in which a Tiwi male is engaged at this time of life. As a father, he has a duty to look after the welfare of his daughters even after they are [593]
married. As an elder in a matrilineal descent group, he has a similar duty toward all younger members of that descent group, male and [614]
female. By arranging a correct Type A marriage contract, a Tiwi man can fulfill two duties at the same time. He can provide his daughter with a son-in-law, whom he selects on the basis of potential economic and political ability and who, if of roughly the same age as the daughter, can be expected to provide her, under the terms of the contract, with continued support throughout her life. By selecting a young man in his own descent group (his sister's daughter's son) to provide this support, he at the same time assures this young man that he will eventually obtain a bestowed and preferred type of wife which will help him on his road to prestige.

The arranger of a Type A contract may be dead by the time the bride is of an age to be given over to her selected groom. The rights to implement the contract, consequently, do not permanently reside with the arranger, but rather they are the duty of the mother of the bride. They are not given to the mother's husband, even if he is also the bride's father. In the space of time that may well elapse between the arrangement of the contract and its implementation, the bride's mother may have a number of husbands, each of whom may have different axes to grind and varying motives for changing the selection of the groom. The right to change any Type A contract belongs to both the mother of the bride and to the groom; if either does not live up to the obligations of the contract the other may consider it void.

A Type A contract, therefore, is one which preferentially and [614]
frequently results in a marriage of a MoFaSiDaSo to a MoMoBrDaDa and in a marital union between two matrilineal descent groups. This arrangement is unaffected either by the death of the arranger or by any secondary marriage of the bride's mother to a man who, though the real father of the bride, might possibly belong to a descent group other than the two originally involved in the contract.

The enduring quality of a Type A contract over a span of two 582
generations is a most important aspect of the total marriage system

582 of the Tiwi. Any variation from the proper, preferred form of a marriage contract in one generation will not normally have any effect on the marriages of the succeeding generation (indeed, there may not be any succeeding generation if the woman is past child-bearing age). When and if the effect is felt in the marriage contracts of the second descending generation, approximately 80 years will have elapsed, i.e., time enough for necessary social adjustments to have been made and accepted. And since a woman's husbands have no control over their daughters' initial marriages, variation from the patterned norm of unilateral cross-cousin and descent-group exchange is not only allowed but is a frequent occurrence. While certain alternatives are preferable, such as a cross-cousin from a different descent group, marriage with relatives other than cross-cousins is permitted with certain limitations.

Type B Contracts

A Type B marriage is one which is arranged by a bride's father
584 or mother's husband. A bride's father has a right and a duty to arrange a daughter's marriage if, and only if, her Type A contract has become void, either because of the death of her promised husband and the lack of any legitimate (A2) heirs to her Type A contract, or because her mother has deemed the contract void because of non-fulfillment of obligations on the part of the promised husband. Although a marriage resulting from a Type B contract may in fact be
582 the first actual marriage of the bride, it is considered a secondary
587 marriage by the Tiwi, and therefore the selection of a groom by the bride's father need not necessarily be confined to the preferential category of FaSiSo. Because the bride's father also has obligations to his own descent group, he may well give his daughter to a member of his matrilineal sib. This may or may not be the same descent group as that from which the first groom was selected. The bride's
[593] father, if he is a man "on the way up," may also make "daughter exchange" an essential part of a Type B contract.

Type C Contracts

584 A Type C contract is one which is arranged by a woman's brothers. When a woman's father dies, her brothers inherit the duty
587 to look after her welfare, and, as this duty applies to their sister's
593 marriage, they may well find themselves in a position to arrange a secondary marriage for her. Since they usually belong to the same descent group as their sister, they need not necessarily consider descent-group obligations in the choice of a groom. Brothers, like fathers, may well make the direct exchange of women an essential part of a Type C contract.

Type D Contracts

A Type D contract is one which is ostensibly arranged by a woman's sons, after the death of her brothers. If a young man who

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

is desirous of starting his household has inherited the right of arranging his mother's remarriage, he may well enter into a contract involving an exchange of mothers with another youth in a similar position. While a son is accorded this right, I suspect that in many of the cases of mother exchange the real arrangers are the mothers.

Tiwi Kinship Terminology

For the sake of the record, I present herewith the kinship terms which I collected in 1954. It must be understood that my major informants on the classification of kin were women. Although most of the terms were also checked with male informants, through oversight this was not done in a few instances. Although a full discussion of the terminology would perhaps be valuable, limitations of time and space compel me to limit my comments to matters directly pertinent to my discussion of the marriage system. Unless otherwise indicated, all the terms listed are employed by male as well as female speakers.

Sibling Terminology

1 *iwuni:* elder brother. Affinal application: WiSiHu, MoBrDaHu (ws).
2 *iwini:* younger brother. Affinal application: WiSiHu, FaSiDaHu (ms).
3 *imbunga:* elder sister. Affinal application: HuBrWi, MoBrSoWi (ws).
4 *imboka:* younger sister. Affinal application: HuBrWi, FaSiSoWi (ms).
5 *inggalabini:* half brother (see discussion below).
6 *inggalabunga:* half sister (see discussion below).

The regular sibling terms (1 to 4) are differentiated on the basis of sex and relative age, and they are extended on Ego's generation to all parallel cousins, including remote ones. A special set of terms (5 and 6) is restricted to some siblings and parallel cousins. The criterion for their differentiation, as stated by the Tiwi, is that they refer to half siblings by the same father whose mothers belong to different matrisibs. The only parallel cousins to whom they apply, I believe, are first cousins; distant parallel cousins are definitely called by the regular sibling terms (1 to 4) regardless of their sib affiliations.

The terms for full siblings are also extended to certain collateral relatives on the second ascending and descending generations. Thus the distant parallel cousins of MoMo and FaFa are called by the terms for elder sibling, *iwuni* or *imbunga*, and the distant parallel cousins of SoCh (ms), DaCh (ws), SiDaCh (ms), and BrDaCh (ws) are called *iwini* or *imboka* (younger brother or sister).

Cross-cousin Terminology

7 *imbuni.* Affinal application only: Hu, HuBr, SiHu (ws), WiBr.
8 *imbunjiga.* Affinal application only: Wi, WiSi, BrWi (ms), HuSi.
9 *mamunjiga* (or *mamunini*): MoBrSo (ws), FaSiSo (ws). Affinal application: "Br" Hu (ws). My data are inconclusive as to whether male speakers use this and the following term in the same way.
10 *mamunga:* MoBrDa (ws), FaSiDa (ws). Affinal application: "Br" Wi (ws).

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to the husband of the pregnant woman. We carefully say "the husband of the pregnant woman" rather than "the father of the child" because the right resided in the male head of the household at the time of the birth. Although he was ordinarily both the father of the child and the husband of its mother, there were naturally occasions when a child was born after the death of its father, in which case the right of betrothal unquestionably belonged to the mother's new husband. The clearest statement of this rule is to say that the right of betrothal of all newly born females resided in the husband of the mother at the time of the girl's birth. "He who named the child bestowed it." 584 851 593

In most human societies the proportion of males and females in the population is approximately equal, except in the older age-groups where women predominate owing to their tendency to live longer than men. The Tiwi conformed to this norm biologically, but their cultural insistence that all females of every age be married resulted in further unusual features of the domestic situation. No such compulsory marriage was required or expected of males. Hence, the total female population, but only part of the male population, was married. Mathematically this permitted, indeed required, a high degree of plural marriage. The men who held the right to betroth—namely, the fathers of the female babies—could, within certain limits imposed by the kinship system, bestow their about-to-be-born or newly born daughters where they wished, and they certainly did not bestow them on about-to-be-born or newly born males. On the contrary, they bestowed them, generally speaking, where some tangible return was to be anticipated. Put bluntly, in Tiwi culture daughters were an asset to their father, and he invested these assets in his own welfare. He therefore bestowed his newly born daughter on a friend or an ally, or on somebody he wanted as a friend or an ally. Such a person was apt to be a man near his own age or at least an adult man, and hence perhaps forty years or so older than the newly born baby bestowed upon him as a wife. Or, the father might bestow an infant daughter on a man—or some close relative of such a man—who had already bestowed an infant daughter upon him, thus in effect swapping infant daughters. Obviously, the fathers who did the swapping, even if they were not quite the same age themselves, were bound to be many years older than the infant wives they thus received from each other. Or, thirdly, a father looking for a suitable male upon whom to bestow his infant daughter's hand might decide to use her as old-age insurance—in which case he selected as her future husband not one of the older adult men who would be old when he himself was old, but a likely looking youngster "with promise"; that is, a youth in his late twenties or thirties who showed signs of being a good hunter and a good fighting man, and who was clearly on his way up in tribal power and influence. Such a youth, in his late twenties at the time of betrothal, would, with luck, be in his prime as "a big man" in about twenty years—a time when the father of the infant daughter would be getting old and decrepit and much in need of an influential son-in-law who was obligated to him. 162 [581] 595 [584] 593 582 581 [562] [572] [606] [888]

There were other bases upon which infant daughters were betrothed, 582 593

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

582 and indeed the father was seldom an entirely free agent, since he not only
593 had to make his choices for his daughters within the limits imposed by the kinship system, but he was also caught in an intricate network of previous commitments, residual interests, and contingent promises made by other men who had had some prior interest in the baby or the mother of the baby. To mention only the most common limiting situation of this sort, the mother of the baby might have been given to him in the first place on the understanding that when she grew up and had a female baby it was to be bestowed on so-and-so or even returned as a *quid pro quo* to its mother's father, either as wife or as ward.

582 We have oversimplified the situation, but it should be clear that Tiwi fathers, in an overwhelming number of cases, bestowed their infant daughters on husbands a great deal older than those daughters. It is hard to strike an average, but the overall situation is best expressed by saying that no Tiwi father, except in the most unusual cases, ever thought of bestowing an infant daughter upon any male below the age of at least twenty-five. Taking this lowest limit for illustration, this meant that a youth of twenty-five had his first wife betrothed or promised to him at that age but had to wait another fourteen years or so before she was old enough to leave her father's household and take up residence and marriage duties with him. By this time he was about forty and she was fourteen. An age gap between husband and wife at least as great as this, but usually greater, was a necessary and constant result of the Tiwi betrothal system.

No Tiwi young man, then, could expect to obtain his first resident wife through betrothal until he was well into his thirties, at which time this first resident wife would be around fourteen, having been betrothed to him
582a at her birth or before. But it was likely that his first wife's father, who spotted him in his twenties as a "comer," was not the only older man to want him as a
● 595 son-in-law. As in our own culture, where the first million is the hardest to make, so in Tiwi the first bestowed wife was the hardest to get. If some shrewd father with a daughter to invest in a twenty-year-old decided to invest her in you, his judgment was likely to attract other fathers to make a similar investment. As a result, for *some* Tiwi men, the arrival in residence of the first wife, an event for which they had to wait until their late thirties, was quickly followed by the arrival in residence of a second, third, and fourth (at least), all of them bestowed very shortly after the bestowal of the first. Thus a successful Tiwi, having had no resident wife at all until his late thirties, would accumulate perhaps half a dozen between his late thirties and his late forties as his various betrothed wives reached the age of puberty and joined his household, and from then on he was practically certain to accumulate still more wives as later bestowals grew up and as he was able to invest the daughters borne by his first crop of young wives in transactions which brought in a later crop.

595 That this is not an exaggerated or overdrawn picture of the number of wives that could be accumulated in the course of a long life by a successful

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

Tiwi household head is shown by the genealogies of the grandfathers of the present generation. Turimpi, who was born in the 1830's and died in the early 1900's, was at his death the most powerful old man among the Tiklauila. Some of his sons are still alive, and all of them were in the prime of life around 1930.[4] A complete list of Turimpi's wives, not all of them living in his household at the same time or necessarily alive at the same time, contains more than twenty names. But Turimpi was outshone in this regard by several of his contemporaries in other bands. A prominent Turupula of the same generation had a list of twenty-five; the father of Finger of the Wilrangwila had twenty-nine; the father of Tamboo and Puti had twenty-two. As late as 1930, men with lists of ten, eleven, and twelve wives were still plentiful, and Tu'untalumi, who was aged about seventy in that year and was a man of great influence, had by then accumulated no less than twenty-one.[5] 595

Such numbers of wives as these per husband are very much higher than usually prevail even among the most polygymous hunting tribes. Obviously, a domestic unit with twelve or more wives in it makes for a very large household. Among the Tiwi, a household even of such men as those just named did not contain all these wives at the same time, mainly because of the very great variation in the ages of a man's wives. As far as bestowed or betrothed wives were concerned, such wives arrived at their husband's household to take up wifely duties therein when they reached the age of about fourteen. Hence the first of them to arrive (typically when their husband was nearly forty) would be women of nearly forty by the time the latest of them arrived (typically when the husband was well into his sixties). Even when the husband died, let us say at the ripe old age of seventy-five, there would probably be some of his bestowed wives still under the age of fourteen who were as yet too young to join his household. Tu'untalumi, the man of twenty-one wives, was already about seventy in 1930, yet in his list of twenty-one wives five were still *al'ingo*—that is, little girls not yet approaching puberty—and two were still babies at their mothers' breast. On the other hand, some of his earliest bestowed wives, who had taken up residence with him when he was in his late thirties, were already dead. 592 582 595

Because of this wide variation in the ages of a man's wives, it is necessary to distinguish between a "list" of a man's wives and those actually in residence in his household at any given time. The resident or active wives—one might almost say the working wives—were always fewer than the listed wives. This would necessarily be so even if marriage by betrothal were the only way by which a Tiwi man could obtain a wife. But while it was the most prestigeful form of marriage and the only respectable way in which a man could obtain a *young* wife, there were other ways of setting up a household. 595 584 587

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[4] See Hart 1954.

[5] Finger, Tamboo, and Puti were elders prominent in tribal affairs at the time of Hart's fieldwork. Puti was still alive in 1953-54 and well known to Pilling. Tu'untalumi, held in great affection by Hart, but anathema to the Mission Station, died in 1935.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

584 The most important way is one which we have already mentioned—namely,
587 widow remarriage.

Widow Remarriage

595 To become "a big man" a Tiwi had, among other things, to accumulate
557 a lot of wives. This required time, in addition to everything else. A rising star
587 who accumulated by bestowal seven or eight wives by his middle forties and then died, merely left a lot of widows to be redistributed at his graveside, and by the process of wealth attracting more wealth, or capital creating more capital, these widows were most likely to be redistributed among his rivals and competitors of his own age group or among men even older than he. Hence, the largest number of wives ultimately accrued to the successful man who lived longest, since he was likely to gather up at least a few of the widows of each of his contemporaries or seniors as they predeceased him.

There was thus a close correlation between increasing age and the number of wives a man had, and the largest households belonged to a few surviving old men in each band. The two conditions, therefore, which were necessary to accumulate a large household were (1) to attract prospective fathers-in-law to invest their infant daughters in you while you were a young man, and then (2) to live long enough to reap the dividends. The longer you lived, the more dividends would accrue to you from one source or another, provided you started off right by attracting betrothals in your twenties and thirties.

But what about the unimpressive young men, the "noncomers," who somehow failed as young men to attract any prospective fathers-in-law to invest an infant daughter in them? As we have seen, even the most highly regarded and well-connected Tiwi young man had to wait until his late thirties or longer before his first bestowed wife was old enough to join him in domestic bliss, but at least while waiting he knew the time was coming. The overlooked or unbetrothed young man had no such prospects. Since the only source of supply of new females was through the birth of female infants whose hands only their fathers could bestow, it would appear as if a young Tiwi male overlooked or ignored by all fathers of bestowable female daughters had no alternative except permanent bachelorhood. Doubtless Tiwi fathers, as a class, would have regarded this as an ideal situation and would have said that permanent bachelorhood was a proper fate for such friendless and hence useless young men, but no social system of such rigidity has ever been discovered by anthropologists. Tiwi fathers were able rigidly to control the marriages of their infant daughters, but they were not able to control with the same rigidity the remarriages of their own widows, and it was widow remarriage that supplied the loophole in the system, or the cultural alternative that took care of young men.

587 A Tiwi husband was unavoidably and necessarily always much older than a bestowed wife. Therefore he usually died much earlier than she. A girl of fourteen who entered into residence with her first husband when he was

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

fifty was likely to be left a widow by him within the next fifteen years, and 587
even if she remarried a man of the same age as her first husband, she could easily be widowed for the second time while still herself a comparatively young woman. There were several different patterns, most of them intermingled in the same household, for a female matrimonial career, but the situation may be illustrated by the concrete case of one of Turimpi's widows, an ancient crone (in 1930) named Bongdadu. Born about 1865, she was betrothed at birth to a powerful old man named Walitaumi who was at least the same age as her father, if not older. Not unnaturally, he died while she was still a child and well before she was old enough to join his household. Her betrothal was then reassigned, so to speak, to Walitaumi's half-brother, Turimpi, then in his early forties. About seven years later, she joined Turimpi's household as a blushing bride of fourteen, her husband then being close to fifty. In the next twenty years she became Turimpi's most prolific wife and bore numerous children, three of whom, Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, all born between 1883 and 1900, were men of importance in Tiwi politics in 1930, and one of whom, Louis, is still alive today.[6] Around 1900, when Bongdadu was still only about thirty-five, she passed to M., a middle-aged Tiklauila, and was his wife until his death around 1925. By this date, Bongdadu was over sixty and had borne ten children, four of whom died young. Not unnaturally, she was beginning to approach the hag or crone stage of Tiwi womanhood. Nonetheless, she had to remarry, but by now all of the people who might have claimed any rights of bestowal in her were long since dead, her eldest sons were adult men of some importance and able to protect their mother's interests, and clearly she was unlikely to produce any more children.[7] Her chief value was as a food producer and housekeeper and female politician, roles for which she had been well trained in her long years as wife of Turimpi and M.

Old women in Bongdadu's position had to remarry, but they were in 587
a good position to exercise some choice of their own as to whom they re- 888
married, especially if they had strong influential sons to support them in their wishes. There was a frequent pattern in such cases for the widow, aided and abetted (or perhaps even forced) by her sons, to arrange a marriage of convenience with some obscure nonentity much younger than herself and usually a friend or contemporary of her sons. In 1925, then, Bongdadu, widowed [554]
three times already, married as her fourth husband one Dominico, a man of no importance whatever, as was shown by the fact that at this time he was nearly forty and had not been able to attract even one bestowed wife. He had, 587
however, already married one widow, so that his marriage to Bongdadu gave 595

[6] Tiwi personal names are polysyllabic and hard for the reader to remember; hence, wherever possible, we have used "whiteman names" for individuals. The frequency of Spanish names among these "whiteman names," such as Mariano or Dominico, derives from the fact that the original buildings for the Mission Station were built by a number of Filipino workmen whom the priests brought with them. [551 128 797]

[7] The Tiwi saw no inconsistency between believing in spirit impregnation and believing at the same time that an old woman was unlikely to bear children. It was to them a matter of probabilities, and of course with them as with us, occasionally an elderly lady did—disconcertingly—have a baby, proving the logic of their position. [842]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 him a second wife, also, of course, a widow. This marriage is of further interest
[545] when we discover that Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, the main sons of Bongdadu by a previous marriage, had some influence in arranging this marriage of their mother to a contemporary and satellite of theirs, and that a year or two before, Antonio had married the ancient mother of Dominico when *she* became a widow. In other words, Antonio and Dominico had married each other's mothers; Antonio while waiting for his oldest bestowed wife to grow up, Dominico with no bestowed wife in sight. The approximate ages of the parties at the time of these marriages were:

Antonio	37	Dominico's mother	55
Dominico	38	Bongdadu (Antonio's mother)	60+

584 Earlier, we mentioned the practice of fathers swapping their daughters within
587 the infant bestowal system; here we find sons swapping their mothers within the widow remarriage system.

This is a relatively simple example of the complexity of Tiwi domestic arrangements, and we hesitate to complicate matters further. But clearly the last remarriage of Bongdadu (to Dominico) and the remarriage around the same time of Dominico's mother to one of Bongdadu's sons, a friend of Dominico, raise some important issues of social structure, particularly the question of whether widow remarriages of this type are to be regarded as a subspecies of bestowal marriages, with the sons having a right of bestowal over their mothers parallel or similar to the right of bestowal possessed by fathers over their infant daughters. Space does not permit any adequate discussion of this fascinating theoretical issue, but we can point out two factors which strongly deter us from regarding Tiwi widow remarriage as a special case of bestowal marriage. One is the self-evident and empirically observed fact that Tiwi widows, who remarried as Bongdadu and Dominico's mother remarried in the quoted case, were usually highly vocal and pretty tough old ladies who were not easily pushed around by anybody, even by their adult and ambitious sons. Whom they remarried in their old age was a matter upon which they had themselves a good deal to say. Secondly, to any anthropologist familiar with the kinship structures of Southeast Asia and the Pacific countries, there
584 is a great deal of difference, in a society with matrilineal clans such as the
587 Tiwi had, between a father making marriage decisions for his daughters, who
614 do not belong to his clan, and sons making marriage decisions for their widowed mothers, who do belong to the same clan as their sons. We prefer, therefore, to view the overall Tiwi marriage situation and the interrelationship of their two forms of marriage as essentially a system wherein the matrilineal clan had lost its right to make marriage decisions for its female children, that right having been taken over (usurped) by the fathers of those children. The daughters of the clan were disposed of, not where fellow clansmen decided, but where an outsider (the father) decided—thus, bestowal or betrothal marriage. But when the female no longer had a father—that is, when she was old and could only be remarried through widow remarriage—then the

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and young men married old women, in many cases the nominal "father" of an elderly woman was very much younger and less influential than were her brothers, or her sons by an earlier husband. The brothers and/or sons, therefore, were able to override the wishes of their sisters' nominal father since the seniority system was on their side in such contests, even though the renaming rules were not. 582 582 587 587 542

Although it was very rare indeed for any Tiwi male to have a resident young wife until he was nearly forty, long before that age he was likely to acquire an ancient widow or two. In at least ninety out of every hundred cases a man's first resident wife was a widow very much older than himself. According to a complete genealogical census carried out in 1928-29, nearly every man in the tribe in the age group from thirty-two to thirty-seven was married to an elderly widow. Many of them had two elderly widows and a few had three. But very few of them, and certainly not more than one out of five of them, had a resident *young* wife. About half of them had bestowed wives, but these were mostly toddling infants who would not come into residence with them for another ten years or more. Even for the most promising and rapidly rising young man, the first young bestowed wife was not likely to arrive until several years after his marriage to a widow. 582 587

To get a start in life as a household head and thus to get his foot on the first rung of the prestige ladder, a Tiwi man in his thirties had first of all to get himself married to an elderly widow, preferably one with married daughters. This was the beginning of his career as a responsible adult. The widow did several things for him. She became his food provider and housekeeper. She served as a link to ally him with her sons. As her husband, he acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters when they became widowed. And she, as the first resident wife in his household, stood ready to be the teacher, trainer, and guardian of his young bestowed wives when they began to join him after they reached puberty. [593] [595]

Levirate, Sororate, and Cross-Cousin Marriage

We have emphasized infant bestowal and widow remarriage because it was the elaborate development of these two matrimonial mechanisms that brought about the unusual, perhaps unique, character of the Tiwi household. Other matrimonial mechanisms, more usual in preliterate societies, were also used by the Tiwi but always in combination with or as minor adjuncts to the two basic mechanisms. Thus, a man often remarried his dead brother's wives, or at least some of them, within the institution of widow remarriage. Such a practice is known to anthropologists as the levirate, and tribes are said "to have" the levirate or "not to have" it. The Tiwi, with their pluralistic approach to the whole area of marriage relationships, can hardly be said to fall into either category. To them, every widow had to remarry and among the many possible candidates for her, the brothers of the dead husband were recognized as having a reasonable, but far from automatic, claim. Whether the brothers 587

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 jointly, or any one of them singly, were able to translate that claim into marriage depended on the other claims. Brotherhood in itself gave no exclusive right to widows, but of course a brother, being necessarily of the same clan and frequently of the same band as the deceased husband, was well in line to assert a claim to the widow if he could make the claim good. Cursory inspection of the genealogies reveals, however, a surprisingly small number of cases of men taking over the widows of their deceased brothers. At best it was a very minor factor in Tiwi marriage customs.

The parallel custom of the sororate—that is, of sisters being married to the same husband—was more common. It occurred both in connection with infant bestowal, by a father promising *all* his daughters by a particular wife [595] to the same husband, or in connection with widow remarriage, whereby two or [584] more full sisters, previously married to the same husband, passed together on his death to the same new husband. The sororate occurred more frequently in the first form than in the second, largely because, as already mentioned, widows had more say in their own marriages than baby girls had, but there was nothing obligatory nor required about it, as is shown by the frequent cases in which a father bestowed all his daughters by one wife on the same man but on the early death of that man rebestowed them *seriatim* on several different husbands. One got the impression, though no Tiwi ever made the point explicit, that within the Tiwi bestowal system the prevailing high rate 165 of infantile and child mortality was an important factor in sustaining the sororate principle to the extent that it did exist. A father who bestowed upon a 182 587 man the first daughter borne by a certain wife was almost obliged to bestow upon the same man the second daughter of the same wife if the first one died in infancy. Moreover, since most fathers bestowed their daughters with an eye to their own advantage, it was clearly desirable if he wanted to cement the goodwill of a prospective son-in-law, to promise him *all* the daughters produced by a certain wife, so that even though most of them died in infancy, at least one or two would be delivered in good condition at the age of puberty. [557] The aim of bestowal was to win friends and influence people, and a bestowal of a child who died before she reached the son-in-law did a father little good. A shrewd father could avoid this risk by following the sororate principle; a stupid or feckless father who scattered his daughters widely could well end up with as many disappointed sons-in-law as friendly ones, as the infantile and child mortality took its heavy toll of his young daughters. In the genealogies, sororate marriages in some form occur much more frequently than levirate marriages, but nonetheless their incidence is such as to indicate that they were a relatively minor feature in Tiwi marriages and that their occurrence was most frequently due to careful fathers trying to insure sons-in-law against disappointment, and themselves against charges of nondelivery.

No account of marriage in any Australian tribe can go very far without 171/ raising the difficult matter of the kinship system, since all the accounts we have 582 of mainland Australian tribes tell us that all marriages there took place within a rigid kinship framework which required everybody to marry somebody who was automatically his or her cross-cousin (for example, a man and a daughter

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

to at least reside in some household and had at least a nominal current husband at any given moment of time, all we need to note about them at this point is that in any listing of a man's wives we have to include "disputed" wives in addition to all the other categories of wives mentioned previously. 588

The Household: An Overview

In the discussion so far we have selected only those aspects of the Tiwi family complex that had close bearing on the nature of the household. These aspects can be briefly summarized as follows: 582 592

1. the high number of wives per husband that a successful man was likely to acquire if he lived long enough.

2. the two distinct mechanisms by which wives were acquired—infant bestowal and widow remarriage.

3. the operation of the bestowal system in such a way as to prevent even the most promising young man from achieving coresidence with a bestowed wife until he was at least nearly forty years old.

4. the tendency for success to lead to more success, whereby *some* astute men received into their households a number of young wives in rapid succession after the age of forty. [554 595]

5. the tendency of younger men and of nonbetrothed younger men in particular to marry elderly widows while waiting for betrothed wives to grow up or, in the case of those with no bestowals in sight, to enable them to start a household of their own.

6. as a result of the integrated operation of all these customs, the strong tendency in Tiwi households for husbands to be very much older than their wives (as a result of infant bestowal) or very much younger than their wives (as a result of widow remarriage) or—what was commonest of all in the bigger households—some combination of both. Hence many a Tiwi husband had some wives much older than himself, including some already dead (but still counted), and some very much younger than himself, including some who were still babies in their mothers' wombs (with their sex still undetermined). All these dead wives, current wives, nominal wives, "disputed" wives, not-yet-joined-the-household wives, and not-yet-born wives were still counted in a husband's list, and the length of his list was a measure of his influence, power, and importance as a household head. [554 595]

It is now perhaps clear why we chose to begin our account of Tiwi culture with some discussion of Tiwi marriage. Compulsory marriage for all females, carried out through the twin mechanisms of infant bestowal and widow remarriage, resulted in a very unusual type of household, in which old successful men had twenty wives each, while men under thirty had no wives at all and men under forty were married mostly to elderly crones. This unusual household structure was the focal point of Tiwi culture. It linked together in an explicable unity the kinship system, the food-gathering system, the political 592 182 592

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

224 roos,[2] wildfowl, and other game, keen eyesight is essential, hence Tiwi men
[887] did very little hunting once they were past about forty-five, though they hated to admit their hunting days were over. The meat, fish, and game provided for the large household of an old man was obtained by the young men, and this was about the only thing an old man thought his sons or his step-sons were good for. Typically the young man, when he returned at nightfall with
[592 a kangaroo which he had spent most of the day tracking down and spearing, would ignore the old man and dump the carcass at the feet of his mother as
888] if to say, "I brought this back for you, not for that old So and So."

As the women straggled back to camp toward sundown with the results
512 of their day's gathering and the young hunters brought in their bags, cooking
595 began and the main meal of the day (usually the only hot meal) was eaten. The Tiwi themselves had no doubt about the close relationship between plural marriage and good eating. "If I had only one or two wives I would starve,"
[797] the head of a large household once told the missionary who was preaching against plural marriage, "but with my present ten or twelve wives I can send them out in all directions in the morning and at least two or three of them are likely to bring something back with them at the end of the day, and then
262 we can all eat." This was a realistic appraisal of the economic situation and it is to be noted that he put the emphasis on the food obtained by the women
[222] gatherers rather than that supplied by the male hunters. Based on the observations of 1928-29, it would appear that the Tiwi ate pretty well, especially in the larger households. Kangaroo and other marsupials, and some of the larger lizards (for example, the goanna) were very plentiful in the bush, as were fish and turtles and dugong on the coasts and wild geese in many districts. But all these were extras or dividends; the staple everyday foods were the vegetable foods gathered day after day in apparently unending quantities by the women. For most months of the year there was always plenty of *kwoka,*
[252] a porridgelike dish prepared by soaking and mashing the small nuts of a native palm. These nuts grew in such quantity that in every large camp baskets or dishes of *kwoka,* at various stages of preparation, were always available, even for midnight snacks if anybody woke up hungry. *Kwoka* was about as dull and tasteless as Scotch porridge, but equally filling, and naked small boys full of *kwoka* had stomachs distended like balloons. In the wet season the place of *kwoka* was taken by *kolema,* a yam whose ripening and growing season was much shorter than that of the nuts from which *kwoka* was made. It was
[796] on the abundance of the *kolema* yams during January and February that the Tiwi supported the more elaborate of their collective ceremonials.

The abundance of these and other vegetable foods, plus the ample supply of game and fish in many places, meant that under aboriginal conditions the Tiwi lived at a food-consumption level much further above the near-

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[2] Actually there are no kangaroos on Melville and Bathurst Islands; the chief mess animal is a slightly smaller species of marsupial technically called the wallaby. As the distinction is important only to zoologists, and as many of the so-called kangaroos in American zoos are in fact wallabies, we prefer to use the more familiar word.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he was at the same time the executive director of a work unit which he expected 578
to work for him, and the husband of many of its members whom he expected 182
to be faithful to him. The young wives were willing, under supervision, to 837
meet his first expectation, but found it difficult, even under the strictest super- 592
vision, to meet the second. Successful supervision of the morals of young wives
was easy to achieve at night because each camp was then gathered together
and it was relatively easy for the husband and his senior wives to guard the
young wives closely. But during the daytime matters were different. Then the 837
young women of the household were widely scattered through the fairly dense
bush and it was impossible for the old wives to watch them every minute of
the day. And the young men of other households, or even of their own house-
hold, were hunting game in the same neighborhood. Encounters, whether by
chance or by previous arrangement, were likely to occur and probably occurred
with a high degree of frequency. We say "probably" because no anthropologist
working with a tribe which has neither courts nor written records can ever
know how often casual extramarital offenses take place. (There is even some
difficulty in obtaining reliable statistics on such matters in our own society,
as the attacks on the late Dr. Kinsey's statistics indicate.) We therefore make
no statement about how common the act of adultery was in Tiwi culture, but
we can say that, judging by the public accusations of adultery, its practice
must have been widespread indeed. In any Tiwi camp comprising more than 578
two households, few weeks went by without an outraged and angry old hus- 837
band shouting accusations at one of the younger men sitting by another camp
fire a few yards away. The young man accused would (usually) deny it; the
old women of both households would enter the argument, the young man's [595]
mother protesting his innocence, the old man's elderly wives (who had of
course been the informers) giving details of time and place and circumstance;
the young man would produce, or try to produce, an alibi and appeal to a
friend to bear him out; the old man would call the friend a liar and the youth's
mother an old witch; the youth's mother would retaliate by shouting things
she knew (but had never before revealed) about the private lives of everybody
in the old man's household, including the old man himself when he was a
young bachelor. A good time would be had by all, including the listening
anthropologist, but nobody would get much sleep. Such nocturnal uproars, al-
ways starting with accusations hurled by an older husband against a younger
man and always involving incidents that had allegedly occurred while the
young wife was somehow left unchaperoned for a short period during her
daytime wandering in search of food, were a commonplace of nightlife among
the Tiwi; but no case was ever reported, observed, or hinted at in which even
the most adventurous and enterprising bachelor had succeeded in seducing,
or had even attempted to seduce, a young wife when she was back in camp [833]
after nightfall. The deeds were always done in the secrecy of the bush during
the daytime; it was the recriminations and accusations that occurred in the
public glare of the campfires at nighttime.

Sometimes these disputes or accusations went no further than the noc- 578
turnal shouting of charges. Often the young man accused the previous night 684

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

matter might end there. Or the old man might let matters rest until the time of the next big gathering of people at a funeral or at the *kolema* rituals, and then revive the issue under such public circumstances that the accused young man could not slip away unpunished. If he followed this second course, the old man went to the gathering covered from head to foot in white paint, the Tiwi uniform for anybody who came in anger and intended to pick a fight with somebody. The decision between these two lines of action lay, of course, with the old man, and while that decision was to some extent determined by how vindictive and revengeful he felt, nonetheless it was also influenced by how this dispute was related to all the other feuds, disputes, deals, marriage exchanges, and so forth, in which both parties were already involved. Like a good lawyer in our own culture, the old man had to consider, before he took the matter to court, who the young man was and who his friends and relatives were, and had to ask himself whether in seeking vengeance for the blow to his pride he might not be doing himself more political harm than the injury was worth.

In arriving at his decision, the old man was influenced to some extent also by another variable, the attitude of the young man. If the alleged offense occurred only once and the young man denied it and thereafter kept his distance, the accuser would probably let the matter drop. Offenders were very rarely caught *in flagrante*, and the evidence of seduction was almost always circumstantial or hearsay. In every case there was some element of doubt as to whether the right young male was being accused or whether the whole story had not been invented by some of the old wives out of sheer spite toward a young wife. The old man had to take such factors into consideration, not out of any abstract sense of justice, but because, naturally, he didn't like to be made a fool of, either by young men or his own spiteful old wives. But he was most suspicious and unbelieving of his own flighty young wives, and sometimes the accused young man was defiant and persistent in his attentions to the same young wife, or wives. In effect, such a young man was daring the old husband to do his worst. Such continued defiance of the seniority system could not be permitted; it became a case not of simple seduction but of subversive activity, since it was a threat to the whole social structure of the tribe, centered as that was around the marriage of old men to young women. When confronted by such action, a Tiwi elder said (as people of other cultures might), "What would happen if everybody did that? We'd have complete anarchy and free love." Hence an old husband, so defied, was almost duty bound not just to seek satisfaction for the private injury done to himself, but to defend the public weal by hauling the offender before the bar of public opinion and denouncing him before as large a crowd as possible, as a public enemy. If the situation became so flagrant that he could not wait until the next big funeral or the next *kolema* gathering, he began calling in surrounding camps or going himself, dressed in white paint, to summon them to assist him in meting out public justice to the violator of the system. When a sufficient number of upholders of the right (that is, senior heads of households) had been collected together, the usual one-sided duel (see below, Chapter 4) was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 The matter of men traveling to distant camps for ceremonials illumi-
595 nates again, and from a new angle, the great value of elderly widows in the
587 household. Tu'untalumi, during his visit to Malau in August, was able to split his household efficiently by taking a couple of old wives with him to supervise his young wives on the journey and leaving other old wives at home in Tangio to begin storing up food for the grass-burning project which he intended to stage on his return. It will be noticed in the account of his movements that he began issuing invitations to the grass burning on his way home from Malau, [224 showing his confidence that the elderly wives he had left at home would 251] have the preparations well in hand during his absence. A big man with a big household really needed three or four elderly widows because these enabled him to split his work force in various ways as his various political and social obligations required and to be sure of trustworthy supervision of each of the segments. A man without widows in his household, or with only one, could not do this; in fact, it was hard for a man without widows to attend ceremonials at all, or even to receive a large party of visitors to his household. And, as we have already pointed out, since such a man would probably go hungry very often because he would not dare to send his unsupervised young wives into the bush to gather food, there were practically no such men nor such households. Widows were indispensable to a senior Tiwi, both in his public and in his private life.

Making Things

592 Throughout this chapter we have been stressing the contrast between
887 the dull routine of life in an isolated Tiwi household during the greater part of the year and the sort of life typical on those relatively rare occasions when something special—a festival, a funeral, a fight, a grass burning, a naming ceremony, some collective phase of men's initiation—required the assembling together of several households for joint activity. Before leaving the daily life of the isolated camp, we should mention one other area of activity—namely, the manufacturing activities of the tribe. The Tiwi did not manufacture much, [32] but spears, throwing sticks, canoes, digging sticks, baskets, bodily ornaments, graveposts, and all the miscellaneous paraphernalia used in ceremonials had to be made in whatever leisure time people could find during the long weeks and months when each of the households lived more or less in isolation from the others. Crude and simple as these artifacts were, their construction required time, and only the older men had the time and the skill based on experience to make the more important of them.

[147] Largely because of their failing eyesight, the older men hunted very little and hence tended to remain in camp all day while the young men were hunting and the women were gathering. There were, of course, some old men who took advantage of this time to do little except doze in the shade, but 182 most of the household heads spent a fairly active day in camp engaged in 511 making things. Here we find another aspect of Tiwi culture that results from 531

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission, automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their opponents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were economically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 plus any new bestowals, plus any further widows Summit might find it to his interest (and power) to remarry.

159 584 557 Padimo, who thus enters our story as one of Summit's rivals and one of his nominal fathers-in-law, was also a Rangwila who had moved to Malau at the call of an elderly father-in-law. He presents another pattern of Tiwi upward mobility and one that was statistically more frequent than the rather tortuous road followed by men like Gitjara. Padimo had been chosen as a nephew worth supporting by old Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest of the Malauila. The earliest proof of Ki-in-kumi's patronage of Padimo had come in 1925-26 when an old man died, leaving eight widows of very diverse ages. Three of these "widows," aged respectively 17, 13, and 9 at the time of the death of their first husband, were daughters of Ki-in-kumi. Being so young and their brothers being equally young, their father's right to arrange their remarriage was unchallenged and Ki-in-kumi reassigned[4] them as wives to young Padimo, then aged about thirty-three. The eldest of the three girls had already borne two female children to the dead man, these being the two girl babies mentioned above as having been promised to Summit.

As well as the three young widows, Padimo had also obtained at the same redistribution the oldest and most haggish of the dead man's eight wives. It was at the same redistribution that Gitjara had obtained his second widow (the mother of the girl promised to Summit). Thus through Ki-in-kumi's influence, Padimo had obtained four "widows" of the eight left by the man who died in 1925-26; Gitjara, working without a powerful patron, had been lucky to obtain one.

159 595 [604] Ki-in-kumi had subsequently followed up this initial selection of Padimo as a favored sister's son by giving further daughters to him as they were born. Consequently, by 1929 Padimo's wife list consisted of the following:

A. One extremely ancient widow.

B. One wife aged about 20, daughter of Ki-in-kumi, mother already of two daughters by a previous husband who, before his death, bestowed these daughters on Summit.

C. One wife aged about 17, daughter of Ki-in-kumi; had just had her first child (who lived only a week); had previously been bestowed on the dead husband of wife B, but was too young to join his household before he died.

D. Three more girls, daughters of Ki-in-kumi, the eldest about 12 and hence old enough to have been bestowed on the same previous husband as wives B and C; the other two aged 2 and 1 and hence born since his death. All three of these were still resident in their father's household.

[584 587] [4] It is difficult to decide whether such reassignments of female children by their father, on the death of the man to whom he had first betrothed them, should be called "rebestowals" or "remarriages." We prefer the first word since such "child-widows" were usually reassigned by their fathers (if still alive) without any challenge to his rights to do so. They therefore do not differ from original bestowals at birth except for the awkward semantic fact that the man to whom such a "child-wife" was reassigned was technically her second husband.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

With a lineup such as this by the time he was thirty-six, Padimo was clearly in 159
process of going places in Tiwi society. The only weakness one could see in 557
his position was that it all derived from the favor of one patron, and no old 595
man with daughters, other than Ki-in-kumi, had seen fit to bestow a girl
upon him. It should be noted that in 1929, though Padimo had two young
wives resident in his household, he still had no children of his own. His first 159
child, born that year, lived only a few days. The only children in residence were 557
the two girls promised to Summit by the previous husband of their mother. 592
Their bestowal on Summit was a matter beyond Padimo's control though he 584
could use them to force some concessions from Summit just as Gitjara could
with the girl in his household. But as Padimo's young wives began to bear
daughters of his own, his bestowal of them would be less encumbered by the
commitments of any predecessor. While Ki-in-kumi lived, Padimo would have
to consider his obligations to that old man and at least consult with Ki-in-kumi
as to how he should bestow his female children, since any such children would
be the daughters' daughters of the old man. Nor would the death of Ki-in-kumi
leave Padimo entirely free to bestow his own daughters anywhere he wished.
Many of the girls already given to him as wives by Ki-in-kumi had mothers
who possibly, and brothers who certainly, would outlive Ki-in-kumi. On the [587]
old man's death, all of his numerous wives would remarry—some of the older
ones probably to ambitious younger men—and these new husbands of the
widows of Ki-in-kumi would begin interfering with and trying to alter the
arrangements made for his daughters by the old man during his lifetime. Thus [606]
Padimo would find himself stuck with a group of new and antagonistic fathers-
in-law in place of the old, indulgent father-in-law who had been responsible
for his success so far. Padimo's problem was basically how to hold, after
Ki-in-kumi's death, the favored position he had gained during the old man's
lifetime through the old man's favor.

In the meantime, with Ki-in-kumi still alive and powerful, Padimo had 159
the biggest and fastest expanding household among the Malauila men in their 592
thirties. The only remaining man in this age group was Boya who was the 557
oldest of them all, being at least 42 years old in 1928. As might be expected,
his career illustrates some new facets of the Tiwi influence struggle.

Structurally the position of Boya was simple but politically it was com- 159
plex. His father had been a henchman and satellite of Ki-in-kumi in the early
career of that old operator and roughly had had somewhat the same relation-
ship to the young Ki-in-kumi as L. F. B. had to Gitjara. Boya's father, the
satellite, left only two widows (an indication of his mediocrity) and these
two widows had been remarried by Ki-in-kumi, the patron. One of these
widows was Boya's mother, and Boya was too young at the time to have any
say in where his mother remarried. Ki-in-kumi's interest in marrying Boya's
mother was not of course because he thus acquired Boya as a step-son, but
because he acquired Boya's sisters as step-daughters. Step-sons were liabilities [562]
which new husbands had to take over in order to get rights in the real assets
—the step-daughters.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 a "young operator" somewhat before 1900, the deals by which he got his
557 career launched were difficult to reconstruct. The results of them, plus the fact that he lived long enough to draw full dividends from them, gave him by
159 1928-29 a wife-list of twenty-one. These had been accumulated as follows:
595

When around 30 years old he remarried two elderly widows and a year or two later received his first bestowal. Thus by age 33 he had three wives. On that foundation he went ahead thus:

		Total
At age 33		
Had two widows and one bestowed wife		3
Between age 33 and age 43		
Remarried two more widows and had three more bestowed wives join him	+5	8
Between age 43 and age 53		
Three more bestowed wives came into residence	+3	11
(During these twenty years at least five bestowed wives died in infancy or childhood)	+5	16
Between age 53 and age 65		
Two more bestowed wives joined him and he married 2 more widows (one the mother of Boya)	+4	20
Now at age 66 there is still one more bestowed wife, aged about 9, in her father's household	+1	21

Thus his list of twenty-one wives was made up of six elderly widows and fifteen bestowed or rebestowed young wives.

By 1928-29 five of his bestowed wives had died before puberty and one was still with her father. Three of his six widows were dead. Subtracting these nine women, we find that his current household contained twelve resident and active wives: the oldest about sixty, two in their fifties, four in their forties or thirties, three in their twenties, and the two youngest around seventeen or eighteen years of age. Almost all of them had borne children since joining his household, but the death rate had been high among Ki-in-kumi's children and from all of his wives he had only eight living children of whom six were girls. Five of these six daughters he had bestowed or rebestowed on Padimo (see above) and the sixth on a middle-aged Rangwila. His oldest living daughter was the girl of 20 married to Padimo. His oldest living son was a boy of 18, despite the fact that Ki-in-kumi had been "a married man" for over thirty-five years. This was a situation which many Tiwi elders found themselves
159 in at the close of long and successful lives. With numerous wives, numerous
592 step-sons, large households to be managed, and large estates to be liquidated after their deaths, their oldest real sons (as distinct from step-sons) were still boys or youths and as such quite unsuitable as executive assistants while the old man lived or as heirs or executors after the old man died. Quite apart
[882 from kinship considerations, the Tiwi emphasis on age and seniority made it
888] impossible for Ki-in-kumi to utilize in any capacity his 18-year-old son. A youth of that age was a nonentity, whoever his father.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

once erected on the grave; the names of dead people immediately became *pukimani* on their deaths and could not be used, and the same was true of all the names bestowed by a dead man on the children of his household and all the other words in the language that sounded similar to the name of the dead man.[4] All ceremonials and rituals were *pukimani* as were the main performers and the armlets, neck ornaments, and other ceremonial objects. People in a *pukimani* state had to observe all sorts of avoidances of and abstentions from everyday actions, particularly with regard to food and sex. Close relatives of dead people could not touch food but had to be fed by nonmourners. That pillar of rigid orthodoxy, Tu'untalumi, was virtually never able to feed himself but was in a *pukimani* state almost the whole year round and needed one of his wives to feed him. (Another advantage of a large household.) Certain spots in the bush or on the banks of streams were *pukimani* places; the dimly seen outline of the Australian coast was *pukimani* as was the ocean near Cape Keith where the Tiwi ancestors had first created the Tiwi world; and finally, the violation of a *pukimani* restriction rendered the violator *pukimani*.

Pukimani as thus applied to people, places, things, names, words, restrictions, and avoidances, meant both sacred and taboo, and was clearly one of that widespread class of words and concepts that is almost standard among the simpler societies. The only noteworthy thing about its Tiwi form is that *pukimani* was a state which people did not actively seek to enter but which happened to people regardless of their wishes. Furthermore, when a man found himself in a state of *pukimani*, his behavior was automatically prescribed for him and for the duration of his *pukimani* condition he observed his avoidances and his abstentions just as automatically as he dropped them when his *pukimani* period expired. When he became *pukimani*, he punctiliously fulfilled the requirements because if he did not, he was likely to be unsuccessful in his enterprises. Big men simply did not dare to be casual about the requirements lest their reputations suffer and they lose face and influence. Less successful men were occasionally explained as probably being secret violators. "His wives and daughters all seem to die young; he must have broken some *pukimani* restrictions sometime" was a reason often given for somebody's failure to be as successful as he might have been. It was noticeable in such explanations of nonsuccess that the failure, or in our terms the bad luck, was attributed to the violation of the taboos, never to the active displeasure of the spirits. The spirits simply did not figure in the picture.

Apart from the big ceremonial occasions, a Tiwi did not have much concern with religion in his everyday life except through some aspect of the *pukimani* system. It was only through *pukimani* that the sacred world impinged upon him at all for most of the year. Since *pukimani* was a condition that could not be actively sought but "just happened" to a person every so often by such common events as the death of a relative, his wife giving birth, or his

[4] When a man named Tibuki died in 1928, a crisis occurred at the Mission where the natives were supposed to make their requests in pidgin English. How could they now ask for tobacco, since that word was now *pukimani*?

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 male of her choice and the couple soon set up housekeeping with Father
177 Gsell's blessing. This was, at least, how the missionary saw it.
584 But what were the real circumstances surrounding this "free choice" by
797 Polly? Her real father—that is, the husband to whom her mother Rita was married when Polly was born—had promised Polly to Kardu. Timalarua had "stolen" Polly from Kardu, her rightful husband. Nor is this the whole story. Rita had been "stolen" by Puti from Polly's father Turimpi. After several fights between Puti and the aging Turimpi and after Rita's complete refusal to return to Turimpi, Turimpi allowed Puti to keep Rita as his wife. Polly, however, was ultimately to go to the man to whom she had been promised, Kardu. But Puti, as the potential next father of Polly, had promised Cabbagee that as soon as Kardu died Polly was to be Cabbagee's wife. That is, when Polly chose Cabbagee as her mate she was only bypassing Kardu and taking as her husband the next normal alternative open to her.

When one considers what parts of Father Gsell's reform were significant in this case, one finds that only late consummation of marriage, monogamy, and marriage between agemates were important. A female did not actually have a "free choice" of her mate as Father Gsell had hoped and, in fact, had specified. She selected a youth to whom one of her relatives had at least tentatively promised her. Or (to put it in Hart's terms) she married—under Mission auspices—a young man who had at least a second or third mortgage on her.

159 Let us follow the case of Cabbagee's marriage further. He married Polly
177 when he was about 23; he was too young to be married in the old pattern and
595 was, therefore, happy to get a wife and be on his way up the social ladder.
797 But when the next female promised to him (before her birth) came of age and he collected her, Polly made a terrific row. She did not want any younger female around her household as a second wife and told the priest at the Mission so. He in turn deprived Cabbagee of all gifts of tobacco and food and sent him and his family to the bush to think over the matter. After a few months, Cabbagee decided that he wanted tobacco and that after all the only place he could get it was at the Mission. He and his family returned and he gave up his second wife to Father Gsell, for a payment of food.

Younger men who were getting wives from among Father Gsell's convent girls thus found that they were unwise to accept a second wife from any other source. But such a young man, married under Catholic auspices, soon
[584 found that he could enhance his prestige without invoking criticism from the
557] Mission if he gathered around him his own female relatives, the younger of whom he could give away later, one at a time, to men of his choice. A married man like Cabbagee, who gave another man his sister or sister's daughter, was in a position to ask all sorts of favors from the recipient, especially gifts of food, tobacco, and trade goods, and support in politics.

177 By the end of World War II, even these newer concepts of marriage
583 agreement had begun to alter. There were many young Christian females desiring to have husbands whose fathers and brothers were not asking further wives as repayment. The fathers began to ask for new types of concessions

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

from their future sons-in-law and demands which look very much like bride price and bride service developed as a basis for marriage arrangement. A young girl had a relatively "free choice" of her future spouse. But following this selection, her father let it be known to the young man what he expected. The desired payment was often stated in Australian money by the 1950's; some men were asking as much as a hundred pounds for a daughter. (This was a very high sum, since Tiwi males working for the Army received four pounds a week as normal wages.) Other men were asking that their sons-in-law live with them, thus leaving their own parental home, and contribute regularly to the upkeep of the household of the father-in-law. This was, indeed, quite a practical arrangement, for when such a young man went to work in Darwin his wife had to be supervised at home and, further, his employer was supposed to send home to the Mission part of the young man's wages.

Thus, by 1954, the following type of marriage agreement was initiated by the great majority of Tiwi with marriageable daughters, specifically those who centered their activities at Bathurst Island Mission and Garden Point. A young girl chose her future husband from her single, male agemates, sometimes with a suggestion from her father. Her father informed his future son-in-law of the obligations incumbent upon him, which normally included matrilocal postmarital residence and a bride price. An older woman with children, or even one without any offspring, who became a widow, was discouraged from remarrying by her father, if he survived, and by her brother after her father's death. The father or eldest brother of a widow with a daughter reaped the benefits of allowing that daughter to marry the young man whom she desired. The widow herself did not remarry but stayed in the household of her father or brother.

Residence Patterns

By 1953, traditional Tiwi residence patterns had undergone major modifications, some of which have already been mentioned. The old residence areas of the bands had been depopulated; in fact, nearly all the Tiwi were located around one of four European establishments—those at Darwin, Bathurst Island Mission, Garden Point, or Snake Bay. In each of these areas a centralized village pattern had developed. Within the Tiwi communities at Snake Bay, Garden Point, and Bathurst Island Mission there remained a few of the old large households with a polygamous base. But in all these camps the household heads were well past sixty and in most cases past seventy. Polygamous households were dying out by 1953.

But what was replacing them? One might assume that the European pattern of the single family household based upon neolocal residence would have emerged as the new Tiwi system. This was not the case, however. Just as Hart found in 1928-29 that successful Tiwi men were the heads of large establishments, so in 1953-54 the younger male leaders had gathered around

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 render his name tabu. This is the case among the Tiwi. All the names of a dead man become strictly *pukimani* (=tabu) immediately upon his death. Anyone in the tribe who uses a name of a dead person at any time for years after his death but especially in the period—usually about five to six months—that always elapses between the death and the funeral corroboree, violates one of the strictest social sanctions the tribe possesses.
192 And this prohibition extends to all words in the ordinary language—
551 though curiously enough not in the sacred language—which bear any
765 resemblance in sound to any one of the names of the dead man. It applies equally to English names in use by the tribe with resemblances to native or English words and to native words which resemble either English or native words. Thus a boy named *Tipuki* having died "tobacco," "baccy," *Tiparkitimiri* all equally became *pukimani*. Similarly when *Mulankina*, one of the Mandeimbula horde died, *mulikina*, one of the commonest words in the language, meaning "plenty," "full," "enough," was dropped completely from the language.

551 Nor does the *pukimani* stop here. Not only is the use of any of the
553 names of the dead man prohibited, but there is an equally strong rule against the use of any of the personal names he has bestowed upon other people, be they his own children or the children of others. A young child may only have one name, that given him by his father, but should his father die he must become nameless until he gets a new name from somewhere. This aspect of the *pukimani* does not extend to similar words in either the ordinary or the sacred language. For instance although
[192 765] *Tambu*, a proper name bestowed by an old man became *pukimani* on the latter's death, the ordinary word *tamu* (imperative form of verb 'to sit down') was not affected.

582 On account chiefly of the extreme form of polygyny practised by the
595 Tiwi whereby most of the girls and young women belong to a comparatively few old men, the father of a family is almost invariably much older than his wife. While a woman goes to live with her husband at about the age of 13, a man is lucky to get his first wife under the age of 35. It follows that in the great majority of cases the father of children dies
587 long before the mother. Therefore as a woman without a husband is unknown amongst the Tiwi, a woman passes through the possession of quite a number of different men during her lifetime and does not remain in an unmarried state for more than a day or two. A widow

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

were words like "insecure" and "uneasy." He was not particularly aggressive nor particularly submissive, but he fluctuated between the two attitudes. One got the impression after associating with him that he was never sure of what was expected of him and acted therefore in contradictory ways according to what *he thought* was expected of him. Or to put the same impression another way, there seemed a constant discrepancy between what people expected of Antonio and what he wanted to do if left alone. In tribal fights, for instance, he acted fiercely and aggressively and with the air of swaggering braggadocio that that all important men are expected to show in fighting, yet at the earliest possible moment he melted into the crowd with visible relief at being able to quit the center of the stage and without a trace of rancor or ill will toward any of the people whom he had been abusing or had been abused by a few minutes before. In council meetings of senior men he was always listened to with respect yet always had to be prodded into speaking at all. He never initiated a policy or offered his opinion until pressure was put upon him to state what he thought, and while his opinion when given was listened to with attention it was always a paraphrase of some opinion already given, usually the majority opinion of the group. He expressed what he thought the group wanted him to say, never an "opinion of his own." In this respect Antonio had many of the characteristics of a "yes-man" and like his counterparts in more civilized societies he seldom took the unpopular side and seldom stood up to opposition.

Two burning political issues agitating the Tiwi in 1928-30 were the issues of (1) plural marriage and (2) the visits of the Japanese pearling luggers. The Catholic missionaries had taken a strong stand on plural marriages and were bringing all the economic and moral pressure they could exert on the younger Tiwi to induce them to restrict themselves to one wife. Failure to bow to Mission pressure resulted in the recalcitrant's being cut off from the European food, tobacco, clothes, etc. which could only be obtained through the Mission. But beginning in the middle 1920's Japanese pearling boats in ever increasing numbers had carried on the practice of anchoring on the further side of Melville Island during the period of high tide (when diving for pearl shell was impossible) and inviting the natives to provide their women as prostitutes for the use of the crews during their stay on the beaches. The Japanese captains paid lavishly in European goods for any women thus provided and the subtribes on the southeast side of Melville, in particular the subtribe called the Yeimpi, proved very susceptible to the Japanese temptations.

These two issues of plural marriage and prostitution for the Japanese rather neatly complemented each other at two points. Not only did the Japanese rival the Mission station as a source of supply for European goods; the possession of a large number of wives was a condition that made a man very unpopular with the missionaries, but, if he were disposed to rent out some of them, made the same man very popular with the Japanese. The plural marriage issue, if alone, would clearly have divided the tribe into the conservatives, staunchly upholding plural marriage as the Tiwi way, and the radicals abandoning it in return for Mission favor. But such an alignment was cut right across

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

by the Japanese issue, since it tempted the conservative with several wives to violate all the old tribal sanctions by renting out his wives, and it provided the Mission adherent radicals with a grand opportunity to pose as the real defenders of the old culture and to charge the old polygamists with being the real renegades from the ancient ways.

It can be easily guessed how high feelings ran on these issues and how hotly they were debated when a number of Tiwi gathered together. But on neither of these issues or on any aspect of them did Antonio show any signs of leadership. He accumulated wives but always apologized in a rather deprecating and apple-polishing way when he met the missionaries, and spent part of his time hanging around the Mission despite the contemptuous attitude which the missionaries adopted toward him. He thus contrasted very unfavorably with some of his contemporaries, notably one Dooley who, having been for years a one-wife man and a Mission favorite, inherited a second wife at around the age of forty. Dooley's decision was clear-cut and highly spectacular. He accepted the second wife, shook the dust of the Mission station from his feet and never set foot near it again, taking up again the traditional life of a Tiwi elder, deep in the bush, with his two wives and later additions, ignoring all white innovations, even tobacco.[4] Dooley's uncompromising behavior was greatly admired by the tribe but few had the strength of character to emulate him, certainly not Antonio.

On the Japanese issue Antonio was just as vacillating. Prodded by others to make a statement he would in ringing tones denounce as disgraceful and scandalous the behavior of the Yeimpi wife-renters, but on his visits to the Yeimpi country ostensibly "to see for himself what was going on" he shared eagerly in the proceeds of vice which his friends there offered him and was even heard on a few occasions to wonder aloud why the Japanese always went to the Yeimpi country when there were plenty of secluded beaches in Tiklaulla country. Instantly challenged, "Would you want the Japanese to come here?" "Would you rent your wives to them if they did?" poor Antonio quickly turned it into a feeble joke, saying deprecatingly, "Oh no, no, no. I just wondered why they always go to those ugly Yeimpi women?"

In summary we might say that Antonio's personal behavior appeared to be that of a man pushed into a position rather too big for him to fill. He was not by nature particularly aggressive or domineering, but as the eldest son of Turimpi he was constantly being pushed by public opinion onto the center of the stage, whereas he would have been much happier if public opinion had left him alone to be an ordinary, average member of the crowd. The role he was called on by his status position to play seemed to give him little or no pleasure, little or no personal satisfaction. Such a view of his "personality" is supported by the fact that when alone in the bush with his own family and away from the society of his peers Antonio was relaxed and at ease. As Durkheim pointed out, the basic factor in Australian social psychology is that men spend a great part of their lives hunting and collecting in the bush, completely out of physical contact with all people except members of their own households,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

portunities for cultural comparison he at the same time acquired an acute insight into his own culture and into the psychology of his fellow tribesmen. For the anthropologist he was a magnificent informant and a continuous pain in the neck. As increasing years gave him increasing tribal seniority, Mariano became increasingly domineering and touchy about his own importance and increasingly recognized by the younger men as the man who voiced the "promission" and hence "pro-white" point of view in tribal arguments. However, it would be a mistake to think of him as the "detribalized" native of the literature (as another Benelong, e.g., in the magnificent study of culture contact given by the Australian novelist Eleanor Dark, 1941). On the contrary the tough old unacculturated natives who lived deep in the bush and who tried to act much of the time as if white men didn't exist not only accepted Mariano but respected him and paid deep attention to his arguments. The reasons why they did this are, I think, all considerations of "personality," that is, they respected Mariano despite his collaboration with the Mission largely because Mariano was the kind of man he was. He was forceful and determined; he was sincere, he was consistent both in word and in deed, he was intelligent and knew both the psychology of his audience and how to marshal his arguments so as to obtain maximum impact from his material. And he had supreme confidence in his own righteousness. Time and again one was struck by the contrast between him and his elder brother Antonio. When Antonio spoke (always after being prompted or coerced into giving his opinion), people listened hoping to hear wisdom and force and cogency; instead they heard only hackneyed phrases and inconsistent arguments which left them dissatisfied and unconvinced. When Mariano spoke (always without invitation and frequently ahead of many of his seniors), he laid down, in vehement tones, a definite policy, and even though his policy was unacceptable to his hearers as it frequently was, they listened with close attention and voiced their approval at the end, not so much of the policy he outlined as the directness and clearness of the delivery and the logic of his position.

The difference between the two men is well illustrated by their attitudes toward the Japanese wife-renting on the Yeimpi beaches. On this, the burning issue of the day, Antonio never took a stand but shilly-shallied on all sides of it, despite the fact—frequently drawn to his attention—that his small daughter was betrothed to an old Yeimpi who was a notorious wife-renter and he, therefore, in a very short time would be faced with the decision of whether to hand the girl over to her promised husband or not. Mariano on the contrary seized upon the Japanese issue from its first appearance as proof of the essential soundness of the Mission campaign against plural marriages. His speeches were clear-cut and definite. "It all goes to show that the priests are right when they say that having a lot of wives is a bad thing. These old Yeimpi have too many wives. If they had only one each, like white men (and inferentially like Mariano himself), they would not be doing this disgusting thing of renting out their wives to Japanese, they would want to keep their one wife to themselves like decent Tiwi." Most of his hearers (a) considered themselves decent Tiwi, but

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 548 595 668 797 (b) had each a number of wives at home, (c) had not rented any to the Japanese as yet (mainly because of lack of opportunity), but (d) were all suspecting each other of contemplating an early trip to the Yeimpi country and therefore were in chronic indecision on the whole matter. Hence Mariano's arguments were greeted with the applause that any group of people caught among a complicated set of moral alternatives will give to one of their number who has solved for himself the conflicts that beset them and has solved them moreover in a way perfectly consistent with all his previous attitudes. It was the applause and approval that is expressed in our culture by some such phrase as "I may not agree with him but at least he is sincere and you always know where he stands."

159 593 But like similar people elsewhere Mariano inspired no close intimate loyalty. Nobody felt warmly toward him. The missionaries used him but didn't like him, the anthropologist found him invaluable as an informant but intensely irritating in his self-importance and his belief in his own indispensability; among the natives he had no intimates and no close friends. His relations with his wife were much more formal and distant than was usual among monogamous couples and she frequently criticized him both in public and in private for what she called his "failure to talk to her"—undoubtedly the Tiwi equivalent of the American wife's complaint against her husband's absorption in business or politics. He was fond of his children but played with them little and then in a silent, brooding sort of way, confining his caresses to tickling and squeezing them, unlike Antonio whose play with his children was always carried on in an endless flow of chatter and two-way conversations. Child-talk, one surmises, was beneath Mariano's dignity.

177 159 All in all, Mariano was a forceful, domineering, self-important, introverted man, pursuing his dedicated way as the leader of a cause—collaboration with and imitation of the whites—but having personality traits which prevented him from inspiring any of the affection or warm devotion that other types of leaders inspire. There were many Tiwi, especially among the younger men, who were ready and willing to adopt at least the easier aspects of white culture such as clothes, work in Darwin, disrespect for tribal laws, violation of taboos, but in no sense can they be described as Mariano's followers, still less his admirers. Everyone respected Mariano, everybody consulted him, everybody made use of him and listened to him, but nobody warmed to him. He was as remote, as domineering, as aggressive, as humorless, as dedicated, as admirable as one of the Old Testament prophets—and just as difficult to like.

LOUIS

159 Of the five sons of Turimpi, it may be that the two who were most similar in whatever it is that is called personality were the second and third sons, Mariano and Louis. Both were "lonely ones," both had about them a kind of gloomy, inward-focused aura which inhibited warm friendly relations with [522] others. Among a people to whom laughter and gaiety come easily, both were completely devoid of humor. Both were men dedicated to a cause, but in the

MoBrSo to be the first husband of a girl is not merely a question of preferential choice; a FaSiSo is actually the only cross-cousin of the appropriate age to be considered as a party to a Type A contract. 582

As a first step, let us consider the expected relative ages of the principal parties to a Type A contract: the mother-in-law, the son-in-law, and the expected daughter-wife. A girl becomes a mother-in-law at puberty. For the sake of convenience we may consider this to be at the absolute minimum age of ten. A boy becomes a son-in-law at an age of not less than ten, and he may well be older than this. The minimum age of a Tiwi male is determined by his physical ability to hunt for and otherwise serve his mother-in-law in order to fulfill his part of the contract. 582 606 [581]

We cannot expect the future daughter and wife to be born, on the average, for at least five years and conceivably not for twenty years after the contract is made. However, again for convenience, let us assume that, on the average, the promised daughter will be born ten years from the date of the contract, i.e., when both the mother and the son-in-law are about twenty years old. The young girl will not become a cohabiting wife for approximately another eight or ten years, at which time her promised husband will be at least 28 to 30 years of age. Thus an average difference of twenty years between the ages of a girl and her first husband is to be expected—a difference which is dictated solely by the form and nature of the initial Type A contract. 582

Hart (1930: 282) believed that this twenty-year age difference was largely a result of the excessive practice of polygyny quite evident in his time (ca. 1930). However, in 1954, when most polygynous households had been broken up, an analysis of age differences for all primary unions for women in my sample still reflected the same disparity. Few men under the age of 30 had received wives, and only one girl over the age of ten had not yet been given to her promised husband. The average age difference between wives and first husbands was 18.9 years, with a range of from three to 54 years (Goodale 1959: 72). [114] [595] [593]

I shall next consider the expected relative ages of parents, siblings, and the children of siblings (cousins). If there is a twenty-year age difference between husbands and wives, it logically follows that the same age difference will also exist between the mothers and fathers of children. A woman can expect to have children by the age of twenty, while a man will not be expected to have legitimate children until about the age of 40. If we assume that siblings are of the same relative age (there being a 50/50 chance that brothers and sisters are older or younger), then we can expect that a sister will, on the average, have a child twenty years before her brother has a child. Thus it can be expected that the FaSiSo of a female Ego will be twenty years older than she is, and that her MoBrSo will be twenty years younger. In arranging the primary marriage of a girl, it is thus virtually impossible that she be promised to a MoBrSo who by expectation is twenty years younger than she, and who indeed is 582 593 582 605

582 probably not even born when she reaches the wifely age of ten. A
605 FaSiSo, on the other hand, is a cross-cousin belonging to the correct age group to be a party to the initial marriage contract. Relative age, therefore, determines that a Type A marriage contract, which is culturally universal for a woman's primary marriage and preferential from the point of view of male prestige, results almost inevitably in unilateral cross-cousin marriage between a MoBrDa and her FaSiSo.

582 The preferred form for widow remarriage among the Tiwi is to a
587 younger brother of the deceased husband. This type of remarriage contract stems directly from the Type A contract and may be considered a continuation thereof. It is therefore here classified as a Type A2 contract. As a woman grows older, when and if her Type A contract or its continuation runs out, alternative choices for secondary husbands are available to her, and acceptable to the Tiwi, among other cross-cousins.

582 A comparable method of analysis indicates that, as between the sons of a father's elder and younger sisters, a woman's primary marriage under a Type A contract is very much more likely to be with
[595] her FaElSiSo, and that under these circumstances she will probably enter her husband's household as a second and junior wife. Her elder co-wives play an important part in her education as a wife.
582 After she becomes a widow, however, she may become the first wife,
587 with the title of *taramaguta*, of a FaYoSiSo or of a MoElBrSo through a Type A2 or B contract. A MoYoBrSo, however, may be expected
593 to be considerably younger than Ego, and my analysis of all marriages in 1954 showed that only after the age of 30 do we find women married to husbands younger than they. Such a marriage can never be the result of a Type A contract but may occur under contracts of Types B, C, or D (see below).

Not only does the twenty-year average age difference between husband and wife under a Type A contract have the effect of practically limiting the choice among cross-cousins for a woman's first husband to a father's elder sister's son; it also means that a woman may expect to have at least two husbands during her lifetime. Indeed, she is likely to have a series of husbands whose ages relative to her own are successively younger until, as an elderly widow, she may well become the first wife of a man very much younger than herself.

Classification of Tiwi Marriage Contracts

584 The form and nature of Tiwi marriage contracts cannot be understood merely by looking at the results of the contract, i.e., who marries whom. One must also look at who has the authority to make the contract, who are parties to the contract, who implements the contract, and who can change a contract. Among the Tiwi the rights, duties, and obligations that pertain to all these aspects of a marriage contract are specified and reside in different individuals at different times in a woman's life. Here again the age factor must be considered, for while these rights, duties, and obligations lie in the

hands of a limited number of specified relatives of the woman, the 584
privilege of exercising a particular role in a marriage contract depends on the individual's age relative to others holding similar rights and relative to the woman involved in the contract. I have chosen to base the following classification of contracts on the single factor of who has the right to make the contract.

Type A Contracts

A Type A contract involves four individuals. The authority to [603]
make the contract resides solely in the hands of the bride's mother's father. At the time the contract is made, this man is at the expected age of 50—the age when a man is at the height of his political career. Acquiring wives for himself to further his career and maintain his [554 595]
prestige is only one of the activities involving marriage contracts in which a Tiwi male is engaged at this time of life. As a father, he has [593]
a duty to look after the welfare of his daughters even after they are married. As an elder in a matrilineal descent group, he has a similar [614]
duty toward all younger members of that descent group, male and female. By arranging a correct Type A marriage contract, a Tiwi man can fulfill two duties at the same time. He can provide his daughter with a son-in-law, whom he selects on the basis of potential economic and political ability and who, if of roughly the same age as the daughter, can be expected to provide her, under the terms of the contract, with continued support throughout her life. By selecting a young man in his own descent group (his sister's daughter's son) to provide this support, he at the same time assures this young man that he will eventually obtain a bestowed and preferred type of wife which will help him on his road to prestige.

The arranger of a Type A contract may be dead by the time the bride is of an age to be given over to her selected groom. The rights to implement the contract, consequently, do not permanently reside with the arranger, but rather they are the duty of the mother of the bride. They are not given to the mother's husband, even if he is also the bride's father. In the space of time that may well elapse between the arrangement of the contract and its implementation, the bride's mother may have a number of husbands, each of whom may have different axes to grind and varying motives for changing the selection of the groom. The right to change any Type A contract belongs to both the mother of the bride and to the groom; if either does not live up to the obligations of the contract the other may consider it void.

A Type A contract, therefore, is one which preferentially and [614]
frequently results in a marriage of a MoFaSiDaSo to a MoMoBrDaDa and in a marital union between two matrilineal descent groups. This arrangement is unaffected either by the death of the arranger or by any secondary marriage of the bride's mother to a man who, though the real father of the bride, might possibly belong to a descent group other than the two originally involved in the contract.

The enduring quality of a Type A contract over a span of two 582
generations is a most important aspect of the total marriage system

12;Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 11. Even the youngest respect the teeth of the crocodile

approached our fire. "You savey goose?" he asked me. "Oh yes," I said, "we eat him along America." He handed me a large juicy leg which I gave to Albert to divide, then squatted down at the edge of the fire's glow. I handed my tin of tobacco to Alice and she filled her husband's pipe. Picking up a burning branch from the fire, she knocked a hot coal into the bowl of the pipe and began smoking. Soon she handed it to Young Brook. Suddenly our attention was directed to the opposite side of the clearing where Dennis, the four-year old daughter of Black Joe was crying hysterically. Tuki, a tall powerful man of fifty-five, was doing his best to calm her and disentangle himself from her clinging arms so that he could leave. Tuki and his wife, Fat Alice, were a childless couple and

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 12. A Tiwi family camped for the night

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Black Joe, Fat Alice's brother, had given them his eldest daughter in adoption. However, Dennis spent as much time with her proper parents as with her foster parents and it was quite evident that her affection was at least equally divided. Albert went over and managed to bring the screaming, kicking child back to our camp and asked me to give her some of the hard candy which I had brought with me. It was some time, however, before her attention was sufficiently distracted to allow Tuki and the other men to slip away into the canoe to hunt crocodiles for another night. Agnes commented to me, "Let him cry? That white man rule no good. By and by they go silly."

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We strolled back to Black Joe's camp with Dennis, and listened to a discussion concerning the superiority of crocodile hunting over

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of his mother's brother).[10] Enough has been said already to indicate that in Tiwi marriage nothing was automatic. Females were given in marriage by their fathers, or (to a lesser extent) by their brothers, or (to a still lesser extent) by their sons. But fathers died and were succeeded by the men their widows remarried, and these men renamed all the widow's children, and by renaming them established some rights to make marriage decisions for the females. Therefore, cross-cousin marriage in Tiwi was merely part of the total system of marriage and had to adjust itself to the rest of the system. In theory, fathers could only bestow their infant daughters on men who stood to them in the relation of sisters' sons. Conversely, every man who received a bestowed wife received her from a man who was technically his mother's brother and of course the girl's father. To this extent the Tiwi were a tribe who practiced cross-cousin marriage and their kinship system belonged to one of the commonest Australian types, that which Radcliffe-Brown called Type I, having investigated it among the mainland tribe called the Kariera.[11] But a kinship system of the Kariera type could not accommodate all the complexities that had been introduced into Tiwi life by the emphasis on infant bestowal and widow remarriage. In particular, the generations kept getting badly mixed up, as for instance in the very common case of old men bestowing their infant daughters on other old men of their own age group, and in return receiving as infant wives (or wards) daughters of those old men. With this happening constantly, it was difficult to maintain the kinship principle that recipients of wives were always sons of the donor's sister and donors were always brothers of the recipient's mother. Which was mother's brother and which was sister's son in the case of two old men busily swapping daughters was a problem that put a severe strain on a Kariera-type kinship system. And widow remarriage introduced further complexities. We have already mentioned the case of two young men, Antonio and Dominico, who through a judicious use of widow-remarriage had ended up married to each other's elderly mothers. This was no isolated case; many pairs of men of like age were married to each other's mothers. Who called whom "father" and who called whom "son" became an insoluble riddle in such cases.

To avoid further involvement in the labyrinthine complexities of Australian kinship organization, all that we need say here is that the Tiwi had unscrambled the potential confusion introduced into their kinship categories by inventing a few new terms which, superimposed upon their Kariera-type system, kept everything straight. In Kariera, and generally among all the mainland tribes, no kinship distinction was made between potential wife and actual wife or between potential "in-laws" and actual "in-laws." A Kariera male called all the girls who were eligible for marriage to him by the same term (*Nuba*, usually translated mother's brother's daughter); all the fathers of such girls

[10] The definitive work on Australian kinship systems is Radcliffe-Brown 1930-31, and there is a large technical literature on the subject. See also Elkin 1951; Berndt 1955 and 1957; Murdock 1949.

[11] See Radcliffe-Brown 1913.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

601 by the same term (*Kaga*, usually translated as mother's brother); and all the mothers of such girls by the same term (*Toa*, usually translated father's sister or mother's brother's wife). When he married one of these girls he still called her *Nuba*, he still called his wife's father *Kaga*, and still called his wife's mother *Toa*. But not in Tiwi. For them, all potential wives were, in theory, mothers' brothers' daughters and all potential wives' fathers were mothers' brothers. But when a man married any such girl, he immediately called her by a new and different kinship term which can only be translated as "wife," and corresponding new and separate terms were used for the actual wife's father, actual wife's mother, and even for the actual wife's father's sister. Thus marriage introduced for a Tiwi a new set of relatives with new kinship terms different from those he used toward his general run of cross-cousins, mother's brothers, father's sisters, and so on, and these "relatives by actual marriage" terms, being based on actual marriages rather than kinship categories, were capable of handling in a fairly orderly manner all the complexities introduced into Tiwi domestic life by such customs as old men exchanging infant daughters or young men marrying each other's mothers. We may sum it up briefly by saying that Tiwi marriages operated within a general framework of cross-cousin marriage kinship categories identical with the 152 categories of the Kariera, but that females had become such important assets 582 in power and prestige relationships among the senior men—marriage had be- 601 come, so to speak, such a political affair—that a new set of kinship terms based on actual marriages had to be superimposed on the terms geared to cross-cousin marriage; in cases of conflict or anomaly or confusion in the cross-cousin terms, the terms based on actual marriages were controlling or took precedence. Which is only another way of saying that in theory all Tiwi marriages were rather idealistically approximated to marriages between cross-cousins, but in practice they departed quite far from such an ideal; so far, in fact, that extra kinship terms had been introduced to take care of the relationships created by such departures.

"Disputed" Wives

588 There is still one more category of wives to be mentioned, a category for which the Tiwi had no name in their own language but which in pidgin English they referred to as "stolen" wives. A few women so labeled were likely to turn up in the "list" of the wives of most big men, but analysis of the circumstances in each case makes it clear that "stolen" was an unsuitable label and that wives so designated were most often in a status that should be called either "disputed" or "shared." In legal terms they were wives in which there was or had been a divided interest. To explain fully the nature of these cases would carry us over into both the Tiwi legal and sexual systems, and here we are trying to confine our analysis to those aspects of marriage that have consequences for household organization. Since these disputed or shared wives had

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The territory of the *Tiklauila* is roughly contained in the area in the south of Bathurst Island, south of Point Hurd and west of *Mukambrimo*, which is a river about eight miles to the west of the mission station. In this area, roughly about two hundred square miles, there are a number of districts with specific names. Anyone familiar with the Australian blackfellow knows how certain districts are given certain names, and although no native can tell the exact boundaries, everyone in the tribe knows when he has come into one of these districts and when he has left it. The principle of differentiation of these areas seems to be upon the basis of the physical aspect of the country, a valley for example having a distinct name from either set of hills surrounding it, a plain being distinguished from a thickly-wooded piece of bushland on its margin, and so on. 361 621 103

These districts play an important part in Tiwi land ownership. Certain districts are not owned by the horde as a whole, but by a single family of that horde. Thus in the horde we are considering, *Tanio*, the extensive district in the extreme south-western corner of the island around Cape Fouveroy, is owned by a single set of men, all of whom are the son's sons of *Mikidjimirla*, a man who as far as can be judged died about 1870-1880. The basis of their title is the fact that *Mikidjimirla* died and was buried in the district, hence all the game and fruit in *Tanio* belong to them, and cannot be hunted or collected by anyone else without their consent. 423 [621]

The question immediately arises as to whether the mere burial of a man in a district gives his heirs property rights in that district. The Tiwi answer is that it always does if the man was sufficiently important. The man in question here, *Mikidjimirla*, was from all accounts one who left a deep impression on the society of his time both by his personality and by his prowess in warfare. More than that he left his mark on following generations by the number of children he had. At the present time, there are nine men, all grandchildren of *Mikidjimirla*, in whom the hunting and fruit-collecting rights of *Tanio* are vested, and these men and their families normally camp in *Tanio* and deny the right of other *Tiklauila* families to hunt there. This group has a solidarity of its own which is expressed by a name *Taniauwila*, which is one of the alternative horde-names. It should be noted in this connection that the Tiwi name for father's father is *amini*, and the members of this group will frequently 423 425 554 423 613 [601]

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

423 refer to one another as *ŋia yirt'amini* (my "one grandfather") in preference
613 to *ŋi'iwuni* (my brother), or *ŋia kalipini* (my half-brother), which is the
601 normal term of address.

423 A member of another horde found trespassing upon the territory
685 of the *Tiklauila* would be killed immediately unless he had been invited for
609 a corroboree or some such festival. A member of the same horde who,
621 not belonging to the *yirt'amini* group, trespasses in *Taŋio* would not be put to death, but he and his relatives would become embroiled in a serious quarrel with the group.

423 *Taŋio* is the best example of this peculiar institution because being
613 in an out-of-the-way peninsula no one needs to go there except people
621 who have a right there. Consequently the *Taŋiauwila* can exercise a much stricter supervision and hence as a matter of fact guard their rights more jealously than the people with such rights over districts that lie upon the main roads of the two islands. Nevertheless the whole of *Tiklaru* is divided into such districts and the whole of the *Tiklauila* into such *yirt' amini* groups.

Thus bordering on the *Taŋiauwila* to the east, we find the *Arupula* who have similar hunting and food-collecting rights over *Arupi*, the coastal district in the middle of the south coast of Bathurst Island. The origin of their title is lost in obscurity inasmuch as nobody to-day knows who the ancestor was or exactly where is the grave that gave them such a right. Nor is the *Arupula* title respected as much as is the *Taŋiauwila* partly because *Arupi* is crossed by several "high-roads"—notably the only road to *Taŋio* from the east, and the *Wraŋgwila* road to the Mission Station —but even more because the present representatives of the *Arupula* are either uninitiated youths or peaceful old men.

423 This introduces what is perhaps the main factor in the perpetuation
628 of this institution—the power of the *yirt'amini* groups to enforce their
613 rights. The ownership of a particular territory by a horde and the
685 punishment of trespass upon it can always be enforced because there is always a certain number of fighting men in the horde. Hence horde-ownership is respected. In the *yirt' amini* group, however, periods frequently occur when the group is not strong enough to enforce its claims, and unless the claims are constantly brought under the notice of the rest of the horde they are ignored. The result is that unless the family gets a new lease of life by boys growing up into formidable warriors, such a

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

614 Each of these *emuya*, sometimes called Pukui (sun),[8] has a number of cult
778 centres and in them resides the "old woman" of the clan; these are also called *emuya*. The sacred site of the Tukambani clan is at Morapeanga, Cape Keith; of the Miatui, Irapulanwa, Buchanan Island in the Apsley Straits; of the Kudjali, Padupi; Sanke Bay, or as the natives say in their quaint pidjin, Djenakaba, which is on the north of Melville Island, an old trepang site.

As far as could be ascertained, no fixed belief is associated with these clan centres. They are not burial caves invested with a ritual significance such as we find in parts of the mainland (Wadaman and other tribes), yet the shade or spirit of the dead does
[775] follow the track made by the natives as they come from the sacred centre to "show it the road." Only some natives know this. It is probably a ritual that has become lost with the advent of new ideas.

614 *Clan Relationship.* To marry within a major clan or phratry, *aramipi*, is taboo,
615 *himiyari*. A person of one phratry can only marry into the other two major clans.
● 601 Thus, all Tukambani and their kindred sub-clans are mother, mother's brother, mother's mother, mother's mother's brother, sister's son and daughter, brother and sister. They call people in the other two clans father, father's sister, son, daughter,
[611] wife, wife's brother, wife's mother, wife's mother's brother, wife's mother's mother and wife's mother's brother. In other words, descent is matrilineal.

582 *Marriage Law.* The marriage law is the same as in most tribes: a man marries his mother's mother's brother's daughter's daughter or, as the natives would say, "a man marries his group sister's son's daughter." They have equal exchange in marriage, that is "opposite brothers exchange sisters." An "uncle" (mother's brother) takes his (group) nephew's daughter, and the group nephew receives the
[616] uncle's daughter in exchange (cross-cousin type). There are neither subsections nor sections and indeed, no moieties. A reason may be suggested for this: being isolated on the island, each person knew his or her relationship to the others, and as there was no intertribal exchange, the need for this type of classification never arose. One of the important functions of the section and subsection systems is to facilitate intercourse between tribal groups.

582 The marriage system with relationship terms is explained in the following table:
601
614

		1		2
A	.. *ubunga* m.m.m.m. or sr.	*UWANI* M.M.M.M.B. or B. (Ego)	*yarbunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.
B	.. *yamoriy* m.m.m.	*YARMURDI* M.M.M.B.	*umbreniwa* w.m.	*YAPINAWINI* W.M.B.
C	.. *imaninga* m.m.	*IMANANI* M.M.B.	*tumaliya* w.m.m.	*TAMALITI* W.M.M.B.
D	.. *inari* m.	*ILAMANI* M.B.	*umarani* w.m.m.m.	*IMERANINGA* W.M.M.M.B.
A	.. *ubunga* sr.	*UWANE* B.	*yabunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.

[8] These natives have numerous names for the same object, the result of the taboo on certain words after a death.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

All those in number one group belong to the same clan, and are "opposite" to those of number two group, who also belong to one clan. The lines A, B, C and D are intermarrying groups, i.e. Ego marries his *yabunaiya*, etc. 582 641 [614]

Of course, relationship terms also include others denoting the type of relation or blood tie. For instance, a mother's brother or a sister's son (group) when distantly related to Ego could be his father-in-law and would then be called *YUNARENIWA*. A true father is *ERINGANI*, a father's sister, *yananiya*; father's father *ARMINI*; father's mother, *armma*; mother's brother's own daughter, *yamuina*, and one son, *YAMUWANINI*[4]; half brother is *INGULABINI* and a half-sister *inguleba*.[5]

This system of marriage is not unlike the Murngin and Anula system and also is the same as the *wadji wadji* (wrong side marriage) of the Mudbara. In one, cross-cousins—not *inguleba*—can marry, while in the true Mudbara cross-cousin marriage is prohibited. 582

Rites. The rituals centre around the Kulama. The underlying principle of this is to ensure that the Kulama (a small hot yam that embodies the spirit of the "old woman" and guardian of the horde) is cooked correctly, for this ensures her protection against Maradji, the rainbow snake, another old woman who can cause evil to come upon them and "swallow them" up. It is performed during the wet season by each family, and is said to bring about a plentiful supply of food. The Kulama is also used to pass the initiates, both male and female, from a lower to a higher order in the social scale, although I myself could not see that any important results were obtained by the initiates through the ritual.[6] 796 [561]

Some result, or at least protection, however, is obtained: if the Kulama is not sung or danced at the prescribed time or place, the Marakarti (spear grass) and also the ring used for cooking the Kulama yams at the ritual, would give rise to a poison, *Tani*, which would pass into the air and cause sickness; perhaps a youth who had not passed through the Kulama would sicken and die. On the other hand, a youth who has passed through the ritual may gain a certain satisfaction by believing that he can drive the sickness away and protect the family. In addition, the Kulama is not only an increase ritual for yams; in it the father also "sings" the name of his child in a form of song, *apa*, and foretells in a dream that a certain spirit "shade" will be incarnated through one of his wives at some future date; for these children are waiting at that "spirit dreaming" place called Bilawuwi. In other words, it is a human increase ritual. [751] [842]

[4] These are true cousins and cannot marry.

[5] This *inguleba* native is the term for persons who are taboo to Ego; they cannot approach Ego's wives, as their sweat must not touch. They are people who are "out of line" in relationship. For instance, if a Kudjarli man marries two women, one a Tukambani and the other a Miatui, his children would be of two different *pukui* or totems. These children, half-brothers and half-sisters, are *inguleba* to each other.

[6] It is unlike the Karawadi of the subincised people, in which the initiate is freed of certain food taboos, and again in the Kudidjingara, through which the old men receive magical power to levy tribute from the young people of the tribe, who have not passed through that ritual.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

is desirous of starting his household has inherited the right of arranging his mother's remarriage, he may well enter into a contract involving an exchange of mothers with another youth in a similar position. While a son is accorded this right, I suspect that in many of the cases of mother exchange the real arrangers are the mothers. 584 587 593

Tiwi Kinship Terminology

For the sake of the record, I present herewith the kinship terms which I collected in 1954. It must be understood that my major informants on the classification of kin were women. Although most of the terms were also checked with male informants, through oversight this was not done in a few instances. Although a full discussion of the terminology would perhaps be valuable, limitations of time and space compel me to limit my comments to matters directly pertinent to my discussion of the marriage system. Unless otherwise indicated, all the terms listed are employed by male as well as female speakers. 601 [124]

Sibling Terminology

1 *iwuni:* elder brother. Affinal application: WiSiHu, MoBrDaHu (ws).
2 *iwini:* younger brother. Affinal application: WiSiHu, FaSiDaHu (ms).
3 *imbunga:* elder sister. Affinal application: HuBrWi, MoBrSoWi (ws).
4 *imboka:* younger sister. Affinal application: HuBrWi, FaSiSoWi (ms).
5 *inggalabini:* half brother (see discussion below).
6 *inggalabunga:* half sister (see discussion below).

The regular sibling terms (1 to 4) are differentiated on the basis of sex and relative age, and they are extended on Ego's generation to all parallel cousins, including remote ones. A special set of terms (5 and 6) is restricted to some siblings and parallel cousins. The criterion for their differentiation, as stated by the Tiwi, is that they refer to half siblings by the same father whose mothers belong to different matrisibs. The only parallel cousins to whom they apply, I believe, are first cousins; distant parallel cousins are definitely called by the regular sibling terms (1 to 4) regardless of their sib affiliations.

The terms for full siblings are also extended to certain collateral relatives on the second ascending and descending generations. Thus the distant parallel cousins of MoMo and FaFa are called by the terms for elder sibling, *iwuni* or *imbunga*, and the distant parallel cousins of SoCh (ms), DaCh (ws), SiDaCh (ms), and BrDaCh (ws) are called *iwini* or *imboka* (younger brother or sister).

Cross-cousin Terminology

7 *imbuwi.* Affinal application only: Hu, HuBr, SiHu (ws), WiBr.
8 *imbuwinga.* Affinal application only: Wi, WiSi, BrWi (ms), HuSi.
9 *mamaniya* (or *mamanini*): MoBrSo (ws), FaSiSo (ws). Affinal application: "Si" Hu (ws). My data are inconclusive as to whether male speakers use this and the following term in the same way.
10 *mamanga:* MoBrDa (ws), FaSiDa (ws). Affinal application: "Br" Wi (ws).

601 It became apparent to me, when I was collecting kinship ter-
582 minology, that actual genealogical connection was an important factor in Tiwi kin classification and also, of course, in determining expected behavior. It is perhaps for this reason that I have always viewed the system of preferential marriage as concerned with actual second cross-cousins rather than with classificatory cross-cousins however distantly removed. First cross-cousins are definitely considered a "little-bit-wrong-way." Unfortunately my actual genealogies are too few and too shallow to shed much statistical light on the problem. It has also occurred to me that with extreme polygyny and obligatory remarriage there should be more first and second cross-cousins available to Ego than with monogamy or limited polygyny.

601 With their strong preference for unilateral cross-cousin marriage it might be expected that the Tiwi would have a Sudanese type of cousin terminology in which cross-cousins would be terminologically differentiated on the basis of whom one could and could not marry. When I phrased this question to my women informants, however, I could find no such discrimination. Women do, nevertheless, make a terminological distinction between cross-cousins to whom they are technically married before birth and those whom they may marry in the future when and if their Type A contract lapses.

585 Here I must interject some additional ethnographic information.
881 At the conclusion of a girl's puberty ceremony, she returns to the camp of her husband (*imbunei*), where she is painted. Then her husband and his brothers, all of whom she also calls *imbunei*, line up with the youngest first and the actual husband last. One by one they hit her with a feather pompom (*tokwiinga*) until the husband's turn arrives. At this point the girl runs, and her husband pursues her, catches her, and makes her kneel by a tree, which is marked. I have chosen to regard this ritual as a marriage ceremony in which the Type A contract is finally validated with all its ramifications. The
[582] fact that the husband's brothers are terminologically classed even at this time with the actual husband and play a part in the marriage ceremony may be regarded as validating the continuance of the Type A contract through successive remarriages (of Type A2) to the younger brothers of the original holder of the contract.

587 If a woman survives all her *imbunei*, she becomes eligible to
601 marry any of her other cross-cousins, either matrilateral or patrilateral, through contracts of Types B, C, or D. It is these cross-cousins, who did not become auxiliary "husbands" under her Type A contract, to whom she applies the term *mawaninya* or its variant, *mawanini*.

601 ## *Terminology in the First Ascending Generation*

11 *iringani:* father; also FaBr, FaFaBo, FaFaBrSo, MoMoFa, MoMoFaBr. Affinal application: MoHu, MoMoMoHu, HuMoBr.

12 *ingwari:* mother; also MoSi, MoMoDa, MoMoSiDa, FaFaSiDa. Affinal application: FaWi, MoMoFaWi, HuFaSi.

13 *ilimani:* mother's brother; also MoMoSo, MoMoSiSo, MoFaFa. Affinal application: HuFa, FaSiHu, MoFaMoHu. 601

14 *intinganinga:* father's sister; also FaFaDa, FaFaSiDa, MoFaSiDa. Affinal application: HuMo, "MoBr" Wi.

15 *timandinga:* classificatory "father's sister"; also MoMoBrDa. Affinal application: MoBrWi, WiMo (before contract).

16 *ambrinua:* wife's mother (after contract); also DaHu (ws) after contract.

While the Tiwi make no terminological distinction between an actual and a classificatory MoBr (*ilimani*), they do distinguish between an actual FaSi (*intinganinga*), with whom the wife of a classificatory MoBr is classed, and a classificatory "FaSi" (*timandinga*) who is the wife of an actual MoBr. Female informants say: "We cannot marry the son of a real mother's brother, but a long-way mother's brother's son is all right." Male informants phrase the rule differently: "We cannot marry the daughter of a real father's sister; we call our mother-in-law *timandinga* before the contract and *ambrinua* afterwards." This terminology, together with the informants' statements, rather clearly implies unilateral cross-cousin marriage. 582 601

Terminology in the First Descending Generation

17 *imrani:* son (ms); also BrSo (ws), MoBrDaSo, DaDaSo (ms), BrDaDaSo (ws). Affinal application: DaHu (ws) before contract, SiDaHu (ms), SiDaDaDaHu (ms), DaDaDaHu (ws). 601

18 *imraninga:* daughter (ms); also BrDa (ws), MoBrDaDa, DaDaDa (ms), BrDaDaDa (ws). Affinal application: SoWi (ws), SiSoWi (ms) DaDaSoWi (ws), SiDaDaSoWi (ms).

19 *morti:* son (ws); also SiSo (ms), DaDaSo (ws), SiDaDaSo (ms). Affinal application: DaHu (ms), BrDaHu (ws), DaDaDaHu (ms), BrDaDaDaHu (ws), MoBrDaDaHu.

20 *maringa:* daughter (ws); also SiDa (ms), DaDaDa (ws), SiDaDaDa (ms). Affinal application: SoWi (ms), BrSoWi (ws), DaDaSoWi (ms), MoBrDaSoWi.

Although the terms appropriate to the first ascending and first descending generations are in general kept distinct, they are to some extent interchangeable when warranted by differences in relative age and the behavior associated therewith.

The applications of the terms *morti* and *maringa*, in contrast to those of the terminology in the first ascending generation, suggest a rule of bilateral cross-cousin marriage with sister exchange. The rest of my analysis, however, indicates a strong preference for unilateral cross-cousin marriage and the impossibility of sister exchange in Type A contracts. The seeming inconsistencies may, of course, reflect a period of uncompleted change in social structure, but this lies outside the province of the present paper, which is concerned with showing how the system operates today. 182 582 583

Terminology in the Second Ascending Generation

21 *amini:* mother's father; also MoFaBr, FaMoBr. Affinal application: MoMoHu, FaMaSiHu. 601

22 *ama:* father's mother; also FaMoSi, MoFaSi. Affinal application: MaFaWi, MoMoBrWi.

601

23 *angamani:* father's father; also FaFaBr, MoMoBr. Affinal application: MaMoHu, MoFaSiHu.

24 *imaninga:* mother's mother; also MoMoSi, FaFaSi. Affinal application: MoFaWi, FaMoBrWi.

Unlike *amini* and *ama*, the terms *angamani* and *imaninga* are not indefinitely extended collaterally, the more distant collateral kin being classed as elder siblings, i.e., *iwuni* or *imbunga*.

Terminology in the Second Descending Generation

25 *inimini:* daughter's son (ms); also BrDaSo (ws). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ws), SiDaDaHu (ms), "Si"Hu.

26 *inimunga:* daughter's daughter (ms); also BrDaDa (ws). Affinal application: DaSoWi (ws), SiDaSoWi (ms), "Br"Wi.

27 *intumili:* daughter's child (ws); also SiDaCh (ms). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ms), DaSoWi (ms), BrDaDaHu (ws), BrDaSoWi (ws). This term is used self-reciprocally and is quite often replaced by sibling terms (*iwini* or *imboke*) for distant kin.

Exchange Between Descent Groups

582 614

Consideration of symmetrical versus asymmetrical cross-cousin marriage is but one way of looking at the Tiwi marriage system. Let us now look at marriage as a system of exchange between descent groups and between local groups.

From both the male and female points of view, the preferred marriage is to a member of Ego's father's matrilineal sib. Of all the marriages I recorded in 1954, 66 per cent were to members of the father's matrisib, and there was no significant difference by sex. These figures were substantiated by statements from informants expressing the preference for the exchange of spouses between two sibs. As in some of the kinship terminology, there is no indication here of asymmetry in the system.

Let us examine some of the ethnographic ramifications of sib exchange. Though a girl can be said to marry into her father's sib, it is more correct to view this as a marriage into her mother's father's sib, for it is her actual MoFa who arranges her Type A marriage, and this man is obligated to the men of his sib to help them acquire wives. If Ego's mother has also married correctly, then Ego's father's sib and her mother's father's sib will be the same. However, it is possible that her MoHu may not be a member of the same sib as her MoFa. This might well account for some of the 34 per cent of "incorrect" marriages in my original analysis, which only took account of the father's sib.

614 [842] [175]

From the point of view of a male Ego it is also important, but for different reasons, to marry a woman of his father's sib. A man's children come to him first in a dream and are then directed by him to their proper mothers. Unborn children (*piispiini*) already have matrilineal sib affiliations and thus must be born to mothers of the same sib. Tiwi fathers call this dreaming of children "finding," and, if a man is unable to "find" any children, his deceased father is ex-

582 and for Tiwi fathers' statements that they can only "find" children
614 in their own country.

Today, with nonlocalized sibs, both the sib and the local group are
582 considered in the exchange of woman, which is direct with reference
614 to sibs but indirect with reference to local groups. Such exchange
may in some cases involve sibs and countries or *tungarima*, in others
621 sibs and districts or subcountries. I found that approximately 50 per cent of local-group exchanges were between *tungarima* and 50 per cent within the *tungarima*.

582 With local-group exchange and unilateral cross-cousin marriage preferred and predominant, we have an indirect but circular marriage exchange system. We cannot, however, consider the entire society as being involved in a single marriage exchange system. The system is best seen from the point of view of a single male Ego, whose marriages are systematized according to rules which are society wide, but whose actual marriages are determined by past affiliations which can be and often are variable with respect to sib and local-group exchange.

That the Tiwi system is Ego-oriented is most evident when a
554 male Ego dies and his relatives foregather for his funeral ceremonies
571 (Goodale 1959). If such an Ego has lived a full life, he will be affiliated
764 at the time of his death with a number of social groups. He is affiliated by birth with a matrilineal sib. By his father's death he is affiliated with a local group and a *tungarima*, which may or may not be the same as the group with whom he currently resides; in either case he is affiliated with the latter and will be buried among them. Through marriage, Ego is likewise affiliated with one or more additional sibs and local groups.

Only those persons who belong to the several above-mentioned
601 groups with which the deceased is actually affiliated are expected to
764 honor him by attending his funeral ceremony. When death occurs,
these individuals are terminologically reclassified into four cate-
602 gories, from the members of each of which similar behavior is expected. The spouse and spouse's siblings become *ambarui*. Cross-cousins, MoFa, FaMo, BrDaCh (ws), and SiSoCh (ms) all become *yempi*. Siblings and parallel cousins, MoMo, FaFa, BrSoCh (ws), and SiDaCh (ms), regardless of their sib affiliations, are classed together as *pudawi*. All kinsmen in the first ascending and first descending generations are classed as *unandawi*. Since, however, there is a distinct role differentiation between Fa, FaSi, and SoCh (ms), on the one hand, and Mo, MoBr, and SiCh (ms), on the other, I suspect there may be a terminological distinction which escaped me, inasmuch as these "funeral terms," with the exception of *ambarui*, are no longer in use.

Conclusion

582 In this paper I have considered the form and nature of the varying types of contracts that lead to marriage among the Tiwi. I have

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

discussed the factor of relative age as a major determinant of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in the particular type of contract which is universal for first marriages among females and is also the preferred contract for males. I have also described several variant patterns of Tiwi marriage contracts and have shown that these cannot be considered as alternatives to the preferred type but rather as additional patterns which apply only to a woman's secondary marriages. These additional types of contracts are also, to some extent, conditioned by the relative ages of the participants, but the resultant form of marriage may vary from a continuance of patrilateral cross-cousin marriage to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and even to marriage with certain relatives who are not cross-cousins. The wide variation in contracts leading to secondary marriages for women does not affect the continuance of preferred unilateral cross-cousin marriage or the exchange of wives between particular descent and local groups until the second generation after the variant marriage. Consequently, any change in the social organization of the Tiwi brought about by variations in marriage contracts is a gradual change, but it is also an inevitable and accepted form of change. The Tiwi rightly consider that as individuals they have considerable freedom in the selection of mates from almost any descent and local group and even from among a number of categories of kinsmen. Their Ego-oriented marriage system provides both stability and flexibility, and this is reflected in their system of kin classification.

NOTES

1. The field work on which this paper is based was undertaken in 1954 at the Snake Bay Native Settlement on Melville Island and was jointly financed by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.
2. In 1959, I used the relative age of spouses in a preliminary analysis of Tiwi unilateral cross-cousin marriage (Goodale 1959). It was with considerable pleasure that I found that a similar analysis by Rose (1960) had quite independently arrived at the same conclusions. Even more interesting was the fact that in cases where I had to calculate expected ages for many of my kin relations, Rose, with more complete age data, could give the average and range in ages for the same relatives, and that in most cases his "average" and my "estimated" ages were the same or within one or two years of one another.
3. For their valuable comments, criticisms, and advice I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Robbins Burling, Ward H. Goodenough, Edward B. Harper, Barbara S. Lane, and George P. Murdock.
4. Unfortunately, since the only age data collected in the field were for husbands and wives, I have had to use expected ages rather than average or mean ages throughout most of this paper (see note 2 above).
5. The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply. The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece of meat or a dish of *kwoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

This created an intriguing situation since Summit, having had this child bestowed on him at her birth some nine years previously, had thus acquired a bestowed wife at about age 27; Gitjara now 33 or so still had not received a bestowal. By remarrying the mother of Summit's young bestowed wife, Gitjara had turned the tables on one of his chief competitors among his age group. He could not, of course, alter the bestowal; in five or six years' time the girl would take up residence with Summit. But as the step-father who renamed the girl and the head of the household in which she would live for the next five years, Gitjara was in an excellent position to make Summit enter into a deal or two with him. He could drag his feet as to the time of the delivery of the girl to Summit; he could drop hints that there was something irregular about the bestowal to Summit in the first place, and so on; but whatever form of pressure he chose to exert on Summit, the latter well knew that all Gitjara wanted was to be cut in on some of Summit's deals and to be included in the network of Summit's alliances. The next move was now clearly up to Summit. 159 557 584

If Summit wished the nine-year-old girl now in Gitjara's household to be transferred promptly and without argument, he would be well advised to give some consideration to Gitjara, perhaps even the promise of one of his still-to-be-born daughters either as a wife or as a ward. Although not necessary, it would be a politically wise gesture. If he did so, both men would be gambling in futures. Since Summit's young wife was now nine years old, it would be at least six or seven years before she could produce a daughter (if at all) and another fourteen or fifteen years before any such daughter (if she lived) would be old enough to join Gitjara's household either as a wife or ward. Hence, under any such arrangement between the two young men, Summit would be giving something to Gitjara but in such a way that the latter could not collect for at least twenty years and might never collect.

Anthropologists will note that such arrangements still conformed to the patterns of cross-cousin marriage. Gitjara as *de jure* father delivers his "daughter" to Summit and thus becomes technically Summit's mother's brother or wife's father. Twenty years later (if all goes well) Summit delivers his daughter (by Gitjara's daughter) to Gitjara, thus becoming technically the mother's brother or wife's father of Gitjara. Gitjara himself might marry this daughter of Summit by his own step-daughter or treat her as a ward given to him by Summit and bestow her on some other man selected by himself; in the latter case he would be acting as father to his step-daughter's daughter. There were no clan barriers to such an arrangement, since fathers had to belong to clans different from those of their wives and of their daughters, step-daughters and daughters' daughters. 159 602 [582] [584] [614]

There were, of course, alternative actions or "deals" open to Summit and also to Gitjara, depending upon their plans in other directions. The pattern described above, however, was extremely common in Tiwi marriage arrangements, and often it was the reason why some very old man would receive some female infant as a wife: an agreement of this type had been made twenty or thirty years before, when the now senile old man was in his 159 557 584

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

therefore the question of who threw the spear that wounded her gave rise to a new series of wrangles which had to be integrated into all the old ones. A man who had been quietly sitting, minding his own business and having no quarrels with anybody, would suddenly leap into the center of the stage and announce that the damaged old lady was his mother and therefore he wanted the hide of the rat that had damaged her, and a whole new argument was in progress. 628

If the person wounded in the first flurry of spear throwing was a senior male, that similarly led the arguments off in some new direction since his kinsmen in *both* war parties felt compelled to support him or revenge his wound or inflict a wound on his wounder. Frequently it appeared that the original matters of dispute, which had brought the two war parties together in the first place, were forgotten and lost in the new disputes and fights that originated on the field of battle. Such a view was supported by the frequency with which one found at the end of the day that the main casualties and the main headline performers had been people who had gone to the field of battle in the morning with no quarrel with anybody, and not even wearing white paint. Even the most peaceful spectator in the most remote corner of the gallery was likely to find himself in the center of the ring before the day was over at a Tiwi "battle." 578 628

Despite this apparent confusion and near anarchy of procedure, however, the main outlines were quite clear. The bands were not firm political entities and therefore could not do battle, as bands, with each other. Everybody, on both sides, was interrelated in the same kinship system. An angry old Tiklauila, abusing and throwing spears at an angry old Mandiimbula, might have as the basis of his complaint the fact that the Mandiimbula father had promised but not delivered one of his daughters. Since Tiwi bestowals were from mother's brother to sister's son, the spear throwing was patently a case of a sister's son abusing his mother's brother, and the fact that the two men belonged to different bands was not germane to their dispute. The angry Tiklauila elder could not demand support from other Tiklauila *as Tiklauila* in the case at issue for it involved a dispute between kinsmen whose band affiliations were irrelevant to the subject matter. Mainly for this reason the so-called war party of one band against another band turned out to be only a loose collection of individuals, each with his own case to argue, who found it convenient, and safer, to travel together into the territory of another band and argue all their individual cases on the same day at the same place. Tiwi interpersonal relations were primarily kin relations between members of all bands; territorial loyalties were shifting ones, temporary and necessarily quite subordinate to kin loyalties. Hence warfare, in the sense of pitched battles between groups aligned through territorial loyalties, did not occur and could not occur among the Tiwi. 621 628 602 619

The confusion of the so-called battle itself was also due to the primacy of kinship and friendship ties. When a man with a grievance started his harangue on a battlefield, he was never quite sure of what support he would get or where it would come from. He was pretty much on his own, even though 602 628 571

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

571 he had arrived there as a member of a large war party. This situation stemmed
602 from the coexistence, on the one hand, of the intricate web of kinship that
628 united everybody present and made the problem of who would support whom unpredictable enough, and, on the other, the intricate network of deals and promises and personal alliances and obligations that every senior Tiwi man had woven inside the kinship system. A Tiwi elder did not, for example, have one category of relatives called his mother's brothers; he had at least three different categories of mother's brothers. There were those mother's brothers who had given him nothing, those who had given him wives, and those who had promised him a wife but were dragging their feet on delivery, or even trying to renege on their promise. In pressing a case against one of this third category, an elder might quite conceivably alienate some of his mother's brothers of the second category. Nor could he be sure of the support of even his own brothers, since they were certainly cultivating, and possibly undercutting him with, the same donors of daughters as he was involved with. Perhaps the nondelivery, which was the whole basis of his case against the mother's brother, had been instigated by his own brother trying to engineer a rebestowal of the girl to him. Because of the two networks, that of formal kinship obligations and that of marriage deals, two Tiwi seniors engaged in a dispute had no impartial body to whom they could submit their arguments about breach of contract. Disputes between a young man and an elder could
[674] be submitted to the publicly witnessed duel, since these were not breaches of contract but cases of trespass by the young men, and as such were crimes.
[626] Impartial public opinion upheld the old men and punished the young men every time. The old men's arguments with each other, however, could not be
[686] so adjusted, since they involved marriage deals (as distinct from seduction) and in marriage deals everybody was involved and nobody was impartial. Where any senior stood on any marriage deal in dispute depended on how that
[557] deal fitted into his own conniving. In that area of life, every adult man had his own axes to grind and a disinterested group of umpires was impossible to find.

Thus Tiwi battles had to be the confused, disorderly, inconclusive
628 things they always were. They usually lasted all day, during which about
578 two-thirds of the elapsed time was consumed in violent talk and mutual abuse between constantly changing central characters and satellites. The remaining third of the time was divided between duels involving a pair of men who threw spears at each other until one was wounded, and brief flurries of more general weapon throwing involving perhaps a dozen men at a time, which ended whenever somebody, even a spectator, was hit. As a result of this full day of violence, perhaps a few of the cases would be settled that night—by a father handing over his delayed daughter, or a man with a disputed wife relinquishing her to her rightful husband—but when the war party left next day to return home, the number of cases settled was likely to be less than the number of new feuds, grievances, and injuries that had originated during the day of battle. For not only did the participants carry away from the battlefield a vivid memory of all the physical wounds, intended or accidental, inflicted by whom

177 them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now
592 only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that
159 his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few un-
177 comfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped
592 with him in 1934 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose
[936 deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother
968] had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased
[584 younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Car-
589] mel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were
[607] two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law
[602] became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

177 We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led
162 by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a list-
571 ing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent.
[768 Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had
604 daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the
584 "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-
177

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 0120 Tiwi 0120

PERSONAL NAMES AMONG THE TIWI[1]

By C. W. M. HART

[171] 551 THE Tiwi, who inhabit Melville and Bathurst Islands in North Australia, are in many respects unlike the other Australian peoples. So little is known, however, about the subject of personal names among Australian tribes that it is impossible to say whether in this respect also [121] they are atypical. Among the Tiwi at any rate personal names and the customs attaching to them play a very important part in the life of the tribe, and in this paper an attempt is made to describe this element of their culture and to explain it.

Every member of the Tiwi has not one name but many, each of which belongs to him or her alone and each having an equal validity as a term of address or of description, though naturally some are used more frequently than others. This is to say, although a man with five different names may be addressed or referred to by any one of those five names, nevertheless the normal thing is for one name to be much more generally used than any of the others, it being for a native, as for us, much easier to think of a person by a single name than by several.

553 602 The multiplicity of names is accounted for by the fact that quite a number of the relatives have the right to bestow names upon a new-born child and a certain proportion of them will always exercise that right. The father may always bestow names upon his own children, and the father's brothers, who are of course the classificatory fathers of the child, have the same power. The mother's brothers may also bestow names upon a child, should they so desire, and less frequently children will be found bearing names given to them by the older men of their own totem clan, that is not only the mother's brothers but also other

[122] [1] This paper, which was presented to Section F, Anthropology, of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science at the Brisbane Meeting, May 1930, contains part of the results of research carried out in 1928 and 1929 as Science Research Scholar of Sydney University, and with the aid of a grant from the Australian National Research Council.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

relatives of the mother, such as the mother's mother's brother. The Tiwi have matrilineal totemic clans. 553 602

Names are seldom bestowed upon an individual by women; the only female relative having that power is the actual mother's mother. A mother is never in any circumstances allowed to name her own child. The reason for this is fairly obvious. The naming of children is a ritual affair, and as such is more or less forbidden to the women, for although their exclusion is not nearly so strict as in some other parts of Australia, they do not, among the Tiwi, take very much part in ritual affairs. The mother's mother, however, stands in a rather privileged position to her daughter's child. She is of the same totem and is normally a very old woman, and to a certain extent appears to become a symbol of the clan for her daughter's son. A boy, for example, will strongly resent and often endeavour to revenge any insult to his mother's mother, even if it means taking up arms against his own father. For example, during my stay a boy of twelve abused his father and quitted his father's camp for over a month because in a fight between hordes his father had injured the boy's mother's mother's brother. There was no particular respect or regard for the latter individual on the part of the boy, but the injury was a grave insult to his mother's mother. [603] [562] 603

It must also be understood that it is impossible for any two people to have the same name. Should a father inadvertently bestow upon his child a name already in use he is guilty of a gross breach of etiquette, and to prevent such a possibility a man will refrain for a long time from coining a name until he is fairly certain that the one he decides upon is neither already in use nor was held by any person recently dead. Although the Tiwi number nearly eleven hundred people at the present time, and each one of these has on an average three names, a careful study of these three thousand three hundred names fails to reveal any two as being identical. 551 [161]

By the time that a child reaches puberty he is the possessor of several names since by then some at least of the people entitled to bestow names upon him will have exercised that privilege. In exceptional cases he may have six or seven names though sometimes only one. All of these will have been known at some time or other to the tribe at large, though it is usually possible to get a full list of a person's names only from that individual himself or his father or mother.

It is not at all unusual in primitive societies for the death of a man to

582 and for Tiwi fathers' statements that they can only "find" children
614 in their own country.

Today, with nonlocalized sibs, both the sib and the local group are
582 considered in the exchange of woman, which is direct with reference
614 to sibs but indirect with reference to local groups. Such exchange
may in some cases involve sibs and countries or *tungarima*, in others
621 sibs and districts or subcountries. I found that approximately 50 per cent of local-group exchanges were between *tungarima* and 50 per cent within the *tungarima*.

582 With local-group exchange and unilateral cross-cousin marriage preferred and predominant, we have an indirect but circular marriage exchange system. We cannot, however, consider the entire society as being involved in a single marriage exchange system. The system is best seen from the point of view of a single male Ego, whose marriages are systematized according to rules which are society wide, but whose actual marriages are determined by past affiliations which can be and often are variable with respect to sib and local-group exchange.

That the Tiwi system is Ego-oriented is most evident when a
554 male Ego dies and his relatives foregather for his funeral ceremonies
571 (Goodale 1959). If such an Ego has lived a full life, he will be affiliated
764 at the time of his death with a number of social groups. He is affiliated by birth with a matrilineal sib. By his father's death he is affiliated with a local group and a *tungarima*, which may or may not be the same as the group with whom he currently resides; in either case he is affiliated with the latter and will be buried among them. Through marriage, Ego is likewise affiliated with one or more additional sibs and local groups.

Only those persons who belong to the several above-mentioned
601 groups with which the deceased is actually affiliated are expected to
764 honor him by attending his funeral ceremony. When death occurs, these individuals are terminologically reclassified into four cate-
602 gories, from the members of each of which similar behavior is expected. The spouse and spouse's siblings become *ambarui*. Cross-cousins, MoFa, FaMo, BrDaCh (ws), and SiSoCh (ms) all become *yempi*. Siblings and parallel cousins, MoMo, FaFa, BrSoCh (ws), and SiDaCh (ms), regardless of their sib affiliations, are classed together as *pudawi*. All kinsmen in the first ascending and first descending generations are classed as *unandawi*. Since, however, there is a distinct role differentiation between Fa, FaSi, and SoCh (ms), on the one hand, and Mo, MoBr, and SiCh (ms), on the other, I suspect there may be a terminological distinction which escaped me, inasmuch as these "funeral terms," with the exception of *ambarui*, are no longer in use.

Conclusion

582 In this paper I have considered the form and nature of the varying types of contracts that lead to marriage among the Tiwi. I have

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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hands of a limited number of specified relatives of the woman, the 584
privilege of exercising a particular role in a marriage contract depends on the individual's age relative to others holding similar rights and relative to the woman involved in the contract. I have chosen to base the following classification of contracts on the single factor of who has the right to make the contract.

Type A Contracts

A Type A contract involves four individuals. The authority to [603]
make the contract resides solely in the hands of the bride's mother's father. At the time the contract is made, this man is at the expected age of 50—the age when a man is at the height of his political career. Acquiring wives for himself to further his career and maintain his [554 595]
prestige is only one of the activities involving marriage contracts in which a Tiwi male is engaged at this time of life. As a father, he has a duty to look after the welfare of his daughters even after they are [593]
married. As an elder in a matrilineal descent group, he has a similar [614]
duty toward all younger members of that descent group, male and female. By arranging a correct Type A marriage contract, a Tiwi man can fulfill two duties at the same time. He can provide his daughter with a son-in-law, whom he selects on the basis of potential economic and political ability and who, if of roughly the same age as the daughter, can be expected to provide her, under the terms of the contract, with continued support throughout her life. By selecting a young man in his own descent group (his sister's daughter's son) to provide this support, he at the same time assures this young man that he will eventually obtain a bestowed and preferred type of wife which will help him on his road to prestige.

The arranger of a Type A contract may be dead by the time the bride is of an age to be given over to her selected groom. The rights to implement the contract, consequently, do not permanently reside with the arranger, but rather they are the duty of the mother of the bride. They are not given to the mother's husband, even if he is also the bride's father. In the space of time that may well elapse between the arrangement of the contract and its implementation, the bride's mother may have a number of husbands, each of whom may have different axes to grind and varying motives for changing the selection of the groom. The right to change any Type A contract belongs to both the mother of the bride and to the groom; if either does not live up to the obligations of the contract the other may consider it void.

A Type A contract, therefore, is one which preferentially and [614]
frequently results in a marriage of a MoFaSiDaSo to a MoMoBrDaDa and in a marital union between two matrilineal descent groups. This arrangement is unaffected either by the death of the arranger or by any secondary marriage of the bride's mother to a man who, though the real father of the bride, might possibly belong to a descent group other than the two originally involved in the contract.

The enduring quality of a Type A contract over a span of two 582
generations is a most important aspect of the total marriage system

I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 592 plus any new bestowals, plus any further widows Summit might find it to his interest (and power) to remarry.

159 584 557 Padimo, who thus enters our story as one of Summit's rivals and one of his nominal fathers-in-law, was also a Rangwila who had moved to Malau at the call of an elderly father-in-law. He presents another pattern of Tiwi upward mobility and one that was statistically more frequent than the rather tortuous road followed by men like Gitjara. Padimo had been chosen as a nephew worth supporting by old Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest of the Malauila. The earliest proof of Ki-in-kumi's patronage of Padimo had come in 1925-26 when an old man died, leaving eight widows of very diverse ages. Three of these "widows," aged respectively 17, 13, and 9 at the time of the death of their first husband, were daughters of Ki-in-kumi. Being so young and their brothers being equally young, their father's right to arrange their remarriage was unchallenged and Ki-in-kumi reassigned[4] them as wives to young Padimo, then aged about thirty-three. The eldest of the three girls had already borne two female children to the dead man, these being the two girl babies mentioned above as having been promised to Summit.

As well as the three young widows, Padimo had also obtained at the same redistribution the oldest and most haggish of the dead man's eight wives. It was at the same redistribution that Gitjara had obtained his second widow (the mother of the girl promised to Summit). Thus through Ki-in-kumi's influence, Padimo had obtained four "widows" of the eight left by the man who died in 1925-26; Gitjara, working without a powerful patron, had been lucky to obtain one.

159 595 Ki-in-kumi had subsequently followed up this initial selection of Padimo as a favored sister's son by giving further daughters to him as they were born. Consequently, by 1929 Padimo's wife list consisted of the following:

[604]

A. One extremely ancient widow.

B. One wife aged about 20, daughter of Ki-in-kumi, mother already of two daughters by a previous husband who, before his death, bestowed these daughters on Summit.

C. One wife aged about 17, daughter of Ki-in-kumi; had just had her first child (who lived only a week); had previously been bestowed on the dead husband of wife B, but was too young to join his household before he died.

D. Three more girls, daughters of Ki-in-kumi, the eldest about 12 and hence old enough to have been bestowed on the same previous husband as wives B and C; the other two aged 2 and 1 and hence born since his death. All three of these were still resident in their father's household.

[584 587] [4] It is difficult to decide whether such reassignments of female children by their father, on the death of the man to whom he had first betrothed them, should be called "rebestowals" or "remarriages." We prefer the first word since such "child-widows" were usually reassigned by their fathers (if still alive) without any challenge to his rights to do so. They therefore do not differ from original bestowals at birth except for the awkward semantic fact that the man to whom such a "child-wife" was reassigned was technically her second husband.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

TABLE II
KI-IN-KUMI'S ESTABLISHMENT
(Ages in brackets)

	Males	Females
Head (Ki-in-kumi 66)	1	0
Oldest step-son (Boya 42)	1	0
Sister's son (Padimo 36)	1	0
Old wives (of all three adult men)	0	5
Young wives (including Padimo's 2)	0	11
Young males (sons and step-sons)	8	0
Young females (daughters and step-daughters)	0	5
Totals	11	21

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592

Confronted by this situation, Ki-in-kumi in his advancing years had summoned Padimo, a sister's son in his early thirties, to come from Raagu and become his chief lieutenant. The youth of his own son had been a factor in his selection of Padimo. The presence in his camp of an older step-son, Boya, had been another factor. Boya, the step-son, was more than twenty years older than the son, and at least six years older than Padimo, the chosen instrument. Padimo, as we have seen, moved right in, fused his own small household with Ki-in-kumi's large one, and became Ki-in-kumi's Man Friday. Boya, the step-son, though married to a widow, refused to move out. Thus, among other things, we have to distinguish between Ki-in-kumi's household of twelve resident wives enumerated above, and Ki-in-kumi's establishment which contained Padimo, Boya, and the various people attached by marriage or kinship to them. Padimo had an old wife and two young wives (daughters of Ki-in-kumi). Boya had an old wife and a younger brother. There were a number of younger step-children of both sexes also resident with Ki-in-kumi. The full size and make-up of his establishment is given in Table II. 159 592 604

The Establishments of Malau

There were, besides Ki-in-kumi, six other elders of the Malauila band. Two of these, the brothers Enquirio and Merapanui, were well over sixty and deserve, both by age and by success, to be labeled senior elders. The remaining four ranged in age from about 45 to nearly 60 and since none of them were particularly successful we call them the junior elders. In Table III we have listed the seven "establishments" in which lived all the members of the band. We mean by an establishment a food-production and food-consumption unit. Ki-in-kumi's establishment contained three married men—himself, Boya, and Padimo—and therefore contained three households. Economically it was one establishment, since the sixteen wives it contained worked 162 592 621

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was entering the junior elder class and, having received wives from other sources than Inglis, was getting to the point where he would soon have free daughters of his own. He had no intention of performing any more services for Inglis who was now nearly sixty. Hence Inglis had not bestowed any daughters on Tomitari since 1923; those of his daughters who had been born since that year were bestowed on men other than Tomitari and men who were younger and less successful than he. 159 584 557

As we see it, the deals involving widows, particularly the pay-offs to young agents for acting to promote the interests of older men, had distorted what might be called the pure theory of Tiwi bestowal. According to the pure theory, mothers' brothers bestowed their daughters on selected sisters' sons, and the older man who gave a young man a wife and became his wife's father, was performing a kindness toward a favorite nephew for which the nephew should be grateful. But the Inglis-Tomitari operation shows how the theory had become distorted in practice. In order that Inglis might have some young daughters whom he would be free to bestow on his favored young nephew, Tomitari, in 1914 he had had to arrange the young man's marriage with an elderly widow to ensure safe delivery to him (Inglis) of some young wives who would bear him those daughters. Everything went smoothly and no slip-up occurred, yet by the time Inglis was in a position to give a wife to his favored young nephew, he found that the latter was no longer a dependent young man but a successful junior elder competing with him in his own field of identifying and using talent among the younger men. Tomitari's first daughter, born in 1927—not to any daughter of Inglis but to an older wife—was bestowed by its father on the distant but very promising Gitjara, a man of thirty-two. Gitjara was thus selected by Tomitari as a promising satellite at about the same age as Tomitari in 1914 had been selected by Inglis. Moreover, Tomitari by this time, far from being the grateful nephew of old Inglis (as the theory stipulated), was looking forward with anticipation to the old man's death, since when that occurred, among the widows of Inglis would be the three sisters of Padimo of whom he was still the nominal father. It was by acting as their step-father when they were children that he had got his own career started. They were indeed the foundation stone of his own career and, having profited so much from them as children, he was keenly interested in their redisposition whenever Inglis' death should put them on the market again. Thus he was simultaneously the husband of some of Inglis' daughters and nominal father of some of Inglis' wives. In the first status, he was expected by the theory to be a grateful son-in-law of Inglis; in the second status, the facts of Tiwi life required him to see Inglis' death as providing him with an opportunity to derive some new benefits for himself from his position as nominal father of the three wives of Inglis whose delivery to Inglis' household he had himself engineered. 183 581 604 159 183 584 604 [557 593]

Thus the politics of bestowal cannot be separated from the politics of widow remarriage. Every case of one had endless repercussions in the other. Sisters' sons who were promised young wives by their mothers' brothers were always too old to be grateful by the time the bestowal occurred or by the even later time when the bestowed child was old enough to come into residence. 182 557 584 604

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 Mothers' brothers, in turn, were unable to endow their nephews any earlier
557 because they as younger men had been caught in the same trap. The only way
584 out was by deals in which older men and younger men collaborated. Ideally
604 such collaborative efforts should always have been between mothers' brothers and sisters' sons, but amid such fierce competition and endless log rolling this was not possible, and in many cases the mother's-brother—sister's-son relationship was a *result* of collaboration between older man and younger man rather than a cause. The bond arose from the deal rather than from their original kinship, particularly when the two men involved were very close in age.

The collaborative deals between older men and younger men were essentially designed to compensate for the older man's inability to bestow a young wife upon the younger man at a reasonable age. As was stated before, not until he was about forty-five would the older man have a free or unencumbered daughter. By then his younger collaborator and satellite had attracted the attention of older and wealthier men with many unencumbered daughters. After
159 performing all his services to Inglis, young Tomitari had not had to depend
557 on him for his first bestowal. A wealthier man than Inglis had reached over
571 Inglis' head, so to speak, and bought Tomitari's allegiance by the bestowal of
584 a young wife who provided Tomitari with a free daughter several years earlier than any child the daughters of Inglis could provide. With this first unencumbered daughter, Tomitari promptly bid for the allegiance of Gitjara. Put in terms of allegiances, Tomitari had from 1914 until about 1923 been the henchman of Inglis. During those years he passed from about age thirty to age forty, and his main patron was Inglis, who passed from about forty-four and on the fringes of the elder group to about fifty-four and accepted among the elder group. Then—and this was typical of the shift of allegiance that occurred in most life careers—a senior elder more wealthy in wives and daughters than Inglis bid for Tomitari's allegiance, and Tomitari became his henchman. Five years later, in 1928, Tomitari was a coming junior elder in Rangu and a man of influence in his own right. His oldest bestowed wife had already borne him a daughter whom he used to make Gitjara *his* henchman. The three wives (daughters A, B, and C) of Inglis were nearing the stage when they would join his household and he had other bestowals from other quarters. His relation to Inglis was no longer that of henchman but of rival, since they were now both successful elders in the same band and competitors in the struggle to make younger men dependent on them. Far from bestowing any more daughters on Tomitari, Inglis was bestowing his daughters (now plentiful) on men of Gitjara's generation (though not on Gitjara). Having more free daughters than Tomitari, he had more men of that generation to patronize, but since Inglis was sixty and Tomitari only forty-five, time was obviously on the side of the latter.

557 Thus the crux of the Tiwi system of influence-satelliteship-marriage ar-
571 rangement-wealth centered around what happened to a man in his thirties. This
584 is what we meant when we said earlier that old men with many daughters bestowed them on young men who looked to them like "comers." Old men

177 them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now
592 only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that
159 his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few un-
177 comfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped
592 with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose
[936 deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother
968] had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased
[584 younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Car-
589] mel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally
[607] her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1]
[602] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

177 We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led
162 by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a list-
571 ing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent.
[768 Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from
604 about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had
584 daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the
177 "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

177 604 584

riage with a boy who was willing to become the "worker" of the girl's controller.[9]

From the economic standpoint, the large household has much the same function as before the days of the Mission. The younger women go out together and gather food; the old women stay home with the young children. The younger men bring home choice items, which now are trade goods and money from Darwin. The "boss" of the great household is wealthy; today, he has food, tobacco, clothes, and usually sufficient money to gamble. The composition of the great households has altered, but their function is very much the same. The establishment of the monogamous Catholic Cabbagee is even larger than that of the polygamous old pagan, Ki-in-kumi, described in an earlier chapter; Cabbagee, with only one wife, has more women under his "control" than ever Ki-in-kumi had, despite his list of twenty-one wives. The Tiwi have thus been able to retain their large households even under the Mission-imposed system of monogamy.

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The Change from Patriliny to Matriliny

In the pre-Cooper era of feuding, the largest significant units among the Tiwi were the bands; the Tiwi never, in that by-gone day, acted as a tribe, even in their attacks upon such outsiders as the British. In the 1950's, when informants talked of the old days they commonly mentioned that male members of old bands came together as units to go on war parties. These old bands did not have a strict rule of descent. But, as has already been indicated, the majority of the males were regarded all their lives as members of the band to which their father belonged. That is, the major unit of the old Tiwi social structure was patrilineal in emphasis.

621 [611]

There also existed in the old Tiwi pattern a strictly matrilineal clan organization, related primarily to totemism. One of the totemic animals of a clan stood for a member of that clan in the song composed to commemorate his death; for instance, the first line of the mourning song for a deceased male of the Red Paint Clan might be "I am red paint." Occasionally, several members of a clan helped one of their number in a fight, but this was apparently not very common before the Mission era. This clan-organization pattern prevailed among the Tiwi through about 1930. Then major and most unpredictable changes began.

614 [533] 765

What does one expect to happen when a society which has a patrilineal emphasis, like the old Tiwi one, comes into contact with a European society where, if there is any emphasis, it is a patrilineal one? Although one would ordinarily expect a strengthening of patriliny, such was not the case among the Tiwi. The old social unit which was predominantly patrilineal was a territorial group with its major functions in the system of feuding. When the

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[9] By 1953, the terms "boss" and "worker" had come into the local Tiwi dialect to indicate superordinate and subordinate status interrelationships.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as 765
ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a
sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own 535
dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major
chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out 765
again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus.
Most of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually [424]
owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to
death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial
occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special 765
to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony,
when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts
and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive
the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners'
state of *pukimani*.

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has 182
been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions 557
of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious
occasions. The connecting link was the state of *pukimani* in which death put 571
the relatives. Men in a state of *pukimani* were at a disadvantage in social and 765
political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things
for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not [577]
afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they
would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the
spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for
the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts
came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and
thus their own *pukimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to
them for many months, came to an end.

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, 881
which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females 571
there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and
elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the
status of *Marukumarni*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and
did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the
ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than
himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for
the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring
it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests.
The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials
or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems;
indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the
beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who 881
were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation 607
of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely [605]

MoBrSo to be the first husband of a girl is not merely a question of preferential choice; a FaSiSo is actually the only cross-cousin of the appropriate age to be considered as a party to a Type A contract. 582

As a first step, let us consider the expected relative ages of the principal parties to a Type A contract: the mother-in-law, the son-in-law, and the expected daughter-wife. A girl becomes a mother-in-law at puberty. For the sake of convenience we may consider this to be at the absolute minimum age of ten. A boy becomes a son-in-law at an age of not less than ten, and he may well be older than this. The minimum age of a Tiwi male is determined by his physical ability to hunt for and otherwise serve his mother-in-law in order to fulfill his part of the contract. 582 606 [581]

We cannot expect the future daughter and wife to be born, on the average, for at least five years and conceivably not for twenty years after the contract is made. However, again for convenience, let us assume that, on the average, the promised daughter will be born ten years from the date of the contract, i.e., when both the mother and the son-in-law are about twenty years old. The young girl will not become a cohabiting wife for approximately another eight or ten years, at which time her promised husband will be at least 28 to 30 years of age. Thus an average difference of twenty years between the ages of a girl and her first husband is to be expected—a difference which is dictated solely by the form and nature of the initial Type A contract. 582

Hart (1930: 282) believed that this twenty-year age difference was largely a result of the excessive practice of polygyny quite evident in his time (ca. 1930). However, in 1954, when most polygynous households had been broken up, an analysis of age differences for all primary unions for women in my sample still reflected the same disparity. Few men under the age of 30 had received wives, and only one girl over the age of ten had not yet been given to her promised husband. The average age difference between wives and first husbands was 18.9 years, with a range of from three to 54 years (Goodale 1959: 72). [114] [595] [593]

I shall next consider the expected relative ages of parents, siblings, and the children of siblings (cousins). If there is a twenty-year age difference between husbands and wives, it logically follows that the same age difference will also exist between the mothers and fathers of children. A woman can expect to have children by the age of twenty, while a man will not be expected to have legitimate children until about the age of 40.. If we assume that siblings are of the same relative age (there being a 50/50 chance that brothers and sisters are older or younger), then we can expect that a sister will, on the average, have a child twenty years before her brother has a child. Thus it can be expected that the FaSiSo of a female Ego will be twenty years older than she is, and that her MoBrSo will be twenty years younger. In arranging the primary marriage of a girl, it is thus virtually impossible that she be promised to a MoBrSo who by expectation is twenty years younger than she, and who indeed is 582 593 582 605

582 probably not even born when she reaches the wifely age of ten. A
605 FaSiSo, on the other hand, is a cross-cousin belonging to the correct age group to be a party to the initial marriage contract. Relative age, therefore, determines that a Type A marriage contract, which is culturally universal for a woman's primary marriage and preferential from the point of view of male prestige, results almost inevitably in unilateral cross-cousin marriage between a MoBrDa and her FaSiSo.

582 The preferred form for widow remarriage among the Tiwi is to a
587 younger brother of the deceased husband. This type of remarriage contract stems directly from the Type A contract and may be considered a continuation thereof. It is therefore here classified as a Type A2 contract. As a woman grows older, when and if her Type A contract or its continuation runs out, alternative choices for secondary husbands are available to her, and acceptable to the Tiwi, among other cross-cousins.

582 A comparable method of analysis indicates that, as between the sons of a father's elder and younger sisters, a woman's primary marriage under a Type A contract is very much more likely to be with
[595] her FaElSiSo, and that under these circumstances she will probably enter her husband's household as a second and junior wife. Her elder co-wives play an important part in her education as a wife.
582 After she becomes a widow, however, she may become the first wife,
587 with the title of *taramaguta*, of a FaYoSiSo or of a MoElBrSo through a Type A2 or B contract. A MoYoBrSo, however, may be expected
593 to be considerably younger than Ego, and my analysis of all marriages in 1954 showed that only after the age of 30 do we find women married to husbands younger than they. Such a marriage can never be the result of a Type A contract but may occur under contracts of Types B, C, or D (see below).

Not only does the twenty-year average age difference between husband and wife under a Type A contract have the effect of practically limiting the choice among cross-cousins for a woman's first husband to a father's elder sister's son; it also means that a woman may expect to have at least two husbands during her lifetime. Indeed, she is likely to have a series of husbands whose ages relative to her own are successively younger until, as an elderly widow, she may well become the first wife of a man very much younger than herself.

Classification of Tiwi Marriage Contracts

584 The form and nature of Tiwi marriage contracts cannot be understood merely by looking at the results of the contract, i.e., who marries whom. One must also look at who has the authority to make the contract, who are parties to the contract, who implements the contract, and who can change a contract. Among the Tiwi the rights, duties, and obligations that pertain to all these aspects of a marriage contract are specified and reside in different individuals at different times in a woman's life. Here again the age factor must be considered, for while these rights, duties, and obligations lie in the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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to the husband of the pregnant woman. We carefully say "the husband of the pregnant woman" rather than "the father of the child" because the right resided in the male head of the household at the time of the birth. Although he was ordinarily both the father of the child and the husband of its mother, there were naturally occasions when a child was born after the death of its father, in which case the right of betrothal unquestionably belonged to the mother's new husband. The clearest statement of this rule is to say that the right of betrothal of all newly born females resided in the husband of the mother at the time of the girl's birth. "He who named the child bestowed it." 584 851 593

In most human societies the proportion of males and females in the population is approximately equal, except in the older age-groups where women predominate owing to their tendency to live longer than men. The Tiwi conformed to this norm biologically, but their cultural insistence that all females of every age be married resulted in further unusual features of the domestic situation. No such compulsory marriage was required or expected of males. Hence, the total female population, but only part of the male population, was married. Mathematically this permitted, indeed required, a high degree of plural marriage. The men who held the right to betroth—namely, the fathers of the female babies—could, within certain limits imposed by the kinship system, bestow their about-to-be-born or newly born daughters where they wished, and they certainly did not bestow them on about-to-be-born or newly born males. On the contrary, they bestowed them, generally speaking, where some tangible return was to be anticipated. Put bluntly, in Tiwi culture daughters were an asset to their father, and he invested these assets in his own welfare. He therefore bestowed his newly born daughter on a friend or an ally, or on somebody he wanted as a friend or an ally. Such a person was apt to be a man near his own age or at least an adult man, and hence perhaps forty years or so older than the newly born baby bestowed upon him as a wife. Or, the father might bestow an infant daughter on a man—or some close relative of such a man—who had already bestowed an infant daughter upon him, thus in effect swapping infant daughters. Obviously, the fathers who did the swapping, even if they were not quite the same age themselves, were bound to be many years older than the infant wives they thus received from each other. Or, thirdly, a father looking for a suitable male upon whom to bestow his infant daughter's hand might decide to use her as old-age insurance—in which case he selected as her future husband not one of the older adult men who would be old when he himself was old, but a likely looking youngster "with promise"; that is, a youth in his late twenties or thirties who showed signs of being a good hunter and a good fighting man, and who was clearly on his way up in tribal power and influence. Such a youth, in his late twenties at the time of betrothal, would, with luck, be in his prime as "a big man" in about twenty years—a time when the father of the infant daughter would be getting old and decrepit and much in need of an influential son-in-law who was obligated to him. 162 [581 595] [584] 593 582 581 [562] [572] [606 888]

There were other bases upon which infant daughters were betrothed, 582 593

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 557 584 [562] ferences in which smart mothers and dull mothers, smart sons and dull sons were all present, and the final plan emerged from consensus.

In this case the former husbands of the two old women both died conveniently soon and within about three years of each other and, according to plan, there came into existence a household of two men in their thirties each married to the elderly mother of the other. Gitjara and L. F. B. thus set up jointly the foundations of their households and began their careers as a joint enterprise.

Gitjara had two sisters, both married to White Man, an elder, and already the mothers of daughters to him. By marrying Gitjara's mother, L. F. B. automatically became the nominal father of these women, and in the event of White Man's death would have, as such, some say in where they remarried. But the right of the step-father to redispose widowed step-daughters was always disputed by the brothers (or even sons) of the step-daughters, provided those brothers (or sons) were old enough or influential enough for their wishes to be taken seriously. Thus we may say that in putting L. F. B. into position as his own step-father, Gitjara's main object had been to get a satellite or henchman of his own into the position of step-father of his sisters (the wives of White Man) so that when they became widows there would be no conflict between the wishes of their brother and the wishes of their step-father as to whom they should remarry. L. F. B. as step-father was, so to speak, a stooge for Gitjara the brother.

Conversely, L. F. B. had two sisters both married to Ki-in-kumi, the most powerful elder in Malau. By marrying the mother of L. F. B., Gitjara became the step-father of two of Ki-in-kumi's wives, thus immediately (despite [606] his youth) becoming technically the father-in-law of that powerful old man, and a man with some say in where those two wives of Ki-in-kumi would remarry on Ki-in-kumi's death. As step-father of such widows, Gitjara would have to make his wishes prevail as against the wishes of their brothers, but the only brother was L. F. B. and his vote was obviously in Gitjara's pocket.

By engineering this double shuffle of two elderly widows, each with daughters, Gitjara had launched his career as a marriage manipulator. Almost before it was concluded he became involved in another widow operation. We will omit the intricate details, but can say that he emerged from this with a second wife for himself, this one (naturally) also a widow but quite a young widow. This woman had already borne four sons and one daughter to her previous husband but was still young enough when Gitjara took her over in 1926 to bear him a son (her last) in 1927. In Tiwi terms the acquisition of this widow by Gitjara was a real achievement for the young man, not because of her comparative youth nor because of the son she bore him but because among the children by her previous marriage was a daughter aged about nine at the time she remarried Gitjara. To become the step-father of such a young [554] girl was a real asset for the young operator. Her dead father had bestowed this child on Summit, another of the same Malauila age group of 30-year-olds and hence one of Gitjara's rivals and competitors in the influence struggle.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

With a lineup such as this by the time he was thirty-six, Padimo was clearly in 159
process of going places in Tiwi society. The only weakness one could see in 557
his position was that it all derived from the favor of one patron, and no old 595
man with daughters, other than Ki-in-kumi, had seen fit to bestow a girl
upon him. It should be noted that in 1929, though Padimo had two young
wives resident in his household, he still had no children of his own. His first 159
child, born that year, lived only a few days. The only children in residence were 557
the two girls promised to Summit by the previous husband of their mother. 592
Their bestowal on Summit was a matter beyond Padimo's control though he 584
could use them to force some concessions from Summit just as Gitjara could
with the girl in his household. But as Padimo's young wives began to bear
daughters of his own, his bestowal of them would be less encumbered by the
commitments of any predecessor. While Ki-in-kumi lived, Padimo would have
to consider his obligations to that old man and at least consult with Ki-in-kumi
as to how he should bestow his female children, since any such children would
be the daughters' daughters of the old man. Nor would the death of Ki-in-kumi
leave Padimo entirely free to bestow his own daughters anywhere he wished.
Many of the girls already given to him as wives by Ki-in-kumi had mothers
who possibly, and brothers who certainly, would outlive Ki-in-kumi. On the [587]
old man's death, all of his numerous wives would remarry—some of the older
ones probably to ambitious younger men—and these new husbands of the
widows of Ki-in-kumi would begin interfering with and trying to alter the
arrangements made for his daughters by the old man during his lifetime. Thus [606]
Padimo would find himself stuck with a group of new and antagonistic fathers-
in-law in place of the old, indulgent father-in-law who had been responsible
for his success so far. Padimo's problem was basically how to hold, after
Ki-in-kumi's death, the favored position he had gained during the old man's
lifetime through the old man's favor.

In the meantime, with Ki-in-kumi still alive and powerful, Padimo had 159
the biggest and fastest expanding household among the Malauila men in their 592
thirties. The only remaining man in this age group was Boya who was the 557
oldest of them all, being at least 42 years old in 1928. As might be expected,
his career illustrates some new facets of the Tiwi influence struggle.

Structurally the position of Boya was simple but politically it was com- 159
plex. His father had been a henchman and satellite of Ki-in-kumi in the early
career of that old operator and roughly had had somewhat the same relation-
ship to the young Ki-in-kumi as L. F. B. had to Gitjara. Boya's father, the
satellite, left only two widows (an indication of his mediocrity) and these
two widows had been remarried by Ki-in-kumi, the patron. One of these
widows was Boya's mother, and Boya was too young at the time to have any
say in where his mother remarried. Ki-in-kumi's interest in marrying Boya's
mother was not of course because he thus acquired Boya as a step-son, but
because he acquired Boya's sisters as step-daughters. Step-sons were liabilities [562]
which new husbands had to take over in order to get rights in the real assets
—the step-daughters.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to marry the boy's sisters, an easily met requirement since girls were "married" so much earlier than their brothers. Very senior and successful men did not bother as a rule with initiation sponsorship because it took too much of their valuable time. Hence in practice, most boys at the *Marukumarni* age were taken in hand by a group of men around 40 years of age who were at least betrothed to, if not already married to, the boys' sisters. Such men justified or rationalized their actions by stating that, as the husbands of the boy's sisters, they wanted their little brother-in-law to be made into a man in proper form. In fact, they were usually given the job by the boy's father, who, having bestowed daughters upon them, regarded it as a legitimate request to make of them. It was the duty of male cross-cousins to initiate their wives' little brothers, but in true Tiwi style the father had to request them to do it, and they counted it in their tallies of what they owed him and what he owed them.

Though the father instigated and stage managed the whole affair, he and his household were always thunderstruck when the cross-cousins—armed to the teeth and painted like a war party—arrived at his camp one evening and proceeded to carry off forcibly the yelling 14-year-old.[6] He had to be dragged literally from the bosom of his family, with his mother screaming and trying to hide him and the father pretending to resist the invaders of his household. From then on, until the final stage (*Mikingula*) at age 24-26, the boy was completely under the authority of the men who carried him off. During these approximately ten to twelve years, he spent much of the time alone with them in the bush where the group lived a monastic existence, as a small band of isolates, speaking to no one (especially not to females) and obtaining their own food. During these phases the tutors guarded the boy as if he were literally a prisoner and taught him all the things—chiefly ritual matters—that grown men should know. At intervals the youth was allowed to go home, on week-end leaves so to speak, but when at home he had to observe all the silences, the modest demeanor, the taboos and the austerities of the isolated life. In monastic language, he was under a strict rule of obedience to his tutors.

Breaking in on the long years of austerity, spent either in seclusion in the bush or in *pukimani* at home, were periodic collective ceremonies when the youth was ritually advanced from one stage of initiation to the next.[7] These were public ceremonies, witnessed by large crowds, and the more important of such transition ceremonies took place in January and February when the *kolema* yams were ripe. At these ceremonies the youths were handled in batches or classes, all the boys of one grade being ritually advanced to the next grade, and the top grade or final class being formally graduated as fully initiated men. The crucial grade—when the pubic hairs were forcibly pulled out and he was at last allowed to talk back a little to his tutors—was usually reached by a youth somewhere between his eighteenth and twentieth years, but

[6] See Hart 1955 for some further details of the tearing away of the boy from the bosom of his family.

[7] A full list of initiation grade names and their duration in years is given in Hart 1951.

183 contract for a girl's primary marriage follows a consistent cultural
582 pattern.

In any discussion of a marriage system all the varieties of marriage contracts must be considered. If, however, one variety is [121] found to be more frequent, preferred, prescribed, or invariable, then that is the one to which all the others must be related. In the Tiwi marriage system there is no difficulty in determining which type of contract should be considered basic to the others. The initial contract which leads to a first marriage of a Tiwi girl is prescribed and invariable and is thus necessarily the most frequent from the point of view of a female Ego, and it is also a preferred contract from the point of view of a male Ego. In the following discussion, I shall refer to this type of contract as a Type A contract. Types B, C, and D are all contracts leading to secondary marriages of Tiwi widows and will be briefly discussed later.

584 A Type A contract is made during the five-day period in which a girl is isolated in the bush at the time of her first menstrual period.
●606 Although she has been living with her first husband, she is separated from him at this time. When she again returns to her husband's [88] camp, she is not only considered to have reached the status of a woman but also that of a mother-in-law. While she is in the bush, her father places a spear between her legs as she sleeps and then presents it to a boy or man whom he selects to serve his daughter as a son-in-law. The spear is regarded by the recipient as a symbol of a bestowed wife yet to be born to his young mother-in-law. By accepting the spear, the son-in-law becomes obligated to his mother-in-law; from that moment on he must supply her with food and goods and such services as she may request at any time. In return, she is [582] held solely responsible for seeing that her first daughter is sent to his camp when she reaches the wifely age of eight or ten. After receiving the first daughter, the son-in-law is expected to continue his services to his wife's mother, in return for which he can expect to receive other daughters subsequently born to her. The initial contract continues until either the son-in-law or mother-in-law dies. If either fails to honor his obligation, however, the other may terminate the contract. A Type A contract is therefore essentially a contract between a mother-in-law and a son-in-law. The arranger of the contract is the mother-in-law's father.

582 The Tiwi, like the majority of Australian societies, consider cross-cousin marriage to be the proper form of marriage arrangements. For the sake of simplicity, I shall conduct the following analysis as if the preferential marriage pattern involved first cousins, although in fact it generally involves second cousins. For the purpose of viewing the system from the standpoint of relative age the distinction between a first and a second cousin is irrelevant. The question of classificatory cousins will be deferred until the kinship terminology is discussed.

The following analysis of Type A contracts in terms of the factor of relative age will show that the selection of a FaSiSo rather than a

MoBrSo to be the first husband of a girl is not merely a question of preferential choice; a FaSiSo is actually the only cross-cousin of the appropriate age to be considered as a party to a Type A contract. 582

As a first step, let us consider the expected relative ages of the principal parties to a Type A contract: the mother-in-law, the son-in-law, and the expected daughter-wife. A girl becomes a mother-in-law at puberty. For the sake of convenience we may consider this to be at the absolute minimum age of ten. A boy becomes a son-in-law at an age of not less than ten, and he may well be older than this. The minimum age of a Tiwi male is determined by his physical ability to hunt for and otherwise serve his mother-in-law in order to fulfill his part of the contract. 582 606 [581]

We cannot expect the future daughter and wife to be born, on the average, for at least five years and conceivably not for twenty years after the contract is made. However, again for convenience, let us assume that, on the average, the promised daughter will be born ten years from the date of the contract, i.e., when both the mother and the son-in-law are about twenty years old. The young girl will not become a cohabiting wife for approximately another eight or ten years, at which time her promised husband will be at least 28 to 30 years of age. Thus an average difference of twenty years between the ages of a girl and her first husband is to be expected—a difference which is dictated solely by the form and nature of the initial Type A contract. 582

Hart (1930: 282) believed that this twenty-year age difference was largely a result of the excessive practice of polygyny quite evident in his time (ca. 1930). However, in 1954, when most polygynous households had been broken up, an analysis of age differences for all primary unions for women in my sample still reflected the same disparity. Few men under the age of 30 had received wives, and only one girl over the age of ten had not yet been given to her promised husband. The average age difference between wives and first husbands was 18.9 years, with a range of from three to 54 years (Goodale 1959: 72). [114] [595] [593]

I shall next consider the expected relative ages of parents, siblings, and the children of siblings (cousins). If there is a twenty-year age difference between husbands and wives, it logically follows that the same age difference will also exist between the mothers and fathers of children. A woman can expect to have children by the age of twenty, while a man will not be expected to have legitimate children until about the age of 40.. If we assume that siblings are of the same relative age (there being a 50/50 chance that brothers and sisters are older or younger), then we can expect that a sister will, on the average, have a child twenty years before her brother has a child. Thus it can be expected that the FaSiSo of a female Ego will be twenty years older than she is, and that her MoBrSo will be twenty years younger. In arranging the primary marriage of a girl, it is thus virtually impossible that she be promised to a MoBrSo who by expectation is twenty years younger than she, and who indeed is 582 593 582 605

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as 765
ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a
sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own 535
dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major
chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out 765
again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus.
Most of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually [424]
owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to
death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial
occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special 765
to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony,
when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts
and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive
the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners'
state of *pukimani*.

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has 182
been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions 557
of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious
occasions. The connecting link was the state of *pukimani* in which death put 571
the relatives. Men in a state of *pukimani* were at a disadvantage in social and 765
political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things
for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not
afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they [577]
would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the
spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for
the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts
came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and
thus their own *pukimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to
them for many months, came to an end.

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, 881
which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females
there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and 571
elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the
status of *Marukumarni*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and
did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the
ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than
himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for
the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring
it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests.
The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials
or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems;
indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the
beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who 881
were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation 607
of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely [605]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to marry the boy's sisters, an easily met requirement since girls were "married" so much earlier than their brothers. Very senior and successful men did not bother as a rule with initiation sponsorship because it took too much of their valuable time. Hence in practice, most boys at the *Marukumarni* age were taken in hand by a group of men around 40 years of age who were at least betrothed to, if not already married to, the boys' sisters. Such men justified or rationalized their actions by stating that, as the husbands of the boy's sisters, they wanted their little brother-in-law to be made into a man in proper form. In fact, they were usually given the job by the boy's father, who, having bestowed daughters upon them, regarded it as a legitimate request to make of them. It was the duty of male cross-cousins to initiate their wives' little brothers, but in true Tiwi style the father had to request them to do it, and they counted it in their tallies of what they owed him and what he owed them.

Though the father instigated and stage managed the whole affair, he and his household were always thunderstruck when the cross-cousins—armed to the teeth and painted like a war party—arrived at his camp one evening and proceeded to carry off forcibly the yelling 14-year-old.[6] He had to be dragged literally from the bosom of his family, with his mother screaming and trying to hide him and the father pretending to resist the invaders of his household. From then on, until the final stage (*Mikingula*) at age 24-26, the boy was completely under the authority of the men who carried him off. During these approximately ten to twelve years, he spent much of the time alone with them in the bush where the group lived a monastic existence, as a small band of isolates, speaking to no one (especially not to females) and obtaining their own food. During these phases the tutors guarded the boy as if he were literally a prisoner and taught him all the things—chiefly ritual matters—that grown men should know. At intervals the youth was allowed to go home, on week-end leaves so to speak, but when at home he had to observe all the silences, the modest demeanor, the taboos and the austerities of the isolated life. In monastic language, he was under a strict rule of obedience to his tutors.

Breaking in on the long years of austerity, spent either in seclusion in the bush or in *pukimani* at home, were periodic collective ceremonies when the youth was ritually advanced from one stage of initiation to the next.[7] These were public ceremonies, witnessed by large crowds, and the more important of such transition ceremonies took place in January and February when the *kolema* yams were ripe. At these ceremonies the youths were handled in batches or classes, all the boys of one grade being ritually advanced to the next grade, and the top grade or final class being formally graduated as fully initiated men. The crucial grade—when the pubic hairs were forcibly pulled out and he was at last allowed to talk back a little to his tutors—was usually reached by a youth somewhere between his eighteenth and twentieth years, but

[6] See Hart 1955 for some further details of the tearing away of the boy from the bosom of his family.

[7] A full list of initiation grade names and their duration in years is given in Hart 1951.

177 them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now
592 only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that
159 his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few un-
177 comfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped
592 with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose
[736 deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother
968] had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased
[584 younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Car-
589] mel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were
[607] two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1]
[602] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

177 We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led
162 by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a list-
571 ing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent.
[768 Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had
604 daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the
584 "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-
177

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Tiwi Marriage

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Cultural Isolation

PEOPLE WHO LIVE in the congested cities and towns of the modern world have difficulty in realizing how different life can be at the hunting and gathering level of human existence. The basic fact about the life of hunters and gatherers is the thinly spread-out manner in which they live and the isolation of families and households from each other. In the case of the Tiwi, these conditions of isolation and dispersal were accentuated by their island habitat. Melville and Bathurst Islands lie off the northern coast of Australia some fifty to eighty miles from Darwin, which is the administrative capital of the empty north. They are separated from the mainland by about twenty-five miles of open sea at the narrowest part. This distance is slightly greater than the distance that separates England from France at the Straits of Dover, and just as the dim outline of coastal France can be seen from England on clear days, so the dim outline of the Australian mainland can be seen from the southern edges of the islands. However, Tiwi tradition is firm and certain that before the white man's arrival there was no contact between the islands and the mainland. To them, the dimly seen coastline of Australia was *Tibambinnmi,* the home of the dead, to which all Tiwi souls went after death. It follows from this they they regarded the inhabited world as composed of their own two islands, and on those islands they lived a self-contained and exclusive existence. Occasionally outsiders appeared, either castaways from surrounding areas, including presumably the Australian mainland, and in recent centuries, fishing boats and pirates from Indonesia, loosely called "Malays" in the literature. To such visitors from outside, the Tiwi were consistently and implacably hostile. Their own traditions and what little written history there is of "Malay" penetration into the Arafura Sea both tell the same story. Outsiders who landed on the islands were massacred or vigorously resisted. Whether they were classified as *Malai-ui* ("Malays") or *Wona-rui*

861 131 [173] [175] [823] 186 609

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not
●609 real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human
[101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate
[173] to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distribu-
171 tional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how
[411] isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their
[531] wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus-
[764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the
[511] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

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[1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the
[197 524] result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

southern coast of Bathurst Island. In 1886, the Australian government tried to erect channel markers on the southern shore of Melville Island, whereupon the Tiwi immediately "salvaged" both cloth and iron from them. During June and July of the same year the ship *Jane Anderson* was stranded on the shoals of first Melville and then Bathurst Island. Also in 1886, two Malay proas were wrecked on the north coast of Melville Island. That year was a great one for looting. 175 648

Occasionally visitors came ashore on the islands. The Stokes' survey party landed in the late 1830's, but saw no natives. A government party crossed Melville Island in 1887; the Tiwi speared its leader. In 1895, a government tourist party went to look over the ruins of old Fort Dundas; they kept their eyes open and no one was injured. In 1897, Joe Cooper, a buffalo shooter, tried to make a living from the Melville Island buffalo; he was speared and retreated to Darwin.

Tiwi treatment of outsiders prior to 1900 had been to rob them, spear them, kill them. This is not, however, the picture painted by modern Tiwi when talking of their past. They claim that their ancestors greeted each new group of strangers with the cry: *"Pongki! Pongki!"* (meaning, "Peace! Peace!"). But then it should be noted that before 1900 many a Tiwi peacemaker carried a spear between his toes. Yet under these circumstances the Tiwi world view did alter. First there were those changes which came from an attempt to understand the new objects which were suddenly thrust into the Tiwi world: the trade knives and axes given by Dutch navigators, the matchlock guns used by the Malays and probably the Portuguese, the rice given to Tiwi by the surveyors under P. P. King, the Indonesian water buffalo introduced by the British at their short-lived settlement, the coconut palms the English left behind them, the cups and plates from shipwrecks in the 1880's, and the flour tossed overboard to lighten foundering vessels. The Tiwi cherished iron knives and axes, readily recognizing their greater efficiency. The Tiwi begged for them; they stole them; and, when a spar washed ashore bound round with iron bands, the natives burned away the wood and took the iron away to grind into axes. The matchlock gun, and even the later flintlock, could be coped with; when one saw the flash, one ducked flat, just in case the weapon worked, and then rushed in to impale the stranger with a spear. Rice was useless; it looked like the larvae of the termite, which was not good for anything anyway. Buffalo were to be killed; they kept wallowing in the best waterholes. Coconut palms were a great disappointment; they were bigger than the local cabbage palm, but when cut down, did not have the same succulent interior. Plates were too much bother to carry around, but cups were worth saving for a while. Flour could be used for white paint, but it was not as good as the best white pigment near at hand. [173] [411] 175 177

Other modifications took place in Tiwi life before 1900 as a result of action by outsiders. Probably the greatest of these alterations came as a result of slave raiding, or "black birding" as it is called in the South Seas. The Tiwi always kept their young women hidden from strangers, even if they were just visitors from other bands. The old men rarely left camp. Therefore, it was the 175 648 [609]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indi-
[175] cate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that
[177] time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and
[609] killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

423 refer to one another as *yia yirt'amini* (my "one grandfather") in preference
613 to *yi'iwuni* (my brother), or *yia kalipini* (my half-brother), which is the
601 normal term of address.

423 A member of another horde found trespassing upon the territory
685 of the *Tiklauila* would be killed immediately unless he had been invited for
609 a corroboree or some such festival. A member of the same horde who,
621 not belonging to the *yirt'amini* group, trespasses in *Tayio* would not be put to death, but he and his relatives would become embroiled in a serious quarrel with the group.

423 *Tayio* is the best example of this peculiar institution because being
613 in an out-of-the-way peninsula no one needs to go there except people
621 who have a right there. Consequently the *Tayiauwila* can exercise a much stricter supervision and hence as a matter of fact guard their rights more jealously than the people with such rights over districts that lie upon the main roads of the two islands. Nevertheless the whole of *Tiklaru* is divided into such districts and the whole of the *Tiklauila* into such *yirt' amini* groups.

Thus bordering on the *Tayiauwila* to the east, we find the *Arupula* who have similar hunting and food-collecting rights over *Arupi*, the coastal district in the middle of the south coast of Bathurst Island. The origin of their title is lost in obscurity inasmuch as nobody to-day knows who the ancestor was or exactly where is the grave that gave them such a right. Nor is the *Arupula* title respected as much as is the *Tayiauwila* partly because *Arupi* is crossed by several "high-roads"—notably the only road to *Tayio* from the east, and the *Wrayawila* road to the Mission Station —but even more because the present representatives of the *Arupula* are either uninitiated youths or peaceful old men.

423 This introduces what is perhaps the main factor in the perpetuation
628 of this institution—the power of the *yirt'amini* groups to enforce their
613 rights, The ownership of a particular territory by a horde and the
685 punishment of trespass upon it can always be enforced because there is always a certain number of fighting men in the horde. Hence horde-ownership is respected. In the *yirt' amini* group, however, periods frequently occur when the group is not strong enough to enforce its claims, and unless the claims are constantly brought under the notice of the rest of the horde they are ignored. The result is that unless the family gets a new lease of life by boys growing up into formidable warriors, such a

123 The following day we finally went hunting. Peter, his wife Dorrie, and daughter Althea, Filicy and her son Crissy-Boy, Albert, Agnes and I all squeezed into the canoe and paddled about two miles upstream to the next landing. Tudiunginarim, "white-paint-place," [177] used to be an old camp of the white buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who at the turn of the century was the first white contact for many of these people. It was very hot and the women took their children 123 into the water, waist deep near the bank, for a swim. It was easy 291 for them in their *nagas*, for when they came out they merely wrapped a dry one around and slid the wet one off underneath very 515 modestly. I, in my shorts and shirt, finally gave in to the temptation 609 and, vowing that if I were to live here longer I would take up the native costume, went in fully dressed. This modesty was a funny thing; they who wore no clothes until contact with white men, were being modest only for my sake, and in return I could do no less. So with dripping clothes, which incidentally felt wonderful in the heat, I set off following Albert and Agnes.

123 The nature of the bush was the same as that in back of Minianapi and indeed the same as that around Snake Bay: the same 224 trees, the same burned earth, the same fan palms and pandanus, and the same flatness. The natives always knew where they were; I never did. We were looking for possums and as these furry marsupials sleep in hollow trees during the day, we investigated every likely tree for evidence that they had recently climbed it. Sometimes the little tears in the rough bark could only be seen silhouetted against the sun; at other times the dry ground around the base of the tree would show very definite tracks. Soon Agnes, who was off somewhere to the left of Albert and me, gave two high-pitched calls. [198] In the hunting language I had already learned, one call meant "I'm here, where are you?" and would be answered by their companions with a similar single call. However, two calls meant "Come; I've found something." So we turned in the direction of the call and soon found Agnes standing by a short, hollow tree. Albert took his axe and cut a long pole which he then thrust up through a hole in the tree's base and wiggled. Out popped a large grey possum which sat on the top of the tree trying to make itself as small as possible. Agnes and Albert threw all manner of sticks and stones at it and finally managed to knock it down, when it scuttled away.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 604 584

riage with a boy who was willing to become the "worker" of the girl's controller.[8]

From the economic standpoint, the large household has much the same function as before the days of the Mission. The younger women go out together and gather food; the old women stay home with the young children. The younger men bring home choice items, which now are trade goods and money from Darwin. The "boss" of the great household is wealthy; today, he has food, tobacco, clothes, and usually sufficient money to gamble. The composition of the great households has altered, but their function is very much the same. The establishment of the monogamous Catholic Cabbagee is even larger than that of the polygamous old pagan, Ki-in-kumi, described in an earlier chapter; Cabbagee, with only one wife, has more women under his "control" than ever Ki-in-kumi had, despite his list of twenty-one wives. The Tiwi have thus been able to retain their large households even under the Mission-imposed system of monogamy.

177 182 592

The Change from Patriliny to Matriliny

In the pre-Cooper era of feuding, the largest significant units among the Tiwi were the bands; the Tiwi never, in that by-gone day, acted as a tribe, even in their attacks upon such outsiders as the British. In the 1950's, when informants talked of the old days they commonly mentioned that male members of old bands came together as units to go on war parties. These old bands did not have a strict rule of descent. But, as has already been indicated, the majority of the males were regarded all their lives as members of the band to which their father belonged. That is, the major unit of the old Tiwi social structure was patrilineal in emphasis.

621 [611]

There also existed in the old Tiwi pattern a strictly matrilineal clan organization, related primarily to totemism. One of the totemic animals of a clan stood for a member of that clan in the song composed to commemorate his death; for instance, the first line of the mourning song for a deceased male of the Red Paint Clan might be "I am red paint." Occasionally, several members of a clan helped one of their number in a fight, but this was apparently not very common before the Mission era. This clan-organization pattern prevailed among the Tiwi through about 1930. Then major and most unpredictable changes began.

614 [533 765]

What does one expect to happen when a society which has a patrilineal emphasis, like the old Tiwi one, comes into contact with a European society where, if there is any emphasis, it is a patrilineal one? Although one would ordinarily expect a strengthening of patriliny, such was not the case among the Tiwi. The old social unit which was predominantly patrilineal was a territorial group with its major functions in the system of feuding. When the

177 611 614 621

[8] By 1953, the terms "boss" and "worker" had come into the local Tiwi dialect to indicate superordinate and subordinate status interrelationships.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

feuding system departed and the Tiwi community became more centralized, especially around the Bathurst Island Mission, the utility of the old band organization diminished and the underlying clan organization dominated. Suddenly, fighting was no longer in terms of band membership, for the matrilineal clan had become the only social unit of significance.

Today young Tiwi often deny that they have any band membership. But it is not unknown for teen-age Tiwi males to lie awake at night counting up the members of their matrilineal clan. According to informants, in the 1940's and 50's the major fights which occurred at Bathurst Island Mission were interclan skirmishes.

Thus, among the Tiwi, we have an example of how a society with a patrilineal emphasis under strong influence from another society with a patrilineal emphasis may, if there is an underlying matrilineal organization, become a society which is for all practical purposes solely matrilineal. The introductory student of anthropology is thereby warned that characterizations of societies as matrilineal or patrilineal are rarely adequate to form the basis for reconstructing past or predicting future forms of such societies.

Tiwi and the Australian Nation

Finally, let us consider those aspects of modern Tiwi life which attract national attention in Australia. What do the newspaper-reading members of the Australian public know about the Tiwi?

Probably the best known Tiwi is a male in his thirties, formerly known to other Tiwi and local residents of Darwin as Bobby Wilson. About 1953, an Australian movie producer, Charles Chauvel, went hunting for a "full-blood" aborigine who could act well enough to portray an aboriginal male in what became the Australian movie "Jedda." In Darwin, the producer found a football star from the Darwin group of Tiwi who could fill the part. Bobby Wilson soon was billed as Robert Tudawali.[8] He went "on location" at several spots in the Territory and finally traveled to Sydney for the studio shooting. The Sydney papers caught his story and spread his bearded face over the country. Bobby Wilson's photo from the local newspaper was hung up in several native huts at Bathurst Island Mission. After much publicity, he ultimately returned to his wife and their hut in the Bagot Native Compound in Darwin. Again the newshounds caught his story. According to them, he had returned to a life of degradation. The Australian public was shocked that a star of one of their best films should be discarded to live again like every other aborigine in Darwin. Tudawali was "rescued" and given a second role in another Australian film.

Bobby Wilson was only one of a large number of young Tiwi who are recognized as fine athletes. There are two football teams in Darwin which have Tiwi members: the Catholic team, St. Mary's, which often takes the local

[8] The last name Tudawali is an attempt to spell the Tiwi word for shark.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

period is the prelude to the complete lapsing of the title to the district. 423
The prominent part played in this institution by the father's father and the 628
fact that most of the present districts held on such a title are held from the 613
father's father whereas comparatively few are held through an ancestor 685
(necessarily more remote) who has been forgotten, seems to indicate that *yirt' amini* holdings do not last more than three generations before they lapse for want of sufficient able-bodied men to enforce them.

It must not be imagined that the whole of Melville and Bathurst 423
Islands are divided into such holdings nor indeed that everyone in the tribe 613
belongs to such a group. The main obstacle to this lies in the self- 621
evident fact that if one's father's father dies in the territory of another horde, as must have quite frequently have happened in the days of marauding expeditions between hordes, there can be no such thing as a *yirt' amini* holding of the district wherein he died. Moreover there are numbers of the Tiwi whose fathers and grandfathers died young, and the essence of the system is that the grandfather should have been old enough to have sufficient male children and grandchildren to enforce the claim.

It can easily be seen from the above how it comes about that each horde has a number of names, since each one of the *yirt' amini* group-names 621
is liable to be applied to the whole horde merely by adding *-ila* or *-ula* to 101
the name of the district they control.

Spencer's list of horde names is at variance with mine, because he 101
did not realize this. Out of six men of the *Tiklawila*, one might easily 114
get six different answers to his question as to their "country," each 103
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horde names that are used here—*Tiklawila*, *Munupula*, etc.—are really *yirt' amini* names that have become extended to include a whole horde either by the identification of a very powerful *yirt' amini* group with a horde in the eyes of the rest of the tribe or by the former horde name becoming tabu and a *yirt' amini* name being substituted. This view is strengthened by the fact that in one or two of the hordes, the horde name is still in use as the name of a district. Thus whereas the whole of the territory of the *Wilrangwila* on the north of Melville is technically *Wilrangu*, the native name for Karslake Island, a small portion of that territory, is *Wilrangu*. Similarly *Malau* is a creek in the territory of the *Malauila* horde.

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WHILE THE WOMAN WILL ALWAYS BE LOOKED UPON 621
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9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

614 Each of these *emuya*, sometimes called Pukui (sun),[3] has a number of cult
778 centres and in them resides the "old woman" of the clan; these are also called *emuya*. The sacred site of the Tukambani clan is at Morapeanga, Cape Keith; of the Miatui, Irapulanwa, Buchanan Island in the Apsley Straits; of the Kudjali, Padupi; Sanke Bay, or as the natives say in their quaint pidjin, Djenakaba, which is on the north of Melville Island, an old trepang site.

As far as could be ascertained, no fixed belief is associated with these clan centres. They are not burial caves invested with a ritual significance such as we find in parts of the mainland (Wadaman and other tribes), yet the shade or spirit of the dead does
[775] follow the track made by the natives as they come from the sacred centre to "show it the road." Only some natives know this. It is probably a ritual that has become lost with the advent of new ideas.

614 *Clan Relationship.* To marry within a major clan or phratry, *aramipi*, is taboo,
615 *kimiyari*. A person of one phratry can only marry into the other two major clans. Thus, all Tukambani and their kindred sub-clans are mother, mother's brother,
601 mother's mother, mother's mother's brother, sister's son and daughter, brother and sister. They call people in the other two clans father, father's sister, son, daughter,
[611] wife, wife's brother, wife's mother, wife's mother's brother, wife's mother's mother and wife's mother's brother. In other words, descent is matrilineal.

582 *Marriage Law.* The marriage law is the same as in most tribes: a man marries his mother's mother's brother's daughter's daughter or, as the natives would say, "a man marries his group sister's son's daughter." They have equal exchange in marriage, that is "opposite brothers exchange sisters." An "uncle" (mother's brother) takes his (group) nephew's daughter, and the group nephew receives the
[616] uncle's daughter in exchange (cross-cousin type). There are neither subsections nor sections and indeed, no moieties. A reason may be suggested for this: being isolated on the island, each person knew his or her relationship to the others, and as there was no intertribal exchange, the need for this type of classification never arose. One of the important functions of the section and subsection systems is to facilitate intercourse between tribal groups.

582 The marriage system with relationship terms is explained in the following table:
601
614

		1		2
A	.. *ubunga* m.m.m.m. or sr.	*UWANI* M.M.M.M.B. or B. (Ego)	*yarbunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.
B	.. *yamoriy* m.m.m.	*YARMURDI* M.M.M.B.	*umbreniwa* w.m.	*YAPINAWINI* W.M.B.
C	.. *imaninga* m.m.	*IMANANI* M.M.B.	*tumaliya* w.m.m.	*TAMALITI* W.M.M.B.
D	.. *inari* m.	*ILAMANI* M.B.	*umarani* w.m.m.m.	*IMERANINGA* W.M.M.M.B.
A	.. *ubunga* sr.	*UWANE* B.	*yabunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.

[3] These natives have numerous names for the same object, the result of the taboo on certain words after a death.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The territory of the *Tiklauila* is roughly contained in the area in the 361
south of Bathurst Island, south of Point Hurd and west of *Mukambrimo*, 621
which is a river about eight miles to the west of the mission station. In 103
this area, roughly about two hundred square miles, there are a number of districts with specific names. Anyone familiar with the Australian blackfellow knows how certain districts are given certain names, and although no native can tell the exact boundaries, everyone in the tribe knows when he has come into one of these districts and when he has left it. The principle of differentiation of these areas seems to be upon the basis of the physical aspect of the country, a valley for example having a distinct name from either set of hills surrounding it, a plain being distinguished from a thickly-wooded piece of bushland on its margin, and so on.

These districts play an important part in Tiwi land ownership. 423
Certain districts are not owned by the horde as a whole, but by a single [621]
family of that horde. Thus in the horde we are considering, *Tapio*, the extensive district in the extreme south-western corner of the island around Cape Fouveroy, is owned by a single set of men, all of whom are the son's sons of *Mikidjimirla*, a man who as far as can be judged died about 1870-1880. The basis of their title is the fact that *Mikidjimirla* died and was buried in the district, hence all the game and fruit in *Tapio* belong to them, and cannot be hunted or collected by anyone else without their consent.

The question immediately arises as to whether the mere burial of a 423
man in a district gives his heirs property rights in that district. The 425
Tiwi answer is that it always does if the man was sufficiently important. 554
The man in question here, *Mikidjimirla*, was from all accounts one who left a deep impression on the society of his time both by his personality and by his prowess in warfare. More than that he left his mark on following generations by the number of children he had. At the present 423
time, there are nine men, all grandchildren of *Mikidjimirla*, in whom the 613
hunting and fruit-collecting rights of *Tapio* are vested, and these men and their families normally camp in *Tapio* and deny the right of other *Tiklauila* families to hunt there. This group has a solidarity of its own which is expressed by a name *Tapiauwila*, which is one of the alternative horde-names. It should be noted in this connection that the Tiwi name for [601]
father's father is *amini*, and the members of this group will frequently

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

423 refer to one another as *ŋia yirt'amini* (my "one grandfather") in preference
613 to *ŋi'iwuni* (my brother), or *ŋia kalipini* (my half-brother), which is the
601 normal term of address.

423 A member of another horde found trespassing upon the territory
685 of the *Tiklauila* would be killed immediately unless he had been invited for
609 a corroboree or some such festival. A member of the same horde who,
621 not belonging to the *yirt'amini* group, trespasses in *Taŋio* would not be put to death, but he and his relatives would become embroiled in a serious quarrel with the group.

423 *Taŋio* is the best example of this peculiar institution because being
613 in an out-of-the-way peninsula no one needs to go there except people
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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

587 him a second wife, also, of course, a widow. This marriage is of further interest
[545] when we discover that Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, the main sons of Bongdadu by a previous marriage, had some influence in arranging this marriage of their mother to a contemporary and satellite of theirs, and that a year or two before, Antonio had married the ancient mother of Dominico when *she* became a widow. In other words, Antonio and Dominico had married each other's mothers; Antonio while waiting for his oldest bestowed wife to grow up, Dominico with no bestowed wife in sight. The approximate ages of the parties at the time of these marriages were:

Antonio	37	Dominico's mother	55
Dominico	38	Bongdadu (Antonio's mother)	60+

584 Earlier, we mentioned the practice of fathers swapping their daughters within
587 the infant bestowal system; here we find sons swapping their mothers within the widow remarriage system.

This is a relatively simple example of the complexity of Tiwi domestic arrangements, and we hesitate to complicate matters further. But clearly the last remarriage of Bongdadu (to Dominico) and the remarriage around the same time of Dominico's mother to one of Bongdadu's sons, a friend of Dominico, raise some important issues of social structure, particularly the question of whether widow remarriages of this type are to be regarded as a subspecies of bestowal marriages, with the sons having a right of bestowal over their mothers parallel or similar to the right of bestowal possessed by fathers over their infant daughters. Space does not permit any adequate discussion of this fascinating theoretical issue, but we can point out two factors which strongly deter us from regarding Tiwi widow remarriage as a special case of bestowal marriage. One is the self-evident and empirically observed fact that Tiwi widows, who remarried as Bongdadu and Dominico's mother remarried in the quoted case, were usually highly vocal and pretty tough old ladies who were not easily pushed around by anybody, even by their adult and ambitious sons. Whom they remarried in their old age was a matter upon which they had themselves a good deal to say. Secondly, to any anthropologist familiar with the kinship structures of Southeast Asia and the Pacific countries, there
584 is a great deal of difference, in a society with matrilineal clans such as the
587 Tiwi had, between a father making marriage decisions for his daughters, who
614 do not belong to his clan, and sons making marriage decisions for their widowed mothers, who do belong to the same clan as their sons. We prefer, therefore, to view the overall Tiwi marriage situation and the interrelationship of their two forms of marriage as essentially a system wherein the matrilineal clan had lost its right to make marriage decisions for its female children, that right having been taken over (usurped) by the fathers of those children. The daughters of the clan were disposed of, not where fellow clansmen decided, but where an outsider (the father) decided—thus, bestowal or betrothal marriage. But when the female no longer had a father—that is, when she was old and could only be remarried through widow remarriage—then the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

right of her clansmen and more specifically her sons (in consultation with her own wishes) to arrange her remarriage became restored as a sort of residual or reanimated right. Moreover, as we shall see, it was in line with their own political interests for the sons to insist on exercising such a right. 584 587 614

Naming Rules

Such a way of integrating the two forms of marriage is supported by the Tiwi rules for naming children, which are very relevant to the issue. We mentioned earlier that the right to bestow a daughter was vested, strictly speaking, not in the actual father, but in the man who named her. Personal names were important in the Tiwi value system[8] and were given to every child a few weeks after its birth by its father or the man currently married to its mother. But whenever a husband died and the widows remarried, all the personal names given to their children by the dead man became strictly taboo, and the new husbands of the widows had the duty (or right) of providing all the children with new names. Since most women were widowed several times in their lives, most children were thus renamed several times in *their* lives, and the names given them by the earlier husbands of their mother dropped completely out of use.[9] Logically under this system nobody would get a permanent name until his or her mother was dead, since as long as she were alive she would remarry and her new husband would rename all her children, no matter how aged they might be. The Tiwi insisted that logically this was how the naming system was supposed to work, and, in fact, the personal names of even prominent senior men did become taboo whenever their mothers' current husbands died. But convenience proved stronger than logic and the personal names of most men and women became well established in their early adulthood as people became used to them. While such names did become taboo when the man who had given them died, the taboo in such cases was temporary rather than permanent, and after a decent interval the name would creep back into use replacing some new and unfamiliar one which might be bestowed by the widow's new husband. In general, the name which thus became permanently or irrevocably attached to a person was the name which a person held when he or she first emerged into tribal prominence or first began to get talked about. For a male, this was most usually the name he was bearing in his late twenties and early thirties; for a female, the name she was known by in her early adolescence when she first left her father's household to take up residence with her earliest husband. 553 768 587 [183] [551]

That convenience thus overbore logic in the Tiwi naming system by

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[8] See Hart 1931.

[9] It can easily be seen what headaches this naming system created for an anthropologist trying to collect genealogies. Individuals would occur in one genealogy under one name and in another under another name, making the task of cross-indexing and cross-checking enormously difficult. [124]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

commitments so as to try and advantage himself as much as possible by a skillful use of whatever shadowy right in the daughters he had obtained by becoming their current "father." 584 592 768

It is within such a context that the apparent swapping of mothers by Dominico and Antonio must be viewed. By marrying Bongdadu in her dotage, Dominico had acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters, the sisters of Antonio, but since his marriage to her had been, partly at least, arranged by Antonio and her other sons, he would have to share with them his disposal rights to their sisters. Similarly, the marriage of Dominico's ancient mother to Antonio (part, so to speak, of the same "package deal") meant that Antonio as current father had some say in the future disposal of Dominico's sisters when they became widowed, since he had the power of renaming them. 587 584

What in effect occurred in this, as in many other cases, was that men of different clans and of about the same age formed a partnership or close alliance wherein "sons" and "husbands" cooperated in arranging the remarriages of their "mothers" and "sisters" by acting as quasi-fathers and treating their mothers and sisters as "quasi-daughters." The partnership or "firm" of Dominico (of the Crane clan) and Antonio, Mariano, and their brothers (of the Red Paint clan) had already arranged the remarriages of Bongdadu (Red Paint clan) and of Dominico's mother (Crane clan), and stood ready to take care of all future remarriages of any of Bongdadu's daughters (Red Paint) or Dominico's sisters (Crane) whenever any of these women became widowed. Each member of the firm was trying to maximize his own self-interest in this and all the other alliances he had a share in, but operations had to be carried out in this partnership form because the marriage of any woman had to be arranged by her "father," and the father, in the Tiwi rules, had to be a nonclansman of the woman whose marriage he arranged. Hence the Red Paint men needed Dominico, a Crane, as a front man to arrange the remarriages of their sisters, and he in turn used Antonio, a Red Paint man, to arrange the remarriages of his sisters. When clansmen made decisions about the remarriages of their sisters, they could only do it by using agreeable nonclansmen as nominal "fathers" and cooperating with them—and the agreeable nonclansmen would of course only come in on the deal if there was something in it for them, as there was for the obscure and unimportant Dominico in the present case. In return for acting as a front for the Red Paint brothers, he got himself a second wife, an excellent food provider though no longer beautiful; he became the ally, even if junior, of some men with assured futures; and he acquired some shadowy residual rights in the future remarriages of several potential widows. Dominico did himself a lot of good by marrying Bongdadu; if he hadn't married her, he would never have attracted much tribal notice and hence would not have warranted mention in these pages. 571 584 587 614

We find that the whole complex situation makes most theoretical sense if we see it as essentially an institutional struggle between clan rights and the father's rights in women. Tiwi fathers, as suggested above, had taken away from the clan the right to make marriage decisions for newly born female members of the clan. As mechanisms validating this success of father's rights 584 592 614

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

As mechanisms validating this success of fathers rights

584 against clan rights there existed two rules: he who bestowed the name had
592 the right to dispose in marriage; and all names given by a woman's previous
●614 husband were cancelled by his death and a new set of names given to all her
[553] children by her new husband. Strictly and universally enforced, such rules
would put *all* control over the marriages of *all* women, of every age, in the
hands of their mother's husbands—that is, men from outside the clan of the
women being disposed of, in other words, fathers in the Tiwi sense. But the
Tiwi system failed to achieve such a result though their rules are pointed
toward it. They achieved something close to it as far as infant or even young
girls were concerned, since the fellow clansmen of such girls were either (as
brothers) too young and unimportant to have any power to resist this alien
control over their sisters' hands, or (as mothers' brothers and hence older
men) too involved and absorbed in their own activities *as fathers* to take any
581 position asserting clan rights as against fathers' rights. To be successful in
557 tribal life, an ambitious young Tiwi male was best advised to forget his mother
584 and his sisters' daughters (all members of his clan) and concentrate on getting
[614] wives for himself. Only by getting wives could he have daughters, and only
by having daughters could he build alliances and obtain influence, power, and
more wives. To get wives for himself, he could not use his mother or his
sisters or his sisters' daughters, since their disposal was in the hands of the men
who had named them—that is, their fathers. But there came a time in the life
of an older man when his mother was old, and *her* mother was dead, and there-
fore the rights of the last man to name his mother had lapsed. And a similar
situation would arise in the case of his sisters when their mother's last husband
died. By this age, a man so situated was likely to be powerful enough and
skilled enough in the rules of the game to exert some control over the late
remarriages of his elderly sisters and even of his mother, were she still alive.
592 Whenever this occurred, although the resulting situation might have the super-
584 ficial appearance of clan solidarity—with sons, mothers, brothers, and sisters
587 all acting and planning together as a partnership—such a surface appearance
was illusory. The motivations involved in it were scarcely altruistic desires on
the part of the brothers to look after their mothers and elderly sisters, but
rather efforts by the brothers to use to advantage, in their intricate political
schemes, some women of their own clan (their mothers and elderly sisters).
Earlier in life these men had been prevented from such manipulation by the
control over those women exercised by nonclansmen (their husbands or fath-
ers) through the naming rules. Put another way, we might say that Tiwi men
as a group had acquiesced to the system wherein "the father" had control over
all marriages of his "daughters," because every Tiwi man hoped to be a
"father" himself; but having acquiesced, every Tiwi male tried to beat the
system, especially as he became older and more influential, by intriguing in the
remarriages of his mother and elderly sisters—matters in which, according to
the strict letter of the law, he had no right to interfere, since bestowal rights
resided with the "father" or "fathers" of these women. One factor which
[182 greatly contributed to the setting aside of the rights involved in the naming
582] system was the fact that since, on the whole, old men married young women

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

This created an intriguing situation since Summit, having had this child be- 159
stowed on him at her birth some nine years previously, had thus acquired a 557
bestowed wife at about age 27; Gitjara now 33 or so still had not received 584
a bestowal. By remarrying the mother of Summit's young bestowed wife, Gitjara had turned the tables on one of his chief competitors among his age group. He could not, of course, alter the bestowal; in five or six years' time the girl would take up residence with Summit. But as the step-father who renamed the girl and the head of the household in which she would live for the next five years, Gitjara was in an excellent position to make Summit enter into a deal or two with him. He could drag his feet as to the time of the delivery of the girl to Summit; he could drop hints that there was something irregular about the bestowal to Summit in the first place, and so on; but whatever form of pressure he chose to exert on Summit, the latter well knew that all Gitjara wanted was to be cut in on some of Summit's deals and to be included in the network of Summit's alliances. The next move was now clearly up to Summit.

If Summit wished the nine-year-old girl now in Gitjara's household to be transferred promptly and without argument, he would be well advised to give some consideration to Gitjara, perhaps even the promise of one of his still-to-be-born daughters either as a wife or as a ward. Although not necessary, it would be a politically wise gesture. If he did so, both men would be gambling in futures. Since Summit's young wife was now nine years old, it would be at least six or seven years before she could produce a daughter (if at all) and another fourteen or fifteen years before any such daughter (if she lived) would be old enough to join Gitjara's household either as a wife or ward. Hence, under any such arrangement between the two young men, Summit would be giving something to Gitjara but in such a way that the latter could not collect for at least twenty years and might never collect.

Anthropologists will note that such arrangements still conformed to 159
the patterns of cross-cousin marriage. Gitjara as *de jure* father delivers his 602
"daughter" to Summit and thus becomes technically Summit's mother's brother [582]
or wife's father. Twenty years later (if all goes well) Summit delivers his
daughter (by Gitjara's daughter) to Gitjara, thus becoming technically the
mother's brother or wife's father of Gitjara. Gitjara himself might marry this [584]
daughter of Summit by his own step-daughter or treat her as a ward given to
him by Summit and bestow her on some other man selected by himself; in the
latter case he would be acting as father to his step-daughter's daughter. There [614]
were no clan barriers to such an arrangement, since fathers had to belong to
clans different from those of their wives and of their daughters, step-daughters and daughters' daughters.

There were, of course, alternative actions or "deals" open to Summit 159
and also to Gitjara, depending upon their plans in other directions. The 557
pattern described above, however, was extremely common in Tiwi marriage 584
arrangements, and often it was the reason why some very old man would receive some female infant as a wife: an agreement of this type had been made twenty or thirty years before, when the now senile old man was in his

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
0120 Tiwi 0120

riage with a boy who was willing to become the "worker" of the girl's controller.[8]

From the economic standpoint, the large household has much the same function as befoes the days of the Mission. The younger women go out together and gather food; the old women stay home with the young children. The younger men bring home choice items, which now are trade goods and money from Darwin. The "boss" of the great household is wealthy; today, he has food, tobacco, clothes, and usually sufficient money to gamble. The composition of the great households has altered, but their function is very much the same. The establishment of the monogamous Catholic Cabbagee is even larger than that of the polygamous old pagan, Ki-in-kumi, described in an earlier chapter; Cabbagee, with only one wife, has more women under his "control" than ever Ki-in-kumi had, despite his list of twenty-one wives. The Tiwi have thus been able to retain their large households even under the Mission-imposed system of monogamy.

The Change from Patriliny to Matriliny

In the pre-Cooper era of feuding, the largest significant units among the Tiwi were the bands; the Tiwi never, in that by-gone day, acted as a tribe, even in their attacks upon such outsiders as the British. In the 1950's, when informants talked of the old days they commonly mentioned that male members of old bands came together as units to go on war parties. These old bands did not have a strict rule of descent. But, as has already been indicated, the majority of the males were regarded all their lives as members of the band to which their father belonged. That is, the major unit of the old Tiwi social structure was patrilineal in emphasis.

There also existed in the old Tiwi pattern a strictly matrilineal clan organization, related primarily to totemism. One of the totemic animals of a clan stood for a member of that clan in the song composed to commemorate his death; for instance, the first line of the mourning song for a deceased male of the Red Paint Clan might be "I am red paint." Occasionally, several members of a clan helped one of their number in a fight, but this was apparently not very common before the Mission era. This clan-organization pattern prevailed among the Tiwi through about 1930. Then major and most unpredictable changes began.

What does one expect to happen when a society which has a patrilineal emphasis, like the old Tiwi one, comes into contact with a European society where, if there is any emphasis, it is a patrilineal one? Although one would ordinarily expect a strengthening of patriliny, such was not the case among the Tiwi. The old social unit which was predominantly patrilineal was a territorial group with its major functions in the system of feuding. When the

[8] By 1955, the terms "boss" and "worker" had come into the local Tiwi dialect to indicate superordinate and subordinate status interrelationships.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 feuding system departed and the Tiwi community became more centralized, especially around the Bathurst Island Mission, the utility of the old band organization diminished and the underlying clan organization dominated. Suddenly, fighting was no longer in terms of band membership, for the matrilineal clan had become the only social unit of significance.

Today young Tiwi often deny that they have any band membership. But it is not unknown for teen-age Tiwi males to lie awake at night counting up the members of their matrilineal clan. According to informants, in the 1940's and 50's the major fights which occurred at Bathurst Island Mission were interclan skirmishes.

Thus, among the Tiwi, we have an example of how a society with a patrilineal emphasis under strong influence from another society with a patrilineal emphasis may, if there is an underlying matrilineal organization, become a society which is for all practical purposes solely matrilineal. The introductory student of anthropology is thereby warned that characterizations of societies as matrilineal or patrilineal are rarely adequate to form the basis for reconstructing past or predicting future forms of such societies.

Tiwi and the Australian Nation

Finally, let us consider those aspects of modern Tiwi life which attract national attention in Australia. What do the newspaper-reading members of the Australian public know about the Tiwi?

Probably the best known Tiwi is a male in his thirties, formerly known to other Tiwi and local residents of Darwin as Bobby Wilson. About 1953, an Australian movie producer, Charles Chauvel, went hunting for a "full-blood" aborigine who could act well enough to portray an aboriginal male in what became the Australian movie "Jedda." In Darwin, the producer found a football star from the Darwin group of Tiwi who could fill the part. Bobby Wilson soon was billed as Robert Tudawali.[3] He went "on location" at several spots in the Territory and finally traveled to Sydney for the studio shooting. The Sydney papers caught his story and spread his bearded face over the country. Bobby Wilson's photo from the local newspaper was hung up in several native huts at Bathurst Island Mission. After much publicity, he ultimately returned to his wife and their hut in the Bagot Native Compound in Darwin. Again the newshounds caught his story. According to them, he had returned to a life of degradation. The Australian public was shocked that a star of one of their best films should be discarded to live again like every other aborigine in Darwin. Tudawali was "rescued" and given a second role in another Australian film.

Bobby Wilson was only one of a large number of young Tiwi who are recognized as fine athletes. There are two football teams in Darwin which have Tiwi members: the Catholic team, St. Mary's, which often takes the local

[3] The last name Tudawali is an attempt to spell the Tiwi word for shark.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

while the woman will always be looked upon as belonging to her former horde, the child changes his, taking that of his step-father. Very often when a boy is aged about 14 or 15 he is taken by his mother's brother of another horde to live with that horde for some years. Often he is initiated there and not quite so often he will spend the rest of his life there. It is no uncommon occurrence for a man to have spent his adolescent years in two or three different hordes in addition to the one into which he was born, always under the supervision of one or other of his classificatory mother's brothers. Two cases at least occurred in the last few years of young unmarried men who had been reared and initiated in one horde leaving that horde of their own free will and going to live permanently in another because they considered they had there more chance of obtaining a wife.[8]

On the other hand, a woman will usually be looked upon as belonging to the same horde all her life, even though she marries young and goes to live with another horde. To the tribe at large such a woman is for example a *Tiklauila*, though she has lived with the *Yeimpi* ever since her marriage, and her *Tiklauila* origin will never be forgotten.

As a result of these conflicting customs it is difficult to lay down any definite rule in regard to membership of the horde. The best generalization is perhaps to say that a woman retains all her life a connection with the horde into which she is born no matter where patrilocal marriage may lead her, while a man on the other hand belongs to whatever horde he is living with at the moment, this being normally but not at all invariably his father's horde.

TOTEMISM

The Tiwi have a system of matrilineal totemic clans. Each clan has a special relation to one or sometimes to two and in two instances to three species of natural objects. The members of the clan have a solidarity of their own, helping each other in tribal fights, speaking of each other as "brother" despite the variation in their actual blood relationship, and not marrying women of their own totem. There are, however, few of the distinctive features of Australian totemism as known from other parts of the continent. They eat their totem without any

[8] It was hardly a logical proceeding as one left the *Tiklauila* for the *Munupula* and the other (quite independently) left the *Munupula* for the *Tiklauila*.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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restriction; they have no ceremonies for the increase of the totem species.

Since the totem of a child is that of its mother it follows that the members of one totemic clan are found in different hordes, and inversely each horde contains persons of several totemic clans. Nevertheless each totem is associated in the minds of the natives with a particular locality or district. This association appears in the myths, there being a number of stories which connect particular natural species with particular localities. Thus each clan may be said to have its ancestral home or centre, but there is little or nothing of any feeling of reverence or ritual attachment to the home of one's totem. Taking it all in all Tiwi totemism does not amount to very much compared with the elaborate forms of totemism found in other parts of Australia. 614 [621] 778 [101]

The word for totem and totemic clan is *pukui*. But the same word means also "sun" and in addition "breath." The connection between these three concepts denoted by one word is not at all apparent. 192

The totems are grouped into three phratries. The term phratry is here used in the sense of an exogamous group containing a number of clans and not being a moiety. The phratries are unnamed. Should a man want to mention a phratry he will call it by the name of one of the totemic clans composing it. He will generally use the name of his own totem clan if his own phratry is in question, or that of the clan that is powerful in the phratry. Thus the phratry that I am calling Phratry 1, will more often be called *Tjilarui* than anything else because at the present time the *Tjilarui* clan is very numerous and many of them are the kind of people who are usually much in the public eye. For a similar reason Phratry 2 is more often called *Timiririyui* than anything else, and Phratry 3 is usually *Tokwombui*. There is a much stronger feeling of solidarity with one's clan than with one's phratry, which will perhaps explain that while the clan name is very important there seems no need, or much less need, for any specific name for the phratry. 615

A complete list of the clans and their totems is given below. Each clan name has three forms, masculine singular, feminine singular, and plural, and these are given in the list in this order. 614 [193]

Clan Name	Totems
Phratry 1.	
(*a*) *Tjilati, Tjilariya, Tjilarui*	jaberoo
(*b*) *Ariri, Aruwidina, Arwudui*	mullet

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

614 Phratry 1 (*continued*)

Clan Name	Totems
(*c*) *Mandubani, Mandubuka, Mandubowi*	fly
(*d*) *Udugini, Uduna, Udumui*	crocodile
(*e*) *Milubruinila, Milubrukela, Milubruwila*	cockatoo
(*f*) *Mierdi, Mierdina, Mierdui*	pandanus
(*g*) *Tanikini, Taninka, Tanikui*	flying fox
(*h*) *Mutuninila, Mutungula, Mutunibila*	a fish
(*i*) *Timilani, Timilnka, Timilowi*	sand fly
Phratry 2.	
(*a*) *Timiririnini, Timiririna, Timiririgui*	woolly-butt tree
(*b*) *Yarinabila, Yarinabunela, Yarinabila*	red paint, sugar bag, (wild honey)
(*c*) *Orandjani, Orandjuka, Orandjowi*	stingray
(*d*) *Paroliuginila, Paroliuggula, Paroliugibila*	mud
(*e*) *Iliti, Ilitina, Ilitui*	*malikini* (a wild fruit)
(*f*) *Andjulini, Andjuluna, Andjului*	rain, turtle
Phratry 3.	
(*a*) *Tokwombini, Tokwombuya, Tokwombui*	a bird
(*b*) *Ariggiinila, Ariggiinela, Ariggiwila*	stones
(*c*) *Pinaluwinila, Pinaluwinela, Pinaluwila*	wood
(*d*) *Waliksinila, Waliksinela, Waliksuwila*	stars
(*e*) *Wirnigiti, Wirnigitiya, Wirnigitui*	bloodwood, *mipari* and a kind of fish.
(*f*) *Taparini, Taparina, Taparui*	moon
(*g*) *Djabijabini, Djabijabuna, Djabijabui*	march fly.

198 614 In reference to the list it must be pointed out that among the Tiwi there are two languages; one is used in common everyday conversation, and the other is a sacred language used on ceremonial occasions, in ritual songs and formulae. Most of the clan-names of the above list are words belonging not to the ordinary language but to the esoteric language. Such words would never be used in ordinary conversation *except as totemic names*. A bloodwood tree in ordinary speech is *urnalaka*, the wild plum is *malikini*, rain is *pakstirina*, the cockatoo is *ingaga*, trees are *tuka* and so on. Of the twenty-two clans nine are normally called by a word in use in the ordinary language; the other thirteen have names taken from the sacred language.

[114] Sir Baldwin Spencer apparently failed to distinguish between the

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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sacred and the ordinary language, with the result that his list of Tiwi clans and their totems is confused and inaccurate.[4]

The Tiwi do not seem to associate very closely the totemic clan 614
and the object that is the totem of the clan. For instance a man of the 771
Udunni considers himself as *Udunini*, not as a crocodile, which he normally thinks of as *irungrabai*. The bond of solidarity is between one member of the clan and another rather than between a member of the clan and his totem.

So much is this the case that it is occasionally difficult to ascertain what is the natural object which gives the clan its name, *i.e.*, what is the totem of the clan. The *Ariŋgwila* are a case in point. In order to find what natural object was the emblem of this clan recourse had to be had to a few old men of the clan who were apparently the only people in the tribe who knew what natural object was the emblem of the *Ariŋgwila*. Everyone knew that a number of men, women and children were *Ariŋgwila*, thought of them and referred to them as *Ariŋgwila*, but very few members of the community connected them in any way with stones—" any kind of stones"—which according to these old men, are the *Ariŋgwila* totemic emblem.

With regard to the origin of the totemic clans and their names the 773
natives say that the system of *pukui* was instituted by the old men a very long time ago. One old man said at some time in the distant past " *Udunui nia pukui kapi Primandua*—Udunui is my totem at Primandua," and so everyone knew his totem was *udunui*. Knowing their legends everyone knew the connection between *Udunui* and *Primandua* since it is at this place, a district in Bathurst Island, that *Munutumi*, the father of all crocodiles, still has his home. Another old man decided upon *mandubani* as his *pukui* because his favourite camping ground was at *Pripanyimili* which has a mythological association with *mandubuka* (the sand fly), such association being founded no doubt on the fact that sand flies breed in great numbers in the mangrove swamps of that region.

The *Ariŋgwila* (the stone totem) are closely associated with a famous rock in *Miŋgu* called *Wurukwompi* which, due no doubt to a hollow interior, gives forth a roll like thunder when beaten with a stick and hence is a sacred object to the natives. The former home of the *Ariŋgwila* is in the

[4] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, page 200.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 vicinity of this rock, so the legend runs, and they are often called the *Wurukwompila*.

The *Timiririqui* are said to have come originally from a small island off the coast of *Wrayqu* where the *timiririqa* (woolly-butt tree) is especially prolific due to the fact that it was here that *Prondupu*, the original mythological woolly-butt, settled after the battle at *Tayio* between the animal-men.

So the story goes on throughout the list of totems. It is not a myth properly so called since mythological figures are in it only incidentally. As told by the Tiwi it is a rationalized explanation on a basis of local geography and the desires of old men generations ago.

162 614 The clans vary greatly in size. The largest clan, *Mierdui*, numbers 132 persons whereas the *Paroliunjibila* has only six and the *Taparui* only two. The distribution of the population amongst the clans and the hordes will be dealt with in a later paper in which the results of a census of the Tiwi population will be given.

C. W. M. HART

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 O120 Tiwi O120

which is interesting. It means the "Moon People" and is probably the name of the tribe displaced by the Purakapale people in the past. It is Arakitamun-uwi (plural), Arakitamun-ini (masculine), Arakitamun-inga (feminine). 101

Horde Places. Living in isolated groups, these people talk of horde places. A man from the south of Bathurst Island will tell you he is of the Tikaluwila people, in the horde place of Tikalaru, the country. Thus a man is a Tikaluwinala and a woman is a Tikiluwinila of the country of Tikalaru in the tribe of Worunguwi. (Hart writes Tiklauila). 621 361

As it is with this horde so it is with all the groups, three of which are on Bathurst Island; Tikalaru on the south of the Island, Arangu on the north, and Malo on the western shore of the Island. We are not sure of the Melville Island divisions but the following are fairly reliable: Mundiimpu, Anangatera, Yaimpi, being three hordes united as one horde on the southern shore; Turupu and Maruwu, two hordes living as one horde to the north-east of the Island; and Wilarunggu and Munaipu, two hordes living as one local group on the north-west of the Island. (This does not conflict with Hart's list.)

These hordes have indefinite tribal boundaries, yet it is considered a transgression to go too far into them for hunting purposes. One law relating to food gathering is, "He who burns the grass first is considered to own all the food that is caught on that burnt patch; he is a boss as it were and remains such until after the cold weather sets in and the dews bring on a new lot of grass." 423 224

Clans. Although the people are divided into numerous hordes they have only three clans (*aramipi*), but each of these clans has a number of sub-totems, *emuya*.[2] These may be survivals of weaker clans or possibly an example of classificatory totemism. Hart calls the *aramipi*, phratries. The totems are: 614

1. Main totem	*Kudjarli*	Fire
Sub-totems	*Yarinapila*	Red ochre
	Iywati	Honey nest
	Pinkwarui	Stingray
	Ilitui	Tree with red flower
	Woriapila	Sun
2. Main totem	*Tukambani*	Martin
Sub-totems	*Tapilapini*	March fly
	Buygaluwila	Stone
	Ariyguwila	Stone.
3. Main totem	*Miatui*	Pandanus
Sub-totems	*Murukpungama*	Flying fox
	Mudumbila	Mullet
	Mandupowi	Fly
	Andolui	Spring
	Tjilati	Jabaru.

[2] The same name as the gall-bladder and the pulse.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

614 778 Each of these *emuya*, sometimes called Pukui (sun),[3] has a number of cult centres and in them resides the "old woman" of the clan; these are also called *emuya*. The sacred site of the Tukambani clan is at Morapeanga, Cape Keith; of the Miatui, Irapulanwa, Buchanan Island in the Apsley Straits; of the Kudjali, Padupi; Sanke Bay, or as the natives say in their quaint pidjin, Djenakaba, which is on the north of Melville Island, an old trepang site.

As far as could be ascertained, no fixed belief is associated with these clan centres. They are not burial caves invested with a ritual significance such as we find in parts of the mainland (Wadaman and other tribes), yet the shade or spirit of the dead does [775] follow the track made by the natives as they come from the sacred centre to "show it the road." Only some natives know this. It is probably a ritual that has become lost with the advent of new ideas.

614 *Clan Relationship*. To marry within a major clan or phratry, *aramipi*, is taboo, 615 *kimiyari*. A person of one phratry can only marry into the other two major clans. Thus, all Tukambani and their kindred sub-clans are mother, mother's brother, 601 mother's mother, mother's mother's brother, sister's son and daughter, brother and sister. They call people in the other two clans father, father's sister, son, daughter, [611] wife, wife's brother, wife's mother, wife's mother's brother, wife's mother's mother and wife's mother's brother. In other words, descent is matrilineal.

582 *Marriage Law*. The marriage law is the same as in most tribes: a man marries his mother's mother's brother's daughter's daughter or, as the natives would say, "a man marries his group sister's son's daughter." They have equal exchange in marriage, that is "opposite brothers exchange sisters." An "uncle" (mother's brother) takes his (group) nephew's daughter, and the group nephew receives the uncle's daughter in exchange (cross-cousin type). There are neither subsections nor [616] sections and indeed, no moieties. A reason may be suggested for this: being isolated on the island, each person knew his or her relationship to the others, and as there was no intertribal exchange, the need for this type of classification never arose. One of the important functions of the section and subsection systems is to facilitate intercourse between tribal groups.

582 The marriage system with relationship terms is explained in the following table:

		1		2
601 614 A	.. *ubunga* m.m.m.m. or sr.	*UWANI* M.M.M.M.B. or B. (Ego)	*yarbunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.
B	.. *yamoriy* m.m.m.	*YARMURDI* M.M.M.B.	*umbreniwa* w.m.	*YAPINAWINI* W.M.B.
C	.. *imaninga* m.m.	*IMANANI* M.M.B.	*tumaliya* w.m.m.	*TAMALITI* W.M.M.B.
D	.. *inari* m.	*ILAMANI* M.B.	*umarani* w.m.m.m.	*IMERANINGA* W.M.M.M.B.
A	.. *ubunga* sr.	*UWANE* B.	*yabunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.

[3] These natives have numerous names for the same object, the result of the taboo on certain words after a death.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

All those in number one group belong to the same clan, and are "opposite" to those of number two group, who also belong to one clan. The lines A, B, C and D are intermarrying groups, i.e. Ego marries his *yabunaiya*, etc. 582 601 [614]

Of course, relationship terms also include others denoting the type of relation or blood tie. For instance, a mother's brother or a sister's son (group) when distantly related to Ego could be his father-in-law and would then be called *YUNARENIWA*. A true father is *ERINGANI*, a father's sister, *yananiya*; father's father *ARMINI*; father's mother, *armma*; mother's brother's own daughter, *yamuina*, and one son, *YAMUWANINI*[4]; half brother is *INGULABINI* and a half-sister *inguleba*.[5]

This system of marriage is not unlike the Murngin and Anula system and also is the same as the *wadji wadji* (wrong side marriage) of the Mudbara. In one, cross-cousins—not *inguleba*—can marry, while in the true Mudbara cross-cousin marriage is prohibited. 582

Rites. The rituals centre around the Kulama. The underlying principle of this is to ensure that the Kulama (a small hot yam that embodies the spirit of the "old woman" and guardian of the horde) is cooked correctly, for this ensures her protection against Maradji, the rainbow snake, another old woman who can cause evil to come upon them and "swallow them" up. It is performed during the wet season by each family, and is said to bring about a plentiful supply of food. The Kulama is also used to pass the initiates, both male and female, from a lower to a higher order in the social scale, although I myself could not see that any important results were obtained by the initiates through the ritual.[6] 796 [561]

Some result, or at least protection, however, is obtained: if the Kulama is not sung or danced at the prescribed time or place, the Marakarti (spear grass) and also the ring used for cooking the Kulama yams at the ritual, would give rise to a poison, *Tani*, which would pass into the air and cause sickness; perhaps a youth who had not passed through the Kulama would sicken and die. On the other hand, a youth who has passed through the ritual may gain a certain satisfaction by believing that he can drive the sickness away and protect the family. In addition, the Kulama is not only an increase ritual for yams; in it the father also "sings" the name of his child in a form of song, *apa*, and foretells in a dream that a certain spirit "shade" will be incarnated through one of his wives at some future date; for these children are waiting at that "spirit dreaming" place called Bilawuwi. In other words, it is a human increase ritual. [751] [842]

[4] These are true cousins and cannot marry.

[5] This *inguleba* native is the term for persons who are taboo to Ego; they cannot approach Ego's wives, as their sweat must not touch. They are people who are "out of line" in relationship. For instance, if a Kudjarli man marries two women, one a Tukambani and the other a Miatai, his children would be of two different *pubui* or totems. These children, half-brothers and half-sisters, are *inguleba* to each other.

[6] It is unlike the Karawadi of the subincised people, in which the initiate is freed of certain food taboos, and again in the Kudidjingara, through which the old men receive magical power to levy tribute from the young people of the tribe, who have not passed through that ritual.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

hands of a limited number of specified relatives of the woman, the 584
privilege of exercising a particular role in a marriage contract depends on the individual's age relative to others holding similar rights and relative to the woman involved in the contract. I have chosen to base the following classification of contracts on the single factor of who has the right to make the contract.

Type A Contracts

A Type A contract involves four individuals. The authority to [603]
make the contract resides solely in the hands of the bride's mother's father. At the time the contract is made, this man is at the expected age of 50—the age when a man is at the height of his political career. Acquiring wives for himself to further his career and maintain his [554 595]
prestige is only one of the activities involving marriage contracts in which a Tiwi male is engaged at this time of life. As a father, he has a duty to look after the welfare of his daughters even after they are [593]
married. As an elder in a matrilineal descent group, he has a similar duty toward all younger members of that descent group, male and [614]
female. By arranging a correct Type A marriage contract, a Tiwi man can fulfill two duties at the same time. He can provide his daughter with a son-in-law, whom he selects on the basis of potential economic and political ability and who, if of roughly the same age as the daughter, can be expected to provide her, under the terms of the contract, with continued support throughout her life. By selecting a young man in his own descent group (his sister's daughter's son) to provide this support, he at the same time assures this young man that he will eventually obtain a bestowed and preferred type of wife which will help him on his road to prestige.

The arranger of a Type A contract may be dead by the time the bride is of an age to be given over to her selected groom. The rights to implement the contract, consequently, do not permanently reside with the arranger, but rather they are the duty of the mother of the bride. They are not given to the mother's husband, even if he is also the bride's father. In the space of time that may well elapse between the arrangement of the contract and its implementation, the bride's mother may have a number of husbands, each of whom may have different axes to grind and varying motives for changing the selection of the groom. The right to change any Type A contract belongs to both the mother of the bride and to the groom; if either does not live up to the obligations of the contract the other may consider it void.

A Type A contract, therefore, is one which preferentially and [614]
frequently results in a marriage of a MoFaSiDaSo to a MoMoBrDaDa and in a marital union between two matrilineal descent groups. This arrangement is unaffected either by the death of the arranger or by any secondary marriage of the bride's mother to a man who, though the real father of the bride, might possibly belong to a descent group other than the two originally involved in the contract.

The enduring quality of a Type A contract over a span of two 582
generations is a most important aspect of the total marriage system

601 23 *angamani:* father's father; also FaFaBr, MoMoBr. Affinal application: MaMoHu, MoFaSiHu.

24 *imaninga:* mother's mother; also MoMoSi, FaFaSi. Affinal application: MoFaWi, FaMoBrWi.

Unlike *amini* and *ama*, the terms *angamani* and *imaninga* are not indefinitely extended collaterally, the more distant collateral kin being classed as elder siblings, i.e., *iwuni* or *imbunga*.

Terminology in the Second Descending Generation

25 *inimini:* daughter's son (ms); also BrDaSo (ws). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ws), SiDaDaHu (ms), "Si"Hu.

26 *inimunga:* daughter's daughter (ms); also BrDaDa (ws). Affinal application: DaSoWi (ws), SiDaSoWi (ms), "Br"Wi.

27 *intemili:* daughter's child (ws); also SiDaCh (ms). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ms), DaSoWi (ms), BrDaDaHu (ws), BrDaSoWi (ws). This term is used self-reciprocally and is quite often replaced by sibling terms (*iwini* or *imboka*) for distant kin.

Exchange Between Descent Groups

Consideration of symmetrical versus asymmetrical cross-cousin
582 marriage is but one way of looking at the Tiwi marriage system. Let us now look at marriage as a system of exchange between descent
614 groups and between local groups.

From both the male and female points of view, the preferred marriage is to a member of Ego's father's matrilineal sib. Of all the marriages I recorded in 1954, 66 per cent were to members of the father's matrisib, and there was no significant difference by sex. These figures were substantiated by statements from informants expressing the preference for the exchange of spouses between two sibs. As in some of the kinship terminology, there is no indication here of asymmetry in the system.

Let us examine some of the ethnographic ramifications of sib exchange. Though a girl can be said to marry into her father's sib, it is more correct to view this as a marriage into her mother's father's sib, for it is her actual MoFa who arranges her Type A marriage, and this man is obligated to the men of his sib to help them acquire wives. If Ego's mother has also married correctly, then Ego's father's sib and her mother's father's sib will be the same. However, it is possible that her MoHu may not be a member of the same sib as her MoFa. This might well account for some of the 34 per cent of "incorrect" marriages in my original analysis, which only took account of the father's sib.

From the point of view of a male Ego it is also important, but
614 for different reasons, to marry a woman of his father's sib. A man's
[842] children come to him first in a dream and are then directed by him to their proper mothers. Unborn children (*pitapitui*) already have matrilineal sib affiliations and thus must be born to mothers of the
[775] same sib. Tiwi fathers call this dreaming of children "finding," and, if a man is unable to "find" any children, his deceased father is ex-

pected to help him. If a man has married a woman in his father's matrisib, then his father and his children will be in the same sib. Since only a dead father can so help his son, we have here an expression of the unity and mutual support of a sib and its members in the previous life and the afterlife as well as in the present life. It is important, I believe, to add here that the Tiwi do not believe in reincarnation. 614 775

It is interesting to speculate, on the basis of the above, what happens if a man marries women of different sibs. If his mother has also married men of different sibs, Ego will have "fathers" in different sibs to help him find children for his various wives. 582 614

Thus, as far as sib exchange is concerned, the Tiwi marriage system is a symmetrical one. When we consider the entire social system of the Tiwi, we see a tendency toward atomism. There are 22 matrisibs, grouped today into five exogamous phratries. Sib membership in phratries is subject to change (Pilling 1957), and the phratries themselves have segmented twice since Hart's visit in 1929. We consequently cannot consider the phratries as stable units in the social organization, and indeed the Tiwi themselves do not. If all marriages were correctly arranged as exchanges between two sibs, we would have eleven independent and symmetrical marriage systems. When this possibility is considered in relation to the data on Tiwi local organization, the potentialities for further symmetry and atomism are quite evident. [615]

Exchange Between Local Groups 621

There are ten major land divisions on Melville and Bathurst Islands, called by the Tiwi *tungarima* or "countries." Rights to the land of the *tungarima* are determined, for both males and females, by the location of the grave of one's father, and there is a marked preference for patrilocal residence. The *tungarima* are, in themselves, agamous. They are, however, subdivided into smaller districts, each inhabited either by a single large patrilocal extended family or by a group of closely related smaller households. Since incest regulations dictate that extended families are exogamous, we may consider that in many cases, if not all, the local group will also be exogamous. 631 [591] [582]

Unilateral Type A marriage contracts will therefore involve a minimum of three such households or local groups. But the marriage system might still be symmetrical within the *tungarima* or country organization, and the total effect might be to localize the matrisibs in pairs. Each country could then be considered as comprising an independent marriage system. The *tungarima* do reveal marked political, economic, and ceremonial independence, but at least today the matrisibs are not localized. The mythology on the origin of the sibs (Mountford 1958), however, strongly indicates that they were at one time conceived as being localized, and this would account for the stated existence of local spirit-child centers with sib affiliations 582 614

582 and for Tiwi fathers' statements that they can only "find" children
614 in their own country.

Today, with nonlocalized sibs, both the sib and the local group are
582 considered in the exchange of woman, which is direct with reference
614 to sibs but indirect with reference to local groups. Such exchange
may in some cases involve sibs and countries or *tungarima*, in others
621 sibs and districts or subcountries. I found that approximately 50 per cent of local-group exchanges were between *tungarima* and 50 per cent within the *tungarima*.

582 With local-group exchange and unilateral cross-cousin marriage preferred and predominant, we have an indirect but circular marriage exchange system. We cannot, however, consider the entire society as being involved in a single marriage exchange system. The system is best seen from the point of view of a single male Ego, whose marriages are systematized according to rules which are society wide, but whose actual marriages are determined by past affiliations which can be and often are variable with respect to sib and local-group exchange.

That the Tiwi system is Ego-oriented is most evident when a
554 male Ego dies and his relatives foregather for his funeral ceremonies
571 (Goodale 1959). If such an Ego has lived a full life, he will be affiliated
764 at the time of his death with a number of social groups. He is affiliated by birth with a matrilineal sib. By his father's death he is affiliated with a local group and a *tungarima*, which may or may not be the same as the group with whom he currently resides; in either case he is affiliated with the latter and will be buried among them. Through marriage, Ego is likewise affiliated with one or more additional sibs and local groups.

Only those persons who belong to the several above-mentioned
601 groups with which the deceased is actually affiliated are expected to
764 honor him by attending his funeral ceremony. When death occurs, these individuals are terminologically reclassified into four cate-
602 gories, from the members of each of which similar behavior is expected. The spouse and spouse's siblings become *ambarui*. Cross-cousins, MoFa, FaMo, BrDaCh (ws), and SiSoCh (ms) all become *yempi*. Siblings and parallel cousins, MoMo, FaFa, BrSoCh (ws), and SiDaCh (ms), regardless of their sib affiliations, are classed together as *pudawi*. All kinsmen in the first ascending and first descending generations are classed as *unandawi*. Since, however, there is a distinct role differentiation between Fa, FaSi, and SoCh (ms), on the one hand, and Mo, MoBr, and SiCh (ms), on the other, I suspect there may be a terminological distinction which escaped me, inasmuch as these "funeral terms," with the exception of *ambarui*, are no longer in use.

Conclusion

582 In this paper I have considered the form and nature of the varying types of contracts that lead to marriage among the Tiwi. I have

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

restriction; they have no ceremonies for the increase of the totem species.

Since the totem of a child is that of its mother it follows that the members of one totemic clan are found in different hordes, and inversely each horde contains persons of several totemic clans. Nevertheless each totem is associated in the minds of the natives with a particular locality or district. This association appears in the myths, there being a number of stories which connect particular natural species with particular localities. Thus each clan may be said to have its ancestral home or centre, but there is little or nothing of any feeling of reverence or ritual attachment to the home of one's totem. Taking it all in all Tiwi totemism does not amount to very much compared with the elaborate forms of totemism found in other parts of Australia.

The word for totem and totemic clan is *pukui*. But the same word means also "sun" and in addition "breath." The connection between these three concepts denoted by one word is not at all apparent.

The totems are grouped into three phratries. The term phratry is here used in the sense of an exogamous group containing a number of clans and not being a moiety. The phratries are unnamed. Should a man want to mention a phratry he will call it by the name of one of the totemic clans composing it. He will generally use the name of his own totem clan if his own phratry is in question, or that of the clan that is powerful in the phratry. Thus the phratry that I am calling Phratry 1, will more often be called *Tjilarui* than anything else because at the present time the *Tjilarui* clan is very numerous and many of them are the kind of people who are usually much in the public eye. For a similar reason Phratry 2 is more often called *Timiririyui* than anything else, and Phratry 3 is usually *Tokwombui*. There is a much stronger feeling of solidarity with one's clan than with one's phratry, which will perhaps explain that while the clan name is very important there seems no need, or much less need, for any specific name for the phratry.

A complete list of the clans and their totems is given below. Each clan name has three forms, masculine singular, feminine singular, and plural, and these are given in the list in this order.

Clan Name	Totems
Phratry 1.	
(*a*) *Tjilati, Tjilariya, Tjilarui*	jaberoo
(*b*) *Ariri, Arawidina, Arwudui*	mullet

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

614 Each of these *emuya*, sometimes called Pukui (sun),[3] has a number of cult
778 centres and in them resides the "old woman" of the clan; these are also called *emuya*. The sacred site of the Tukambani clan is at Morapeanga, Cape Keith; of the Miatui, Irapulanwa, Buchanan Island in the Apsley Straits; of the Kudjali, Padupi; Sanke Bay, or as the natives say in their quaint pidjin, Djenakaba, which is on the north of Melville Island, an old trepang site.

As far as could be ascertained, no fixed belief is associated with these clan centres. They are not burial caves invested with a ritual significance such as we find in parts of the mainland (Wadaman and other tribes), yet the shade or spirit of the dead does
[775] follow the track made by the natives as they come from the sacred centre to "show it the road." Only some natives know this. It is probably a ritual that has become lost with the advent of new ideas.

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10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Parading around the unlit fire in the centre of the *milimika*, the performers
177 chanted a telephone song, the literal translation of which is, "Hallo, that
533 telephone there, hallo, yes, yes," some, as they did so, imitating the winding
[539] of the handle of an old-type magneto telephone.

When the fire, which had been started by a young man, was well alight, the men performed the ritual of *wandiatapinda* by jumping through flames and smoke, each shouting "telegraphy".

The men again assembled at the edge of the *milimika*, and, led by the *alowia*, called the localities on Melville Island where the white men had camped. As each name was called the aborigines shouted "*wja*" (yes).

One dancer held his hands high above his head, symbolizing a radio aerial, while his companions chanted the following words to the refrain of the telephone song:

[539] "The Queen sent a radio asking *Wurarbuti* and other men to dance for her."

Then followed songs related to the radio and the telephone. These were usually performed with the traditional steps and gestures, except that, at the end, the actor mimed the ringing up with one hand, and the holding of the
[535] telephone to the ear with the other.[60] As the men danced, the women moved into the *milimika* from the side, performing their own dance, the *amburu* (Pl. 30F), some of them crying and endeavouring to beat themselves. They were, however, restrained by their companions.

765 After a number of dances came the ceremony of appointing the men to carry out the work near the grave.

At the death of any person the tribe divides into two groups: the *pukamunis*, near relatives of the dead, who are forbidden to touch food with
[616] their hands (Pl. 24A), or go near the grave, and the distant relatives, who can visit the grave site without fear of attack from the spirit (the *mopaditi*).

At *Waniamperi's* first *ilania*, the ceremonial leader chose, from the latter group, ten men, the *wanaras*, colloquially called the "workers". It was their duty to cut and paint the burial poles (one each), help to clear the grave site and dancing ground of sticks and stones, and to carry out other menial tasks associated with the final rituals. For these tasks, the "workers" were paid on the last day of the rituals.

When "workers" were chosen, the aged brother, *Nalgui*, of the dead man,

[60] This mixture of the ancient and the modern, shows how a living culture gradually absorbs the characteristics of an adjacent people, particularly those from a culture as dominant as our own.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The two forms of fire-jumping (described earlier, p. 73) were also used in these rituals. 765

The *ilanis* closed with the performance of the rite of *pumuni*, then the usual honey and mosquito calls.

5. THE FINAL PUKAMUNI RITUALS

(1) *The Pukamuni of Waniamperi*

For the sake of simplicity I will describe, under this heading, the rituals carried out during the last two days of the closing phases of the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*. These rituals took place about three months after burial and about a month after the performance of the first *ilanis* and the receiving of the message stick (Fig. 5F, G, H) from the Bathurst Island aborigines. [202]

During these final ceremonies, the aborigines divided themselves into two groups; the Melville Island men and women, under the leadership of *Wurarkuri*, and the Bathurst Island men and women, with a few of the Melville Island aborigines linked with them totemically, under their leader, *Jikunglinkumi*. [616]

The "workers" had cleared two dancing grounds: one, Fig. 4A, about fifty yards south of *Waniamperi's* grave, belonging to the Melville Island aborigines, and the other, Fig. 4B, about thirty yards east, to the people from Bathurst Island.

There were seven decorated burial poles on *milimika*, A, and three on B (Fig. 4). The three poles, although cut and painted by the local men, had been given, with their permission, to the Bathurst Island group who were responsible for the payment of them. [432]

The final rituals extended over two days. After both groups had performed *ilanies* in the middle of the first morning, they spent about six hours decorating each other with elaborate facial and body designs, one of which, that of *Wurarkuri*, is illustrated on the frontispiece. Other facial designs are illustrated on Pl. 28. In the late afternoon all the participants, men and women, moved to the two *milimikas* near the grave (Fig. 4A, B), where they performed a series of dances until dark. The aborigines camped nearby, most of them within a hundred yards of the grave. The next morning the final rituals started. [302]

These *pukamuni* rituals can be divided into five distinct phases—

(*a*) The opening rituals.

(*b*) The songs and dances.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 O120 Tiwi O120

614 Each of these *emuga*, sometimes called Pukui (sun),[8] has a number of cult
778 centres and in them resides the "old woman" of the clan; these are also called *emuga*. The sacred site of the Tukambani clan is at Morapeanga, Cape Keith; of the Miatui, Irapulanwa, Buchanan Island in the Apsley Straits; of the Kudjali, Padupi; Sanke Bay, or as the natives say in their quaint pidjin, Djenakaba, which is on the north of Melville Island, an old trepang site.

As far as could be ascertained, no fixed belief is associated with these clan centres. They are not burial caves invested with a ritual significance such as we find in parts of the mainland (Wadaman and other tribes), yet the shade or spirit of the dead does [775] follow the track made by the natives as they come from the sacred centre to "show it the road." Only some natives know this. It is probably a ritual that has become lost with the advent of new ideas.

614 *Clan Relationship.* To marry within a major clan or phratry, *aramipi*, is taboo,
615 *himiyari*. A person of one phratry can only marry into the other two major clans.
601 Thus, all Tukambani and their kindred sub-clans are mother, mother's brother, mother's mother, mother's mother's brother, sister's son and daughter, brother and sister. They call people in the other two clans father, father's sister, son, daughter, [611] wife, wife's brother, wife's mother, wife's mother's brother, wife's mother's mother and wife's mother's brother. In other words, descent is matrilineal.

582 *Marriage Law.* The marriage law is the same as in most tribes: a man marries his mother's mother's brother's daughter's daughter or, as the natives would say, "a man marries his group sister's son's daughter." They have equal exchange in marriage, that is "opposite brothers exchange sisters." An "uncle" (mother's brother) takes his (group) nephew's daughter, and the group nephew receives the uncle's daughter in exchange (cross-cousin type). There are neither subsections nor [616] sections and indeed, no moieties. A reason may be suggested for this: being isolated on the island, each person knew his or her relationship to the others, and as there was no intertribal exchange, the need for this type of classification never arose. One of the important functions of the section and subsection systems is to facilitate intercourse between tribal groups.

582 The marriage system with relationship terms is explained in the following table:
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A	.. *ubunga* m.m.m.m. or sr.	*UWANI* M.M.M.M.B. or B. (Ego)	*yarbunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.
B	.. *yamoriy* m.m.m.	*YARMURDI* M.M.M.B.	*umbreniwa* w.m.	*YAPINAWINI* W.M.B.
C	.. *imaninga* m.m.	*IMANANI* M.M.B.	*tumaliya* w.m.m.	*TAMALITI* W.M.M.B.
D	.. *inari* m.	*ILAMANI* M.B.	*umarani* w.m.m.m.	*IMERANINGA* W.M.M.M.B.
A	.. *ubunga* sr.	*UWANE* B.	*yabunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.

[8] These natives have numerous names for the same object, the result of the taboo on certain words after a death.

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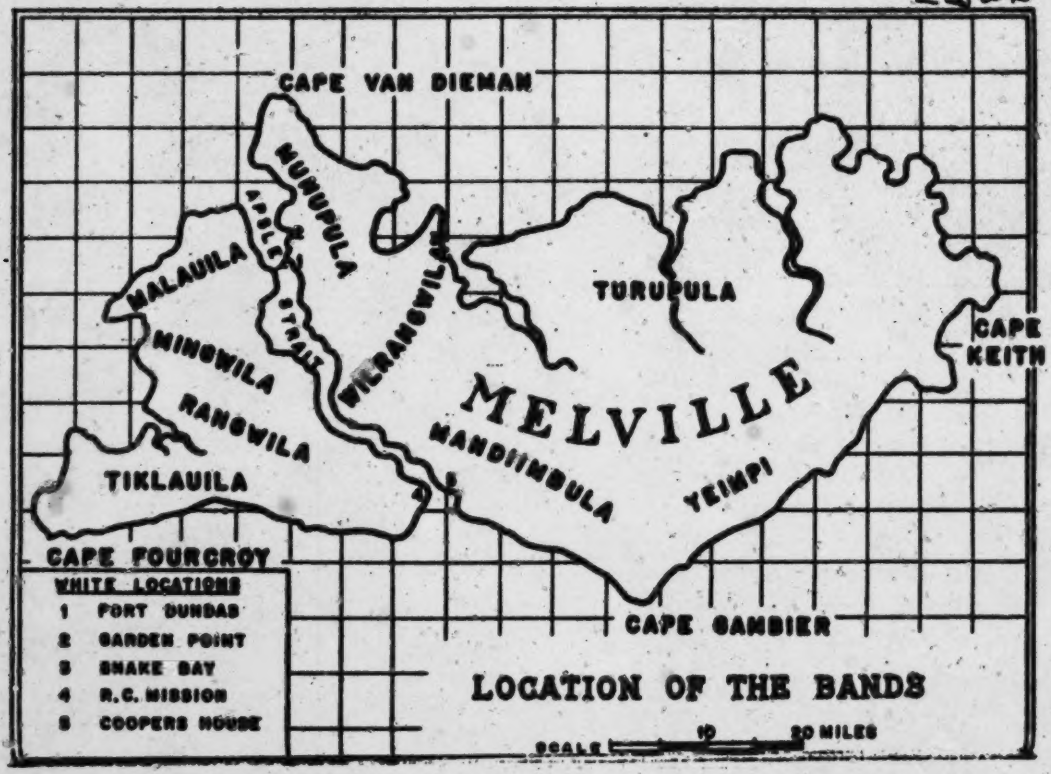

[p. xii]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OR20 Tiwi OR20

V: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tralian tribe that was able to develop within the general Australian type of culture a number of distinct features, some of them unique, while at the same time lacking entirely other features which were widespread on the mainland. Tiwi isolation from the mainland explains the differences and the lacks; their favorable environment explains why they were able to develop certain traits along their own unique lines. [7]

The Tribe and the Bands

Because they were isolated and few outsiders came near them, they did very little as a united tribe. Everybody on the two islands was a Tiwi, and the Tiwi world stopped at the water's edge. Fuzziness on the edges of tribal territory—a chronic headache to anthropologists working with mainland tribes—did not exist, nor did the problem of marriage outside the tribe. All Tiwi, of course, spoke the same language and practiced the same customs and regarded themselves as *the* people; these were almost the only respects in which they could be said to do anything as a tribal unit. There was no tribal government, there were no tribal officials, and no occasions which required the whole tribe to assemble together as a collective entity. For daily and yearly living, the important group was the band or horde,[2] of which there were nine. The total area of the two islands is about 3000 square miles, but some of this is swampy, some of it waterless, some of it mosquito-infested mangrove jungle, and the suitability of the rest for native living varies a good deal. Hence, the actively used and lived-in areas for each band probably averaged about two hundred square miles each and, in any case, there was not a very close relationship between band size and area occupied. Details of band size at various times are given in a later chapter, but, typically, Tiwi bands probably varied in size between a hundred and three hundred people. 619 [131]

The band was the territorial group with which a man most closely identified himself. Though the band lived from day to day spread out over a wide area and a man might not see many of his fellow band-members for weeks at a time, the average Tiwi thought of the two or three hundred square miles of band territory as his "own country" and of his fellow members as his own people. This is why the tribal name—Tiwi—so seldom needed to be used at home on the islands. It did not identify one group as distinct from another, since all locals were Tiwi. Just as in a New York suburb one does not say that there are some Americans in the house next door, but may say that there are some Texans or some Californians or some people from Michigan next door, so a Tiwi, seeing a group of visitors arriving in his band territory, would immediately identify them as Malauila or Rangwila or by whatever band they belonged to. A father would say casually, "I have betrothed my daughter to a 619 621 [423]

[2] Radcliffe-Brown, the great authority on Australian tribal society, tried to introduce the word "horde" for the Australian local group, but probably because of its suggestion to the popular mind of a dense concentration of people, it has never become established and in these pages we have used the more neutral word "band."

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

621 Tiklauila" or "My wife is a Munupula woman"; a mourner would say, "He
619 died when visiting the Munupula and therefore we will have to go to Munupi for the funeral"; an old man would reminisce about being brought up as a youth by his mother's brother, who was a Turupula, and the good times he had in Turupi; and another would recount details of big battles between the Munupula and the Malauila. All of these were band names or band territories. The nine bands thus acted, psychologically, as small tribelets or semisovereign groups, since it was with one of them that every Tiwi most closely identified in his day-to-day life on the islands. It is only when, as nowadays, he leaves the islands to go to work for the white man in Darwin that he has to think of himself as a Tiwi, since there he mingles with men of other tribes. Even then,
[177] work and residence in the white man's town does not entirely obliterate band identification. A Tiklauila in Darwin prefers to work with and to consort in the evenings with other Tiklauila, and Malauila with Malauila.[8]

Because of certain peculiar features of Tiwi domestic life, to be dis-
621 cussed below, it is difficult to sum up the Tiwi band in any simple formula.
591 People, especially women, changed their band residence frequently in the course of their lives, and being born into a band did not at all require permanent residence with that band, either for males or for females. Thus the district (for example, Tiklaru or Malau) was a firm, fixed, known quantity, but the people who "owned" the district (for example, Tiklauila or Malauila) were a flexible and constantly shifting collection of individuals.

The territorial boundaries between bands were clear and well known
423 to everybody, though they were not the sharp lines on a map such as we
621 regard as essential for a frontier or a land boundary. All pieces of country—clumps of jungle, stretches of grassland, sections of thick woods—had names. One such piece of country, say a thickly wooded area, belonged to one band, while the more open country that began where the woods thinned out belonged to another; thus the boundary was not a sharp line but a transitional zone—
[131] perhaps of several miles—where the change from trees to open savannah became noticeable, with the band territories thus fusing into one another rather
[823] than being separated by sharp lines. The Tiwi, so to speak, thought of the landscape as a sort of spectrum where a man moved gradually out of one district into another as he passed from one type of horizon to the next. Since
[133] rivers and even Apsley Strait, a very narrow arm of the sea separating Melville from Bathurst Island, usually have similar types of vegetation on *both* sides or banks, none of the island rivers nor Apsley Strait was a boundary or frontier between bands. The Mandiimbula, predominantly a Melville Island

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[8] In the early 1930's the situation at the Government Hospital in Darwin offered
177 a good illustration of this. The hospital authorities said they gave preference for house-
797 boy jobs to "Melville Islanders because of their greater intelligence and reliability." In
181 point of fact, some of the younger Tiklauila had established a monopoly on hospital jobs and no Tiwi other than a Tiklauila was ever hired there. The whites thought they were hiring Tiwi but the Tiklauila saw to it that they hired only Tiklauila and felt no vestige of obligation to other Tiwi to help them get these desirable jobs. The alleged greater intelligence of the islanders was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Tiklauila, having had a Catholic mission in their territory since 1911, were more used to white requirements.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tribe, owned also the country on the opposite side of Apsley Strait at the 423
southeast corner of Bathurst, while the Malauila, the band in the northern 621
half of Bathurst Island, conversely overlapped their ownership across the strait to take in a thin strip of coastline on the northwest corner of Melville.

These details illustrate the fact that the band was the land-owning, workaday, territorially organized group which controlled the hunting, the food supply, and the warfare. Until the white man arrived in force in the 619
coastal waters of North Australia, the average Tiwi regarded the nine bands as the main functional units of his existence, and his loyalty to and identification with his band were given much greater opportunity for exercise than any loyalty to or identification with the whole Tiwi tribe. He did many things as a member of a band, but he did little as a member of a tribe. Only when an outsider turned up did he need to think of himself as a Tiwi, and outsiders were very rare. For the rest of the time he thought of himself as a member of his band, thought of his band as his people, and of his band territory as his country.

The Household

Since the band consisted of anything from one hundred to three hundred people, it could not live together in one place, except for very short periods of time. Hunting and gathering in almost any part of the world (except the northwest coast of America in pre-white times) require the human population to disperse itself very thinly over the countryside and live from day to day in small hunting and camping units. Such small primary groups 592
are usually in one sense families and in another sense households, and this is the case among the Tiwi. We propose to call such units households rather than families for reasons that will soon become apparent. It is true that Tiwi "houses," especially in the long dry season (from March to October), were the flimsiest and most temporary of structures, but the group of people in question was the group who lived together day after day, hunted as a unit, pooled the results of their food getting, and ate and slept together. Functionally this group is identical with an American household, even though the "house" they used was nothing more than a few piled-up tree branches, used as shelter for a night or two and then abandoned. Like the American household also, the Tiwi household usually consisted of a man, his wife (or wives), and their children, though in many would also be included a few leftovers or extras, common to all cultures, such as bachelor uncles, visiting cousins, ancient widowers, and ambiguous "men who came to dinner" and were still there. (Tiwi households did not, however, include maiden aunts, female orphans, or ancient widows, since these could not exist in Tiwi culture.)

Thus the Tiwi household was more or less the same thing as the Tiwi family group, but Tiwi family organization had such a number of unusual twists that we find it desirable to insist upon calling such a group the house-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

staged and this was usually sufficient to incapacitate the offender and make him decide to move—at least for a while—into some other district. The group thus hastily convened to mete out public justice seldom numbered more than sixty or seventy people (seven or eight households) and having been convened *ad hoc* would remain camped together only for the forty-eight hours or less needed to deal with the emergency.

Joint Activities

This discussion of the alternative lines of action open to an outraged household head enables us to specify the relatively rare occasions during the year when the dull, quiet, day-by-day, food-gathering routines of the dispersed household camps were interrupted by events that required many households to gather together in one place and indulge in joint action. Foremost among these occasions were big funerals and the *kolema* ceremonial, both of which were mentioned above. These were the main religious events of the year, full of dancing, singing, wailing, and excitement. The excitement was the psychological result of so many people being together at the same time, a rare experience in the life of any Tiwi. Since the *kolema* ceremonial was an annual event and even the most enthusiastic funeral goer did not attend more than three or four really big funerals in the course of a year, we may reckon that even an old and important man, much concerned with ritual observances, would probably find himself a participant in such crowd activities on not more than some six occasions per year. For less important men and for women and children the number of such occasions was less than six. The *kolema* ceremonial lasted two weeks or more, big funerals, even when they became the occasion for carrying on other public business, did not last more than four or five days each. Hence we may reckon an average of about a week each for the half-dozen times a really big man spent in the company of a sizable crowd of fellow tribesmen, giving a total annual average of about six or seven weeks at most out of every fifty-two—or a little less than 10 percent of the year spent by an old important man in large ceremonial activities or what Durkheim calls the collective life of the tribe.

In addition there were the smaller gatherings, such as the funerals of younger men and most women, and the calling together of a number of households to settle a dispute in the manner we have described above. These were collective occasions also but they brought together a considerably smaller crowd. A really big man's funeral was likely to draw over three hundred people or even as much as one-third of the whole tribe.[4] Not only did many

[4] Tamboo's funeral in May 1929 (he died in the previous August) drew practically the full band membership (men, women, and children) of the four Bathurst Island bands; almost all the Munupula; many Mandiimbula; and large delegations from the remaining three bands. With such a crowd, an actual head count was difficult, especially of the children, but there must have been over four hundred people present. Needless to say, excitement was intense; more fights occurred, more insults were exchanged, more ancient feuds revived and new ones started, and more food consumed than at any funeral in living memory. At least that was the opinion of Tamboo's chief mourners, but since it was they who threw the party and had to pay for it, they may have been biased.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Not only did many

people come to such a funeral to express their kinship with, and pay their 527
respects to, the deceased, but as mentioned above, many men with disputes to 571
settle or fights to pick let such matters ride until the next big funeral was 619
called and then took advantage of the large crowd to provide the necessary 764
witnesses for the transaction of the outstanding legal business. Gatherings of
many households for purely legal affairs, without funerals or *kolema* ceremonial 627
as the main *raison d'etre* for the gathering, were comparatively rare and when they did occur they were usually called by one man, to settle one case only, and hence did not promote the attendance of very many households. Similarly, the funerals of most women and of younger and therefore less important men drew together at most ten or twelve households and a few other individuals, so that the crowd was usually not above one hundred people at the most. A single *ad hoc* legal duel, even when an episode in a long-drawn out and notorious dispute, seldom drew more than this number. Duels always attracted some spectators who came for the excitement, even though not personally involved, provided of course they were camped somewhere in the vicinity.

This second type of collective gathering, of which the smaller funerals and the single duels were the main occasions, might then require the attendance of a household head, accompanied by some or all of his household members, perhaps five or six times a year. These gatherings would each last less than forty-eight hours, and since the people the household head met at them would mostly be people of his own band or of closely adjoining bands, the excitement of seeing unfamiliar faces—people not seen for over a year perhaps—would be absent. We may reckon that attendance at these smaller, more localized gatherings, and the participation in group activity which they entailed, took up two more weeks, all told, out of the yearly round. When these two weeks are added to the six or seven already estimated for the time spent by a busy public man at the large gatherings, we find that even the busiest and most gregarious senior elders spent less than ten weeks out of the fifty-two in collective activity outside their immediate households.

To complete the list of occasions which called for joint activity by the 224
members of several households, we must include the joint kangaroo hunt.
This activity was very localized and very spasmodic, occurring only when and
where conditions were right and somebody felt sufficiently energetic to or-
ganize it. Much of the Tiwi country is a mixture of dense scrub and relatively [137]
open savannah; kangaroo are relatively easy to hunt in the latter but very hard to get near in the denser types of vegetation. The native method of hunting was based on getting as close as possible to the animal before it saw or heard the hunter. If it detected the hunter, it fled, and no Tiwi in his senses ever threw a spear or a throwing stick at a moving kangaroo.[8] Only when the animal was standing still and the hunter was close enough to aim carefully at
a vital part was the spear thrown. At certain seasons of the year, particularly 221
after the end of the wet and early in the dry season, many sections of good 224
kangaroo country gave very poor hunting returns because the grass had become

[8] The up-and-down movement of a hopping kangaroo in flight makes it an extraordinarily difficult target even for skilled white hunters armed with shotguns or rifles.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

221 so high and rank that the hunters were unable to get near the kangaroo. In
224 this event, a senior man of the district might decide to convene a grass-
[554] burning posse. To it he invited more or less whom he pleased, so long as he included other household heads of the same band and other senior men from outside it whose ancestry gave them some claim to be invited. At the appointed time the hunters assembled, perhaps ten or fifteen adult men, with younger ones doing the actual hunting and the older ones supervising. The women and children acted as beaters; the grass was set on fire over a big area, and the kangaroos rounded up and killed while dazed by the smoke and the noise. The bag of animals killed in such a concerted hunt sometimes ran higher than one kangaroo per participant, so that every man, woman, and child present was able to gorge himself on kangaroo meat for a day or two. This sudden glut of meat was not, however, the main object of the burning, but a dividend. Even though few kangaroos were caught in the smoke and confusion, the burned-over area would provide good visibility for kangaroo hunting during the rest of the dry season, since the new tender shoots that sprang from the burned-over grass were a favorite food of the kangaroo and served to lure them out of the denser scrub areas and the mangrove swamps where hunting them was always difficult.

224 These occasional joint hunts, like the occasional small fights and the
571 funerals of unimportant people, usually brought together only the members
619 of households who lived relatively close to one another, so that while they are included in the list of events which interrupted household isolation, they did not, as a rule, involve any interaction between members of any wider group than the neighboring households. Perhaps the whole matter of activity beyond the household and the band can be illustrated best by an actual case.
159 We have already mentioned the venerable Tu'untalumi, an old man resident
888 among the Tiklauila, who as late as 1929, and despite the fact that by then the Tiklauila were the band most subject to mission influence, nonetheless had a list of twenty-one wives. In other ways besides his record of polygamy, Tu'untalumi was a pillar of the old culture. Though past seventy and much too old to hunt, he was a most enthusiastic and indefatigable song and dance composer, and in his zest for ceremonial he made a point of attending every big festival and as many smaller ones as he could get to. The whole tribe respected Tu'untalumi as a big man, liked him as a person, admired him for his steadfast support of Tiwi traditions, and most of all accepted him as a sort of leading authority on ritual matters. When dubious or disputed points of ceremonial were submitted to him, his decision, given clearly and firmly and with much citation of precedent and the distant past, was accepted without demur. His presence at a gathering located outside his own district was always a source of gratification to the household which had convened the gathering. The fact that Tu'untalumi had seen fit to attend not only made that household feel important but also provided its members with a technical guide and arbiter for unofficial help in running the rituals. The old man loved going to parties—and he was always a welcome guest—and years of such activity had given him such a sturdy, wiry constitution that despite his near-seventy-five years he could

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

628 of nondelivery of bestowed daughters, or other types of broken promises. Some of these cases had been going on for years, and settlement of them at the level of the individual duel had failed. The aggrieved individuals in the two Bathurst Island bands therefore pooled their grievances, persuaded many of their relatives and friends who were not aggrieved to join them, and a large party of men of all ages set off for the Mandiimbula territory.

This party, comprising about thirty fighting men all heavily armed and [302] all wearing the white paint indicative of anger and hostile intent, was a "war" party, and its coming to their territory was recognized as such by the Mandiimbula. On arrival at the place where the latter, duly warned of its approach, had gathered, the war party announced its presence. Both sides then exchanged a few insults and agreed to meet formally the next day in an open space where there was plenty of room. After a night mostly spent by both sides in individual visiting and renewing old acquaintances, the two armies met next morning in battle array, with the thirty Tiklauila-Rangwila warriors drawn up at one end of the clearing, and about sixty local warriors at the other end. Immediately the familiar patterns of the duel imposed themselves. 537 A senior individual on one side began a harangue directed at an individual 628 on the other. When he ran out of breath, another individual began his complaint. Since each accused Mandiimbula replied individually to the charges made against him, the whole proceeding remained at the level of mutual charges and replies between pairs of individuals. Angry old men on both sides often seemed to be trying to find a basis that would justify or provoke a general attack by one group upon the other, but always failed to find it because of the particularity of the charges. The rules of Tiwi procedure compelled the accuser to specify the sources of his charges and his anger, and these always [619] turned out to be directed not at the Mandiimbula band, but at one, or at most two or three, individual members of that band. And when another old man took the center of attention, his anger would be directed at quite different 628 individuals. Hence when spears began to be thrown, they were thrown by individuals at individuals for reasons based on individual disputes. Unlike the seduction duels, however, these duels occurred mostly between two senior men, and the danger of a direct hit was much reduced because of the poor marksmanship of both parties. On the other hand, the danger of somebody getting hurt was increased because a fight between two old men was likely to spread as other old men were drawn into it to support one or the other side—in which case, a wild melee occurred with badly thrown spears flying in all directions. This was probably a good thing, because soon somebody was bound to be hit, thus ending the fight. Not infrequently the person hit was some innocent noncombatant or one of the screaming old women who weaved through the [147] fighting men, yelling obscenities at everybody, and whose reflexes for dodging spears were not as fast as those of the men.

As soon as somebody was wounded, even a seemingly irrelevant crone, fighting stopped immediately until the implications of this new incident could be assessed by both sides. For the crone was never really irrelevant; she was somebody's mother and somebody else's wife and somebody else's sister and

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

therefore the question of who threw the spear that wounded her gave rise to a new series of wrangles which had to be integrated into all the old ones. A man who had been quietly sitting, minding his own business and having no quarrels with anybody, would suddenly leap into the center of the stage and announce that the damaged old lady was his mother and therefore he wanted the hide of the rat that had damaged her, and a whole new argument was in progress. 628

If the person wounded in the first flurry of spear throwing was a senior male, that similarly led the arguments off in some new direction since his kinsmen in *both* war parties felt compelled to support him or revenge his wound or inflict a wound on his wounder. Frequently it appeared that the original matters of dispute, which had brought the two war parties together in the first place, were forgotten and lost in the new disputes and fights that originated on the field of battle. Such a view was supported by the frequency with which one found at the end of the day that the main casualties and the main headline performers had been people who had gone to the field of battle in the morning with no quarrel with anybody, and not even wearing white paint. Even the most peaceful spectator in the most remote corner of the gallery was likely to find himself in the center of the ring before the day was over at a Tiwi "battle." 578 628

Despite this apparent confusion and near anarchy of procedure, however, the main outlines were quite clear. The bands were not firm political entities and therefore could not do battle, as bands, with each other. Everybody, on both sides, was interrelated in the same kinship system. An angry old Tiklauila, abusing and throwing spears at an angry old Mandiimbula, might have as the basis of his complaint the fact that the Mandiimbula father had promised but not delivered one of his daughters. Since Tiwi bestowals were from mother's brother to sister's son, the spear throwing was patently a case of a sister's son abusing his mother's brother, and the fact that the two men belonged to different bands was not germane to their dispute. The angry Tiklauila elder could not demand support from other Tiklauila *as Tiklauila* in the case at issue for it involved a dispute between kinsmen whose band affiliations were irrelevant to the subject matter. Mainly for this reason the so-called war party of one band against another band turned out to be only a loose collection of individuals, each with his own case to argue, who found it convenient, and safer, to travel together into the territory of another band and argue all their individual cases on the same day at the same place. Tiwi interpersonal relations were primarily kin relations between members of all bands; territorial loyalties were shifting ones, temporary and necessarily quite subordinate to kin loyalties. Hence warfare, in the sense of pitched battles between groups aligned through territorial loyalties, did not occur and could not occur among the Tiwi. 621 628 602 619

The confusion of the so-called battle itself was also due to the primacy of kinship and friendship ties. When a man with a grievance started his harangue on a battlefield, he was never quite sure of what support he would get or where it would come from. He was pretty much on his own, even though 602 628 571

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

not only in physique but also in intelligence. I should be surprised to find in any other Australian tribe a man with the intelligence and adaptability of my own head boy Mariano. 153

The flora and fauna of the two islands is very similar to that of the rest of the Northern Territory. The country is mostly flat with a low range of rocky hills between Cape Gambier and Cape Keith on Melville Island, and a still lower range in the centre of Bathurst. The timber consists of the usual Australian trees; gums, stringy-bark, woolly-butt, bloodwood and ironwood cover most of the two islands, broken here and there by patches of open grassland and in other places by dense patches of jungle where snakes and "devils" thrive and the natives seldom enter. Wallabies are extraordinarily plentiful, but there are no kangaroos. Buffaloes are found on Melville in small numbers. These are the wild descendants of the domestic Indian buffaloes imported for agricultural purposes by the early settlers at Fort Dundas. At one time they had increased and multiplied to such effect that thousands were shot every year without any appreciable effect upon their numbers. At the present time, however, probably owing to many of the cows being killed, there are probably not more than a thousand on the island. The natives are seldom able to kill a buffalo though they realise the fact that it is good to eat. 133 137 136

Not only are wallabies plentiful, but there is also an abundant supply of the other native articles of food, fish, crocodile, birds of all kinds, wild honey, yams and other native vegetables. As a result of this abundance of foods, it would seem that the two islands had a greater density of population than is to be found in almost any other part of Australia. 262 161

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The people inhabiting Melville and Bathurst Islands are subdivided into a number of local groups. These local groups are the important sections of the population since they act as land-owning groups, war-making groups, have a solidarity of their own which is far stronger than any tribal solidarity that may exist and even to some extent regulate marriage. 621

Before considering these hordes in detail, however, something must be said about the tribal name. All the hordes practise the same customs, speak the same language and inter-marry. The boundaries of the people speaking this language are of course strictly defined by the sea. In other words, the people of Melville and Bathurst have a solidarity of their own, 184 619

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

184 they speak one language and they regard a certain defined area of land as
619 belonging to them.

[171] The Australian tribe is a collection of persons who speak a common
619 language, or what they themselves regard as such, practise the same
101 customs, and normally have a name by which they distinguish themselves and their language. The inhabitants of Melville and Bathurst Islands are therefore to be regarded as a single tribe, but it is difficult to find a true tribal name. The Uwaidja of Port Essington call the Melville Islanders, *Wuyuk*, as Spencer notes, but the Melville Islanders scarcely
186 regard it as necessary to call themselves anything. The local group of
648 which a man is conscious of being a member is the horde, and until the
101 advent of the white man, the Melville Islander was not aware that any other people existed except themselves. It was impossible and also quite unnecessary for them to visit the mainland in their bark canoes more especially as the coast around Cape Don and Cape Hotham, dimly seen
[725] on clear days, was regarded as the abode of departed souls, *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead. It was apparently just as impossible or unnecessary, or perhaps danger was the chief deterrent, for the Uwaidja or the Larakia to visit Melville Island.

The result was that the people, with no contact with people not of their own tribe, did not really need a tribal name, and very seldom used the word *Tiwi*, which is the only one that can be regarded as the name of the tribe.

101 Tiwi is a word that is known and but seldom used. Some of the younger men were in fact surprised and interested when they heard the old men using it in response to my enquiries. There is no question of secrecy or tabu about it. In common everyday use are the words *tini*, meaning a man of one of the Melville or Bathurst Island hordes, *i.e.*, a male member of the Tiwi, and *tiya* meaning a female member of the tribe. *Tiwi* is the plural form of *tini* and *tiya*. It is often said by informants that *tini* means a man, and *tiya* a woman, irrespective of colour or race, but in point of fact these words are only used as applying to members of the *Tiwi*, and some other word would be used in referring to a white man, or a Larakia or Uwaidja.

101 Objection may be made to the adoption as the tribal name of these
619 people of a word that theoretically at any rate seems simply "men" in the ordinary language. But in point of fact the word is never used except

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the same way as such words as Larakia, Worgaits, Uwaidja, etc., are 101
used. For example, if a Melville Islander at home is asked who a certain 619
group of natives are, he will reply in his own language that there are, *e.g.*, two *Tiklauila* and two *Munupula*, these being horde names. Ask him the same question in Darwin about another group and he will reply, *e.g.*, "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira Larakia*" (four Tiwi and two Larakia); he does not mean to insult the Larakia by denying them the status of men; he is merely applying the term *Tiwi* to men of his own tribe. Should he be uncertain of the tribe of the other, he will say "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira wanarui*" (literally "four Tiwi and two blackfellows"); *wanarui* being a term denoting black fellows as distinct from white men.

In other words, when at home on the Islands, a man thinks of himself as a *Tiklauila* or a *Munupula*, or whatever his horde may be, since there he feels strongly his bond of solidarity with the fellow members of his horde. When in contact with other tribes, however, as in Darwin, he thinks of himself as Tiwi, a member of a group which despite the divisions inside it, is nevertheless a group distinct from other tribes, and this seems quite an adequate reason for us to adopt Tiwi as the tribal name.

The hordes number nine, five on Melville and four on Bathurst Island. 101
This division is not strictly accurate, as may be seen from the accompany- 131
ing map; the *Malauila* territory, while mainly on Bathurst stretches across 621
Apsley Strait on to Melville, while a portion of Bathurst Island, including the site of the Mission Station, is *Mandiimbula* territory.

MELVILLE & BATHURST ISLANDS. [102]

MAP SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF THE TIWI HORDES

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103
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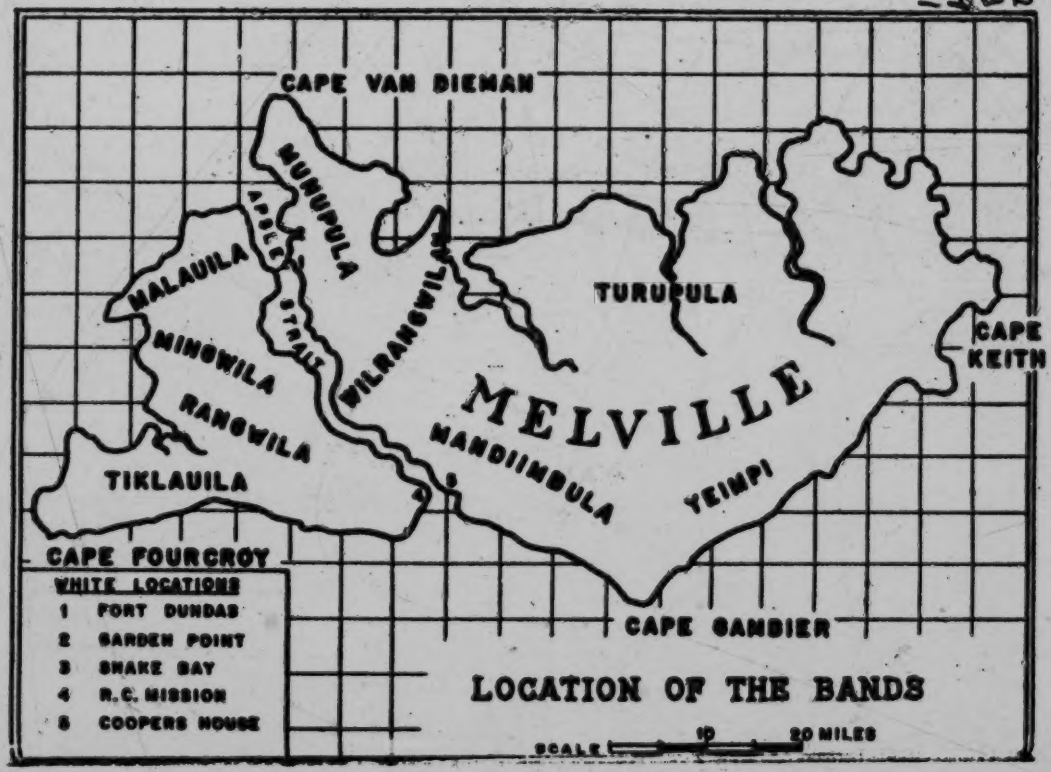

[iv]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OX20 Tiwi OX20

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tralian tribe that was able to develop within the general Australian type of culture a number of distinct features, some of them unique, while at the same time lacking entirely other features which were widespread on the mainland. Tiwi isolation from the mainland explains the differences and the lacks; their favorable environment explains why they were able to develop certain traits along their own unique lines. [7]

The Tribe and the Bands

Because they were isolated and few outsiders came near them, they did very little as a united tribe. Everybody on the two islands was a Tiwi, and the Tiwi world stopped at the water's edge. Fuzziness on the edges of tribal territory—a chronic headache to anthropologists working with mainland tribes—did not exist, nor did the problem of marriage outside the tribe. All Tiwi, of course, spoke the same language and practiced the same customs and regarded themselves as *the* people; these were almost the only respects in which they could be said to do anything as a tribal unit. There was no tribal government, there were no tribal officials, and no occasions which required the whole tribe to assemble together as a collective entity. For daily and yearly living, the important group was the band or horde,[2] of which there were nine. The total area of the two islands is about 3000 square miles, but some of this is swampy, some of it waterless, some of it mosquito-infested mangrove jungle, and the suitability of the rest for native living varies a good deal. Hence, the actively used and lived-in areas for each band probably averaged about two hundred square miles each and, in any case, there was not a very close relationship between band size and area occupied. Details of band size at various times are given in a later chapter, but, typically, Tiwi bands probably varied in size between a hundred and three hundred people. 619 [131]

The band was the territorial group with which a man most closely identified himself. Though the band lived from day to day spread out over a wide area and a man might not see many of his fellow band-members for weeks at a time, the average Tiwi thought of the two or three hundred square miles of band territory as his "own country" and of his fellow members as his own people. This is why the tribal name—Tiwi—so seldom needed to be used at home on the islands. It did not identify one group as distinct from another, since all locals were Tiwi. Just as in a New York suburb one does not say that there are some Americans in the house next door, but may say that there are some Texans or some Californians or some people from Michigan next door, so a Tiwi, seeing a group of visitors arriving in his band territory, would immediately identify them as Malauila or Rangwila or by whatever band they belonged to. A father would say casually, "I have betrothed my daughter to a 619 621 [423]

[2] Radcliffe-Brown, the great authority on Australian tribal society, tried to introduce the word "horde" for the Australian local group, but probably because of its suggestion to the popular mind of a dense concentration of people, it has never become established and in these pages we have used the more neutral word "band."

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Tiklauila" or "My wife is a Munupula woman"; a mourner would say, "He died when visiting the Munupula and therefore we will have to go to Munupi for the funeral"; an old man would reminisce about being brought up as a youth by his mother's brother, who was a Turupula, and the good times he had in Turupi; and another would recount details of big battles between the Munupula and the Malauila. All of these were band names or band territories. The nine bands thus acted, psychologically, as small tribelets or semisovereign groups, since it was with one of them that every Tiwi most closely identified in his day-to-day life on the islands. It is only when, as nowadays, he leaves the islands to go to work for the white man in Darwin that he has to think of himself as a Tiwi, since there he mingles with men of other tribes. Even then, work and residence in the white man's town does not entirely obliterate band identification. A Tiklauila in Darwin prefers to work with and to consort in the evenings with other Tiklauila, and Malauila with Malauila.[8]

Because of certain peculiar features of Tiwi domestic life, to be discussed below, it is difficult to sum up the Tiwi band in any simple formula. People, especially women, changed their band residence frequently in the course of their lives, and being born into a band did not at all require permanent residence with that band, either for males or for females. Thus the district (for example, Tiklaru or Malau) was a firm, fixed, known quantity, but the people who "owned" the district (for example, Tiklauila or Malauila) were a flexible and constantly shifting collection of individuals.

The territorial boundaries between bands were clear and well known to everybody, though they were not the sharp lines on a map such as we regard as essential for a frontier or a land boundary. All pieces of country—clumps of jungle, stretches of grassland, sections of thick woods—had names. One such piece of country, say a thickly wooded area, belonged to one band, while the more open country that began where the woods thinned out belonged to another; thus the boundary was not a sharp line but a transitional zone—perhaps of several miles—where the change from trees to open savannah became noticeable, with the band territories thus fusing into one another rather than being separated by sharp lines. The Tiwi, so to speak, thought of the landscape as a sort of spectrum where a man moved gradually out of one district into another as he passed from one type of horizon to the next. Since rivers, and even Apsley Strait, a very narrow arm of the sea separating Melville from Bathurst Island, usually have similar types of vegetation on *both* sides or banks, none of the island rivers nor Apsley Strait was a boundary or frontier between bands. The Mandiimbula, predominantly a Melville Island

[8] In the early 1930's the situation at the Government Hospital in Darwin offered a good illustration of this. The hospital authorities said they gave preference for house-boy jobs to "Melville Islanders because of their greater intelligence and reliability." In point of fact, some of the younger Tiklauila had established a monopoly on hospital jobs and no Tiwi other than a Tiklauila was ever hired there. The whites thought they were hiring Tiwi but the Tiklauila saw to it that they hired only Tiklauila and felt no vestige of obligation to other Tiwi to help them get these desirable jobs. The alleged greater intelligence of the islanders was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Tiklauila, having had a Catholic mission in their territory since 1911, were more used to white requirements.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

tribe, owned also the country on the opposite side of Apsley Strait at the southeast corner of Bathurst, while the Malauila, the band in the northern half of Bathurst Island, conversely overlapped their ownership across the strait to take in a thin strip of coastline on the northwest corner of Melville. 423 621

These details illustrate the fact that the band was the land-owning, workaday, territorially organized group which controlled the hunting, the food supply, and the warfare. Until the white man arrived in force in the coastal waters of North Australia, the average Tiwi regarded the nine bands as the main functional units of his existence, and his loyalty to and identification with his band were given much greater opportunity for exercise than any loyalty to or identification with the whole Tiwi tribe. He did many things as a member of a band, but he did little as a member of a tribe. Only when an outsider turned up did he need to think of himself as a Tiwi, and outsiders were very rare. For the rest of the time he thought of himself as a member of his band, thought of his band as his people, and of his band territory as his country. 619 621

The Household

Since the band consisted of anything from one hundred to three hundred people, it could not live together in one place, except for very short periods of time. Hunting and gathering in almost any part of the world (except the northwest coast of America in pre-white times) require the human population to disperse itself very thinly over the countryside and live from day to day in small hunting and camping units. Such small primary groups are usually in one sense families and in another sense households, and this is the case among the Tiwi. We propose to call such units households rather than families for reasons that will soon become apparent. It is true that Tiwi "houses," especially in the long dry season (from March to October), were the flimsiest and most temporary of structures, but the group of people in question was the group who lived together day after day, hunted as a unit, pooled the results of their food getting, and ate and slept together. Functionally this group is identical with an American household, even though the "house" they used was nothing more than a few piled-up tree branches, used as shelter for a night or two and then abandoned. Like the American household also, the Tiwi household usually consisted of a man, his wife (or wives), and their children, though in many would also be included a few leftovers or extras, common to all cultures, such as bachelor uncles, visiting cousins, ancient widowers, and ambiguous "men who came to dinner" and were still there. (Tiwi households did not, however, include maiden aunts, female orphans, or ancient widows, since these could not exist in Tiwi culture.) [361] 592 [342] [574] [589]

Thus the Tiwi household was more or less the same thing as the Tiwi family group, but Tiwi family organization had such a number of unusual twists that we find it desirable to insist upon calling such a group the house-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

2

Life in the Bush

Organization: Band and Household

THE PRECEDING CHAPTER should convey something of what a Tiwi band really was. The casual way in which people left one band and joined another shows that the band was in no sense a tight political or legal group. Old men preferred, on the whole, to bestow their daughters on men in other bands, but far from this indicating any tendency towards patrilocality, there was at the same time a strong tendency on the part of such selected sons-in-law, especially if they were young and mobile, to move into the band of the father-in-law, partly, at least, to ensure that the donor did not change his mind. Even the faint prospect of a wife was sufficient to cause young men to change bands, and change of band residence by senior men was not at all rare. 621 591

The emphasis on widow remarriage was another factor that influenced band residence and made the whole matter of band affiliation extremely fluid and arbitrary. For widow remarriage not only caused elderly women to move perhaps several times in their lifetimes, but also caused their younger sons to move with them. Such unmarried sons preferred home cooking and followed their elderly mothers outside the band if remarriage required the widows to move. Almost invariably the question "Why is So and So (a youth of 15-25) living in Turupi if he is really a Malauila?" evoked the response (obvious to a Tiwi) "Because his mother is there." Conversely, mothers often followed their sons, especially when the son began to acquire young wives who needed senior female supervision. Such mothers divided their time between the household of the son (or even several sons) and the household of the nominal husband, and if such part-time residence in two (or more) households involved part-time residence in two (or more) bands, the arrangement did not provoke any comment, nor was it thought to be in any way odd. [587] [182]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

621 The fluidity of band affiliation was so constant a feature of Tiwi life that almost the only firm generalization that can be made about it is that when "a big man" with a large household had lived most of his adult life in the territory of a band, and had been up to the time of his death one of the dominating elders of that band, his children, both male and female, would be regarded as "really" members of that band during *their* lifetimes, regardless of where marriage took the girls, or where their own life careers or the remarriages of their mothers took the boys. Thus in 1928 the three oldest men of Malau—Ki-in-kumi, Enquirio, and Merapanui—were regarded as core members of the Malauila band. Reference to their family trees reveals that the latter two had been born in Malau to a big man of that band in the previous generation and had resided in Malau all their lives. Ki-in-kumi, however, always thought of as equally a Malauila, in fact had been born in Rangu to a Rangwila father and had moved to Malau as a youth when his marriage prospects had seemed to him best in that district. This move had happened so long ago that only old people remembered it, and as a result all three old men were generally regarded as "real" Malauila and the children of all three would so be regarded all their lives. Such identification would hardly carry over for more than one, or at best, two generations. In explaining the matter, we have had to use the English word "really" in quotation marks because the Tiwi themselves had no corresponding concept. If one asked "Why is he a Malauila when he never seems to live there?" the answer would be "Because his father was, and he grew up there." It was only in pidgin English that one could talk of a "real Malauila" or a "real Rangwila." In Tiwi language and thought, Malau or Rangu was a firm, fixed, unchanging piece of country; the Malauila or Rangwila were the households, of constantly changing personnel, who hunted there, and a man had to belong to one of those households practically all his life and have his father before him also a permanent resident of the same district before his identification with that district was sufficiently close to approximate the degree of identification that is implied in the European concept of a "real" Malauila or "really" a Rangwila.

592 [621] The crux, then, of Tiwi territorial organization was not the band but the household.[1] A band was merely the temporary concentration in one district of semiautonomous households which were the food-collecting, living-together, and sleeping-together units of Tiwi life. People were not members

[1] There has been a prolonged argument in the anthropological journals about the Australian territorial unit, especially as to whether it was patrilineal or matrilineal. For the Tiwi, such a problem could not arise. A father bestowed his daughters where he wished and at puberty they joined their husbands. Where his sons found wives was no concern of the father, and hence where they established their households was of no interest to him either. The father would wish, however, that they would establish their households as far away from his as possible since then he would not have to worry about them interfering with his young wives. On the other hand, it was thought to be "unfatherly" actually to throw sons out. See G. P. Murdock and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and A. P. Elkin in *American Anthropologist* (*passim*) for the main contributions to the mainland argument, which we think becomes pointless when dominance of the household tie over band ties existed, as it did among the Tiwi.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of bands as part of any political or legal system; they were members of households as part of a domestic system. What held the unit together was the central position and dominance of the father or husband, and hence the life of a household was only as long as his lifetime. When he died, the household broke up and the surviving members joined other households, perhaps in the same district, perhaps in some other band territory. Such change of household was carried out by the individuals concerned, not quite at will, but certainly not with sufficient uniformity for any political or legal label to be put upon it.

Uniformity was derived from the fact that every Tiwi had to live in a household. The universal prohibition on unmarried females was obviously one expression of that requirement. For men, the requirement was less firm, and if a young man wanted to live entirely alone he was free to try—although there is no record of any man having tried it for more than a few weeks at a time. Even if his mother were dead and his father or step-father did not welcome him, he attached himself to some household since, apart from any question of loneliness, this was the only way by which he could eat regularly. For Tiwi households were primarily autonomous food-producing and food-consumption units. A household made its own decisions, camped where it saw fit to camp, moved on when the food quest made it advantageous or necessary to move on. A large household, such as that of Ki-in-kumi or any other big man, was a complete community in itself, with the old man as executive director. He laid down the daily, weekly, and monthly work and travel schedules for the women, the young men, and the children. Most of the time the work went automatically because all the adults and the older children knew their jobs.

Daily Activities

By shortly after dawn each day, the household was up, and after a light breakfast, usually of leftovers from the previous night, everybody left camp to go to work. The women and children (except perhaps the five- to ten-year-old boys, who were rather useless at that age) scattered in every direction from the camp with baskets and/or babies on their backs, to spend the day gathering food, chiefly vegetable foods, grubs, worms, and anything else edible. Since they had spent their lives doing it, the old women knew all about gathering and preparing vegetable foods, and they supervised the younger women. This was one important reason for men marrying widows, and even a man with many young wives was quite likely to remarry an elderly widow or two nonetheless. A husband with only young wives might have a satisfactory sex life, but he still needed a household manager if he wished to eat well. The supervision of the female members of the household was left to the old women and, provided the returns were good, the husband did not attempt to interfere nor to give orders concerning the details of women's work.

After the women had scattered out in a wide circuit from the camp, the husband might hunt, but only if he were not too old. In hunting kanga-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

162 [621] The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

561 [858 882] [591] Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

561 589 884 The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married [582] to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been [177] able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

561 884 557 [582] The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

159 554 [584] In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

TABLE II
KI-IN-KUMI'S ESTABLISHMENT

(Ages in brackets)

		Males	Females
Head (Ki-in-kumi	66)	1	0
Oldest step-son (Boya	42)	1	0
Sister's son (Padimo	36)	1	0
Old wives (of all these adult men)		0	5
Young wives (including Padimo's 2)		0	11
Young males (sons and step-sons)		8	0
Young females (daughters and step-daughters)		0	5
Totals		11	21

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Confronted by this situation, Ki-in-kumi in his advancing years had summoned Padimo, a sister's son in his early thirties, to come from Raaga and become his chief lieutenant. The youth of his own son had been a factor in his selection of Padimo. The presence in his camp of an older step-son, Boya, had been another factor. Boya, the step-son, was more than twenty years older than the son, and at least six years older than Padimo, the chosen instrument. Padimo, as we have seen, moved right in, fused his own small household with Ki-in-kumi's large one, and became Ki-in-kumi's Man Friday. Boya, the step-son, though married to a widow, refused to move out. Thus, among other things, we have to distinguish between Ki-in-kumi's household of twelve resident wives enumerated above, and Ki-in-kumi's establishment which contained Padimo, Boya, and the various people attached by marriage or kinship to them. Padimo had an old wife and two young wives (daughters of Ki-in-kumi). Boya had an old wife and a younger brother. There were a number of younger step-children of both sexes also resident with Ki-in-kumi. The full size and make-up of his establishment is given in Table II.

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The Establishments of Malau

There were, besides Ki-in-kumi, six other elders of the Malauila band. Two of these, the brothers Enquirio and Merapanui, were well over sixty and deserve, both by age and by success, to be labeled senior elders. The remaining four ranged in age from about 45 to nearly 60 and since none of them were particularly successful we call them the junior elders. In Table III we have listed the seven "establishments" in which lived all the members of the band. We mean by an establishment a food-production and food-consumption unit. Ki-in-kumi's establishment contained three married men—himself, Boya, and Padimo—and therefore contained three households. Economically it was one establishment, since the sixteen wives it contained worked

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

as a team and the food they produced was consumed by the thirty-two total members of the establishment. For comparative purposes in Table III we list Ki-in-kumi's establishment as Unit I and give the personnel breakdown of the other six establishments that made up the total population of Malau. Unit II is the joint enterprise maintained by the other two senior elders, the brothers Enquirio and Merapanui. To this we have added the pathetic and ostracized Teapot and his motherless son, since when they ate at all they ate as hangers-on of the Enquirio-Merapanui menage. Unit III is the establishment jointly maintained by the brothers White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua. Since the oldest wife of Ku-nai-u-ua was Summit's mother, that young man, together with the elderly ex-widow who was so far his only resident wife, lived in this establishment. Units IV and V present no difficulty; they are the small households of the other two junior elders Fingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai respectively. Unit VI is the joint enterprise of Gitjara and L. F. B., containing largely old ladies and young men. Unit VII is the remarkable menage that had gathered round the elderly widow whom young Banana had illegally "married." To this couple

TABLE III
THE FOOD PRODUCTION UNITS OF MALAU

Unit	Married Males	Unmarried Males[a]	Old Wives[b]	Young Wives	Girls Under 14	Total Persons
I	3	8	5	11	5	32
II	3	9	1	7	11	31
III	3	2	2	3	5	15
IV	1	5	0	1	1	8
V	1	2	0	1	2	6
VI	2	5	3	0	1	11
VII	1?	4	1	0	0	6
Total	14	35	12	23	25	109

[a] Unmarried males include all males from male infants to men around 30, or more.
[b] The division between old wives and young wives is arbitrary. Several of the young wives were 40, others only 14 or 15.
? The question mark in Unit VII refers to the difficulty of deciding whether Banana should be classified as married.

had attached themselves Tiberun (Banana's unmarried older brother), two younger brothers, and another male orphan who had apparently moved in for want of some better place to eat. The Banana menage thus had somewhat the appearance of a case of economic polyandry and somewhat the look of a fraternity house with an elderly housemother in residence. We include it as Unit VII since by so doing we are able to include in Table III all the hundred and nine people who made up the Malauila band in 1928-29 and allocate all of them to the economic units in which they functioned as food producers and food consumers.

The data in Table III merit close study. These seven establishments illustrate in capsule form several of the more significant emphases in Tiwi career patterns; indeed each might be said to illustrate some time point in the life careers of adult men and/or some degree of success or lack of success in becoming an influential man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

therefore the question of who threw the spear that wounded her gave rise to a new series of wrangles which had to be integrated into all the old ones. A man who had been quietly sitting, minding his own business and having no quarrels with anybody, would suddenly leap into the center of the stage and announce that the damaged old lady was his mother and therefore he wanted the hide of the rat that had damaged her, and a whole new argument was in progress. 628

If the person wounded in the first flurry of spear throwing was a senior male, that similarly led the arguments off in some new direction since his kinsmen in *both* war parties felt compelled to support him or revenge his wound or inflict a wound on his wounder. Frequently it appeared that the original matters of dispute, which had brought the two war parties together in the first place, were forgotten and lost in the new disputes and fights that originated on the field of battle. Such a view was supported by the frequency with which one found at the end of the day that the main casualties and the main headline performers had been people who had gone to the field of battle in the morning with no quarrel with anybody, and not even wearing white paint. Even the most peaceful spectator in the most remote corner of the gallery was likely to find himself in the center of the ring before the day was over at a Tiwi "battle." 578 628

Despite this apparent confusion and near anarchy of procedure, however, the main outlines were quite clear. The bands were not firm political entities and therefore could not do battle, as bands, with each other. Everybody, on both sides, was interrelated in the same kinship system. An angry old Tiklauila, abusing and throwing spears at an angry old Mandiimbula, might have as the basis of his complaint the fact that the Mandiimbula father had promised but not delivered one of his daughters. Since Tiwi bestowals were from mother's brother to sister's son, the spear throwing was patently a case of a sister's son abusing his mother's brother, and the fact that the two men belonged to different bands was not germane to their dispute. The angry Tiklauila elder could not demand support from other Tiklauila *as Tiklauila* in the case at issue for it involved a dispute between kinsmen whose band affiliations were irrelevant to the subject matter. Mainly for this reason the so-called war party of one band against another band turned out to be only a loose collection of individuals, each with his own case to argue, who found it convenient, and safer, to travel together into the territory of another band and argue all their individual cases on the same day at the same place. Tiwi interpersonal relations were primarily kin relations between members of all bands; territorial loyalties were shifting ones, temporary and necessarily quite subordinate to kin loyalties. Hence warfare, in the sense of pitched battles between groups aligned through territorial loyalties, did not occur and could not occur among the Tiwi. 621 628 602 619

The confusion of the so-called battle itself was also due to the primacy of kinship and friendship ties. When a man with a grievance started his harangue on a battlefield, he was never quite sure of what support he would get or whose it would come from. He was pretty much on his own, even though 602 628 571

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

from their future sons-in-law and demands which look very much like bride price and bride service developed as a basis for marriage arrangement. A young girl had a relatively "free choice" of her future spouse. But following this selection, her father let it be known to the young man what he expected. The desired payment was often stated in Australian money by the 1950's; some men were asking as much as a hundred pounds for a daughter. (This was a very high sum, since Tiwi males working for the Army received four pounds a week as normal wages.) Other men were asking that their sons-in-law live with them, thus leaving their own parental home, and contribute regularly to the upkeep of the household of the father-in-law. This was, indeed, quite a practical arrangement, for when such a young man went to work in Darwin his wife had to be supervised at home and, further, his employer was supposed to send home to the Mission part of the young man's wages.

Thus, by 1954, the following type of marriage agreement was initiated by the great majority of Tiwi with marriageable daughters, specifically those who centered their activities at Bathurst Island Mission and Garden Point. A young girl chose her future husband from her single, male agemates, sometimes with a suggestion from her father. Her father informed his future son-in-law of the obligations incumbent upon him, which normally included matrilocal postmarital residence and a bride price. An older woman with children, or even one without any offspring, who became a widow, was discouraged from remarrying by her father, if he survived, and by her brother after her father's death. The father or eldest brother of a widow with a daughter reaped the benefits of allowing that daughter to marry the young man whom she desired. The widow herself did not remarry but stayed in the household of her father or brother.

Residence Patterns

By 1959, traditional Tiwi residence patterns had undergone major modifications, some of which have already been mentioned. The old residence areas of the bands had been depopulated; in fact, nearly all the Tiwi were located around one of four European establishments—those at Darwin, Bathurst Island Mission, Garden Point, or Snake Bay. In each of these areas a centralized village pattern had developed. Within the Tiwi communities at Snake Bay, Garden Point, and Bathurst Island Mission there remained a few of the old large households with a polygamous base. But in all these camps the household heads were well past sixty and in most cases past seventy. Polygamous households were dying out by 1953.

But what was replacing them? One might assume that the European pattern of the single family household based upon neolocal residence would have emerged as the new Tiwi system. This was not the case, however. Just as Hart found in 1928-29 that successful Tiwi men were the heads of large establishments, so in 1953-54 the younger male leaders had gathered around

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
0120 Tiwi 0120

177 604 584

riage with a boy who was willing to become the "worker" of the girl's controller.[8]

From the economic standpoint, the large household has much the same function as before the days of the Mission. The younger women go out together and gather food; the old women stay home with the young children. The younger men bring home choice items, which now are trade goods and money from Darwin. The "boss" of the great household is wealthy; today, he has food, tobacco, clothes, and usually sufficient money to gamble. The composition of the great households has altered, but their function is very much the same. The establishment of the monogamous Catholic Cabbagee is even larger than that of the polygamous old pagan, Ki-in-kumi, described in an earlier chapter; Cabbagee, with only one wife, has more women under his "control" than ever Ki-in-kumi had, despite his list of twenty-one wives. The Tiwi have thus been able to retain their large households even under the Mission-imposed system of monogamy.

177 182 592

The Change from Patriliny to Matriliny

In the pre-Cooper era of feuding, the largest significant units among the Tiwi were the bands; the Tiwi never, in that by-gone day, acted as a tribe, even in their attacks upon such outsiders as the British. In the 1930's, when informants talked of the old days they commonly mentioned that male members of old bands came together as units to go on war parties. These old bands did not have a strict rule of descent. But, as has already been indicated, the majority of the males were regarded all their lives as members of the band to which their father belonged. That is, the major unit of the old Tiwi social structure was patrilineal in emphasis.

621 [611]

There also existed in the old Tiwi pattern a strictly matrilineal clan organization, related primarily to totemism. One of the totemic animals of a clan stood for a member of that clan in the song composed to commemorate his death; for instance, the first line of the mourning song for a deceased male of the Red Paint Clan might be "I am red paint." Occasionally, several members of a clan helped one of their number in a fight, but this was apparently not very common before the Mission era. This clan-organization pattern prevailed among the Tiwi through about 1930. Then major and most unpredictable changes began.

614 [533] 765

What does one expect to happen when a society which has a patrilineal emphasis, like the old Tiwi one, comes into contact with a European society where, if there is any emphasis, it is a patrilineal one? Although one would ordinarily expect a strengthening of patriliny, such was not the case among the Tiwi. The old social unit which was predominantly patrilineal was a territorial group with its major functions in the system of feuding. When the

177 611 614 621

[8] By 1953, the terms "boss" and "worker" had come into the local Tiwi dialect to indicate superordinate and subordinate status interrelationships.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

feuding system departed and the Tiwi community became more centralized, especially around the Bathurst Island Mission, the utility of the old band organization diminished and the underlying clan organization dominated. Suddenly, fighting was no longer in terms of band membership, for the matrilineal clan had become the only social unit of significance.

Today young Tiwi often deny that they have any band membership. But it is not unknown for teen-age Tiwi males to lie awake at night counting up the members of their matrilineal clan. According to informants, in the 1940's and 50's the major fights which occurred at Bathurst Island Mission were interclan skirmishes.

Thus, among the Tiwi, we have an example of how a society with a patrilineal emphasis under strong influence from another society with a patrilineal emphasis may, if there is an underlying matrilineal organization, become a society which is for all practical purposes solely matrilineal. The introductory student of anthropology is thereby warned that characterizations of societies as matrilineal or patrilineal are rarely adequate to form the basis for reconstructing past or predicting future forms of such societies.

Tiwi and the Australian Nation

Finally, let us consider those aspects of modern Tiwi life which attract national attention in Australia. What do the newspaper-reading members of the Australian public know about the Tiwi?

Probably the best known Tiwi is a male in his thirties, formerly known to other Tiwi and local residents of Darwin as Bobby Wilson. About 1953, an Australian movie producer, Charles Chauvel, went hunting for a "full-blood" aborigine who could act well enough to portray an aboriginal male in what became the Australian movie "Jedda." In Darwin, the producer found a football star from the Darwin group of Tiwi who could fill the part. Bobby Wilson soon was billed as Robert Tudawali.[8] He went "on location" at several spots in the Territory and finally traveled to Sydney for the studio shooting. The Sydney papers caught his story and spread his bearded face over the country. Bobby Wilson's photo from the local newspaper was hung up in several native huts at Bathurst Island Mission. After much publicity, he ultimately returned to his wife and their hut in the Bagot Native Compound in Darwin. Again the newshounds caught his story! According to them, he had returned to a life of degradation. The Australian public was shocked that a star of one of their best films should be discarded to live again like every other aborigine in Darwin. Tudawali was "rescued" and given a second role in another Australian film.

Bobby Wilson was only one of a large number of young Tiwi who are recognized as fine athletes. There are two football teams in Darwin which have Tiwi members: the Catholic team, St. Mary's, which often takes the local

[8] The last name Tudawali is an attempt to spell the Tiwi word for shark.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

not only in physique but also in intelligence. I should be surprised to find in any other Australian tribe a man with the intelligence and adaptability of my own head boy Mariano.

The flora and fauna of the two islands is very similar to that of the rest of the Northern Territory. The country is mostly flat with a low range of rocky hills between Cape Gambier and Cape Keith on Melville Island, and a still lower range in the centre of Bathurst. The timber consists of the usual Australian trees; gums, stringy-bark, woolly-butt, bloodwood and ironwood cover most of the two islands, broken here and there by patches of open grassland and in other places by dense patches of jungle where snakes and "devils" thrive and the natives seldom enter. Wallabies are extraordinarily plentiful, but there are no kangaroos. Buffaloes are found on Melville in small numbers. These are the wild descendants of the domestic Indian buffaloes imported for agricultural purposes by the early settlers at Fort Dundas. At one time they had increased and multiplied to such effect that thousands were shot every year without any appreciable effect upon their numbers. At the present time, however, probably owing to many of the cows being killed, there are probably not more than a thousand on the island. The natives are seldom able to kill a buffalo though they realise the fact that it is good to eat.

Not only are wallabies plentiful, but there is also an abundant supply of the other native articles of food, fish, crocodile, birds of all kinds, wild honey, yams and other native vegetables. As a result of this abundance of foods, it would seem that the two islands had a greater density of population than is to be found in almost any other part of Australia.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The people inhabiting Melville and Bathurst Islands are subdivided into a number of local groups. These local groups are the important sections of the population since they act as land-owning groups, war-making groups, have a solidarity of their own which is far stronger than any tribal solidarity that may exist and even to some extent regulate marriage.

Before considering these hordes in detail, however, something must be said about the tribal name. All the hordes practise the same customs, speak the same language and inter-marry. The boundaries of the people speaking this language are of course strictly defined by the sea. In other words, the people of Melville and Bathurst have a solidarity of their own,

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the same way as such words as Larakia, Worgaits, Uwaidja, etc., are used. For example, if a Melville Islander at home is asked who a certain group of natives are, he will reply in his own language that there are, *e.g.*, two *Tiklauila* and two *Munupula*, these being horde names. Ask him the same question in Darwin about another group and he will reply, *e.g.*, "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira Larakia*" (four Tiwi and two Larakia); he does not mean to insult the Larakia by denying them the status of men; he is merely applying the term *Tiwi* to men of his own tribe. Should he be uncertain of the tribe of the other, he will say "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira wanarui*" (literally "four Tiwi and two blackfellows"); *wanarui* being a term denoting black fellows as distinct from white men.

In other words, when at home on the Islands, a man thinks of himself as a *Tiklauila* or a *Munupula*, or whatever his horde may be, since there he feels strongly his bond of solidarity with the fellow members of his horde. When in contact with other tribes, however, as in Darwin, he thinks of himself as Tiwi, a member of a group which despite the divisions inside it, is nevertheless a group distinct from other tribes, and this seems quite an adequate reason for us to adopt Tiwi as the tribal name.

The hordes number nine, five on Melville and four on Bathurst Island. This division is not strictly accurate, as may be seen from the accompanying map; the *Malauila* territory, while mainly on Bathurst stretches across Apsley Strait on to Melville, while a portion of Bathurst Island, including the site of the Mission Station, is *Mandilimbula* territory.

MELVILLE & BATHURST ISLANDS.

MAP SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF THE TIWI HORDES

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

101 Like other concrete things in this culture, the hordes have a multi-
621 plicity of names, and this has caused a certain amount of confusion and doubt as to their actual number. A full list of these names is as follows. The name most commonly used in each case by the natives themselves is given first in each case, as these are the names used throughout this account of the Tiwi culture.

1. *Tiklauila*: *Arupula, Matjulauila, Muliuŋabila, Tuŋalimbila, Talpauila, Pilamiruntabila, Aritui, Wayiŋui, Adauinabila, Payondiŋaluwila, Pukuŋinabila, Primanduwila.*
2. *Wraŋgwila*: *Mungwaiunabila, Puiauarurwila, Tintauwila.*
3. *Miŋgwila*: *Wonuruwila, Kaliprauiŋuwila, Malamikwariuŋabila.*
4. *Malauila*: *Mirkalambila, Pulunduwila, Iwiriwila, Malamuŋoriuŋabila, Papiuŋabila.*
5. *Wilraŋgwila*: *Panodjiwila, Mirkauiuŋabila, Marawauila, Kambuŋambila.*
6. *Munupula*: *Urumaiawila, Tuuuŋabila, Imaluwila, Parumunupula.*
7. *Turupula*: *Yuŋanduwila, Tikampula.*
8. *Yeimpi*: *Arupontuwila, Araŋgitarila, Palwiuŋabila.*
9. *Mandiimbula*: *Tumulambila, Tilambila, Urumaiuŋabila, Uruwinapila, Ilubiuŋabila.*

101 If Spencer's list[2] is compared with mine it will be seen that allowing
114 for our different spellings, his "Kambuambulla" are really the *Marawauila*,
621 his "Cherupulla" are the *Turupula*, his "Purumunupulla" are really the *Munupula*, his "Mindaluulla" probably mean the *Miŋgwila*. "Ulobu" (or *Ilubi*) is a place-name of a favourite camping ground in the country of the Mandiimbula slightly to the north-west of Cape Gambier; hence *Ilubiuŋabila*. "Marungallambu" similarly is a camping ground in the territory of the *Malauila*. "Barranpunalli" I am unable to trace; *Punali* (or *Bunali*) is, however, the name for the district around the English Point Alley. "Arangijerulla" is an alternative name for the *Yeimpi*, but I prefer to spell it *Araŋgitarila*, while "Balauiungambulla" is obviously a misspelling of the *Palwiuŋabila*, which is another alternative name for the *Yeimpi*.

121 To explain this multiplicity of horde names, and also to throw some light on the actual composition of the horde, I propose to consider one of the hordes in detail, taking for this purpose the *Tiklauila*.

[2] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, 1914, page 43.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The territory of the *Tiklauila* is roughly contained in the area in the south of Bathurst Island, south of Point Hurd and west of *Mukambrimo*, which is a river about eight miles to the west of the mission station. In this area, roughly about two hundred square miles, there are a number of districts with specific names. Anyone familiar with the Australian blackfellow knows how certain districts are given certain names, and although no native can tell the exact boundaries, everyone in the tribe knows when he has come into one of these districts and when he has left it. The principle of differentiation of these areas seems to be upon the basis of the physical aspect of the country, a valley for example having a distinct name from either set of hills surrounding it, a plain being distinguished from a thickly-wooded piece of bushland on its margin, and so on. 361 621 103

These districts play an important part in Tiwi land ownership. Certain districts are not owned by the horde as a whole, but by a single family of that horde. Thus in the horde we are considering, *Tanio*, the extensive district in the extreme south-western corner of the island around Cape Fouveroy, is owned by a single set of men, all of whom are the son's sons of *Mikidjimirla*, a man who as far as can be judged died about 1870-1880. The basis of their title is the fact that *Mikidjimirla* died and was buried in the district, hence all the game and fruit in *Tanio* belong to them, and cannot be hunted or collected by anyone else without their consent. 423 [621]

The question immediately arises as to whether the mere burial of a man in a district gives his heirs property rights in that district. The Tiwi answer is that it always does if the man was sufficiently important. The man in question here, *Mikidjimirla*, was from all accounts one who left a deep impression on the society of his time both by his personality and by his prowess in warfare. More than that he left his mark on following generations by the number of children he had. At the present time, there are nine men, all grandchildren of *Mikidjimirla*, in whom the hunting and fruit-collecting rights of *Tanio* are vested, and these men and their families normally camp in *Tanio* and deny the right of other *Tiklauila* families to hunt there. This group has a solidarity of its own which is expressed by a name *Taniauwila*, which is one of the alternative horde-names. It should be noted in this connection that the Tiwi name for father's father is *amini*, and the members of this group will frequently 423 425 554 423 613 [601]

refer to one another as *gia yirt'amini* (my "one grandfather") in preference to *gi'iwuni* (my brother), or *gia kalipini* (my half-brother), which is the normal term of address.

A member of another horde found trespassing upon the territory of the *Tiklauila* would be killed immediately unless he had been invited for a corroboree or some such festival. A member of the same horde who, not belonging to the *yirt'amini* group, trespasses in *Tapio* would not be put to death, but he and his relatives would become embroiled in a serious quarrel with the group.

Tapio is the best example of this peculiar institution because being in an out-of-the-way peninsula no one needs to go there except people who have a right there. Consequently the *Tapiauwila* can exercise a much stricter supervision and hence as a matter of fact guard their rights more jealously than the people with such rights over districts that lie upon the main roads of the two islands. Nevertheless the whole of *Tiklaru* is divided into such districts and the whole of the *Tiklauila* into such *yirt' amini* groups.

Thus bordering on the *Tapiauwila* to the east, we find the *Arupula* who have similar hunting and food-collecting rights over *Arupi*, the coastal district in the middle of the south coast of Bathurst Island. The origin of their title is lost in obscurity inasmuch as nobody to-day knows who the ancestor was or exactly where is the grave that gave them such a right. Nor is the *Arupula* title respected as much as is the *Tapiauwila* partly because *Arupi* is crossed by several "high-roads"—notably the only road to *Tapio* from the east, and the *Wrapgwila* road to the Mission Station —but even more because the present representatives of the *Arupula* are either uninitiated youths or peaceful old men.

This introduces what is perhaps the main factor in the perpetuation of this institution—the power of the *yirt'amini* groups to enforce their rights. The ownership of a particular territory by a horde and the punishment of trespass upon it can always be enforced because there is always a certain number of fighting men in the horde. Hence horde-ownership is respected. In the *yirt' amini* group, however, periods frequently occur when the group is not strong enough to enforce its claims, and unless the claims are constantly brought under the notice of the rest of the horde they are ignored. The result is that unless the family gets a new lease of life by boys growing up into formidable warriors, such a

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

period is the prelude to the complete lapsing of the title to the district. 423
The prominent part played in this institution by the father's father and the 628
fact that most of the present districts held on such a title are held from the 613
father's father whereas comparatively few are held through an ancestor 685
(necessarily more remote) who has been forgotten, seems to indicate that *yirt' amini* holdings do not last more than three generations before they lapse for want of sufficient able-bodied men to enforce them.

It must not be imagined that the whole of Melville and Bathurst 423
Islands are divided into such holdings nor indeed that everyone in the tribe 613
belongs to such a group. The main obstacle to this lies in the self- 621
evident fact that if one's father's father dies in the territory of another horde, as must have quite frequently have happened in the days of marauding expeditions between hordes, there can be no such thing as a *yirt' amini* holding of the district wherein he died. Moreover there are numbers of the Tiwi whose fathers and grandfathers died young, and the essence of the system is that the grandfather should have been old enough to have sufficient male children and grandchildren to enforce the claim.

It can easily be seen from the above how it comes about that each horde has a number of names, since each one of the *yirt' amini* group-names 621
is liable to be applied to the whole horde merely by adding *-ila* or *-ula* to 101
the name of the district they control.

Spencer's list of horde names is at variance with mine, because he 101
did not realize this. Out of six men of the *Tiklauwila*, one might easily 114
get six different answers to his question as to their "country," each 103
giving the name of his *yirt' amini* group. It is quite possible that the 621
horde names that are used here—*Tiklauwila*, *Munupula*, etc.—are really *yirt' amini* names that have become extended to include a whole horde either by the identification of a very powerful *yirt' amini* group with a horde in the eyes of the rest of the tribe or by the former horde name becoming tabu and a *yirt' amini* name being substituted. This view is strengthened by the fact that in one or two of the hordes, the horde name is still in use as the name of a district. Thus whereas the whole of the territory of the *Wilraŋgwila* on the north of Melville is technically *Wilraŋgu*, the native name for Karslake Island, a small portion of that territory, is *Wilraŋgu*. Similarly *Malau* is a creek in the territory of the *Malauila* horde.

A man is born into the horde of his father. Should his father die and 591
his mother be taken by a member of another horde he goes with her, and [611]
621
WHILE THE WOMAN WILL ALWAYS BE LOOKED UPON [768]
AS BELONGING TO HER FORMER HORDE, THE CHILD
CHANGES HIS, TAKING THAT OF HIS STEPFATHER.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

while the woman will always be looked upon as belonging to her former horde, the child changes his, taking that of his step-father. Very often when a boy is aged about 14 or 15 he is taken by his mother's brother of another horde to live with that horde for some years. Often he is initiated there and not quite so often he will spend the rest of his life there. It is no uncommon occurrence for a man to have spent his adolescent years in two or three different hordes in addition to the one into which he was born, always under the supervision of one or other of his classificatory mother's brothers. Two cases at least occurred in the last few years of young unmarried men who had been reared and initiated in one horde leaving that horde of their own free will and going to live permanently in another because they considered they had there more chance of obtaining a wife.[8]

On the other hand, a woman will usually be looked upon as belonging to the same horde all her life, even though she marries young and goes to live with another horde. To the tribe at large such a woman is for example a *Tiklawila*, though she has lived with the *Yeimpi* ever since her marriage, and her *Tiklawila* origin will never be forgotten.

As a result of these conflicting customs it is difficult to lay down any definite rule in regard to membership of the horde. The best generalization is perhaps to say that a woman retains all her life a connection with the horde into which she is born no matter where patrilocal marriage may lead her, while a man on the other hand belongs to whatever horde he is living with at the moment, this being normally but not at all invariably his father's horde.

TOTEMISM

The Tiwi have a system of matrilineal totemic clans. Each clan has a special relation to one or sometimes to two and in two instances to three species of natural objects. The members of the clan have a solidarity of their own, helping each other in tribal fights, speaking of each other as "brother" despite the variation in their actual blood relationship, and not marrying women of their own totem. There are, however, few of the distinctive features of Australian totemism as known from other parts of the continent. They eat their totem without any

[8] It was hardly a logical proceeding as one left the *Tiklawila* for the *Mumpula* and the other (quite independently) left the *Mumpula* for the *Tiklawila*.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

restriction; they have no ceremonies for the increase of the totem species.

Since the totem of a child is that of its mother it follows that the members of one totemic clan are found in different hordes, and inversely each horde contains persons of several totemic clans. Nevertheless each totem is associated in the minds of the natives with a particular locality or district. This association appears in the myths, there being a number of stories which connect particular natural species with particular localities. Thus each clan may be said to have its ancestral home or centre, but there is little or nothing of any feeling of reverence or ritual attachment to the home of one's totem. Taking it all in all Tiwi totemism does not amount to very much compared with the elaborate forms of totemism found in other parts of Australia.

The word for totem and totemic clan is *pukui*. But the same word means also "sun" and in addition "breath." The connection between these three concepts denoted by one word is not at all apparent.

The totems are grouped into three phratries. The term phratry is here used in the sense of an exogamous group containing a number of clans and not being a moiety. The phratries are unnamed. Should a man want to mention a phratry he will call it by the name of one of the totemic clans composing it. He will generally use the name of his own totem clan if his own phratry is in question, or that of the clan that is powerful in the phratry. Thus the phratry that I am calling Phratry 1, will more often be called *Tjilarui* than anything else because at the present time the *Tjilarui* clan is very numerous and many of them are the kind of people who are usually much in the public eye. For a similar reason Phratry 2 is more often called *Timiririyui* than anything else, and Phratry 3 is usually *Tokwombui*. There is a much stronger feeling of solidarity with one's clan than with one's phratry, which will perhaps explain that while the clan name is very important there seems no need, or much less need, for any specific name for the phratry.

A complete list of the clans and their totems is given below. Each clan name has three forms, masculine singular, feminine singular, and plural, and these are given in the list in this order.

Clan Name	Totems
Phratry 1.	
(*a*) *Tjilati, Tjilariya, Tjilarui*	jaberoo
(*b*) *Ariri, Aruwidina, Arwudui*	mullet

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 O120 Tiwi O120

The southern section of Bathurst

[31] Island (Hart 1930) is inhabited by a subtribe called the Tiklauila. In 1911 a
[797] Roman Catholic Mission station was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island, virtually in Tiklauila territory, and at the time of the present writer's field work this was the only white settlement. In the generation before the missionaries arrived the "big man" among the Tiklauila was Turimpi.
159 Because of their complicated marriage and inheritance regulations the average Tiwi old man in the course of his lifetime accumulates an impressive number of wives and Turimpi was no exception to this rule. At the time of his death, which occurred toward the end of the 1890's at an age which was probably something approaching 70, Turimpi counted as his wives then living or pre-deceasing him no less than 25 females. Of these the only one we need to pay any attention to is the woman named Bongdadu. She, while Turimpi's wife, had borne numerous children, of whom three males grew to manhood—Antonio, born in approximately 1883, Mariano born three or four years later, and Louis born around 1893. Sometime between 1895 and 1900 she was widowed by the death of Turimpi, whereupon she married another elderly man, Murikambunga, to whom she bore two more sons—Tipperary, born around 1900, and Bob born about a year later. Bongdadu of course had numerous other children who did not survive childhood.[4] It is her five adult sons who concern us here.

Turimpi, as the number of wives suggests, was an important tribal figure
[554] during his lifetime. Importance, prestige, tendency to be spoken of as a "big man" are in Tiwi functions of a number of factors in which age, number of wives, fighting ability, wisdom in council, and "family" in the sense of having relatives who are also "big men," are all compounded. On all these counts Turimpi was important, and his prestige tended to carry on after his death.
554 Since the horde or subtribe is a comparatively small group, ranging in size
627 from 214 for the Tiklauila (the biggest) to 57 for the Mingwila (the smallest), there will seldom be more than two or three "big men" in a subtribe at the same time, and at certain periods there may be none at all since the few old men who have the age qualification may not have the other qualifications. Turimpi's death left the Tiklauila to some extent in this state. There were few other men with comparable seniority and none of them had the qualifications for informal leadership and local prestige that he had possessed. His death left a gap, and
[768] a gap that could hardly be filled by his eldest son Antonio, who at the time of his father's death was a youth of about 16 years of age. About thirty years
[114] later, in 1928 to 1930, the field work upon which the present paper is based was carried out.

ANTONIO

159 It so happened that the present writer had been with the Tiwi for nearly three months before he met Antonio, although during those three months he had been closely associated with two of his brothers, Mariano and Tipperary. These two gave Antonio a great build-up as one of the most important men around, as a "big man" in every possible Tiwi sense. But when encountered in person he proved most disappointing. The only words that fitted Antonio

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 O120 Tiwi O120

which is interesting. It means the "Moon People" and is probably the name of the tribe displaced by the Purakapale people in the past. It is Arakitamun-uwi (plural), Arakitamun-ini (masculine), Arakitamun-inga (feminine). 101

Horde Places. Living in isolated groups, these people talk of horde places. A man from the south of Bathurst Island will tell you he is of the Tikaluwila people, in the horde place of Tikalaru, the country. Thus a man is a Tikaluwinala and a woman is a Tikiluwinila of the country of Tikalaru in the tribe of Worunguwi. (Hart writes Tiklauila). 621 361

As it is with this horde so it is with all the groups, three of which are on Bathurst Island; Tikalaru on the south of the Island, Arangu on the north, and Malo on the western shore of the Island. We are not sure of the Melville Island divisions but the following are fairly reliable: Mundiimpu, Anangatera, Yaimpi, being three hordes united as one horde on the southern shore; Turupu and Maruwu, two hordes living as one horde to the north-east of the Island; and Wilarunggu and Munaipu, two hordes living as one local group on the north-west of the Island. (This does not conflict with Hart's list.)

These hordes have indefinite tribal boundaries, yet it is considered a transgression to go too far into them for hunting purposes. One law relating to food gathering is, "He who burns the grass first is considered to own all the food that is caught on that burnt patch; he is a boss as it were and remains such until after the cold weather sets in and the dews bring on a new lot of grass." 423 224

Clans. Although the people are divided into numerous hordes they have only three clans (*aramipi*), but each of these clans has a number of sub-totems, *emuya*.[2] These may be survivals of weaker clans or possibly an example of classificatory totemism. Hart calls the *aramipi*, phratries. The totems are: 614

1. Main totem	*Kudjarli*	Fire
Sub-totems	*Yarinapila*	Red ochre
	Iywati	Honey nest
	Pinkwarui	Stingray
	Ilitui	Tree with red flower
	Woriapila	Sun
2. Main totem	*Tukambani*	Martin
Sub-totems	*Tapitapini*	March fly
	Buygaluwila	Stone
	Ariyguwila	Stone.
3. Main totem	*Miatui*	Pandanus
Sub-totems	*Murukpungama*	Flying fox
	Mudumbila	Mullet
	Mandupowi	Fly
	Andolui	Spring
	Tjilati	Jabaru.

[2] The same name as the gall-bladder and the pulse.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

pected to help him. If a man has married a woman in his father's matrisib, then his father and his children will be in the same sib. Since only a dead father can so help his son, we have here an expression of the unity and mutual support of a sib and its members in the previous life and the afterlife as well as in the present life. It is important, I believe, to add here that the Tiwi do not believe in reincarnation. 614 775

It is interesting to speculate, on the basis of the above, what happens if a man marries women of different sibs. If his mother has also married men of different sibs, Ego will have "fathers" in different sibs to help him find children for his various wives. 582 614

Thus, as far as sib exchange is concerned, the Tiwi marriage system is a symmetrical one. When we consider the entire social system of the Tiwi, we see a tendency toward atomism. There are 22 matrisibs, grouped today into five exogamous phratries. Sib membership in phratries is subject to change (Pilling 1957), and the phratries themselves have segmented twice since Hart's visit in 1929. We consequently cannot consider the phratries as stable units in the social organization, and indeed the Tiwi themselves do not. If all marriages were correctly arranged as exchanges between two sibs, we would have eleven independent and symmetrical marriage systems. When this possibility is considered in relation to the data on Tiwi local organization, the potentialities for further symmetry and atomism are quite evident. [615]

Exchange Between Local Groups 621 ●

There are ten major land divisions on Melville and Bathurst Islands, called by the Tiwi *tungarima* or "countries." Rights to the land of the *tungarima* are determined, for both males and females, by the location of the grave of one's father, and there is a marked preference for patrilocal residence. The *tungarima* are, in themselves, agamous. They are, however, subdivided into smaller districts, each inhabited either by a single large patrilocal extended family or by a group of closely related smaller households. Since incest regulations dictate that extended families are exogamous, we may consider that in many cases, if not all, the local group will also be exogamous. 631 [591] [582]

Unilateral Type A marriage contracts will therefore involve a minimum of three such households or local groups. But the marriage system might still be symmetrical within the *tungarima* or country organization, and the total effect might be to localize the matrisibs in pairs. Each country could then be considered as comprising an independent marriage system. The *tungarima* do reveal marked political, economic, and ceremonial independence, but at least today the matrisibs are not localized. The mythology on the origin of the sibs (Mountford 1958), however, strongly indicates that they were at one time conceived as being localized, and this would account for the stated existence of local spirit-child centers with sib affiliations 582 614

582 and for Tiwi fathers' statements that they can only "find" children
614 in their own country.

Today, with nonlocalized sibs, both the sib and the local group are
582 considered in the exchange of woman, which is direct with reference
614 to sibs but indirect with reference to local groups. Such exchange may in some cases involve sibs and countries or *tungarima*, in others
621 sibs and districts or subcountries. I found that approximately 50 per cent of local-group exchanges were between *tungarima* and 50 per cent within the *tungarima*.

With local-group exchange and unilateral cross-cousin marriage
582 preferred and predominant, we have an indirect but circular marriage exchange system. We cannot, however, consider the entire society as being involved in a single marriage exchange system. The system is best seen from the point of view of a single male Ego, whose marriages are systematized according to rules which are society wide, but whose actual marriages are determined by past affiliations which can be and often are variable with respect to sib and local-group exchange.

That the Tiwi system is Ego-oriented is most evident when a
554 male Ego dies and his relatives foregather for his funeral ceremonies
571 (Goodale 1959). If such an Ego has lived a full life, he will be affiliated at the time of his death with a number of social groups. He is affili-
764 ated by birth with a matrilineal sib. By his father's death he is affiliated with a local group and a *tungarima*, which may or may not be the same as the group with whom he currently resides; in either case he is affiliated with the latter and will be buried among them. Through marriage, Ego is likewise affiliated with one or more additional sibs and local groups.

Only those persons who belong to the several above-mentioned
601 groups with which the deceased is actually affiliated are expected to
764 honor him by attending his funeral ceremony. When death occurs, these individuals are terminologically reclassified into four cate-
602 gories, from the members of each of which similar behavior is expected. The spouse and spouse's siblings become *ambarui*. Cross-cousins, MoFa, FaMo, BrDaCh (ws), and SiSoCh (ms) all become *yempi*. Siblings and parallel cousins, MoMo, FaFa, BrSoCh (ws), and SiDaCh (ms), regardless of their sib affiliations, are classed together as *pudawi*. All kinsmen in the first ascending and first descending generations are classed as *unandawi*. Since, however, there is a distinct role differentiation between Fa, FaSi, and SoCh (ms), on the one hand, and Mo, MoBr, and SiCh (ms), on the other, I suspect there may be a terminological distinction which escaped me, inasmuch as these "funeral terms," with the exception of *ambarui*, are no longer in use.

Conclusion

582 In this paper I have considered the form and nature of the varying types of contracts that lead to marriage among the Tiwi. I have

755 death was an early patient. The new witch-doctor applied his lips to her chest and appeared to suck out a dirty, rusty rag, a piece of wire, and a few pebbles, together with some blood (which he probably produced by biting his tongue).

The woman died; but all the people uttered loud exclamations of wonderment at the cleverness of the doctor, and a collection, [272] chiefly of sticks of tobacco, was made to mark their approval of such distinguished surgical attainments. Similarly, when some youngsters had become entangled with a school of jelly fish while bathing in the Strait, one baby at least being quite unconscious, the old fellow performed his ritual, and collected, when the patients had all revived after treatment with ammonia by the mission fathers. Such are some of the trials and problems that have to be faced in dealing with the islanders.

622 And now we encountered Mariano. "This chap calls himself king," I was informed; "but nobody recognizes his authority." Mariano was a fine, upstanding man, and he carried a bundle of many-pronged and gaily-painted spears. "Me king!" said Mariano to me as we came up. "Hullo, King!" said I, and Mariano proudly inflated his chest at this highly proper recognition of his royal status. But, if Mariano is not king, he is at 721 least a person of some importance. They had been holding a 727 war on the islands for the previous six months or so, and arrangements for the next battle were being held up pending Mariano's decision about a corroboree at which his presence was essential. At the moment he could not make up his mind to leave the mission station, so war and corroboree were both in abeyance.

WARS are of frequent occurrence on the islands. The current combat was in connexion with the possession of a very young lubra; but, since there had been only two casualties (one man had lost an eye, and another warrior had had a leg broken) in the six months, in all probability she will have died of old age before the matter is settled, unless, of course, the warriors tire of this as a pretext and come to some arrangement. Any old excuse is good enough to start a war. If nothing better offers, they get one up "Married v. Single." Father Geell approves of the wars.

As he says, they are the only form of manly recreation that the islanders have. It is seldom that anyone is hurt, and the battles are rather in the nature of a somewhat dangerous cricket-match with fast leg-theory permitted and encouraged. A cleared space in the forest is necessary for a battle, and consequently the mission aerodrome is a favourite site for the usually bloodless encounters. When battle is raging there, it is necessary to give the excited small boys of the mission school a holiday. They join in, too, and have great fun throwing stones at their elders.

726 Each engagement of a war is conducted with due regard to ceremony. The opposing factions line up with the width of the chosen battlefield between them. Messengers from each side march out and meet half-way between the two forces and, formal arrangements being made, return majestically each to his own side. Then each army makes a fire, round which the warriors race with spears upheld, getting closer and closer in their frantic circlings. They leap through the flames, burning the hair from their legs, and finally the circle becomes so close that the excited warriors, regardless of hot coals, tramp the fire out. With a yell of defiance, spears are cast in the air as high as the warriors can throw them.

[p. 16(B)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

was still a bachelor and why Banana had acted so impulsively and thereby gotten himself in the bad graces of the elders. The two men were the eldest of four brothers without any full sisters and as such they were necessarily handicapped in their career struggle. Elders seeking satellites or contemporaries seeking allies looked askance at men without sisters, for such men could have no sisters' daughters to use in the marriage-arrangements struggle. The mother of Tiberun and Banana was dead, but even were she still alive, few men would have been interested in marrying a widow whose only living children were sons. Widows without daughters and bachelors without sisters rated very low in the scale of desirable assets sought either by elders or by contemporaries. 159 554 [557] [562 581]

Tiberun was thus the only bachelor in the 30-42 age group. Of the remainder we select Teapot as an example of another man who failed to get started. Teapot was at least 35, and about seven years previously he had "stolen" a wife from an elder. This wife was no ancient and shop-worn widow like the wife Banana had "stolen," but a young girl who had been betrothed in due form to an elder by her father. How Teapot had managed to get away with her is too complicated an incident to unravel here, and in any case it hadn't done Teapot much good. After presenting Teapot with a baby boy the young woman died, and Teapot, with a now six-year-old son, was more or less an outcast among the Malauila. No elder wanted him as a satellite and none of his contemporaries wanted him as an ally. His mother was dead and his only sister was married to a Munupula elder. This sister in Munupi was his only asset and one which a different man might have used as a means to better himself. But Teapot, instead of using this small asset to get started on a career, had chosen to defy the rules and "steal" an elder's bestowed wife. "Stealing" an old widow was reprehensible conduct in the eyes of the elders; stealing a young bestowed wife was unforgivable. Hence Teapot, since his crime, had received no bestowal, had been able to marry no widow, and was wanted by no one as an ally. 159 554 626

A complete contrast to these two unsuccessful men in their thirties was provided by the case of Gitjara, who was about the same age as Tiberun. Gitjara, it is true, had sisters, and that was always a help. Using his sisters (already married and bearing children to an elder) as bait, Gitjara when he was about 28 proposed an alliance to L. F. B., a rather feeble man about five years older than himself, who was not doing very well in the influence race. The gist of the proposal was that, since both their mothers were still alive and each married to an old man who could not last much longer, Gitjara should marry the ancient mother of L. F. B. when she became a widow, and L. F. B. should marry Gitjara's mother when that old lady became a widow. Perhaps the idea originated with the two old women rather than with either of the young men. Since such arrangements were essentially plots or schemes, it is impossible to determine who conceived them in the first place—old women ambitious to aid their sons or young men ready to use their mothers as long-term gambits to ultimately provide themselves with young wives. Mother-exchange operations were probably first conceived at high-level strategy con- 159 557 562 584

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 relatives, soon caught up with them. Several cases of such elopements occurred
583 during the period of fieldwork, including the case of one young couple (Peanut and Jumbo's wife) who made repeated attempts to elope over a period of
[624] several years. But despite the relaxation of standards that white contact had brought, as long as they remained on the islands these violators of the system were soon forced back into conformity by outraged public opinion and its punitive sanctions. Unless he fled to the mainland with his girl, the young bachelor who stole an old man's young wife had to restore her sooner or later to her rightful husband. Under pre-white conditions they could not flee to the mainland; if they tried, they both probably drowned on the way or at least were never heard of again.

Thus the isolation of the Tiwi made the rule of the gerontocracy much
182 more absolute, and the enforcement of it much more effective than was possible
691 for any of the mainland tribes where violators of the rules could skip across the border. Tiwi bachelors had to be satisfied, by and large, with casual and temporary liaisons and even in these, because of the constant suspicion of the old husbands and the constant spying and scandalmongering of the old wives, they had to be prepared to be often caught and, when caught, to be punished.
[578] Thus we come to another of the main emphases in Tiwi culture—the enormous frequency of disputes, fights, duels, and war parties arising directly or indirectly out of cases of seduction. If we may call this area of life the legal area, then over 90 percent of legal affairs were matters in which women were in some way involved.

THE DUEL The Tiwi formula for handling seduction was very
627 straightforward and clear-cut in its formal outline. Since senior men had young
684 wives and young men had not, seduction was necessarily viewed as an offense by a young man against a senior man. Hence the charge was always laid by the senior and the younger man was always the defendant.[1] At night in camp the accuser hurled his charges at the offender. We described earlier the alternatives available at this stage to both parties. Two of those alternatives were for the old man to press the matter to a public "trial," either the next day, if the camp was already a large one, or else on the next occasion when both men were present in a big gathering.

The basic shape of all Tiwi trials was standardized in the form that we have been calling the duel. Everybody present—men, women, children, and dogs—formed a rough circle in an open space, sitting or standing according to their degree of excitement at the moment. At one end stood the accuser,
[302 the old man, covered from head to foot in white paint, with his ceremonial
411] spears in one hand and a bundle of the more useful hunting spears in the

[1] Under pre-white conditions this had to be so. After the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, some young men through Mission manipulation got a young wife at an age that would have been impossible earlier. This resulted in an occasional case around the Mission where a *young* husband charged a man older than himself with seducing his wife. The resulting duel, with an older man as defendant, was regarded by the Tiwi as both embarrassing and ludicrous, perhaps analogous to the average American's attitude toward female professional wrestlers. (See Hart 1954 for a case of this sort, the duel of Bob v. Louis.)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

other. At the opposite end stood the defendant, with little or no paint on him, perhaps holding a hunting spear or two in his hand (a sign of insolence), perhaps holding only throwing sticks (less defiant, since the stick was an inferior weapon more appropriate to young men), or perhaps entirely weaponless (a sign of proper humility and the deference to his seniors that all bachelors ought to show in such situations). The accuser, with many gestures, particularly with much stamping of the feet and chewing of the beard, told the young man in detail precisely what he and all right-minded members of the community thought of him. This angry, loud harangue went into minute detail, not only about the actual offense, but the whole life career of the defendant, and paid particular attention to occasions in the past when the old man even remotely, or some of his relatives, even more remotely, had performed kindnesses toward either the young man or some of his relatives. It is difficult to summarize briefly one of these harangues, but the general formula, subject to much variation by each individual accuser, appeared to be the building up of as much contrast as possible between the criminal or antisocial character of the young man's actions and the fact that he was a member of a network of interpersonal relationships in which mutual aid and reciprocal obligations were essential. The Tiwi orators, of course, did not put the matter in such abstract terms. They listed the long catalogue of people who had done things for the young man since his birth, and for his ancestors and relatives, until the catalogue took in practically the whole tribe—past, present, and future. And what had he done to repay his obligations to all these people? "Why, the miserable, ungrateful wretch spends his time hanging around my camp, etc., etc. And not only my camp, but last year it was widely believed that he was indulging in similar actions around the camp of my esteemed fellow-elder, So and So." We do not think that we are overintellectualizing the content of these harangues if we say that they involved the old man's reminding the young man of his debt to society, and his attempting to convey the idea that social life needed mutual aid and trust between all its members.

After twenty minutes or so of this sociological abuse and blame pinning, the old man threw aside his ceremonial spears and began to throw his hunting spears at the defendant. This active phase of the duel conformed to a stereotyped pattern which in some respects resembled baseball. The old man stood about ten feet farther away from the young man than the pitcher stands from the plate. The young man had to avoid being hit by the spears. To do this he was permitted to jump from side to side or into the air, or to duck, but he was expected always to land on approximately the same spot as he had been standing on when the first spear was thrown. Thus there was no marked strike zone, but an implied one. If the accused jumped well away from the strike zone, he was jeered by the crowd. If the old man was wild, he was jeered too, but more respectfully. Under such rules a modern baseball hitter, having no bat in his hand to worry about, would almost never be hit by a pitched ball, and the Tiwi young men were similarly never likely to be hit by an old man's spears. The main danger was the spear that pitched in the dirt. Although clearly outside the strike zone and hence an indication that the old man was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

really wild, such a spear was apt to carom off the ground at an unexpected angle and inflict a severe wound before the spectators (as collective umpires) had time to call it—in which case the duel was over and the accused was punished.[2]

Apart from those that unpredictably deflected off the ground, or even off a neighboring tree, the young man could dodge the old man's spears indefinitely if he wanted to. He was much younger and hence almost invariably in much better shape than the older man. But if he did this, the old man soon began to look a little ridiculous, and Tiwi society thoroughly disapproved of young men who made old men look ridiculous in public. Continued dodging and jumping and weaving of the body, no matter how gracefully they were done, were not prolonged by any young man who hoped in time to become a respected elder himself. The elders in the last analysis controlled bestowals, and holding one of them up to public ridicule was sure to antagonize all of them. So the young man, having for five or ten minutes demonstrated his physical ability to avoid being hit, then showed a proper moral attitude by allowing himself to be hit. This took even greater skill in bodily movement. Trying to lose a fight without making it too obvious to the crowd and without getting hurt too much oneself is a problem that confronts some professional athletes in our own culture, and few of them do it with as much skill as the younger Tiwi in the same situation. A fairly deep cut on the arm or thigh that bled a lot but healed quickly was the most desirable wound to help the old man inflict, and when the blood gushed from such a wound the crowd yelled approval and the duel was over. The young man had behaved admirably, the old man had vindicated his honor, the sanctity of marriage and the Tiwi constitution had been upheld, and everybody went home satisfied and full of moral rectitude. Seduction did not pay.

This was the Tiwi duel as it ideally should be conducted, and in perhaps as many as two-thirds of all such disputes it was so conducted. Divergences from this form clearly arose from the unpredictability of human beings and their fondness for trying to exercise choice instead of following a set pattern. Though the dice were heavily loaded against them, some Tiwi young men chose defiance instead of repentance. There were various avenues of defiance open to them. The mildest was to refuse to allow the old man's spears to hit the target. Slightly more brazen were the young men who turned up at the beginning of the duel with throwing sticks or hunting spears in their hands, even though they used these not to throw but to knock aside contemptuously the spears of the old man. More brazen still was the young man, rare but not unknown, who went so far as to throw missiles back at the older accuser. All such attempts to defy the traditional pattern of the duel met with the same response, and that very quickly. The duel began as usual with the two antagonists facing one another inside the circle of spectators. As soon as it became apparent that the young man was not conforming to the normal pattern of meekness and nonretaliation, there would be immediate activity on the

[2] Two cases of broken legs below the knee within six weeks of each other in 1928 give some indication of the force with which such badly aimed spears would bounce off the ground.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

571 he had arrived there as a member of a large war party. This situation stemmed
602 from the coexistence, on the one hand, of the intricate web of kinship that
628 united everybody present and made the problem of who would support whom unpredictable enough, and, on the other, the intricate network of deals and promises and personal alliances and obligations that every senior Tiwi man had woven inside the kinship system. A Tiwi elder did not, for example, have one category of relatives called his mother's brothers; he had at least three different categories of mother's brothers. There were those mother's brothers who had given him nothing, those who had given him wives, and those who had promised him a wife but were dragging their feet on delivery, or even trying to renege on their promise. In pressing a case against one of this third category, an elder might quite conceivably alienate some of his mother's brothers of the second category. Nor could he be sure of the support of even his own brothers, since they were certainly cultivating, and possibly undercutting him with, the same donors of daughters as he was involved with. Perhaps the nondelivery, which was the whole basis of his case against the mother's brother, had been instigated by his own brother trying to engineer a rebestowal of the girl to him. Because of the two networks, that of formal kinship obligations and that of marriage deals, two Tiwi seniors engaged in a dispute had no impartial body to whom they could submit their arguments about breach of contract. Disputes between a young man and an elder could
[674] be submitted to the publicly witnessed duel, since these were not breaches of contract but cases of trespass by the young men, and as such were crimes.
[626] Impartial public opinion upheld the old men and punished the young men every time. The old men's arguments with each other, however, could not be
[686] so adjusted, since they involved marriage deals (as distinct from seduction) and in marriage deals everybody was involved and nobody was impartial. Where any senior stood on any marriage deal in dispute depended on how that
[557] deal fitted into his own conniving. In that area of life, every adult man had his own axes to grind and a disinterested group of umpires was impossible to find.

628 Thus Tiwi battles had to be the confused, disorderly, inconclusive
578 things they always were. They usually lasted all day, during which about two-thirds of the elapsed time was consumed in violent talk and mutual abuse between constantly changing central characters and satellites. The remaining third of the time was divided between duels involving a pair of men who threw spears at each other until one was wounded, and brief flurries of more general weapon throwing involving perhaps a dozen men at a time, which ended whenever somebody, even a spectator, was hit. As a result of this full day of violence, perhaps a few of the cases would be settled that night—by a father handing over his delayed daughter, or a man with a disputed wife relinquishing her to her rightful husband—but when the war party left next day to return home, the number of cases settled was likely to be less than the number of new feuds, grievances, and injuries that had originated during the day of battle. For not only did the participants carry away from the battlefield a vivid memory of all the physical wounds, intended or accidental, inflicted by whom

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

once erected on the grave; the names of dead people immediately became *pukimani* on their deaths and could not be used, and the same was true of all the names bestowed by a dead man on the children of his household and all the other words in the language that sounded similar to the name of the dead man.[6] All ceremonials and rituals were *pukimani* as were the main performers and the armlets, neck ornaments, and other ceremonial objects. People in a *pukimani* state had to observe all sorts of avoidances of and abstentions from everyday actions, particularly with regard to food and sex. Close relatives of dead people could not touch food but had to be fed by nonmourners. That pillar of rigid orthodoxy, Tu'untalumi, was virtually never able to feed himself but was in a *pukimani* state almost the whole year round and needed one of his wives to feed him. (Another advantage of a large household.) Certain spots in the bush or on the banks of streams were *pukimani* places; the dimly seen outline of the Australian coast was *pukimani* as was the ocean near Cape Keith where the Tiwi ancestors had first created the Tiwi world; and finally, the violation of a *pukimani* restriction rendered the violator *pukimani*.

Pukimani as thus applied to people, places, things, names, words, restrictions, and avoidances, meant both sacred and taboo, and was clearly one of that widespread class of words and concepts that is almost standard among the simpler societies. The only noteworthy thing about its Tiwi form is that *pukimani* was a state which people did not actively seek to enter but which happened to people regardless of their wishes. Furthermore, when a man found himself in a state of *pukimani*, his behavior was automatically prescribed for him and for the duration of his *pukimani* condition he observed his avoidances and his abstentions just as automatically as he dropped them when his *pukimani* period expired. When he became *pukimani*, he punctiliously fulfilled the requirements because if he did not, he was likely to be unsuccessful in his enterprises. Big men simply did not dare to be casual about the requirements lest their reputations suffer and they lose face and influence. Less successful men were occasionally explained as probably being secret violators. "His wives and daughters all seem to die young; he must have broken some *pukimani* restrictions sometime" was a reason often given for somebody's failure to be as successful as he might have been. It was noticeable in such explanations of nonsuccess that the failure, or in our terms the bad luck, was attributed to the violation of the taboos, never to the active displeasure of the spirits. The spirits simply did not figure in the picture.

Apart from the big ceremonial occasions, a Tiwi did not have much concern with religion in his everyday life except through some aspect of the *pukimani* system. It was only through *pukimani* that the sacred world impinged upon him at all for most of the year. Since *pukimani* was a condition that could not be actively sought but "just happened" to a person every so often by such common events as the death of a relative, his wife giving birth, or his

[6] When a man named Tibuki died in 1928, a crisis occurred at the Mission where the natives were supposed to make their requests in pidgin English. How could they now ask for tobacco, since that word was now *pukimani*?

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

sister's son being initiated, the attitude of a Tiwi toward the whole *pukimani* state was essentially a passive attitude. *Pukimani* behavior was something one accepted and conformed to when required; it was in no way an active attempt to change nature, people, food, gods, spirits, or anything else in the universe. It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that since their *pukimani* system offered them no handle by which to seek actively to alter the universe in which they lived, the Tiwi found that universe to their liking as it was. Unlike the tribes of central Australia who lavished a lot of thought upon magical methods of improving the food supply or the rainfall, the Tiwi believed and acted on the belief that as long as they observed their *pukimani* taboos, the food would continue to be as abundant and the rains as regular as they had always been. The central Australians, by seeking to coerce nature through magic, suggest that they found nature unsatisfactory; the Tiwi, by relying upon passive taboo-observance alone, suggest rather that their relationship to nature was an acceptable equilibrium that they wanted to preserve, not change. And if everybody observed his *pukimani* taboos when required, that equilibrium would remain undisturbed. Hence the antisocial man in Tiwi was not the maker of individual magic (he was unknown, anyway) but the nonobserver of taboo. By his nonobservance he threatened to upset the normally satisfactory equilibrium between man and nature. For a senior Tiwi male to be charged publicly with breaking *pukimani* rules was a disgrace and a blow to his prestige and his position in public opinion. His behavior was possibly a sin against the spirits but it was certainly a shame in the eyes of his fellows. *Pukimani* observance was thus a matter of respectability to a much greater degree than it was a matter of pleasing the spirits.

DEATH As was mentioned above, death is the natural phenomenon around which the Tiwi had woven their most elaborate web of ritual. The most frequent and most important Tiwi ceremonies were the mourning ceremonies, and they came in three sizes—small, medium, and large—depending on the age, sex, and importance of the dead person. The mourning ceremonies which drew the crowds were not held until some time after the death and burial. All bodies of dead persons were buried within twenty-four hours of their death by digging a hole near the camp where the death had occurred and placing the body, wrapped in bark, in it. Near most well-used camping spots there was already a graveyard marked by old graveposts, and the latest corpse was buried there or near there. Seldom was the body carried any distance for burial. If a person died even less than a mile from an old burial ground, there was little inclination to carry the body that far. He would be buried, instead, within perhaps a hundred yards of where he died. This had certain awkward repercussions for social organization, since occasionally a person died while away from his home district and, being buried where he died, his ceremonies were held and his posts erected in a district in which his immediate family did not live. Young men often used this to validate a change of residence, giving as their reason for living in a band territory in which they had not grown up, the location there of their father's graveposts.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 of *Pulaninkuwi's* wife, *Nulatini*, which I saw, the general pattern was similar. I shall, however, describe both burials, that of *Nulatini* being the more detailed.

(1) *The Burial of Waniamperi*

On the day that *Waniamperi* died, *Marawani*, one of his near relatives, who wanted the dead man buried near his mother, paid a young "worker"[88] a sum of money and two loin cloths to dig the grave.

When the corpse was brought to the burial ground, a number of relatives had a last look at the dead man before he was laid on a series of logs, placed transversely across the bottom of the grave.

This act was a signal for concerted mourning, the women beating themselves with sticks and the men cutting their heads. For personal safety it is [753] imperative that each man and woman show excessive grief, real or feigned, [626] otherwise the *mopaditi*, annoyed at the lack of grief, will make the offending person ill.

After the mourning died down, the "workers" placed boughs on the body and filled in the grave, leaving a small mound on top (Pl. 24c).

[533] While this work was being carried out, the relatives stood on one side of the grave, either singing the *amburu*, the mourning song, or the rain song of Wailu, the totem of *Tiparawilimiri*, *Waniamperi's* father. To the chanting [535] of this song, the men acted the rain dance (Pl. 30a). The aborigines did not stage the totemic dances or chant the songs belonging to the fire totem of Wuriupi (*Waniamperi's* own totem), because, to have done so, would have especially attracted the attention of his *mopaditi*.

The "workers" laid *Waniamperi's* personal belongings at the base of a tree (Pl. 24d), tied his loin cloth and tobacco to the top of a thin sapling which had been driven into the ground at the head of the grave, made a large fire, and left a container of water.

The aborigines believe that the *mopaditi*, seeing his belongings near at [775] hand, water to drink and fire to warm himself and cook the food he gathers in the surrounding forest, will stay near the grave until the time comes for him to leave the locality.

While the "workers" were engaged on those tasks, the rest of the burial party quietly left, not looking behind, lest the *mopaditi* follow them to their camp.

[88] These "workers" or *wanaras*, being distant relatives of the dead, are in little danger [767] from the *mopaditis*. Therefore, it is safe for them to clean the site, dig the grave, handle the body, and carry out other tasks associated with burial. They are paid for their work by the chief mourners at the final *pukamani* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

During this performance an old man, *Nalauri*, *Waniamperi's* brother, reprimanded, in the native tongue, a group of young aborigines for not taking a more active part in the *pukamuni* rituals. 765 626

"Don't hang around there like a mob of whites," he said. "If you're standing while there's a dance, beat your buttocks, or if you're sitting, either clap your hands or beat the ground with a stick."

At the conclusion of the Melville Island performance, the Bathurst Islanders continued the songs and dances in their own *milimika* (Fig. 4a), about *Purutjikini* and the first *kulama*. 533 539 765

The leader, *Jibunglialumi*, chanted how, at the first *kulama*, *Purutjikini* said to his companions, "I'll give you the songs, then you'll dance about the things around you." As he did so, *Nangrinini* performed the dance of the turtle. "Then as the next song was being chanted," *Purutjikini* said, "you will cook the *kulama*." Another man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, and, calling "*brr*, *brr*, *brr*" (as they do in the *kulama* ceremonies), emptied the supposed contents on the ground in imitation of pouring out the *kulama* yams preparatory to putting them in the earth oven (p. 137). *Jibunglialumi* then followed with the dance of the owl man, *Purutjikini*, with his hands held around his eyes (Pl. 29a), ending his dance with "*Ah*, *oo*, *ah*, *oo*", the call of the present-day boobook owl.

The Melville and Bathurst Island groups then moved from the distant to the grave side of their burial poles (Fig. 4) and performed the *pumuti* rituals. On this occasion, however, only husbands and wives beat each other.

The *pumuti* was followed by *Urumatjina* from Melville Island, chanting a song he had composed for the occasion which described how the dead man, *Waniamperi* had become involved in a fight at a *pukamuni* ceremony.[88]

Some men, listening intently to *Urumatjina*, joined in as soon as they had learned the song, while others performed the dance miming the action of men fighting.

Another part of the same song told how a woman, *Purpurangmio* (since dead) loudly abused the men because so many of them attacked her husband at one time. To add reality to the performance, *Urumatjina* pounded the side of a *pukamuni* basket with a stick to indicate the noise made by the angry woman (Pl. 26b).

The theme of the songs then returned to the *kulama* ceremony. As some men chanted, others laid sheets of paper-bark on the ground, and to the *kulama* thunder-call they imitated the actions of rubbing the *kulama* yam on 765

[88] This is the same fight as the one enacted in the Bathurst Island *ilania* on the previous day (p. 83).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, 881
dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp, and prepared them for cooking.

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42E).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place 302
where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42E), 881
and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh", threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[25] It is [821]
believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunderstorms and so prolonging the wet season.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikingulas*, the *Mikiatarimas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts, 881
went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* [386]
sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a [824]
line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[26]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the [775]
portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always [824]
present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the *kulama* people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates then sat down to a meal of the edible yams.

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a *pukamuni* man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any [753]
part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them [626]
ill.

[25] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[26] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 463, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated men.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

how a slow canoe journey had made him late for a recent *pukamani* ceremony. 177

(*b*) "I was sick in the Darwin hospital. Sister Philips said it was because I had had too much grog." 533 539 881

(*c*) "There was a man at Cockle Point (opposite the Bathurst Island Mission), who wanted to kill me with a spear. So I changed myself into a mullet and he didn't see me."

Another singer chanted,

(*a*) "I am a goose and a man cast his throwing stick and hit me." 533

(*b*) "I want that girl from Bathurst Island to wash her with fresh water to make it square for giving away my sister."[86] 539 881

Another *Mikingula*, *Pulitara*, aired his differences with a woman, *Batali*, in the following song.

(*a*) "I fed *Batali*, but she did not give her daughter to me as a wife."[87]

(3) *Collecting the Kulama Yam*

Early on the following morning, the *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinsaras*, the *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, went to the ceremonial ground of the previous evening. They first dipped their hands in a bark container filled with water, throwing some over their bodies; then, taking a mouthful, they squirted water into the air in imitation of rain, afterwards calling out "Oom-oom", to symbolize thunderstorms. Taking two small sticks, one in each hand, the men used them to clean the wax from their ears, afterwards standing the sticks upright in the ground.[88] 881 [515]

Placing their palms on a sheet of bark covered with white paint, the men patted their hair, chest, wrists and pubes (Pl. 44c), turning toward the north as they again called out "Oom-oom", in imitation of thunder.

Following this ritual, each *kulama* man painted another with a design in white (Pl. 42a). The leader then picked up the bark basket, held it on his arm, and facing north, south, east and west, again called "Oom-oom", while he made a drum-like sound, symbolical of thunder, by hitting the basket with his hand. After this the men set out to collect the *kulama* yams. They were

[86] I did not find out the significance of this ritual.

[87] When a woman promises her daughter to a man, it is the duty of the future son-in-law to give her continuous presents of food. On this occasion, the woman had accepted *Pulitara's* gifts, but when her daughter was old enough, she gave the girl to another man. [584]

Quarrelling at a *kulama* ceremony is forbidden, otherwise *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, will destroy all the participants. This prohibition allows an aboriginal, such as *Pulitara*, to air his grievances without causing a quarrel, even though, as on this occasion, the defaulting person was present. [626] [753]

[88] The meaning of this ritual is obscure. According to the aborigines it prevents trouble and quarrelling during the *kulama* rituals.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

527 mainland, it will be remembered, are with preference postponed until after night-
535 fall. The women were not permitted to take part in the proceedings, but were,
[562] indeed, kept at some considerable distance off. Youths and male children were allowed to join in the ceremonies without apparent restriction. When we met with men, hunting in the bush, and they had been convinced of our *bona fide* intentions, they would approach us in groups of from two to four, and deliver up their long
[200] spears to us. Several of the young men would, in the meantime, run into the woods as messengers to summon others who were as yet unaware of the presence of the strangers in their haunts.

203 A corrobboree[1] having been decided upon, the signal or invitation to take part
527 in the event is sounded by two or three of the older men, who have previously arranged it among themselves. This initial note is a long-drawn, continuous yell resembling the German diphthong ö! Other members immediately fall in with the same note and are joined, at intervals, by others excitedly rushing up to take their stand alongside of those who started the call. The monosyllabic "ö" is kept continuous by the combined efforts of many voices, each of which individually expires for a moment, after the lungs' capacity for air has been completely exhausted. The note is, however, taken up again immediately after a fresh supply of air has been inhaled. The weirdness of the monotone is suddenly broken by the powerful voice of the "master" of the ceremonies, who brings forth a penetrating, but abrupt, order resembling "wahoi." This is instantly and collectively repeated by all others present. A momentary silence follows and allows the sombre trunks of the surrounding forest to reiterate the final word in ringing echoes.

The leader once more gives the note; this time in a slightly modified form resembling a long-continued "ye," that merges imperceptibly into a "yi." A sudden shrill "wahoi-hoi" brings that note also to a stop. A deadly silence prevails.

527 The primary appellation now being over, the performers congregate themselves into a compact group. In the meanwhile much excited vociferation ensues from every mouth, young as well as old. At this stage their eyes make a survey of any
[628] neighbouring encampment and if, by chance, a likely performer is noticed who has not heeded the appeal and is shirking his duty by non-attendance, he is furiously implored, at times abusively, to join the assemblage of performers. The leader now emerges from the group at a walking pace and is followed, in single file, by all participants, each in his turn falling into regular order as though his place had previously been allotted to him. The course taken by the leader is a winding one; walking, at first, some distance away from the point of starting but returning
527 eventually thereto. The musical accompaniment is started afresh, and though not
533 exactly melodious to the European ear, it is certainly a remarkably clever and original production on the part of the aboriginal. The nearest way we might describe it in words is that it is in the form of a trill, produced by a rapidly repeated

[1] Compare also H. Klaatsch, *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, pp. 589 and 590.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

548 by the Japanese issue, since it tempted the conservative with several wives to
598 violate all the old tribal sanctions by renting out his wives, and it provided
648 the Mission adherent radicals with a grand opportunity to pose as the real de-
668 fenders of the old culture and to charge the old polygamists with being the real
797 renegades from the ancient ways.

It can be easily guessed how high feelings ran on these issues and how hotly
159 they were debated when a number of Tiwi gathered together. But on neither
177 of these issues or on any aspect of them did Antonio show any signs of leader-
797 ship. He accumulated wives but always apologized in a rather deprecating and apple-polishing way when he met the missionaries, and spent part of his time hanging around the Mission despite the contemptuous attitude which the missionaries adopted toward him. He thus contrasted very unfavorably with some of his contemporaries, notably one Dooley who, having been for years a one-wife man and a Mission favorite, inherited a second wife at around the age of forty. Dooley's decision was clear-cut and highly spectacular. He accepted the second wife, shook the dust of the Mission station from his feet and never set foot near it again, taking up again the traditional life of a Tiwi elder, deep in the bush, with his two wives and later additions, ignoring all white innovations, even tobacco.[4] Dooley's uncompromising behavior was greatly admired by the tribe but few had the strength of character to emulate him, certainly not Antonio.

159 On the Japanese issue Antonio was just as vacillating. Prodded by others to make a statement he would in ringing tones denounce as disgraceful and scandalous the behavior of the Yeimpi wife-renters, but on his visits to the Yeimpi country ostensibly "to see for himself what was going on" he shared eagerly in the proceeds of vice which his friends there offered him and was even heard on a few occasions to wonder aloud why the Japanese always went to the Yeimpi country when there were plenty of secluded beaches in Tikauila country. Instantly challenged, "Would you want the Japanese to come here?" "Would you rent your wives to them if they did?" poor Antonio quickly turned it into a feeble joke, saying deprecatingly, "Oh no, no, no. I just wondered why they always go to those ugly Yeimpi women?"

In summary we might say that Antonio's personal behavior appeared to be that of a man pushed into a position rather too big for him to fill. He was
[55 4] not by nature particularly aggressive or domineering, but as the eldest son of
[62 6] Turimpi he was constantly being pushed by public opinion onto the center of the stage, whereas he would have been much happier if public opinion had left him alone to be an ordinary, average member of the crowd. The role he was called on by his status position to play seemed to give him little or no pleasure, little or no personal satisfaction. Such a view of his "personality" is supported by the fact that when alone in the bush with his own family and away from the society of his peers Antonio was relaxed and at ease. As Durk-
159 heim pointed out, the basic factor in Australian social psychology is that men
571 spend a great part of their lives hunting and collecting in the bush, completely out of physical contact with all people except members of their own households,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 of the oldest and most respected seniors, particularly of Tu'untalumi and those
322 swayed by his opinion. It follows from this that Tip though given to jokes and
372 pranks cannot be written off as merely a privileged buffoon. On the contrary his wit and gaiety earned him friends and his friends gave him influence out of proportion to his youth. Some insight into this is supplied by the shadow of the ubiquitous Louis. Tipperary, through the missionaries' efforts on behalf
[177] of monogamy, had obtained a wife at a much earlier age than would have been
[582] possible under pre-white conditions, and according to the women, who have their own sources of information about such things, Louis was strongly attracted by Tipperary's wife. Since Louis was not noted for restraint or self-discipline in these matters the obvious question was why he did not press his attention on her as he had done on numerous other women, including the wife
[626] of Tip's younger brother Bob. "Oh no, he doesn't dare chase after Tipperary's wife. The old men would be very angry if he did anything to her," was the reply of the old hags who were the local gossip columnists. This belief that the "old men" would undoubtedly protect Tip's wife while they had noticeably failed to protect Bob's wife from a similar threat (see below) is a pretty clear indication that the two young men had very different places in tribal estimation—a fact that in turn can be correlated with no status differential between them and leaves only the "personality" difference between the two men to account for it. Tip was popular with the control groups, Bob was not, therefore the control groups would support Tip because they liked him. They were indifferent toward Bob.[10]

159 To summarize Tipperary is relatively easy. He was a cheery, relaxed, fun-loving young man who enjoyed his own humor but enjoyed it all the more if it were shared by an appreciative audience. He was therefore gregarious, friendly, outgoing and extroverted. He would have been a good Rotarian or a better disk-jockey. Because of these traits he was noticed a great deal more by his elders than his age justified and the notice he received was usually favorable. He was popular in a way none of his brothers were, and because of this popularity was able to express opinions and exert influence to an extent unusual for one of his years. In a society where men under 30 are expected to be seen and not heard, Tip was constantly being heard. This was only possible because his natural gaiety and warmth prejudiced almost everybody in his favor. He was the sort of man about whom it is often said in our culture "he always makes a party go," or, "he is the sort of person who just naturally makes friends."

BOB

The youngest brother, Bob, needs only two words to describe him—complete nonentity. About 27 or 28 when I knew him and, because of the Mission's efforts, married a good deal younger than he would have been under pre-white conditions, Bob, whatever the occasion or circumstances, was always part of the background. Like many of the younger Tiwi he was inclined to spend part
[464] of each year in Darwin working for the white men, and by them he was regarded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

leads to the situation—quite foreign to our way of thought and also apparently to that of Polynesian cultures—whereby a young bachelor can prowl around the bush all night without arousing the slightest interest but his daytime wanderings, ostensibly in search of game, are watched by his married seniors with the deepest suspicion. 837

[8] The buffalo, which are confined to Melville Island, are the wild descendants of domestic East Asian water buffalo which were imported during an early attempt at settlement. 136

[9] It is perhaps not without interest that one of Tip's jokes is imperishably preserved in the files of the Peabody Museum at Harvard. Tip was in Darwin in 1927 when W. Lloyd Warner was collecting at the Native Compound the anthropometric measurements which were afterwards analyzed by W. W. Howells (1937), and like all other natives in town from many tribes he and a number of Tiwi were measured by Warner. On the card for each subject Warner wished to record the personal name of the native. Led by Tip, all the Tiwi measured bestowed upon themselves the most obscene "native name" they could think of, and years later Tip would shout with laughter when telling how Warner faithfully recorded these obscenities, often repeating them several times to make sure of the correct pronunciation. 159 522 114

[10] This set of sentiments surrounding Tip's wife also gives a little more insight into the sex activities of Louis. His reluctance to move in on her, because of the way "the old men would feel," while showing no such reluctance to move in on Mrs. Bob, supports the view implied above that Louis, while sex dominated, was no fool in his amours. He had an intelligent and realistic appreciation of just how much he could get away with. 159 626

[11] I use this slang term deliberately, since it expresses somewhat the Tiwi attitude toward those young bachelors who go about seducing the wives of their elders and betters.

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 2. Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend, Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

578 quietly slipped away to some other camp and was not seen the following
684 morning. The matter might then die, depending largely on whether the old husband wanted to carry it further or was content to drop it. If the young
[627] man was still in camp the following day, the old man might insist on a duel then and there, but it would take place only if the camp were large, since Tiwi duels were essentially legal actions and as such needed a sizable audience for their correct staging. Disputes between men, of which old men accusing young men of seduction were by far the most common type, usually remained at the verbal level until a large body of spectators was available. Since such large
[527] concentrations of many households were necessary for the performance of the
627] main collective ceremonials, it was at the time of these ceremonials that most verbal arguments were pushed by the aggrieved party to the action level.

554 During the dry season (April to November) when travel was easy, the
764 only collective ceremonials sufficiently important to draw together a large number of households were those held for the funerals of big men. In the wet season (November to March) when the grass and bush were high and travel was difficult, the main collective phases of the male initiation ceremonies were
[881] held (see Chapter 4), and these brought together for a few weeks at a time large numbers of households. The funeral ceremonies for adults were always held some considerable time after the death and burial of the deceased. How long a period elapsed between the death and the funeral ceremonies depended on the expected size of the gathering, and this figure correlated; at least roughly, with the importance of the deceased. Here again the overriding considera-
574 tion was food supply, since the chief mourners (that is, the deceased's closer
764 relatives) had to feed everybody who came to the funeral while the ceremonies
433 lasted, which might be almost a week. The more important the dead person the bigger the crowd at his funeral, and hence the greater the amount of time
182 needed by the mourners to arrange the catering. As much as a year might elapse between the death and the time when the mourners felt that the funeral arrangements—especially the food supply, but also the ceremonial preparation —were sufficiently well in hand to permit them to set a date and send out invitations for the funeral ceremonies. Funerals, therefore, were not held at regular times but were individually scheduled at times fixed by the chief mourners. They were always held in the dry season, however (except those of
[627] young children, to which nobody came in any case), and therefore an old man who had a dispute to settle or a case to try publicly could always depend on a few big funerals being held in the not very distant future which would provide the large audience necessary to make the settlement of the dispute legal. During the wet season the *kolema* phases of the initiation ceremonial
[881] always drew a large attendance; the annual time of these was pretty definitely fixed by the ripening of the *kolema* yams.

578 Hence the verbal wrangles in the small scattered encampments at night,
684 about seduction during the day, could have any one of three outcomes, depending largely upon the determination of the old man-accuser and the demeanor
627 of the young man-accused. If by the following morning the young man had disappeared and showed no further interest in the old man's menage, the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

matter might end there. Or the old man might let matters rest until the time of the next big gathering of people at a funeral or at the *kolema* rituals, and then revive the issue under such public circumstances that the accused young man could not slip away unpunished. If he followed this second course, the old man went to the gathering covered from head to foot in white paint, the Tiwi uniform for anybody who came in anger and intended to pick a fight with somebody. The decision between these two lines of action lay, of course, with the old man, and while that decision was to some extent determined by how vindictive and revengeful he felt, nonetheless it was also influenced by how this dispute was related to all the other feuds, disputes, deals, marriage exchanges, and so forth, in which both parties were already involved. Like a good lawyer in our own culture, the old man had to consider, before he took the matter to court, who the young man was and who his friends and relatives were, and had to ask himself whether in seeking vengeance for the blow to his pride he might not be doing himself more political harm than the injury was worth.

In arriving at his decision, the old man was influenced to some extent also by another variable, the attitude of the young man. If the alleged offense occurred only once and the young man denied it and thereafter kept his distance, the accuser would probably let the matter drop. Offenders were very rarely caught *in flagrante*, and the evidence of seduction was almost always circumstantial or hearsay. In every case there was some element of doubt as to whether the right young male was being accused or whether the whole story had not been invented by some of the old wives out of sheer spite toward a young wife. The old man had to take such factors into consideration, not out of any abstract sense of justice, but because, naturally, he didn't like to be made a fool of, either by young men or his own spiteful old wives. But he was most suspicious and unbelieving of his own flighty young wives, and sometimes the accused young man was defiant and persistent in his attentions to the same young wife, or wives. In effect, such a young man was daring the old husband to do his worst. Such continued defiance of the seniority system could not be permitted; it became a case not of simple seduction but of subversive activity, since it was a threat to the whole social structure of the tribe, centered as that was around the marriage of old men to young women. When confronted by such action, a Tiwi elder said (as people of other cultures might), "What would happen if everybody did that? We'd have complete anarchy and free love." Hence an old husband, so defied, was almost duty bound not just to seek satisfaction for the private injury done to himself, but to defend the public weal by hauling the offender before the bar of public opinion and denouncing him before as large a crowd as possible, as a public enemy. If the situation became so flagrant that he could not wait until the next big funeral or the next *kolema* gathering, he began calling in surrounding camps or going himself, dressed in white paint, to summon them to assist him in meting out public justice to the violator of the system. When a sufficient number of upholders of the right (that is, senior heads of households) had been collected together, the usual one-sided duel (see below, Chapter 4) was

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

627 684 stiged and this was usually sufficient to incapacitate the offender and make him decide to move—at least for a while—into some other district. The group thus hastily convened to mete out public justice seldom numbered more than sixty or seventy people (seven or eight households) and having been convened *ad hoc* would remain camped together only for the forty-eight hours or less needed to deal with the emergency.

Joint Activities

This discussion of the alternative lines of action open to an outraged 796 household head enables us to specify the relatively rare occasions during the 619 year when the dull, quiet, day-by-day, food-gathering routines of the dispersed 527 household camps were interrupted by events that required many households to 764 gather together in one place and indulge in joint action. Foremost among these 221 occasions were big funerals and the *kolema* ceremonial, both of which were mentioned above. These were the main religious events of the year, full of dancing, singing, wailing, and excitement. The excitement was the psychological result of so many people being together at the same time, a rare experience in the life of any Tiwi. Since the *kolema* ceremonial was an annual event and even the most enthusiastic funeral goer did not attend more than three or [887] four really big funerals in the course of a year, we may reckon that even an old and important man, much concerned with ritual observances, would probably find himself a participant in such crowd activities on not more than some six occasions per year. For less important men and for women and children the number of such occasions was less than six. The *kolema* ceremonial lasted two weeks or more, big funerals, even when they became the occasion for carrying on other public business, did not last more than four or five days each. Hence we may reckon an average of about a week each for the half-dozen times a really big man spent in the company of a sizable crowd of fellow tribesmen, giving a total annual average of about six or seven weeks at most out of every fifty-two—or a little less than 10 percent of the year spent by an old important man in large ceremonial activities or what Durkheim calls the collective life of the tribe.

In addition there were the smaller gatherings, such as the funerals of 527 younger men and most women, and the calling together of a number of house- 619 holds to settle a dispute in the manner we have described above. These were 764 collective occasions also but they brought together a considerably smaller 571 crowd. A really big man's funeral was likely to draw over three hundred people or even as much as one-third of the whole tribe.[4] Not only did many

[4] Tamboo's funeral in May, 1929 (he died in the previous August) drew practically the full band membership (men, women, and children) of the four Bathurst Island bands; almost all the Munupula; many Mandiimbula; and large delegations from the remaining three bands. With such a crowd, an actual head count was difficult, especially of the children, but there must have been over four hundred people present. Needless to say, excitement was intense; more fights occurred, more insults were exchanged, more ancient feuds revived and new ones started, and more food consumed than at any funeral in living memory. At least that was the opinion of Tamboo's chief mourners, but since it was they who threw the party and had to pay for it, they may have been biased.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Not only did many

people come to such a funeral to express their kinship with, and pay their respects to, the deceased, but as mentioned above, many men with disputes to settle or fights to pick let such matters ride until the next big funeral was called and then took advantage of the large crowd to provide the necessary witnesses for the transaction of the outstanding legal business. Gatherings of many households for purely legal affairs, without funerals or *kolema* ceremonial as the main *raison d'etre* for the gathering, were comparatively rare and when they did occur they were usually called by one man, to settle one case only, and hence did not promote the attendance of very many households. Similarly, the funerals of most women and of younger and therefore less important men drew together at most ten or twelve households and a few other individuals, so that the crowd was usually not above one hundred people at the most. A single *ad hoc* legal duel, even when an episode in a long-drawn out and notorious dispute, seldom drew more than this number. Duels always attracted some spectators who came for the excitement, even though not personally involved, provided of course they were camped somewhere in the vicinity.

527 571 619 764 627

This second type of collective gathering, of which the smaller funerals and the single duels were the main occasions, might then require the attendance of a household head, accompanied by some or all of his household members, perhaps five or six times a year. These gatherings would each last less than forty-eight hours, and since the people the household head met at them would mostly be people of his own band or of closely adjoining bands, the excitement of seeing unfamiliar faces—people not seen for over a year perhaps—would be absent. We may reckon that attendance at these smaller, more localized gatherings, and the participation in group activity which they entailed, took up two more weeks, all told, out of the yearly round. When these two weeks are added to the six or seven already estimated for the time spent by a busy public man at the large gatherings, we find that even the busiest and most gregarious senior elders spent less than ten weeks out of the fifty-two in collective activity outside their immediate households.

To complete the list of occasions which called for joint activity by the members of several households, we must include the joint kangaroo hunt. This activity was very localized and very spasmodic, occurring only when and where conditions were right and somebody felt sufficiently energetic to organize it. Much of the Tiwi country is a mixture of dense scrub and relatively open savannah; kangaroo are relatively easy to hunt in the latter but very hard to get near in the denser types of vegetation. The native method of hunting was based on getting as close as possible to the animal before it saw or heard the hunter. If it detected the hunter, it fled, and no Tiwi in his senses ever threw a spear or a throwing stick at a moving kangaroo.[8] Only when the animal was standing still and the hunter was close enough to aim carefully at a vital part was the spear thrown. At certain seasons of the year, particularly after the end of the wet and early in the dry season, many sections of good kangaroo country gave very poor hunting returns because the grass had become

224 [137] 221 224

[8] The up-and-down movement of a hopping kangaroo in flight makes it an extraordinarily difficult target even for skilled white hunters armed with shotguns or rifles.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 583 relatives, soon caught up with them. Several cases of such elopements occurred during the period of fieldwork, including the case of one young couple (Peanut and Jumbo's wife) who made repeated attempts to elope over a period of several years. But despite the relaxation of standards that white contact had [624] brought, as long as they remained on the islands these violators of the system were soon forced back into conformity by outraged public opinion and its punitive sanctions. Unless he fled to the mainland with his girl, the young bachelor who stole an old man's young wife had to restore her sooner or later to her rightful husband. Under pre-white conditions they could not flee to the mainland; if they tried, they both probably drowned on the way or at least were never heard of again.

182 691 Thus the isolation of the Tiwi made the rule of the gerontocracy much more absolute, and the enforcement of it much more effective than was possible for any of the mainland tribes where violators of the rules could skip across the border. Tiwi bachelors had to be satisfied, by and large, with casual and temporary liaisons and even in these, because of the constant suspicion of the old husbands and the constant spying and scandalmongering of the old wives, they had to be prepared to be often caught and, when caught, to be punished. [578] Thus we come to another of the main emphases in Tiwi culture—the enormous frequency of disputes, fights, duels, and war parties arising directly or indirectly out of cases of seduction. If we may call this area of life the legal area, then over 90 percent of legal affairs were matters in which women were in some way involved.

627 684 THE DUEL The Tiwi formula for handling seduction was very straightforward and clear-cut in its formal outline. Since senior men had young wives and young men had not, seduction was necessarily viewed as an offense by a young man against a senior man. Hence the charge was always laid by the senior and the younger man was always the defendant.[1] At night in camp the accuser hurled his charges at the offender. We described earlier the alternatives available at this stage to both parties. Two of those alternatives were for the old man to press the matter to a public "trial," either the next day, if the camp was already a large one, or else on the next occasion when both men were present in a big gathering.

The basic shape of all Tiwi trials was standardized in the form that we have been calling the duel. Everybody present—men, women, children, and dogs—formed a rough circle in an open space, sitting or standing according to their degree of excitement at the moment. At one end stood the accuser, [302 411] the old man, covered from head to foot in white paint, with his ceremonial spears in one hand and a bundle of the more useful hunting spears in the

[1] Under pre-white conditions this had to be so. After the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, some young men through Mission manipulation got a young wife at an age that would have been impossible earlier. This resulted in an occasional case around the Mission where a *young* husband charged a man older than himself with seducing his wife. The resulting duel, with an older man as defendant, was regarded by the Tiwi as both embarrassing and ludicrous, perhaps analogous to the average American's attitude toward female professional wrestlers. (See Hart 1954 for a case of this sort, the duel of Bob v. Louis.)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

other. At the opposite end stood the defendant, with little or no paint on him, perhaps holding a hunting spear or two in his hand (a sign of insolence), perhaps holding only throwing sticks (less defiant, since the stick was an inferior weapon more appropriate to young men), or perhaps entirely weaponless (a sign of proper humility and the deference to his seniors that all bachelors ought to show in such situations). The accuser, with many gestures, particularly with much stamping of the feet and chewing of the beard, told the young man in detail precisely what he and all right-minded members of the community thought of him. This angry, loud harangue went into minute detail, not only about the actual offense, but the whole life career of the defendant, and paid particular attention to occasions in the past when the old man even remotely, or some of his relatives, even more remotely, had performed kindnesses toward either the young man or some of his relatives. It is difficult to summarize briefly one of these harangues, but the general formula, subject to much variation by each individual accuser, appeared to be the building up of as much contrast as possible between the criminal or antisocial character of the young man's actions and the fact that he was a member of a network of interpersonal relationships in which mutual aid and reciprocal obligations were essential. The Tiwi orators, of course, did not put the matter in such abstract terms. They listed the long catalogue of people who had done things for the young man since his birth, and for his ancestors and relatives, until the catalogue took in practically the whole tribe—past, present, and future. And what had he done to repay his obligations to all these people? "Why, the miserable, ungrateful wretch spends his time hanging around my camp, etc., etc. And not only my camp, but last year it was widely believed that he was indulging in similar actions around the camp of my esteemed fellow-elder, So and So." We do not think that we are overintellectualizing the content of these harangues if we say that they involved the old man's reminding the young man of his debt to society, and his attempting to convey the idea that social life needed mutual aid and trust between all its members.

After twenty minutes or so of this sociological abuse and blame pinning, the old man threw aside his ceremonial spears and began to throw his hunting spears at the defendant. This active phase of the duel conformed to a stereotyped pattern which in some respects resembled baseball. The old man stood about ten feet farther away from the young man than the pitcher stands from the plate. The young man had to avoid being hit by the spears. To do this he was permitted to jump from side to side or into the air, or to duck, but he was expected always to land on approximately the same spot as he had been standing on when the first spear was thrown. Thus there was no marked strike zone, but an implied one. If the accused jumped well away from the strike zone, he was jeered by the crowd. If the old man was wild, he was jeered too, but more respectfully. Under such rules a modern baseball hitter, having no bat in his hand to worry about, would almost never be hit by a pitched ball, and the Tiwi young men were similarly never likely to be hit by an old man's spears. The main danger was the spear that pitched in the dirt. Although clearly outside the strike zone and hence an indication that the old man was

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

627 684 really wild, such a spear was apt to carom off the ground at an unexpected angle and inflict a severe wound before the spectators (as collective umpires) had time to call it—in which case the duel was over and the accused was punished.[8]

Apart from those that unpredictably deflected off the ground, or even off a neighboring tree, the young man could dodge the old man's spears indefinitely if he wanted to. He was much younger and hence almost invariably in much better shape than the older man. But if he did this, the old man soon [626] began to look a little ridiculous, and Tiwi society thoroughly disapproved of [888] young men who made old men look ridiculous in public. Continued dodging and jumping and weaving of the body, no matter how gracefully they were done, were not prolonged by any young man who hoped in time to become a respected elder himself. The elders in the last analysis controlled bestowals, and holding one of them up to public ridicule was sure to antagonize all of them. So the young man, having for five or ten minutes demonstrated his physical ability to avoid being hit, then showed a proper moral attitude by allowing himself to be hit. This took even greater skill in bodily movement. Trying to lose a fight without making it too obvious to the crowd and without getting hurt too much oneself is a problem that confronts some professional athletes in our own culture, and few of them do it with as much skill as the younger Tiwi in the same situation. A fairly deep cut on the arm or thigh that bled a lot but healed quickly was the most desirable wound to help the old man inflict, and when the blood gushed from such a wound the crowd yelled approval and the duel was over. The young man had behaved admirably, the old man had vindicated his honor, the sanctity of marriage and the Tiwi constitution had been upheld, and everybody went home satisfied and full of moral rectitude. Seduction did not pay.

This was the Tiwi duel as it ideally should be conducted, and in per- 183 haps as many as two-thirds of all such disputes it was so conducted. Divergences 627 from this form clearly arose from the unpredictability of human beings and 684 their fondness for trying to exercise choice instead of following a set pattern. Though the dice were heavily loaded against them, some Tiwi young men chose defiance instead of repentance. There were various avenues of defiance open to them. The mildest was to refuse to allow the old man's spears to hit 627 the target. Slightly more brazen were the young men who turned up at the 684 beginning of the duel with throwing sticks or hunting spears in their hands, even though they used these not to throw but to knock aside contemptuously the spears of the old man. More brazen still was the young man, rare but not unknown, who went so far as to throw missiles back at the older accuser. All such attempts to defy the traditional pattern of the duel met with the same response, and that very quickly. The duel began as usual with the two antagonists facing one another inside the circle of spectators. As soon as it became apparent that the young man was not conforming to the normal pattern of meekness and nonretaliation, there would be immediate activity on the

[8] Two cases of broken legs below the knee within six weeks of each other in 1928 give some indication of the force with which such badly aimed spears would bounce off the ground.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

sidelines. Two or three or four senior men would leave the spectators and range themselves alongside the accuser, spears in hand. Other senior men would quietly leave their seats and sit down in the audience alongside close relatives of the young defendant, particularly his full brothers or his father, if they were present, and gently lay restraining hands upon them. Within a few minutes there was no longer an old man facing a young man but as many as four or five old men facing one young man, and no sign of support for him. His close male relatives would keep their seats or (more often) allow themselves to be led away as if they did not want to witness what was coming next. Never, in any of these cases, did any supporter of the young man step into the ring and line up with him. He remained an isolate, faced by several older men, and of course he had no chance. It was easy to dodge the spears of one opponent, since they had to be thrown one at a time; it was impossible to dodge the spears of more than one, since they could be thrown more or less simultaneously. 627 684

Usually this baring of its teeth by society-at-large was enough. The group of elders did not need to throw many spears simultaneously. The accused capitulated by throwing aside his spears or throwing sticks, or if the defiance had been only of the mildest form—namely, an undue prolongation of the dodging—he allowed his accuser to score a direct hit and the duel ended in the normal way. In the rare cases of the accused refusing to give up, even when confronted by a menacing line of several elders, a concerted volley or two from them quickly knocked him out, and in pre-white days, usually killed him.[8] Crime thus paid even less for the accused who chose defiance than it did for the accused who allowed himself to be wounded in a duel by a doddering ancient three times his age. The greater the amount of defiance, the more clear it became that the doddering ancient, acting ostensibly as an outraged husband, was the responsible agent of society dispensing public justice. If he needed help, all responsible elders went to his aid, and the kinsmen of the accused stood aside and let justice take its course.

Warfare Apart from the occasional castaways and the very occasional other visitors such as "Malays," the Tiwi in pre-white times had nobody to fight with except each other. Duels of the type we have just described were their only formula for settling disputes, and these occasionally became sufficiently broadened to warrant being called warfare. The expedition of Tiklauila and Rangwila to the country of the Mandiimbula which was listed in Chapter 2 among the travels of Tu'untalumi in 1928 was an example of this sort of activity. At least half a dozen senior members of the two first-named bands had disputes with various individuals among the Mandiimbula. Some of these were seduction cases but some of them involved charges by elder against elder, 628

[8] Since the coming of white administration, the Tiwi have found that when a man is killed in a native duel, there is a strong likelihood that white policemen will appear and will drag some of them off to Darwin where incomprehensible proceedings called murder trials then take place. To avoid such nonsense, since about 1925 they have tended to use throwing sticks rather than spears in their fighting. Throwing sticks, while dangerous, seldom kill people outright and as long as nobody is killed, the police in Darwin show no interest in native fights on the islands. 177 648

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

628 of nondelivery of bestowed daughters, or other types of broken promises. Some of these cases had been going on for years, and settlement of them at the level of the individual duel had failed. The aggrieved individuals in the two Bathurst Island bands therefore pooled their grievances, persuaded many of their relatives and friends who were not aggrieved to join them, and a large party of men of all ages set off for the Mandiimbula territory.

This party, comprising about thirty fighting men all heavily armed and [302] all wearing the white paint indicative of anger and hostile intent, was a "war" party, and its coming to their territory was recognized as such by the Mandiimbula. On arrival at the place where the latter, duly warned of its approach, had gathered, the war party announced its presence. Both sides then exchanged a few insults and agreed to meet formally the next day in an open space where there was plenty of room. After a night mostly spent by both sides in individual visiting and renewing old acquaintances, the two armies met next morning in battle array, with the thirty Tiklauila-Rangwila warriors drawn up at one end of the clearing, and about sixty local warriors at the other end. Immediately the familiar patterns of the duel imposed themselves. 537 A senior individual on one side began a harangue directed at an individual 628 on the other. When he ran out of breath, another individual began his complaint. Since each accused Mandiimbula replied individually to the charges made against him, the whole proceeding remained at the level of mutual charges and replies between pairs of individuals. Angry old men on both sides often seemed to be trying to find a basis that would justify or provoke a general attack by one group upon the other, but always failed to find it because of the particularity of the charges. The rules of Tiwi procedure compelled the accuser to specify the sources of his charges and his anger, and these always [619] turned out to be directed not at the Mandiimbula band, but at one, or at most two or three, individual members of that band. And when another old man took the center of attention, his anger would be directed at quite different 628 individuals. Hence when spears began to be thrown, they were thrown by individuals at individuals for reasons based on individual disputes. Unlike the seduction duels, however, these duels occurred mostly between two senior men, and the danger of a direct hit was much reduced because of the poor marksmanship of both parties. On the other hand, the danger of somebody getting hurt was increased because a fight between two old men was likely to spread as other old men were drawn into it to support one or the other side—in which case, a wild melee occurred with badly thrown spears flying in all directions. This was probably a good thing, because soon somebody was bound to be hit, thus ending the fight. Not infrequently the person hit was some innocent noncombatant or one of the screaming old women who weaved through the [147] fighting men, yelling obscenities at everybody, and whose reflexes for dodging spears were not as fast as those of the men.

As soon as somebody was wounded, even a seemingly irrelevant crone, fighting stopped immediately until the implications of this new incident could be assessed by both sides. For the crone was never really irrelevant; she was somebody's mother and somebody else's wife and somebody else's sister and

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

therefore the question of who threw the spear that wounded her gave rise to 628
a new series of wrangles which had to be integrated into all the old ones. A man who had been quietly sitting, minding his own business and having no quarrels with anybody, would suddenly leap into the center of the stage and announce that the damaged old lady was his mother and therefore he wanted the hide of the rat that had damaged her, and a whole new argument was in progress.

If the person wounded in the first flurry of spear throwing was a senior 578
male, that similarly led the arguments off in some new direction since his 628
kinsmen in *both* war parties felt compelled to support him or revenge his wound or inflict a wound on his wounder. Frequently it appeared that the original matters of dispute, which had brought the two war parties together in the first place, were forgotten and lost in the new disputes and fights that originated on the field of battle. Such a view was supported by the frequency with which one found at the end of the day that the main casualties and the main headline performers had been people who had gone to the field of battle in the morning with no quarrel with anybody, and not even wearing white paint. Even the most peaceful spectator in the most remote corner of the gallery was likely to find himself in the center of the ring before the day was over at a Tiwi "battle."

Despite this apparent confusion and near anarchy of procedure, how- 621
ever, the main outlines were quite clear. The bands were not firm political en- 628
tities and therefore could not do battle, as bands, with each other. Everybody, 602
on both sides, was interrelated in the same kinship system. An angry old 619
Tiklauila, abusing and throwing spears at an angry old Mandiimbula, might have as the basis of his complaint the fact that the Mandiimbula father had promised but not delivered one of his daughters. Since Tiwi bestowals were from mother's brother to sister's son, the spear throwing was patently a case of a sister's son abusing his mother's brother, and the fact that the two men belonged to different bands was not germane to their dispute. The angry Tiklauila elder could not demand support from other Tiklauila *as Tiklauila* in the case at issue for it involved a dispute between kinsmen whose band affiliations were irrelevant to the subject matter. Mainly for this reason the so-called war party of one band against another band turned out to be only a loose collection of individuals, each with his own case to argue, who found it convenient, and safer, to travel together into the territory of another band and argue all their individual cases on the same day at the same place. Tiwi interpersonal relations were primarily kin relations between members of all bands; territorial loyalties were shifting ones, temporary and necessarily quite subordinate to kin loyalties. Hence warfare, in the sense of pitched battles between groups aligned through territorial loyalties, did not occur and could not occur among the Tiwi.

The confusion of the so-called battle itself was also due to the primacy 602
of kinship and friendship ties. When a man with a grievance started his 628
harangue on a battlefield, he was never quite sure of what support he would 571
get or where it would come from. He was pretty much on his own, even though

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

571 he had arrived there as a member of a large war party. This situation stemmed
602 from the coexistence, on the one hand, of the intricate web of kinship that
628 united everybody present and made the problem of who would support whom unpredictable enough, and, on the other, the intricate network of deals and promises and personal alliances and obligations that every senior Tiwi man had woven inside the kinship system. A Tiwi elder did not, for example, have one category of relatives called his mother's brothers; he had at least three different categories of mother's brothers. There were those mother's brothers who had given him nothing, those who had given him wives, and those who had promised him a wife but were dragging their feet on delivery, or even trying to renege on their promise. In pressing a case against one of this third category, an elder might quite conceivably alienate some of his mother's brothers of the second category. Nor could he be sure of the support of even his own brothers, since they were certainly cultivating, and possibly undercutting him with, the same donors of daughters as he was involved with. Perhaps the nondelivery, which was the whole basis of his case against the mother's brother, had been instigated by his own brother trying to engineer a rebestowal of the girl to him. Because of the two networks, that of formal kinship obligations and that of marriage deals, two Tiwi seniors engaged in a dispute had no impartial body to whom they could submit their arguments about breach of contract. Disputes between a young man and an elder could
[674] be submitted to the publicly witnessed duel, since these were not breaches of contract but cases of trespass by the young men, and as such were crimes.
[626] Impartial public opinion upheld the old men and punished the young men every time. The old men's arguments with each other, however, could not be
[686] so adjusted, since they involved marriage deals (as distinct from seduction) and in marriage deals everybody was involved and nobody was impartial. Where any senior stood on any marriage deal in dispute depended on how that
[557] deal fitted into his own conniving. In that area of life, every adult man had his own axes to grind and a disinterested group of umpires was impossible to find.

628 Thus Tiwi battles had to be the confused, disorderly, inconclusive
578 things they always were. They usually lasted all day, during which about two-thirds of the elapsed time was consumed in violent talk and mutual abuse between constantly changing central characters and satellites. The remaining third of the time was divided between duels involving a pair of men who threw spears at each other until one was wounded, and brief flurries of more general weapon throwing involving perhaps a dozen men at a time, which ended whenever somebody, even a spectator, was hit. As a result of this full day of violence, perhaps a few of the cases would be settled that night—by a father handing over his delayed daughter, or a man with a disputed wife relinquishing her to her rightful husband—but when the war party left next day to return home, the number of cases settled was likely to be less than the number of new feuds, grievances, and injuries that had originated during the day of battle. For not only did the participants carry away from the battlefield a vivid memory of all the physical wounds, intended or accidental, inflicted by whom

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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on whom, but they also brooded long and suspiciously upon who had supported whom and why, either verbally or with spear in hand. In addition, all the incidents of the battle, in minute detail, were relayed to the rest of the tribe who had not been present, and many of these absentees would discover, among the proceedings, things they did not like or suspicious-looking actions on the part of some of their competitors or putative friends. These they would weave into their own strategies and store up for future use. An elder frequently found some basis for a new grievance against somebody in the events of a battle at which he had not even been present. 628 578

Finally, through all these disputes and hostile actions between senior men ran their united suspicion of bachelors. The only "battle" in two years between large groups drawn from distinct bands that had a clear-cut and definite final act was one fought in Rangu in late 1928. On that occasion, after disputing and fighting among themselves from early morning until mid-afternoon, all the old men present from both war parties gradually channeled all their anger toward one unfortunate young Mandiimbula bachelor whom they finally accused of going around from band to band creating misunderstandings between various elders. Several elders on both sides testified publicly that their mistrust of each other had started shortly after the bachelor in question had begun hanging around their households; whereupon the senior warriors of the two opposing armies had no difficulty in deciding that most of their suspicions of each other "were all his fault," and with great unanimity ganged up on the bachelor and quickly clubbed him into unconsciousness for being a troublemaker and a suspicion spreader. In the midst of battle the gerontocracy had reasserted its solidarity by finding a bachelor scapegoat upon whom to unload all their mutual suspicions and aggressions. 54 578 628

Religious Activities

If by religious activities we mean those beliefs and practices which pertain to unseen or supernatural forces, including rituals whose performance somehow affects those forces, then Tiwi religion readily crystallized around three focal points. These were: 1) their elaborate system of day-to-day taboos; 2) the elaborate set of beliefs and rituals pertaining to death; and 3) their complicated initiation ceremonies for young men. Add to these their myths and folklore about creation and their tribal past, and the whole of Tiwi religion has been covered. Space permits only brief mention of these three focal points. 771

TABOO In earlier chapters we have pointed out several aspects of life in which Tiwi culture diverged sharply from what anthropologists have come to regard as Australian mainland norms and we have suggested that these differences from the mainland are most reasonably to be attributed to either Tiwi isolation or favorable food supply, or some combination of both factors. In their religious life this same line of explanation continues to have validity. To those familiar with the cultures of Australian tribes, perhaps 171 789

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

423 refer to one another as *gia yirt'amini* (my "one grandfather") in preference
613 to *gi'iwuni* (my brother), or *gia kalipini* (my half-brother), which is the
601 normal term of address.

423 A member of another horde found trespassing upon the territory
685 of the *Tiklauila* would be killed immediately unless he had been invited for
609 a corroboree or some such festival. A member of the same horde who,
621 not belonging to the *yirt'amini* group, trespasses in *Tanio* would not be put to death, but he and his relatives would become embroiled in a serious quarrel with the group.

423 *Tanio* is the best example of this peculiar institution because being
613 in an out-of-the-way peninsula no one needs to go there except people
621 who have a right there. Consequently the *Taniauwila* can exercise a much stricter supervision and hence as a matter of fact guard their rights more jealously than the people with such rights over districts that lie upon the main roads of the two islands. Nevertheless the whole of *Tiklaru* is divided into such districts and the whole of the *Tiklauila* into such *yirt' amini* groups.

Thus bordering on the *Taniauwila* to the east, we find the *Arupula* who have similar hunting and food-collecting rights over *Arupi*, the coastal district in the middle of the south coast of Bathurst Island. The origin of their title is lost in obscurity inasmuch as nobody to-day knows who the ancestor was or exactly where is the grave that gave them such a right. Nor is the *Arupula* title respected as much as is the *Taniauwila* partly because *Arupi* is crossed by several "high-roads"—notably the only road to *Tanio* from the east, and the *Wrangwila* road to the Mission Station —but even more because the present representatives of the *Arupula* are either uninitiated youths or peaceful old men.

423 This introduces what is perhaps the main factor in the perpetuation
628 of this institution—the power of the *yirt'amini* groups to enforce their
613 rights. The ownership of a particular territory by a horde and the
685 punishment of trespass upon it can always be enforced because there is always a certain number of fighting men in the horde. Hence horde-ownership is respected. In the *yirt' amini* group, however, periods frequently occur when the group is not strong enough to enforce its claims, and unless the claims are constantly brought under the notice of the rest of the horde they are ignored. The result is that unless the family gets a new lease of life by boys growing up into formidable warriors, such a

period is the prelude to the complete lapsing of the title to the district. 423
The prominent part played in this institution by the father's father and the 628
fact that most of the present districts held on such a title are held from the 613
father's father whereas comparatively few are held through an ancestor 685
(necessarily more remote) who has been forgotten, seems to indicate that *yirt' amini* holdings do not last more than three generations before they lapse for want of sufficient able-bodied men to enforce them.

It must not be imagined that the whole of Melville and Bathurst 423
Islands are divided into such holdings nor indeed that everyone in the tribe 613
belongs to such a group. The main obstacle to this lies in the self- 621
evident fact that if one's father's father dies in the territory of another horde, as must have quite frequently have happened in the days of marauding expeditions between hordes, there can be no such thing as a *yirt' amini* holding of the district wherein he died. Moreover there are numbers of the Tiwi whose fathers and grandfathers died young, and the essence of the system is that the grandfather should have been old enough to have sufficient male children and grandchildren to enforce the claim.

It can easily be seen from the above how it comes about that each horde has a number of names, since each one of the *yirt' amini* group-names 621
is liable to be applied to the whole horde merely by adding *-ila* or *-ula* to 101
the name of the district they control.

Spencer's list of horde names is at variance with mine, because he 101
did not realize this. Out of six men of the *Tiklauwila*, one might easily 114
get six different answers to his question as to their "country," each 103
giving the name of his *yirt' amini* group. It is quite possible that the 621
horde names that are used here—*Tiklauwila*, *Mumupula*, etc.—are really *yirt' amini* names that have become extended to include a whole horde either by the identification of a very powerful *yirt' amini* group with a horde in the eyes of the rest of the tribe or by the former horde name becoming tabu and a *yirt' amini* name being substituted. This view is strengthened by the fact that in one or two of the hordes, the horde name is still in use as the name of a district. Thus whereas the whole of the territory of the *Wilraŋgwila* on the north of Melville is technically *Wilraŋgu*, the native name for Karslake Island, a small portion of that territory, is *Wilraŋgu*. Similarly *Malau* is a creek in the territory of the *Malauila* horde.

A man is born into the horde of his father. Should his father die and 591
his mother be taken by a member of another horde he goes with her, and [611]
WHILE THE WOMAN WILL ALWAYS BE LOOKED UPON 621
AS BELONGING TO HER FORMER HORDE, THE CHILD [768]
CHANGES HIS, TAKING THAT OF HIS STEPFATHER.

pected to help him. If a man has married a woman in his father's 614
matrisib, then his father and his children will be in the same sib. 775
Since only a dead father can so help his son, we have here an expression of the unity and mutual support of a sib and its members in the previous life and the afterlife as well as in the present life. It is important, I believe, to add here that the Tiwi do not believe in reincarnation.

It is interesting to speculate, on the basis of the above, what 582
happens if a man marries women of different sibs. If his mother has 614
also married men of different sibs, Ego will have "fathers" in different sibs to help him find children for his various wives.

Thus, as far as sib exchange is concerned, the Tiwi marriage system is a symmetrical one. When we consider the entire social system of the Tiwi, we see a tendency toward atomism. There are 22 matrisibs, grouped today into five exogamous phratries. Sib [615] membership in phratries is subject to change (Pilling 1957), and the phratries themselves have segmented twice since Hart's visit in 1929. We consequently cannot consider the phratries as stable units in the social organization, and indeed the Tiwi themselves do not. If all marriages were correctly arranged as exchanges between two sibs, we would have eleven independent and symmetrical marriage systems. When this possibility is considered in relation to the data on Tiwi local organization, the potentialities for further symmetry and atomism are quite evident.

Exchange Between Local Groups 621

There are ten major land divisions on Melville and Bathurst 631
Islands, called by the Tiwi *tungarima* or "countries." Rights to the land of the *tungarima* are determined, for both males and females, [591] by the location of the grave of one's father, and there is a marked preference for patrilocal residence. The *tungarima* are, in themselves, agamous. They are, however, subdivided into smaller districts, each inhabited either by a single large patrilocal extended family or by a group of closely related smaller households. Since incest regulations [582] dictate that extended families are exogamous, we may consider that in many cases, if not all, the local group will also be exogamous.

Unilateral Type A marriage contracts will therefore involve a 582
minimum of three such households or local groups. But the marriage 614
system might still be symmetrical within the *tungarima* or country organization, and the total effect might be to localize the matrisibs in pairs. Each country could then be considered as comprising an independent marriage system. The *tungarima* do reveal marked political, economic, and ceremonial independence, but at least today the matrisibs are not localized. The mythology on the origin of the sibs (Mountford 1958), however, strongly indicates that they were at one time conceived as being localized, and this would account for the stated existence of local spirit-child centers with sib affiliations

Tjipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families. 161 361 648

It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace. 361 177 [631] [224] [464]

By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives, 123 [132] [825]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

sidelines. Two or three or four senior men would leave the spectators and range themselves alongside the accuser, spears in hand. Other senior men would quietly leave their seats and sit down in the audience alongside close relatives of the young defendant, particularly his full brothers or his father, if they were present, and gently lay restraining hands upon them. Within a few minutes there was no longer an old man facing a young man but as many as four or five old men facing one young man, and no sign of support for him. His close male relatives would keep their seats or (more often) allow themselves to be led away as if they did not want to witness what was coming next. Never, in any of these cases, did any supporter of the young man step into the ring and line up with him. He remained an isolate, faced by several older men, and of course he had no chance. It was easy to dodge the spears of one opponent, since they had to be thrown one at a time; it was impossible to dodge the spears of more than one, since they could be thrown more or less simultaneously. 627 684

Usually this baring of its teeth by society-at-large was enough. The group of elders did not need to throw many spears simultaneously. The accused capitulated by throwing aside his spears or throwing sticks, or if the defiance had been only of the mildest form—namely, an undue prolongation of the dodging—he allowed his accuser to score a direct hit and the duel ended in the normal way. In the rare cases of the accused refusing to give up, even when confronted by a menacing line of several elders, a concerted volley or two from them quickly knocked him out, and in pre-white days, usually killed him.[8] Crime thus paid even less for the accused who chose defiance than it did for the accused who allowed himself to be wounded in a duel by a doddering ancient three times his age. The greater the amount of defiance, the more clear it became that the doddering ancient, acting ostensibly as an outraged husband, was the responsible agent of society dispensing public justice. If he needed help, all responsible elders went to his aid, and the kinsmen of the accused stood aside and let justice take its course.

Warfare Apart from the occasional castaways and the very occasional other visitors such as "Malays," the Tiwi in pre-white times had nobody to fight with except each other. Duels of the type we have just described were their only formula for settling disputes, and these occasionally became sufficiently broadened to warrant being called warfare. The expedition of Tiklauila and Rangwila to the country of the Mandiimbula which was listed in Chapter 2 among the travels of Tu'untalumi in 1928 was an example of this sort of activity. At least half a dozen senior members of the two first-named bands had disputes with various individuals among the Mandiimbula. Some of these were seduction cases but some of them involved charges by elder against elder, 628

[8] Since the coming of white administration, the Tiwi have found that when a man is killed in a native duel, there is a strong likelihood that white policemen will appear and will drag some of them off to Darwin where incomprehensible proceedings called murder trials then take place. To avoid such nonsense, since about 1925 they have tended to use throwing sticks rather than spears in their fighting. Throwing sticks, while dangerous, seldom kill people outright and as long as nobody is killed, the police in Darwin show no interest in native fights on the islands. 177 648

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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5

Friend and Foe
(1600-1928)

ON NEARLY ALL SIDES, the emptiness of a great sea surrounded the Tiwi; 131
to the south, the only path which might have led to the outside was blocked by the hostility of their nearest mainland neighbors. The Tiwi retained this isolation until the very end of the last century, even though for several centuries outsiders had been seen by them; ships passed along the coast and occasionally strangers landed or were cast ashore. Changes in the 177
life on the islands were few, however, until about 1900, when the Tiwi began their integration into the modern world.

Hostility toward Outsiders (1600-1900)

Although in June of 1636 the sailor Pieter Pieterszoon in command of 175
the ships *Cleen Amsterdam* and *Wesel* sailed along the western twenty miles of the north coast of Melville Island and named the region Van Diemensland,[1] our first real knowledge of the natives of Bathurst and Melville islands was gained by the Dutch expedition to this region in 1705 under Maarten van Delft. Men from his three ships spent about two weeks in surveying the north coast of Melville Island, the northern two-thirds of Apsley Strait between Bathurst and Melville islands, and the entire west coast of Bathurst Island.[2] They met natives several times and even allowed them aboard their ships.

Following this meeting between islanders and Europeans was a period 648
during which the natives became extremely hostile to outsiders. Tiwi distrust of 175
foreigners probably stemmed from these decades when the Portuguese on Timor were raiding Melville Island for slaves. Although very little has been

[1] Heeres 1899.
[2] *Ibid.* See also Mander Jones 1948 for some further data concerning Dutch knowledge of Melville Island.

[p. 96 blank]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

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published concerning this era, such lack of information should not be taken as a refutation of such practices; the Portuguese archives remain today the only major block of libraries concerning a European colonial power important in the East Indies which has not been examined for material relevant to the history of Australia. From what little is known we may conclude that the Portuguese stopped capturing Tiwi as slaves about 1800.[8]

Even before the Portuguese made their last raids on Melville Island, another type of stranger, the "Malays" (or as we would call them today, the Indonesians), began to have encounters with the Tiwi. It was the search for the Chinese delicacy, the trepang or sea slug, which annually caused the Malays to sail past Melville Island eastward to Arnhem Land and the Gulf of Carpentaria. Neither the free-lance trepangers nor those sailing out of Macassar in the fleet of the Radaj of Boni wanted to stop at Melville Island, and they considered their misfortune to be great if their proas happened to be wrecked on its coast. They, like other Indonesians blown in to the homeland of the Tiwi, had little chance of surviving, for the Tiwi normally speared such poorly armed intruders and asked questions later.

The nineteenth century was an era of decreasing isolation for the Tiwi; during it, the outside world was knocking hard and often on their door. In 1802, a French expedition under Baudin mapped the southwestern tip of Bathurst Island, although its members apparently did not make a landing. In 1818, a British ship under P. P. King made a detailed coastal survey of Bathurst Island and all except the southeastern coast of Melville Island. Then on September 26, 1824, the British founded Fort Dundas on northwestern Melville Island, the first European settlement in the tropical part of Australia. The British and the Tiwi did not make friends. The imaginative commander of this outpost of empire, Major John Campbell, tried to capture a Tiwi and teach him sufficient English so that he could tell his tribesmen that the British would shoot them if they did not stop spearing the Englishmen and their buffalo imported from Timor. One Tiwi was captured but escaped within a fortnight under cover of darkness; meanwhile the British mourned for their doctor and storekeeper who had gotten in the way of well-aimed Tiwi spears. No native learned English. The British, disillusioned by their perpetual battle with the Tiwi and with tropical decay, abandoned Fort Dundas on March 31, 1829. Four and a half years of exposure to the British had affected the Tiwi little.

But the Tiwi were not to remain without external intruders. Shortly before 1844 a Dutch ship was wrecked on their coast. In 1858, an English vessel was lost on Melville Island. In 1869, the city now known as Darwin was founded and ships began to pass Bathurst or Melville islands almost daily. In the 1880's two ships, the *Afghan* and *Northern*, went aground off the

[8] The following statement from George Windsor Earl's *The Native Races of the Indian Archipelago: Papuans* (London: Hippolyte Bailliere, 1853, p. 210,) is probably the most significant passage concerning the Portuguese relations with Tiwi: ". . . According to . . . the older inhabitants of Timor, Melville Island was only less a source of slavery than New Guinea, in proportion to its smaller extent of surface, at the period in which the slave-trade was encouraged or connived at by the European authorities . . . ."

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

southern coast of Bathurst Island. In 1886, the Australian government tried 175
to erect channel markers on the southern shore of Melville Island, where- 648
upon the Tiwi immediately "salvaged" both cloth and iron from them. During June and July of the same year the ship *Jane Anderson* was stranded on the shoals of first Melville and then Bathurst Island. Also in 1886, two Malay proas were wrecked on the north coast of Melville Island. That year was a great one for looting.

Occasionally visitors came ashore on the islands. The Stokes' survey party landed in the late 1830's, but saw no natives. A government party crossed Melville Island in 1887; the Tiwi speared its leader. In 1895, a government tourist party went to look over the ruins of old Fort Dundas; they kept their eyes open and no one was injured. In 1897, Joe Cooper, a buffalo shooter, tried to make a living from the Melville Island buffalo; he was speared and retreated to Darwin.

Tiwi treatment of outsiders prior to 1900 had been to rob them, spear [173]
them, kill them. This is not, however, the picture painted by modern Tiwi when talking of their past. They claim that their ancestors greeted each new group of strangers with the cry: *"Pongki! Pongki!"* (meaning, "Peace! [411]
Peace!"). But then it should be noted that before 1900 many a Tiwi peacemaker carried a spear between his toes. Yet under these circumstances the Tiwi 175
world view did alter. First there were those changes which came from an 177
attempt to understand the new objects which were suddenly thrust into the Tiwi world: the trade knives and axes given by Dutch navigators, the matchlock guns used by the Malays and probably the Portuguese, the rice given to Tiwi by the surveyors under P. P. King, the Indonesian water buffalo introduced by the British at their short-lived settlement, the coconut palms the English left behind them, the cups and plates from shipwrecks in the 1880's, and the flour tossed overboard to lighten foundering vessels. The Tiwi cherished iron knives and axes, readily recognizing their greater efficiency. The Tiwi begged for them; they stole them; and, when a spar washed ashore bound round with iron bands, the natives burned away the wood and took the iron away to grind into axes. The matchlock gun, and even the later flintlock, could be coped with; when one saw the flash, one ducked flat, just in case the weapon worked, and then rushed in to impale the stranger with a spear. Rice was useless; it looked like the larvae of the termite, which was not good for anything anyway. Buffalo were to be killed; they kept wallowing in the best waterholes. Coconut palms were a great disappointment; they were bigger than the local cabbage palm, but when cut down, did not have the same succulent interior. Plates were too much bother to carry around, but cups were worth saving for a while. Flour could be used for white paint, but it was not as good as the best white pigment near at hand.

Other modifications took place in Tiwi life before 1900 as a result of 175
action by outsiders. Probably the greatest of these alterations came as a result 648
of slave raiding, or "black birding" as it is called in the South Seas. The Tiwi [608]
always kept their young women hidden from strangers, even if they were just visitors from other bands. The old men rarely left camp. Therefore, it was the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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young males who went, or were sent, to try to satisfy their curiosity and to get iron from the Portuguese—and it was these young males who would make the best slaves in Timor. The anthropologist is left to wonder to what extent the removal of a disproportionate number of young men from a group might alter the form of the society. Is it possible that such happenings might be a factor which contributed to the dominance of the old Tiwi men and their near monopoly of wives? Could it be that the politics involved in wife trading were an indirect result of the Portuguese slave raiding? The possibility at least exists, and perhaps research in Portuguese archives will give us some clearer idea of how many young Tiwi men were carried off to Timor during this period. Present-day Tiwi, of course, remember nothing about it.

The Beginning of Friendly Contact (1900-1928)

Today the Tiwi have been incorporated into the modern world as a part of the Australian nation, yet they came to understand outsiders, including Australians, through persons with many national backgrounds. Individuals who have helped to shape Tiwi views of non-Tiwi have been Indonesians, Filipinos, mainland natives from the Cobourg Peninsula, Frenchmen, and Japanese, as well as Australians from the southern parts of Australia.

The Tiwi were first drawn out of their hostile insularity by curiosity and the desire for iron, the same factors which had attracted them toward the Portuguese a century earlier. Iron looted from shipwrecks, channel markers, and the camps of casual visitors to the islands was not sufficient; the Tiwi desired a permanent avenue by which they could obtain the metal. The oldest Tiwi in the early 1950's stated that during the 1890's the Tiwi began to feel that opportunity was passing them by as they noted ship after ship sail in and out of Darwin; the islanders therefore came to the conclusion that they wanted a permanent European settlement in their midst, like the earlier Fort Dundas, for only in this way could they be guaranteed an uninterrupted source of iron.

About 1895, events began moving toward the establishment of a long-term European center on the islands. The vanguard of the movement was not European, however. In 1885, mother-of-pearl shell of commercial value was found on the bottom of Darwin Harbor. A few years of intensive diving by "Malay," "Manila," and Japanese pearlers soon worked out the Darwin beds, making it necessary for the growing fleet of pearling luggers to go further afield. They stripped the coast north of Darwin, moved on to the south coast of Melville Island, and finally began working the great shoals at the south end of Apsley Strait. Cautiously at first, the pearlers went ashore for water and firewood. Young Tiwi men became curious and paddled out to visit the luggers hove to just off the southern beaches in the neap tides. Aboard the luggers Tiwi youth had occasional meals, smoked tobacco, and were given iron tools. The Mandiimbula of southern Melville Island in particular began to look

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

forward to the periodic visits of the luggers, for they brought a new source of iron and trinkets. 175 648

Joe Cooper, the Australian buffalo hunter who had been chased out of the islands on his first attempt in 1897, returned again a few years later having first kidnaped two Tiwi women so that his mainland native helpers of the Yuwatja (Iwaidja) tribe near Cape Don could learn the language. When they had, he returned with a strong mainland detachment and well equipped with guns and horses. By 1900, European firearms were efficient weapons and a Tiwi spearman no longer could expect to kill a man armed with a modern rifle. Cooper is said never to have gone unarmed in his fifteen or so years (from about 1900-1916) as "King of Melville Island."[4]

In retrospect it is apparent that the agent through whom the Tiwi learned of the outside world was not Cooper, the white man, but his companions the Yuwatja (Iwaidja). They were more numerous and more approachable than Cooper, and several of them even had Tiwi wives whom they had captured. Tiwi accounts of these captives are noteworthy. It was the young Tiwi men hanging around Cooper's camp who suggested to the Yuwatja that they go and capture, by force of arms, Tiwi females who had recently become widows. The young men were thus performing their customary role of agents in widow remarriage—but in this case for foreign clients.

Cooper and his Yuwatja camped at various localities on Melville Island until about 1916 when their last base, at Paru opposite the site of the Mission, was abandoned and he and his mainlanders withdrew from the islands. It was this last camp at Paru that was made headquarters by Sir Baldwin Spencer, the well-known Australian anthropologist, when he visited the Tiwi in 1912.[5] [114]

While Cooper was at Paru he was also visited by a young Alsatian priest, Father Francis Xavier Gsell, M. S. C., who was contemplating establishing a mission on adjacent Bathurst Island. Cooper tried to discourage Father Gsell by telling him that the Bathurst Islanders had guns and were dangerous; apparently Cooper did not want any missionaries around his rough-and-ready establishment. But Father Gsell did not scare easily; in June 1911 he returned and built his mission station on the southeast corner of Bathurst Island, where it still stands today. Cooper left Paru permanently about five years later. 175 797

By 1916, five years after its founding, the Mission had two French priests, several French nuns and some Filipino workmen, and a lugger which ran to and from Port Darwin once a month. It was not until the nuns came that the local Tiwi put any trust in the missionaries; they could not understand why a man who claimed to be as important as Father Gsell claimed to be did not have any wives. When the nuns arrived, the Tiwi were more ready to accept the priest as "a big man" and began to bring their women around.

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[4] Hardly a year goes by without a newspaper in Australia running a Sunday supplement article on Cooper's stay at Melville Island. Such stories often are titled "The King of Melville Island" and are normally extremely romanticized.

[5] Spencer 1914. Spencer's account of the Tiwi is remarkably inaccurate and confused. On this trip to the Northern Territory in 1912 he was without his usual collaborator, Gillen.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

When between the mid-1920's and the early 1940's the Japanese began to give trade goods to men for sexual access to their wives, Father Gsell's missionization program ran into competition. The Japanese gave the old Tiwi males a much better deal than did Father Gsell. The Japanese with their continuous payment for access to women poured into the households of these old men the same sort of goods which Gsell provided. But in the case of the Japanese, the goods were paid time and again over a matter of years and the old father or husband was kept permanently in tobacco and food. Thus, oddly indeed, the two chief outside influences which came to bear upon the traditional Tiwi system of marriage, after about 1920, were both agencies which were anxious (for entirely different reasons and ends) to "buy" young girls and pay their ancient husbands or fathers for relinquishing them; temporarily in the case of the Japanese, permanently in the case of the missionaries. The Tiwi could scarcely be expected to cease putting a high value on women, and upon control over women, under these conditions.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

6

The Tiwi Today

Changes since 1930

THERE WERE in 1929 only two year-round settlements of outsiders which were significant to the Tiwi. One was Bathurst Island Mission, by then nearly twenty years old, the only permanent white-man establishment on the islands. It acted as the main exit point for travel to Darwin, the other focus of Tiwi life. There was also the large camp of Mandiimbula and Yeimpi on the south coast of Melville Island, which owed its existence to the sexual arrangement between the Tiwi and Japanese pearlers.

In the 1930's, the centers of Tiwi activity shifted somewhat. The Australian government successfully broke up the camp located on the south coast by transporting nearly all of the Yeimpi to Darwin and by sending patrol boats out to discourage the Japanese from frequenting the area. In about 1935, the Japanese moved their base for contact with the Tiwi north to the region of Garden Point, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, just beyond the ruins of old Fort Dundas. Around the great fresh-water pool on the beach at that locality there developed a Tiwi camp like that which formerly had existed on the south coast; however, the native bands involved were no longer the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula but the Malauila, Munupula, Wilrangwila, and Turupula of northern Bathurst and Melville islands. The government again attempted to control sexual activities between Tiwi and Japanese, but to get to this spot a patrol boat from Darwin had to travel along forty miles of indented coastline which amplified and seemed to project every throb of an engine toward the ears of the Japanese miles away. The patrol boats found that they could not sneak up on the pearlers unannounced and, therefore, could not catch them in the act of cohabiting with native women.

By the late 1930's, pressure from missionary and other humanitarian circles in the southern part of Australia forced the government to attempt to terminate, or at least to control, the trade pattern which had become estab-

[p. 104 is blank]

648 lished between the northern Tiwi and the Japanese. A government ration depot was founded at Garden Point about 1939 and many of the local Tiwi females were taken by the government to Darwin in order to stop their use by Japanese pearlers. However, by that time many Japanese half-castes had been born to the women.

797 In 1940, a new Catholic mission was established at Garden Point to care for these half-castes. This Melville Island Mission brought together not only the island part-aborigines, but also other Catholic half-castes from all over the Northern Territory. By late 1940, it became clear that the existence 648 of a government depot for aborigines at Garden Point was incompatible with a policy aimed toward educating the adjacent half-caste children for life [164] as members of the white Australian community. The government ration center was removed to Snake Bay. Also, by 1940, the government had begun to remove lepers from both Bathurst and Melville islands to a leprosarium on Channel Island in Darwin harbor. Here, over the following years, developed a community of Tiwi which often numbered as many as forty persons. At Channel Island they found themselves forcefully confined amongst natives [177] from many mainland tribes. Tiwi who returned from Channel Island after years of residence there were more sophisticated in European ways than their fellow-tribesmen and found themselves agents of white Australian culture.

The winter (our summer) of 1941 was the last in which the Japanese came to Garden Point. The Catholic brothers who were there at the time viewed at least one extraordinary event in those months before Pearl Harbor. On this occasion, a man in the uniform of a Japanese naval officer was seen aboard the mother ship of the Japanese pearling fleet which called in at Garden Point; under Australian law neither ship nor officer were allowed within the three-mile limit. Pearl Harbor occurred a few months later.

The year 1942 brought modern warfare to the Tiwi. An American plane running out of the Philippines lacked enough fuel to get to Darwin; it landed on the small airstrip at Bathurst Island Mission. Then on February 19, 1942, Darwin was bombed. Japanese planes flew over Bathurst Island Mission on their way to commit what became "Australia's Pearl Harbor." Father McGrath, the local priest, recognized the raiders as Japanese and radioed his warning into Darwin twenty minutes before the horror commenced. The message went unheeded and the loss of life and property was great. Bathurst Island Mission was itself strafed, possibly for the attempt to warn Darwin. The bombing of Darwin left the Northern Territory in chaos. The white residents evacuated southward by any means at hand; in one case, two men drove a road grader seventy miles "down the track" before they felt safe enough to stop.

The disruption of the Tiwi community was as great as that of the white settlement at Darwin, although no Tiwi were killed in the bombing and strafing by the Japanese. The Catholic authorities realized that they could not [797] guarantee a food supply to the natives, and the Tiwi families at the Mission were sent to the bush to support themselves. Tipperary, a Tiwi who was by 1942 an old hand in Darwin, told Pilling (1954) of the privation he had [177] endured when he had taken to the bush and had not had a smoke for four months after the attack on Darwin.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

months after the attack on Darwin. Many of the older Tiwi who were in Darwin during the bombing did not survive the war; the psychological strain and lack of sufficient food was too much for them. Genealogies show that an unusual number of deaths occurred among Tiwi between 1942 and 1946.

When Western food supplies again became available, the old Tiwi bush living seems to have departed. The Tiwi suddenly realized their full dependence upon the products which only the whites could provide. As the war came to an end and one after another of the temporary military bases were abandoned, the missionaries and the Tiwi salvaged what they could, transporting large amounts of corrugated iron to Bathurst Island Mission for native huts. The Tiwi were drawn together around the Mission in larger numbers than ever before, their camps ranging in a line along the Mission beach. The majority of the Tiwi, about 600, considered Bathurst Island Mission their home, although some of the young adult males spent most of the year in Darwin. About 50 islanders lived adjacent to the half-caste Melville Island Mission at Garden Point. Another 150 were permanently located at the government settlement at Snake Bay. The remaining Tiwi, about 150, were year-round residents of Darwin; over one hundred lived at Bagot Native Compound and at an unsupervised native camp at Point Gunn directly opposite the southernmost tip of Melville Island; the rest were inmates at the leper colony. The resulting total population of about 950, in 1954, is only about a hundred less than the figure of 1062 which Hart obtained in his census of 1928-29.

Marriage Arrangements

We have discussed how, under the traditional Tiwi pattern of life, the greatest energies of mature males were expended in bargaining with each other for new wives. The old social system was one which had as normal features prenatal and early childhood engagements for females, remarriage for all widows, considerable age difference between marriage partners, and polygamy. The new Catholic system introduced by Father Gsell outlawed, or at least discouraged, polygamous marriages, nuptial unions between persons of greatly differing ages, and all prenatal or childhood betrothals. As indicated, Father Gsell initiated his new policies by purchasing young females and then allowing them to choose their own partners from among their single agemates.

It is of interest to inspect the actual circumstances surrounding one of the earliest unions which took place under Father Gsell's supervision. About 1914, Polly, an attractive young female who had already had a rather checkered career, having been stolen by a Yuwatja male from her rightful mate, was "stolen back" by another Tiwi, Timalarua of the Rangwila. Polly, however, decided that she did not want an old husband like Timalarua, so she ran away to the sisters and Father Gsell. In time, old Timalarua allowed Father Gsell to buy this wife who did not want to live with him. Shortly afterward, Father Gsell asked Polly whom she wanted to marry. Polly named Cabbagee as the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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177 feuding system departed and the Tiwi community became more centralized,
611 especially around the Bathurst Island Mission, the utility of the old band
614 organization diminished and the underlying clan organization dominated. Sud-
621 denly, fighting was no longer in terms of band membership, for the matrilineal clan had become the only social unit of significance.

Today young Tiwi often deny that they have any band membership. But it is not unknown for teen-age Tiwi males to lie awake at night counting
[578] up the members of their matrilineal clan. According to informants, in the 1940's and 50's the major fights which occurred at Bathurst Island Mission were interclan skirmishes.

177 Thus, among the Tiwi, we have an example of how a society with a patrilineal emphasis under strong influence from another society with a
611 patrilineal emphasis may, if there is an underlying matrilineal organization, become a society which is for all practical purposes solely matrilineal. The introductory student of anthropology is thereby warned that characterizations of societies as matrilineal or patrilineal are rarely adequate to form the basis for reconstructing past or predicting future forms of such societies.

Tiwi and the Australian Nation

648 Finally, let us consider those aspects of modern Tiwi life which attract national attention in Australia. What do the newspaper-reading members of the Australian public know about the Tiwi?

Probably the best known Tiwi is a male in his thirties, formerly known to other Tiwi and local residents of Darwin as Bobby Wilson. About 1953, an Australian movie producer, Charles Chauvel, went hunting for a "full-blood" aborigine who could act well enough to portray an aboriginal male in what became the Australian movie "Jedda." In Darwin, the producer found a football star from the Darwin group of Tiwi who could fill the part. Bobby Wilson soon was billed as Robert Tudawali.[3] He went "on location" at several spots in the Territory and finally traveled to Sydney for the studio shooting. The Sydney papers caught his story and spread his bearded face over the country. Bobby Wilson's photo from the local newspaper was hung up in several native huts at Bathurst Island Mission. After much publicity, he ultimately returned to his wife and their hut in the Bagot Native Compound in Darwin. Again the newshounds caught his story. According to them, he had returned to a life of degradation. The Australian public was shocked that a star of one of their best films should be discarded to live again like every other aborigine in Darwin. Tudawali was "rescued" and given a second role in another Australian film.

177 Bobby Wilson was only one of a large number of young Tiwi who are
526 recognized as fine athletes. There are two football teams in Darwin which have
648 Tiwi members: the Catholic team, St. Mary's, which often takes the local

[3] The last name Tudawali is an attempt to spell the Tiwi word for shark.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

permanent, and the Wanderers, which draws from the permanent native population in Darwin and includes such Tiwi as Bobby Wilson. It is normal for one of these Tiwi players to be considered among the top three in Darwin football circles. 177 526 648

For a while, Edmund, a Tiwi from Bathurst Island Mission, was one of the players on the newly organized St. Mary's basketball team; other Tiwi have played on the Bagot Compound basketball team. Billy Larrakeyah, a Darwin Tiwi, was thought to have Olympic potentialities as a javelin thrower, but strained his arm in the try-outs.[4] Most recently, a group of young Catholic Tiwi has been organized into a water polo team called the Seals. National magazines suggest that they may be the best water polo team in the country, but so far they have not gone south to play any non-Darwin group.

Tiwi carving and painting have had recent popularity in Australian art circles. Traditional Tiwi graveposts are finely carved in geometric designs and painted with precise and complex networks of cross-hatching and other simple, but effective, motifs. The first modern innovation in Tiwi art occurred about 1945 when a native known as Katu (or Short Katu) made his first attempt to carve a human figure atop a mourning post. When Pilling later asked Katu why he had carved this post, he said, "Me see 'm along Darwin. Me savvy." That is, Katu transferred the concept of Western realistic statuary in the round into the Tiwi art form. He carved a second realistic post for presentation to Queen Elizabeth II in 1954. More recently, Tiwi carvers at Snake Bay have taken to realistic carving. Two figurines, both carved by Tiwi at Snake Bay, were given to the Perth Museum in 1958. Sixteen mourning posts from Snake Bay were purchased by the National Art Gallery in Sydney the same year. An art display of Tiwi carving has been held in the United States in Philadelphia. 177 532 322

Tiwi have received recognition in the Northern Territory for other art forms. One of the thirty-year-old female Tiwi at Bathurst Island Mission usually takes first prize for embroidery at the annual Territorial fair. There has also been interest shown by outsiders in the double-barbed ceremonial spears. Male Tiwi skill in dancing has attracted wide attention in Australia. When natives from all over the Territory were sent to dance before Queen Elizabeth in Queensland during her 1954 tour, three Tiwi were among the delegation. The Tiwi contingent, directed by the innovator Short Katu, made every news story covering this part of the Royal Visit. In Darwin, when Bagot Compound needs to raise money for native participation in sports, the Tiwi, usually led by Katu, present a public dance. As a result, Katu's clan under his direction has invented many new dances for white Australian audiences. 177 [531] 177 535 648

Perhaps we may look forward to the day when American television audiences can enjoy such a Tiwi dance, one of Australia's best native products. Yet only sixty years ago, and therefore in the lifetime of many people still living, very few Tiwi had even seen a white man, and white men who set foot on Tiwi soil, like Cooper in his first attempt in 1897, were ferociously chased out.

[4] He was killed in a brawl in Darwin in the spring of 1959.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pole at Punata on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), while I saw and photographed the third example in the form of a highly conventionalized human figure (Pl. 38A, B, C), which was on an old grave not far from our camp. No doubt there are other examples of these poles on the deserted graves of the Islands. I saw recently, in the Musée Ethnographique et Musée Suisse de Folklore, Bâle, Switzerland, two full-length human figures which had been collected at Bathurst Island by Mr. Karel Kupta in 1956. 532x 765

This evidence indicates that, for thirty years, at least, the men and women of the Tiwi,[11] occasionally carved burial poles in human form; we do not know when the practice of carving the smaller figures[12] began.

At first sight it appeared that these wooden figures might have been a cultural trait borrowed, as in north-eastern Arnhem Land, from the Malay trepangers. Further research, however, did not confirm this hypothesis. [177]

Although now and again some Malay prau, driven off its course by contrary winds, must have touched the shores of either Melville or Bathurst Island, it is certain that the men of the Tiwi, who were notably unfriendly, would have endeavoured to drive them away. This unfriendliness probably explains why the Malays were not able to establish themselves on these Islands as they did in north-eastern Arnhem Land. The old men of the Tiwi do not remember any Malay fishermen visiting their country. This evidence that the Malays did not settle on the land of the Tiwi is further supported by Campbell (1834), who writes (p. 143), "The Malays were never seen near Melville Island", and later (p. 155), ". . . Malay fishermen were forbidden to go near Melville Island . . . alleging that it was infested with pirates. . . ." 174 648 [114]

This evidence suggests that the Tiwi practice of carving human figures in wood was not, like that of the aborigines of Arnhem Land, borrowed from a Malayan source, but is a recent local development, probably stimulated by the acquisition of steel tools and the other possessions of the white man. For instance, it would be easy to imagine a skilled aboriginal trying to make his pole resemble the tall bodies of the white man's saints in the mission church. From these larger would develop the smaller figures. 532x 765 177

It is unlikely that any elaborately carved burial pole, much less one in the form of a human figure, would be more than fifty years old. Before that time, except those stolen from the short-lived Fort Dundas settlement, the Tiwi would have owned few, if any steel tools. 532x 765

Although the Tiwi have no specific myth about the larger burial poles, 773

[11] A woman may cut a burial pole instead of her husband, should he be absent.

[12] There is a difference, however, between the two; the *tudini* poles, in human form, are cut from the hardest and most durable eucalypt; the smaller figures from the soft wood of the beach kapok, a wood which is quickly destroyed by insects.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

776 The *Maratjis* belong to the totem of *Andjaki* (fresh water), in common with *Pakadringa* (thunderstorms), *Tomituka* (monsoon rain) and *Bumerali* (lightning). They are mortal creatures who die and disintegrate like everything else (Pl. 48D).

[123] I collected bark paintings and crayon drawings of a number of *Maratjis*, living with their wives and families in three lagoons on Melville and Bathurst Islands, i.e., Maundu, southern Bathurst Island, and Kulimbini, north-western, and Maratjiana, northern Melville Island.

776 778 The *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands are not always of the same temperament. For instance, the *Maratjis* who live at Kulimbini (Pl. 48A) are so dangerous that should any aboriginal dare approach their water, they will steal his *imunka* (spirit), and he will die.

Although the *Maratjis* of Maundu (Pl. 48C) are feared, it is possible, if certain rituals are performed, for even a stranger to drink the water without harm; while those who live in the Maratjiana lagoon at Goose Creek, are looked upon by the aborigines as "properly quiet fellow".[49]

776 821 The rainbow, as a *Maratji*, however, is universally feared, the aborigines believing that the primary bow is the *imunka* (spirit) of a male, and the secondary bow, that of a female *Maratji*.

If a rainbow goes too near an aboriginal camp, the occupants will quickly [789] build up their fire[50] and call out to frighten *Maratji* away, but should he come too close, the people will feel ill and break out into a cold perspiration. If an aboriginal is overtaken by a rainbow,[51] it will kill him by taking his spirit.

Should some aboriginal be so foolish as to throw a spear at a rainbow and injure it, the *Maratjis* would destroy the whole country and the people who live in it.

776 821 648 Two heavy wind-storms, which occurred whilst the expedition was at Melville Island, were supposed to have been caused by angry *Maratjis*. The first was due to some foolish aboriginal who broke a *kulama* ceremony taboo (p. 142) by throwing some of the termite mound from the *kulama* oven into the sea. The second happened when a *pukamuni* pole, taken from a grave by one of the senior officers of the Native Affairs Branch, was being loaded on a boat for transport to Darwin.

The aborigines explained that as these poles are a gift from the living to

[49] Further research will no doubt reveal other waterholes on Melville and Bathurst Islands, inhabited by *Maratjis*.

[50] This would suggest that *Maratji*, like the *Wonambi* of the Central Australian deserts, [171] is afraid of fire (Mountford, 1948, p. 138).

[51] These conditions are, of course, impossible because the rainbow is always several feet from the observer.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat and so prevent the theft. 776 821 648

The Maratjis at Maundu

Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained by the faeces of the *Maratjis*. 776 778

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandubuka* totem are the only people safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from his own armpits, rubs it over his companion. 751 776 [827]

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then, walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi* which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of Maundu. [437] [753] [164]

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon, they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an aboriginal, called *Alumgun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this taboo. [841] [784]

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu. 532 x 778

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained) water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the 776

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

THE TIWI OF MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDS

By C. W. M. HART[1]

MELVILLE and Bathurst Islands lie off the north coast of Australia (3) some fifty to eighty miles north-east of Port Darwin. They are divided from the mainland by Dundas Straits, which at their narrowest part are about twenty-five miles wide, this being the approximate distance between the Vernon Group and Cape Gambier on Melville Island. The latter is the largest island in the Commonwealth of Australia with the exception of Tasmania, being some seventy miles long by forty miles wide, and containing about one and a half million acres. Bathurst Island is about one-third of that size, and is separated from its neighbour by Apsley Strait, which varies in width from about a quarter of a mile opposite the mission to two or three miles below Fort Dundas.

The first settlement in Northern Australia was made on Melville 175 Island at a spot named Fort Dundas in Apsley Strait. It was founded on the 26th September, 1824, by Captain Gordon Bremer, R.N., of H.M.S. *Tamar*, who had been specially sent from Sydney for the purpose. Chiefly owing to difficulties with the natives, the settlement was abandoned on 31st March, 1829, when the convicts, troops, stores, etc., were transferred to Fort Wellington, on the Coburg Peninsula of the mainland. To-day a few piles of stones and a dilapidated ramparted ditch are all that is to be seen of this outpost of empire.

From 1829 until 1911, when the Sacred Heart Mission Station was established on Bathurst Island, no permanent settlement was made on either of these islands, though they were visited from time to time, and various buffalo shooters and timber-getters resided there for varying periods, the best-known of them, R. J. Cooper, having lived on Melville (where his house still stands) from 1894 until 1914. At present Bathurst 648 Island is a native reserve with the missionaries as protectors, and hence

[1] This paper contains some of the results of research carried out as Science Research Scholar of the University of Sydney and with the aid of a grant from the Australian National Research Council. [122]

[P. 167]

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

648 has no other white inhabitants, while Melville is held under lease by the meat firm known as Vesteys Ltd., but has no permanent white inhabitants, though occasionally campers, beachcombers, and hunters from Darwin stay there for a few months.

177 All the earlier accounts lay stress on the ferocity and hostility of the
648 natives of these islands, but long albeit intermittent contact with the whites has tamed them. At the present time it is no exaggeration to say that except for the Larakia, who are almost extinct, no tribe in the Northern Territory has so assimilated white ideas or is so familiar with white men. A proof of this is afforded by the fact that members of this tribe are more in demand in Darwin as houseboys than members of any other tribe, simply because, as it is generally expressed, they have more "savvy," that is they are more intelligent and more adaptable to white conditions.

But while their proximity to Darwin and their long experience of white men have taught them much of our ideas and customs, the absence of a permanent white settlement in their country with its consequent massacres and epidemics has on the other hand prevented their numbers being depleted and their social organization being broken down. It is therefore still possible to obtain fairly full and satisfactory information about the life and culture of these islands as they were before white influence began.

181 The ferocity of these people, I am convinced, has been much exag-
648 gerated even by the earliest settlers. As a matter of fact their outstanding characteristic is not their fierceness but their sense of humour, as noted by Spencer. They are constantly laughing, even at the most solemn moments, and this applies to practically every man, woman and child on the island. I am inclined to think that their superior physique, which is very apparent, their huge spears—which incidentally they seldom use, except ceremonially—their striking method of painting their faces and their years of conflict with the Malays, which had accustomed them to stand and fight rather than to run at sight of a stranger, gained them in large part their evil reputation.

144 In physical appearance they are certainly Australoid, but the men are on the whole taller, sturdier and better proportioned than any of the mainland tribes. This is obvious even in Darwin, where it is an easy matter to pick out almost at a glance a member of the Tiwi. I agree
153 also with Sir Baldwin Spencer that they are superior to the mainlanders,

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

184 they speak one language and they regard a certain defined area of land as
619 belonging to them.

[171] The Australian tribe is a collection of persons who speak a common
619 language, or what they themselves regard as such, practise the same
101 customs, and normally have a name by which they distinguish themselves and their language. The inhabitants of Melville and Bathurst Islands are therefore to be regarded as a single tribe, but it is difficult to find a true tribal name. The Uwaidja of Port Essington call the Melville Islanders, *Wuŋuk*, as Spencer notes, but the Melville Islanders scarcely regard it as necessary to call themselves anything. The local group of
186 which a man is conscious of being a member is the horde, and until the
648 advent of the white man, the Melville Islander was not aware that any
101 other people existed except themselves. It was impossible and also quite unnecessary for them to visit the mainland in their bark canoes more especially as the coast around Cape Don and Cape Hotham, dimly seen
[725] on clear days, was regarded as the abode of departed souls, *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead. It was apparently just as impossible or unnecessary, or perhaps danger was the chief deterrent, for the Uwaidja or the Larakia to visit Melville Island.

The result was that the people, with no contact with people not of their own tribe, did not really need a tribal name, and very seldom used the word *Tiwi*, which is the only one that can be regarded as the name of the tribe.

101 Tiwi is a word that is known and but seldom used. Some of the younger men were in fact surprised and interested when they heard the old men using it in response to my enquiries. There is no question of secrecy or tabu about it. In common everyday use are the words *tini*, meaning a man of one of the Melville or Bathurst Island hordes, *i.e.*, a male member of the Tiwi, and *tiŋa* meaning a female member of the tribe. *Tiwi* is the plural form of *tini* and *tiŋa*. It is often said by informants that *tini* means a man, and *tiŋa* a woman, irrespective of colour or race, but in point of fact these words are only used as applying to members of the *Tiwi*, and some other word would be used in referring to a white man, or a Larakia or Uwaidja.

101 Objection may be made to the adoption as the tribal name of these
619 people of a word that theoretically at any rate seems simply "men" in the ordinary language. But in point of fact the word is never used except

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

By Herbert Basedow, M.D., M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., etc.

With Plates VII–XX.

Local Correspondent of the Royal Anthropological Institute, London, and Honorary Fellow of the Anthropological Society, Göttingen; late Chief Medical Inspector and Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Introduction.

In August of last year (1911), I visited Bathurst Island to inspect the natives on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. Accompanied by one of my inspectors (Mr. J. H. Kelly) and a crew consisting of a Chinaman, a Manilaman, and three natives of the Larrekiya Tribe,[1] I left Port Darwin at eleven o'clock in the evening and entered Apsley Strait early the next morning. We spent nine days in the examination of the island, entering the numerous salt-water arms and rivers, effecting a landing wherever possible and traversing the island on foot. Landing was, in most places, difficult on account of the thick growth of mangroves that fringes the island on the east. It had been my intention to circumnavigate the island, but a heavy monsoonal gale prevented us from even making the attempt in the small motor-craft at our disposal. I therefore decided to return *viâ* Apsley Strait and inspect part of Melville Island.

The plates included in this paper are all reproductions of my original photographs and coloured drawings.

Condition of Natives.

I estimate the population of the island to be about 500. Their isolation and, no doubt in a measure also, their reputation as being cannibalistic and treacherous in their habits, have guarded their primitive condition to the present day.[2] Before

[1] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. of S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 1.

[2] Compare the statement:—

"Melville Island, about 30 miles north of Port Darwin, is inhabited by a tribe of which very little is known. They do not circumcize, and speak a different language from those on the mainland. They are represented as a very strong and powerful race.

"Before the arrival of the Hon. B. T. Finniss at Escape Cliffs in 1864, the Melville Island natives occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras, in which they invariably succeeded; but they have not done so since. This tribe is of a very hostile nature, and on several occasions have attacked Europeans visiting the island. Their canoes and weapons are similar to those on the mainland." P. Foelsche: "Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia," *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 17.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

BEFORE the advent of the buffalo-hunters, few white men had visited the islands since the 648
early days of the naval settlement at Fort Dundas, established by Sir Gordon [175]
Bremer in 1824, but abandoned four years later. Malays and Japanese pearlers have been in the habit of taking in water from either of the islands and have frequently come into disastrous conflict with the natives. It is perhaps also on 164
account of their isolation from civilization that I found the blacks comparatively free from any serious disease. Apart from the various minor ailments such as traumatic lesions and their after-effects, cataracts and keratitis, a few congenital deformities and such like, only a few cases of tertiary syphilis came under my notice.

A young gin was suffering from a disease of the hip, apparently chronic, but she was too timid to permit me to make an examination. They are on the whole 142
a healthy, sturdy people of moderate stature, with a good muscular development and a square, big thorax. The characteristics are Australoid and yet they present [144]
certain insular peculiarities.

The Head.

The forehead is low, with a marked supraorbital development; the face somewhat depressed and the lower jaw strong. The eyes are sunken and the nose is small. The wavy black hair of some of the males was worked up into numerous [302]
small, cylindrical, pendant masses with clay and ochre.[1] This, so far as I could [765]
ascertain, designated mourning. Others had besmeared their hair with ochre. The hairs on the upper lip are pulled out. The growth of the beard of the men varies, but is, on an average, good.

The natives of either island do not practise the knocking out of one or two 304
incisors as they do on the mainland. Major Campbell,[2] however, reports having 171
observed the custom on Melville Island.

The face is painted symmetrically with differently coloured ochres, charcoal, 302
and pipeclay, in various degrees of complexity (Fig. 1). A few of the simpler designs might be described briefly:—*Case* (1): The whole surface of the face blackened with charcoal. *Case* (2): The nose red and the rest of the face charcoal-black. *Case* (3): Face (including the shaven upper lip and upper part of chin) charcoal-

[1] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* London, 1852, vol. ii, p. 13: "The characteristic mode of dressing the hair among the Torres Strait Islanders is to have it twisted up into long pipe-like ringlets, and wigs in imitation of this are also worn"; and again, "at Cape York I have at times for a week together seen all the men and lads with the hair twisted into little strands well daubed over with red ochre and turtle fat."

Also P. P. King, *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114: "The [184]
men were more muscular and better formed than any we have before seen, they were daubed over with a yellow pigment which was the colour of the neighbouring cliff (Luxmore Head on Melville Island); their hair was long and curly and appeared to be clotted with a whitish paint."

[2] *Journ. Geogr. Society*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 153. *Cf.* also H. Klaatsch: *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 591.

were words like "insecure" and "uneasy." He was not particularly aggressive nor particularly submissive, but he fluctuated between the two attitudes. One got the impression after associating with him that he was never sure of what was expected of him and acted therefore in contradictory ways according to what *he thought* was expected of him. Or to put the same impression another way, there seemed a constant discrepancy between what people expected of Antonio and what he wanted to do if left alone. In tribal fights, for instance, he acted fiercely and aggressively and with the air of swaggering braggadocio that that all important men are expected to show in fighting, yet at the earliest possible moment he melted into the crowd with visible relief at being able to quit the center of the stage and without a trace of rancor or ill will toward any of the people whom he had been abusing or had been abused by a few minutes before. In council meetings of senior men he was always listened to with respect yet always had to be prodded into speaking at all. He never initiated a policy or offered his opinion until pressure was put upon him to state what he thought, and while his opinion when given was listened to with attention it was always a paraphrase of some opinion already given, usually the majority opinion of the group. He expressed what he thought the group wanted him to say, never an "opinion of his own." In this respect Antonio had many of the characteristics of a "yes-man" and like his counterparts in more civilized societies he seldom took the unpopular side and seldom stood up to opposition.

Two burning political issues agitating the Tiwi in 1928-30 were the issues of (1) plural marriage and (2) the visits of the Japanese pearling luggers. The Catholic missionaries had taken a strong stand on plural marriages and were bringing all the economic and moral pressure they could exert on the younger Tiwi to induce them to restrict themselves to one wife. Failure to bow to Mission pressure resulted in the recalcitrant's being cut off from the European food, tobacco, clothes, etc. which could only be obtained through the Mission. But beginning in the middle 1920's Japanese pearling boats in ever increasing numbers had carried on the practice of anchoring on the further side of Melville Island during the period of high tide (when diving for pearl shell was impossible) and inviting the natives to provide their women as prostitutes for the use of the crews during their stay on the beaches. The Japanese captains paid lavishly in European goods for any women thus provided and the subtribes on the southeast side of Melville, in particular the subtribe called the Yeimpi, proved very susceptible to the Japanese temptations.

These two issues of plural marriage and prostitution for the Japanese rather neatly complemented each other at two points. Not only did the Japanese rival the Mission station as a source of supply for European goods; the possession of a large number of wives was a condition that made a man very unpopular with the missionaries, but, if he were disposed to rent out some of them, made the same man very popular with the Japanese. The plural marriage issue, if alone, would clearly have divided the tribe into the conservatives, staunchly upholding plural marriage as the Tiwi way, and the radicals abandoning it in return for Mission favor. But such an alignment was cut right across

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

by the Japanese issue, since it tempted the conservative with several wives to violate all the old tribal sanctions by renting out his wives, and it provided the Mission adherent radicals with a grand opportunity to pose as the real defenders of the old culture and to charge the old polygamists with being the real renegades from the ancient ways.

It can be easily guessed how high feelings ran on these issues and how hotly they were debated when a number of Tiwi gathered together. But on neither of these issues or on any aspect of them did Antonio show any signs of leadership. He accumulated wives but always apologized in a rather deprecating and apple-polishing way when he met the missionaries, and spent part of his time hanging around the Mission despite the contemptuous attitude which the missionaries adopted toward him. He thus contrasted very unfavorably with some of his contemporaries, notably one Dooley who, having been for years a one-wife man and a Mission favorite, inherited a second wife at around the age of forty. Dooley's decision was clear-cut and highly spectacular. He accepted the second wife, shook the dust of the Mission station from his feet and never set foot near it again, taking up again the traditional life of a Tiwi elder, deep in the bush, with his two wives and later additions, ignoring all white innovations, even tobacco.[4] Dooley's uncompromising behavior was greatly admired by the tribe but few had the strength of character to emulate him, certainly not Antonio.

On the Japanese issue Antonio was just as vacillating. Prodded by others to make a statement he would in ringing tones denounce as disgraceful and scandalous the behavior of the Yelmpi wife-renters, but on his visits to the Yelmpi country ostensibly "to see for himself what was going on" he shared eagerly in the proceeds of vice which his friends there offered him and was even heard on a few occasions to wonder aloud why the Japanese always went to the Yelmpi country when there were plenty of secluded beaches in Tiklauila country. Instantly challenged, "Would you want the Japanese to come here?" "Would you rent your wives to them if they did?" poor Antonio quickly turned it into a feeble joke, saying deprecatingly, "Oh no, no, no. I just wondered why they always go to those ugly Yelmpi women?"

In summary we might say that Antonio's personal behavior appeared to be that of a man pushed into a position rather too big for him to fill. He was not by nature particularly aggressive or domineering, but as the eldest son of Turimpi he was constantly being pushed by public opinion onto the center of the stage, whereas he would have been much happier if public opinion had left him alone to be an ordinary, average member of the crowd. The role he was called on by his status position to play seemed to give him little or no pleasure, little or no personal satisfaction. Such a view of his "personality" is supported by the fact that when alone in the bush with his own family and away from the society of his peers Antonio was relaxed and at ease. As Durkheim pointed out, the basic factor in Australian social psychology is that men spend a great part of their lives hunting and collecting in the bush, completely out of physical contact with all people except members of their own households,

I was told that

765 the old man had chanted about the *Tarula*,[1]
533 who had planted magic on the beaches to
754 the north at the beginning of the wet season.
The sun heated the magic, and up it went
[648] like smoke and the wind blew it all about.
The magic works on the blackfellow with a feeling like a snake crawling up the legs. It moves up to his stomach, and when it reaches his heart he eats no more and dies. He also sang that he was an old man, his wind was short and soon he would die. Later he sang of a fight he had had with another tribe. Later he sang of people who came and fed him while he was sick. When standing in the water he was calling on the others to make the ceremony. When he threw up the stones he called *wei tua*, i.e "finish."

754 During the next four weeks I visited tribes in various parts of the islands and heard the same story. I was shown a sample of the magic. It was a tightly woven string bag about the size of a billiard ball and stuffed with kapok. This was said to have been "sung" before it was buried.

124 Statistics of the mortality of the epidemic
802 presented a problem. The only words for numbers which I could obtain with certainty

[1] The *tarula* were mainland blacks in the employ of local white men. They were called *tarula* ("lightning") after the guns carried by their employers.

[p 80-A]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 1. Snake Bay Settlement

114 Islanders on a hunt. The trip took us to a small clearing on the right bank of the Paluwiunga River, ten miles upstream from where it empties into the Arafura Sea.

131 A brief glance at the map will help to further pinpoint this location. Ten degrees south of the equator and at a distance of twenty to fifty miles due north from the Australian Northern Territory capital of Darwin, lies the relatively large Melville Island (1,000 square miles), named for Viscount Henry Dundas Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, who authorized the coastal survey of 1818 during which the island was circumnavigated. To the west, separated by a narrow strait, lies the smaller Bathurst
101 Island. The group of people with whom I found myself camped by the river bank were members of the Tiwi, a tribe of Australian
[161 Aboriginals whose country includes both these islands. Today about
361] seven hundred members of the tribe live near to the southeast corner
777 of Bathurst Island where they are in various ways administered so by the Sacred Heart Mission. On the northern coast of Melville
161 Island, on a hill overlooking Snake Bay, near the mouth of the
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Tjipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families. 161 361 648

It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace. 361 177 [631] [224] [464]

By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives, 123 [132] [825]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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equally entertaining as she sang some risqué love songs she had picked up around camp.

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The evening's goose hunt was even more unsuccessful than the earlier hunts. Two of the men separated and went down river and killed three geese, but the others, upstream in the usual place, did not even see any, and there was more talk of *mobudities* by everyone way into the night.

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The following day was the last and, as the Assistant Superintendent was due that evening, feverish work was done by one and all on the long neglected house. Evidently the arrival of Paul scared off the ghosts, for that evening we almost had a goose per person, and my final memory of Minianapi is one of flickering fires in the moonlight and the smell of fresh roasted goose carried on the gentle breezes.

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Fig. 21. After the return trip the launch's motor gets a much needed overhaul

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

portunities for cultural comparison he at the same time acquired an acute insight into his own culture and into the psychology of his fellow tribesmen. For the anthropologist he was a magnificent informant and a continuous pain in the neck. As increasing years gave him increasing tribal seniority, Mariano became increasingly domineering and touchy about his own importance and increasingly recognized by the younger men as the man who voiced the "pro-mission" and hence "pro-white" point of view in tribal arguments. However, it would be a mistake to think of him as the "detribalized" native of the literature (as another Benelong, e.g., in the magnificent study of culture contact given by the Australian novelist Eleanor Dark, 1941). On the contrary the tough old unacculturated natives who lived deep in the bush and who tried to act much of the time as if white men didn't exist not only accepted Mariano but respected him and paid deep attention to his arguments. The reasons why they did this are, I think, all considerations of "personality," that is, they respected Mariano despite his collaboration with the Mission largely because Mariano was the kind of man he was. He was forceful and determined; he was sincere, he was consistent both in word and in deed, he was intelligent and knew both the psychology of his audience and how to marshal his arguments so as to obtain maximum impact from his material. And he had supreme confidence in his own righteousness. Time and again one was struck by the contrast between him and his elder brother Antonio. When Antonio spoke (always after being prompted or coerced into giving his opinion), people listened hoping to hear wisdom and force and cogency; instead they heard only hackneyed phrases and inconsistent arguments which left them dissatisfied and unconvinced. When Mariano spoke (always without invitation and frequently ahead of many of his seniors), he laid down, in vehement tones, a definite policy, and even though his policy was unacceptable to his hearers as it frequently was, they listened with close attention and voiced their approval at the end, not so much of the policy he outlined as the directness and clearness of the delivery and the logic of his position.

The difference between the two men is well illustrated by their attitudes toward the Japanese wife-renting on the Yeimpi beaches. On this, the burning issue of the day, Antonio never took a stand but shilly-shallied on all sides of it, despite the fact—frequently drawn to his attention—that his small daughter was betrothed to an old Yeimpi who was a notorious wife-renter and he, therefore, in a very short time would be faced with the decision of whether to hand the girl over to her promised husband or not. Mariano on the contrary seized upon the Japanese issue from its first appearance as proof of the essential soundness of the Mission campaign against plural marriages. His speeches were clear-cut and definite. "It all goes to show that the priests are right when they say that having a lot of wives is a bad thing. These old Yeimpi have too many wives. If they had only one each, like white men (and inferentially like Mariano himself), they would not be doing this disgusting thing of renting out their wives to Japanese, they would want to keep their one wife to themselves like decent Tiwi." Most of his hearers (a) considered themselves decent Tiwi, but

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 548 595 668 797 (b) had each a number of wives at home, (c) had not rented any to the Japanese as yet (mainly because of lack of opportunity), but (d) were all suspecting each other of contemplating an early trip to the Yeimpi country and therefore were in chronic indecision on the whole matter. Hence Mariano's arguments were greeted with the applause that any group of people caught among a complicated set of moral alternatives will give to one of their number who has solved for himself the conflicts that beset them and has solved them moreover in a way perfectly consistent with all his previous attitudes. It was the applause and approval that is expressed in our culture by some such phrase as "I may not agree with him but at least he is sincere and you always know where he stands."

159 593 But like similar people elsewhere Mariano inspired no close intimate loyalty. Nobody felt warmly toward him. The missionaries used him but didn't like him, the anthropologist found him invaluable as an informant but intensely irritating in his self-importance and his belief in his own indispensability; among the natives he had no intimates and no close friends. His relations with his wife were much more formal and distant than was usual among monogamous couples and she frequently criticized him both in public and in private for what she called his "failure to talk to her"—undoubtedly the Tiwi equivalent of the American wife's complaint against her husband's absorption in business or politics. He was fond of his children but played with them little and then in a silent, brooding sort of way, confining his caresses to tickling and squeezing them, unlike Antonio whose play with his children was always carried on in an endless flow of chatter and two-way conversations. Child-talk, one surmises, was beneath Mariano's dignity.

177 159 All in all, Mariano was a forceful, domineering, self-important, introverted man, pursuing his dedicated way as the leader of a cause—collaboration with and imitation of the whites—but having personality traits which prevented him from inspiring any of the affection or warm devotion that other types of leaders inspire. There were many Tiwi, especially among the younger men, who were ready and willing to adopt at least the easier aspects of white culture such as clothes, work in Darwin, disrespect for tribal laws, violation of taboos, but in no sense can they be described as Mariano's followers, still less his admirers. Everyone respected Mariano, everybody consulted him, everybody made use of him and listened to him, but nobody warmed to him. He was as noble, as domineering, as aggressive, as humorless, as dedicated, as admirable as one of the Old Testament prophets—and just as difficult to like.

LOUIS

159 Of the five sons of Turimpi, it may be that the two who were most similar in whatever it is that is called personality were the second and third sons, Mariano and Louis. Both were "lonely ones," both had about them a kind of gloomy, inward-focused aura which inhibited warm friendly relations with others. Among a people to whom laughter and gaiety come easily, both were completely devoid of humor. Both were men dedicated to a cause, but in the

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123 sional patch of grass, which the rushing fire had missed, there was not a living green plant below the four-foot line. Burning the country is an annual occurrence and many are the laws governing 221 who may burn and who may subsequently hunt in the newly cleared 224 land. Because the fires are set each year, there is no accumulation of dry tinder to feed the fire and allow it to rage uncontrollably. Only the grass and a few fallen logs catch and these will burn rapidly and fiercely, but for a very short period. Any gap in the vegetation will stop the fire and the heavy dew, falling in the evening, will also put out the flames, leaving perhaps only isolated, smouldering logs to burn through the night. Until the first shoots of new grass push [421] their way through the charred ground, the individual hunter who set the fire has exclusive rights to the area he set alight. Of course, no one except those who belong to that country may burn without [671] permission of the owners. As far as possible, these laws are still upheld.

123 We soon came to a branch in the path and Albert indicated that we two girls should continue straight ahead; he would stop behind. In front of us stretched the fresh-water swamp. Out of the almost inky but clear water rose the gnarled paperbark trees, their roots so intertwined they almost formed a floor, albeit a most slippery and irregular one, over the rotten vegetation in the bottom of the swamp. I picked a particularly large rooted tree for my bath [515] tub, and a short distance away Agnes did the same. If one was careful not to disturb the fine deposit on the bottom but managed to stay on top of the slippery roots, the clear cool water was as sweet and soft as one could wish for. We stayed for about an hour, washing ourselves and our clothes, but finally an impatient call from Albert put an end to this pleasure. Albert had been hunting for a possum, but in this area so close to the camp, they had already been depleted.

123 Instead of returning to camp, Albert decided that now was as good a time as any to cut his *milingani*, the sticks with which they 411 kill the geese. After another mile or so into the bush, we came to a 322 grove of stout bushes of a kind I had not seen before. They had [223] long, straight branches of about a half-inch diameter. These Albert

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

571 he had arrived there as a member of a large war party. This situation stemmed
602 from the coexistence, on the one hand, of the intricate web of kinship that
628 united everybody present and made the problem of who would support whom unpredictable enough, and, on the other, the intricate network of deals and promises and personal alliances and obligations that every senior Tiwi man had woven inside the kinship system. A Tiwi elder did not, for example, have one category of relatives called his mother's brothers; he had at least three different categories of mother's brothers. There were those mother's brothers who had given him nothing, those who had given him wives, and those who had promised him a wife but were dragging their feet on delivery, or even trying to renege on their promise. In pressing a case against one of this third category, an elder might quite conceivably alienate some of his mother's brothers of the second category. Nor could he be sure of the support of even his own brothers, since they were certainly cultivating, and possibly undercutting him with, the same donors of daughters as he was involved with. Perhaps the nondelivery, which was the whole basis of his case against the mother's brother, had been instigated by his own brother trying to engineer a rebestowal of the girl to him. Because of the two networks, that of formal kinship obligations and that of marriage deals, two Tiwi seniors engaged in a dispute had no impartial body to whom they could submit their arguments about breach of contract. Disputes between a young man and an elder could
[674] be submitted to the publicly witnessed duel, since these were not breaches of contract but cases of trespass by the young men, and as such were crimes.
[626] Impartial public opinion upheld the old men and punished the young men every time. The old men's arguments with each other, however, could not be
[686] so adjusted, since they involved marriage deals (as distinct from seduction) and in marriage deals everybody was involved and nobody was impartial. Where any senior stood on any marriage deal in dispute depended on how that
[557] deal fitted into his own conniving. In that area of life, every adult man had his own axes to grind and a disinterested group of umpires was impossible to find.

Thus Tiwi battles had to be the confused, disorderly, inconclusive
628 things they always were. They usually lasted all day, during which about
578 two-thirds of the elapsed time was consumed in violent talk and mutual abuse between constantly changing central characters and satellites. The remaining third of the time was divided between duels involving a pair of men who threw spears at each other until one was wounded, and brief flurries of more general weapon throwing involving perhaps a dozen men at a time, which ended whenever somebody, even a spectator, was hit. As a result of this full day of violence, perhaps a few of the cases would be settled that night—by a father handing over his delayed daughter, or a man with a disputed wife relinquishing her to her rightful husband—but when the war party left next day to return home, the number of cases settled was likely to be less than the number of new feuds, grievances, and injuries that had originated during the day of battle. For not only did the participants carry away from the battlefield a vivid memory of all the physical wounds, intended or accidental, inflicted by whom

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he was at the same time the executive director of a work unit which he expected 578
to work for him, and the husband of many of its members whom he expected 182
to be faithful to him. The young wives were willing, under supervision, to 837
meet his first expectation, but found it difficult, even under the strictest supervision, to meet the second. Successful supervision of the morals of young wives 592
was easy to achieve at night because each camp was then gathered together and it was relatively easy for the husband and his senior wives to guard the young wives closely. But during the daytime matters were different. Then the 837
young women of the household were widely scattered through the fairly dense bush and it was impossible for the old wives to watch them every minute of the day. And the young men of other households, or even of their own household, were hunting game in the same neighborhood. Encounters, whether by chance or by previous arrangement, were likely to occur and probably occurred with a high degree of frequency. We say "probably" because no anthropologist working with a tribe which has neither courts nor written records can ever know how often casual extramarital offenses take place. (There is even some difficulty in obtaining reliable statistics on such matters in our own society, as the attacks on the late Dr. Kinsey's statistics indicate.) We therefore make no statement about how common the act of adultery was in Tiwi culture, but we can say that, judging by the public accusations of adultery, its practice must have been widespread indeed. In any Tiwi camp comprising more than 578
two households, few weeks went by without an outraged and angry old husband shouting accusations at one of the younger men sitting by another camp 837
fire a few yards away. The young man accused would (usually) deny it; the old women of both households would enter the argument, the young man's [595]
mother protesting his innocence, the old man's elderly wives (who had of course been the informers) giving details of time and place and circumstance; the young man would produce, or try to produce, an alibi and appeal to a friend to bear him out; the old man would call the friend a liar and the youth's mother an old witch; the youth's mother would retaliate by shouting things she knew (but had never before revealed) about the private lives of everybody in the old man's household, including the old man himself when he was a young bachelor. A good time would be had by all, including the listening anthropologist, but nobody would get much sleep. Such nocturnal uproars, always starting with accusations hurled by an older husband against a younger man and always involving incidents that had allegedly occurred while the young wife was somehow left unchaperoned for a short period during her daytime wandering in search of food, were a commonplace of nightlife among the Tiwi; but no case was ever reported, observed, or hinted at in which even the most adventurous and enterprising bachelor had succeeded in seducing, or had even attempted to seduce, a young wife when she was back in camp [833]
after nightfall. The deeds were always done in the secrecy of the bush during the daytime; it was the recriminations and accusations that occurred in the public glare of the campfires at nighttime.

Sometimes these disputes or accusations went no further than the noc- 578
turnal shouting of charges. Often the young man accused the previous night 684

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

578 quietly slipped away to some other camp and was not seen the following
684 morning. The matter might then die, depending largely on whether the old husband wanted to carry it further or was content to drop it. If the young
[627] man was still in camp the following day, the old man might insist on a duel then and there, but it would take place only if the camp were large, since Tiwi duels were essentially legal actions and as such needed a sizable audience for their correct staging. Disputes between men, of which old men accusing young men of seduction were by far the most common type, usually remained at the verbal level until a large body of spectators was available. Since such large
[527] concentrations of many households were necessary for the performance of the
627] main collective ceremonials, it was at the time of these ceremonials that most verbal arguments were pushed by the aggrieved party to the action level.

554 During the dry season (April to November) when travel was easy, the
764 only collective ceremonials sufficiently important to draw together a large number of households were those held for the funerals of big men. In the wet season (November to March) when the grass and bush were high and travel was difficult, the main collective phases of the male initiation ceremonies were
[881] held (see Chapter 4), and these brought together for a few weeks at a time large numbers of households. The funeral ceremonies for adults were always held some considerable time after the death and burial of the deceased. How long a period elapsed between the death and the funeral ceremonies depended on the expected size of the gathering, and this figure correlated, at least roughly, with the importance of the deceased. Here again the overriding considera-
574 tion was food supply, since the chief mourners (that is, the deceased's closer
764 relatives) had to feed everybody who came to the funeral while the ceremonies
433 lasted, which might be almost a week. The more important the dead person the bigger the crowd at his funeral, and hence the greater the amount of time
182 needed by the mourners to arrange the catering. As much as a year might elapse between the death and the time when the mourners felt that the funeral arrangements—especially the food supply, but also the ceremonial preparation —were sufficiently well in hand to permit them to set a date and send out invitations for the funeral ceremonies. Funerals, therefore, were not held at regular times but were individually scheduled at times fixed by the chief mourners. They were always held in the dry season, however (except those of
[627] young children, to which nobody came in any case), and therefore an old man who had a dispute to settle or a case to try publicly could always depend on a few big funerals being held in the not very distant future which would provide the large audience necessary to make the settlement of the dispute legal. During the wet season the *kolema* phases of the initiation ceremonial
[881] always drew a large attendance; the annual time of these was pretty definitely fixed by the ripening of the *kolema* yams.

578 Hence the verbal wrangles in the small scattered encampments at night,
684 about seduction during the day, could have any one of three outcomes, depending largely upon the determination of the old man-accuser and the demeanor
627 of the young man-accused. If by the following morning the young man had disappeared and showed no further interest in the old man's menage, the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

matter might end there. Or the old man might let matters rest until the time of the next big gathering of people at a funeral or at the *kolema* rituals, and then revive the issue under such public circumstances that the accused young man could not slip away unpunished. If he followed this second course, the old man went to the gathering covered from head to foot in white paint, the Tiwi uniform for anybody who came in anger and intended to pick a fight with somebody. The decision between these two lines of action lay, of course, with the old man, and while that decision was to some extent determined by how vindictive and revengeful he felt, nonetheless it was also influenced by how this dispute was related to all the other feuds, disputes, deals, marriage exchanges, and so forth, in which both parties were already involved. Like a good lawyer in our own culture, the old man had to consider, before he took the matter to court, who the young man was and who his friends and relatives were, and had to ask himself whether in seeking vengeance for the blow to his pride he might not be doing himself more political harm than the injury was worth.

In arriving at his decision, the old man was influenced to some extent also by another variable, the attitude of the young man. If the alleged offense occurred only once and the young man denied it and thereafter kept his distance, the accuser would probably let the matter drop. Offenders were very rarely caught *in flagrante*, and the evidence of seduction was almost always circumstantial or hearsay. In every case there was some element of doubt as to whether the right young male was being accused or whether the whole story had not been invented by some of the old wives out of sheer spite toward a young wife. The old man had to take such factors into consideration, not out of any abstract sense of justice, but because, naturally, he didn't like to be made a fool of, either by young men or his own spiteful old wives. But he was most suspicious and unbelieving of his own flighty young wives, and sometimes the accused young man was defiant and persistent in his attentions to the same young wife, or wives. In effect, such a young man was daring the old husband to do his worst. Such continued defiance of the seniority system could not be permitted; it became a case not of simple seduction but of subversive activity, since it was a threat to the whole social structure of the tribe, centered as that was around the marriage of old men to young women. When confronted by such action, a Tiwi elder said (as people of other cultures might), "What would happen if everybody did that? We'd have complete anarchy and free love." Hence an old husband, so defied, was almost duty bound not just to seek satisfaction for the private injury done to himself, but to defend the public weal by hauling the offender before the bar of public opinion and denouncing him before as large a crowd as possible, as a public enemy. If the situation became so flagrant that he could not wait until the next big funeral or the next *kolema* gathering, he began calling in surrounding camps or going himself, dressed in white paint, to summon them to assist him in meting out public justice to the violator of the system. When a sufficient number of upholders of the right (that is, senior heads of households) had been collected together, the usual one-sided duel (see below, Chapter 4) was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

staged and this was usually sufficient to incapacitate the offender and make him decide to move—at least for a while—into some other district. The group thus hastily convened to mete out public justice seldom numbered more than sixty or seventy people (seven or eight households) and having been convened *ad hoc* would remain camped together only for the forty-eight hours or less needed to deal with the emergency.

Joint Activities

This discussion of the alternative lines of action open to an outraged household head enables us to specify the relatively rare occasions during the year when the dull, quiet, day-by-day, food-gathering routines of the dispersed household camps were interrupted by events that required many households to gather together in one place and indulge in joint action. Foremost among these occasions were big funerals and the *kolema* ceremonial, both of which were mentioned above. These were the main religious events of the year, full of dancing, singing, wailing, and excitement. The excitement was the psychological result of so many people being together at the same time, a rare experience in the life of any Tiwi. Since the *kolema* ceremonial was an annual event and even the most enthusiastic funeral goer did not attend more than three or four really big funerals in the course of a year, we may reckon that even an old and important man, much concerned with ritual observances, would probably find himself a participant in such crowd activities on not more than some six occasions per year. For less important men and for women and children the number of such occasions was less than six. The *kolema* ceremonial lasted two weeks or more, big funerals, even when they became the occasion for carrying on other public business, did not last more than four or five days each. Hence we may reckon an average of about a week each for the half-dozen times a really big man spent in the company of a sizable crowd of fellow tribesmen, giving a total annual average of about six or seven weeks at most out of every fifty-two—or a little less than 10 percent of the year spent by an old important man in large ceremonial activities or what Durkheim calls the collective life of the tribe.

In addition there were the smaller gatherings, such as the funerals of younger men and most women, and the calling together of a number of households to settle a dispute in the manner we have described above. These were collective occasions also but they brought together a considerably smaller crowd. A really big man's funeral was likely to draw over three hundred people or even as much as one-third of the whole tribe.[4] Not only did many

[4] Tamboo's funeral in May, 1929 (he died in the previous August) drew practically the full band membership (men, women, and children) of the four Bathurst Island bands; almost all the Munupula; many Mandiimbula; and large delegations from the remaining three bands. With such a crowd, an actual head count was difficult, especially of the children, but there must have been over four hundred people present. Needless to say, excitement was intense; more fights occurred, more insults were exchanged, more ancient feuds revived and new ones started, and more food consumed than at any funeral in living memory. At least that was the opinion of Tamboo's chief mourners, but since it was they who threw the party and had to pay for it, they may have been biased.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 relatives, soon caught up with them. Several cases of such elopements occurred
583 during the period of fieldwork, including the case of one young couple (Peanut and Jumbo's wife) who made repeated attempts to elope over a period of several years. But despite the relaxation of standards that white contact had
[624] brought, as long as they remained on the islands these violators of the system were soon forced back into conformity by outraged public opinion and its punitive sanctions. Unless he fled to the mainland with his girl, the young bachelor who stole an old man's young wife had to restore her sooner or later to her rightful husband. Under pre-white conditions they could not flee to the mainland; if they tried, they both probably drowned on the way or at least were never heard of again.

Thus the isolation of the Tiwi made the rule of the gerontocracy much
182 more absolute, and the enforcement of it much more effective than was possible
691 for any of the mainland tribes where violators of the rules could skip across the border. Tiwi bachelors had to be satisfied, by and large, with casual and temporary liaisons and even in these, because of the constant suspicion of the old husbands and the constant spying and scandalmongering of the old wives, they had to be prepared to be often caught and, when caught, to be punished.
[578] Thus we come to another of the main emphases in Tiwi culture—the enormous frequency of disputes, fights, duels, and war parties arising directly or indirectly out of cases of seduction. If we may call this area of life the legal area, then over 90 percent of legal affairs were matters in which women were in some way involved.

THE DUEL The Tiwi formula for handling seduction was very
627 straightforward and clear-cut in its formal outline. Since senior men had young
684 wives and young men had not, seduction was necessarily viewed as an offense by a young man against a senior man. Hence the charge was always laid by the senior and the younger man was always the defendant.[1] At night in camp the accuser hurled his charges at the offender. We described earlier the alternatives available at this stage to both parties. Two of those alternatives were for the old man to press the matter to a public "trial," either the next day, if the camp was already a large one, or else on the next occasion when both men were present in a big gathering.

The basic shape of all Tiwi trials was standardized in the form that we have been calling the duel. Everybody present—men, women, children, and dogs—formed a rough circle in an open space, sitting or standing according to their degree of excitement at the moment. At one end stood the accuser,
[302 the old man, covered from head to foot in white paint, with his ceremonial
411] spears in one hand and a bundle of the more useful hunting spears in the

[1] Under pre-white conditions this had to be so. After the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, some young men through Mission manipulation got a young wife at an age that would have been impossible earlier. This resulted in an occasional case around the Mission where a *young* husband charged a man older than himself with seducing his wife. The resulting duel, with an older man as defendant, was regarded by the Tiwi as both embarrassing and ludicrous, perhaps analogous to the average American's attitude toward female professional wrestlers. (See Hart 1954 for a case of this sort, the duel of Bob v. Louis.)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

other. At the opposite end stood the defendant, with little or no paint on him, perhaps holding a hunting spear or two in his hand (a sign of insolence), perhaps holding only throwing sticks (less defiant, since the stick was an inferior weapon more appropriate to young men), or perhaps entirely weaponless (a sign of proper humility and the deference to his seniors that all bachelors ought to show in such situations). The accuser, with many gestures, particularly with much stamping of the feet and chewing of the beard, told the young man in detail precisely what he and all right-minded members of the community thought of him. This angry, loud harangue went into minute detail, not only about the actual offense, but the whole life career of the defendant, and paid particular attention to occasions in the past when the old man even remotely, or some of his relatives, even more remotely, had performed kindnesses toward either the young man or some of his relatives. It is difficult to summarize briefly one of these harangues, but the general formula, subject to much variation by each individual accuser, appeared to be the building up of as much contrast as possible between the criminal or antisocial character of the young man's actions and the fact that he was a member of a network of interpersonal relationships in which mutual aid and reciprocal obligations were essential. The Tiwi orators, of course, did not put the matter in such abstract terms. They listed the long catalogue of people who had done things for the young man since his birth, and for his ancestors and relatives, until the catalogue took in practically the whole tribe—past, present, and future. And what had he done to repay his obligations to all these people? "Why, the miserable, ungrateful wretch spends his time hanging around my camp, etc., etc. And not only my camp, but last year it was widely believed that he was indulging in similar actions around the camp of my esteemed fellow-elder, So and So." We do not think that we are overintellectualizing the content of these harangues if we say that they involved the old man's reminding the young man of his debt to society, and his attempting to convey the idea that social life needed mutual aid and trust between all its members.

After twenty minutes or so of this sociological abuse and blame pinning, the old man threw aside his ceremonial spears and began to throw his hunting spears at the defendant. This active phase of the duel conformed to a stereotyped pattern which in some respects resembled baseball. The old man stood about ten feet farther away from the young man than the pitcher stands from the plate. The young man had to avoid being hit by the spears. To do this he was permitted to jump from side to side or into the air, or to duck, but he was expected always to land on approximately the same spot as he had been standing on when the first spear was thrown. Thus there was no marked strike zone, but an implied one. If the accused jumped well away from the strike zone, he was jeered by the crowd. If the old man was wild, he was jeered too, but more respectfully. Under such rules a modern baseball hitter, having no bat in his hand to worry about, would almost never be hit by a pitched ball, and the Tiwi young men were similarly never likely to be hit by an old man's spears. The main danger was the spear that pitched in the dirt. Although clearly outside the strike zone and hence an indication that the old man was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

627 really wild, such a spear was apt to carom off the ground at an unexpected angle
684 and inflict a severe wound before the spectators (as collective umpires) had time to call it—in which case the duel was over and the accused was punished.[2]

Apart from those that unpredictably deflected off the ground, or even off a neighboring tree, the young man could dodge the old man's spears indefinitely if he wanted to. He was much younger and hence almost invariably in much better shape than the older man. But if he did this, the old man soon
[626] began to look a little ridiculous, and Tiwi society thoroughly disapproved of
[888] young men who made old men look ridiculous in public. Continued dodging and jumping and weaving of the body, no matter how gracefully they were done, were not prolonged by any young man who hoped in time to become a respected elder himself. The elders in the last analysis controlled bestowals, and holding one of them up to public ridicule was sure to antagonize all of them. So the young man, having for five or ten minutes demonstrated his physical ability to avoid being hit, then showed a proper moral attitude by allowing himself to be hit. This took even greater skill in bodily movement. Trying to lose a fight without making it too obvious to the crowd and without getting hurt too much oneself is a problem that confronts some professional athletes in our own culture, and few of them do it with as much skill as the younger Tiwi in the same situation. A fairly deep cut on the arm or thigh that bled a lot but healed quickly was the most desirable wound to help the old man inflict, and when the blood gushed from such a wound the crowd yelled approval and the duel was over. The young man had behaved admirably, the old man had vindicated his honor, the sanctity of marriage and the Tiwi constitution had been upheld, and everybody went home satisfied and full of moral rectitude. Seduction did not pay.

This was the Tiwi duel as it ideally should be conducted, and in per-
183 haps as many as two-thirds of all such disputes it was so conducted. Divergences
627 from this form clearly arose from the unpredictability of human beings and
684 their fondness for trying to exercise choice instead of following a set pattern. Though the dice were heavily loaded against them, some Tiwi young men chose defiance instead of repentance. There were various avenues of defiance open to them. The mildest was to refuse to allow the old man's spears to hit
627 the target. Slightly more brazen were the young men who turned up at the
684 beginning of the duel with throwing sticks or hunting spears in their hands, even though they used these not to throw but to knock aside contemptuously the spears of the old man. More brazen still was the young man, rare but not unknown, who went so far as to throw missiles back at the older accuser. All such attempts to defy the traditional pattern of the duel met with the same response, and that very quickly. The duel began as usual with the two antagonists facing one another inside the circle of spectators. As soon as it became apparent that the young man was not conforming to the normal pattern of meekness and nonretaliation, there would be immediate activity on the

[2] Two cases of broken legs below the knee within six weeks of each other in 1928 give some indication of the force with which such badly aimed spears would bounce off the ground.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

sidelines. Two or three or four senior men would leave the spectators and range themselves alongside the accuser, spears in hand. Other senior men would quietly leave their seats and sit down in the audience alongside close relatives of the young defendant, particularly his full brothers or his father, if they were present, and gently lay restraining hands upon them. Within a few minutes there was no longer an old man facing a young man but as many as four or five old men facing one young man, and no sign of support for him. His close male relatives would keep their seats or (more often) allow themselves to be led away as if they did not want to witness what was coming next. Never, in any of these cases, did any supporter of the young man step into the ring and line up with him. He remained an isolate, faced by several older men, and of course he had no chance. It was easy to dodge the spears of one opponent, since they had to be thrown one at a time; it was impossible to dodge the spears of more than one, since they could be thrown more or less simultaneously. 627 684

Usually this baring of its teeth by society-at-large was enough. The group of elders did not need to throw many spears simultaneously. The accused capitulated by throwing aside his spears or throwing sticks, or if the defiance had been only of the mildest form—namely, an undue prolongation of the dodging—he allowed his accuser to score a direct hit and the duel ended in the normal way. In the rare cases of the accused refusing to give up, even when confronted by a menacing line of several elders, a concerted volley or two from them quickly knocked him out, and in pre-white days, usually killed him.[8] Crime thus paid even less for the accused who chose defiance than it did for the accused who allowed himself to be wounded in a duel by a doddering ancient three times his age. The greater the amount of defiance, the more clear it became that the doddering ancient, acting ostensibly as an outraged husband, was the responsible agent of society dispensing public justice. If he needed help, all responsible elders went to his aid, and the kinsmen of the accused stood aside and let justice take its course.

WARFARE Apart from the occasional castaways and the very occasional other visitors such as "Malays," the Tiwi in pre-white times had nobody to fight with except each other. Duels of the type we have just described were their only formula for settling disputes, and these occasionally became sufficiently broadened to warrant being called warfare. The expedition of Tiklauila and Rangwila to the country of the Mandiimbula which was listed in Chapter 2 among the travels of Tu'untalumi in 1928 was an example of this sort of activity. At least half a dozen senior members of the two first-named bands had disputes with various individuals among the Mandiimbula. Some of these were seduction cases but some of them involved charges by elder against elder, 628

[8] Since the coming of white administration, the Tiwi have found that when a man is killed in a native duel, there is a strong likelihood that white policemen will appear and will drag some of them off to Darwin where incomprehensible proceedings called murder trials then take place. To avoid such nonsense, since about 1925 they have tended to use throwing sticks rather than spears in their fighting. Throwing sticks, while dangerous, seldom kill people outright and as long as nobody is killed, the police in Darwin show no interest in native fights on the islands. 177 648

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

garded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker. The tribe thought of him in much the same way, the missionaries and anthropologist agreed with the estimate. Bob was essentially a "good boy." He never did anything wrong, never answered back, never spoke out of turn, never stepped out of line, never deviated from the behavior expected of him. He was, of course, too young in Tiwi categories to have any influence or importance. But it is hard to see how age could turn him into anything more positive than he was at 28, at which age he invited the comment that he had very little personality. About all that could be said is that he was a born follower and always tried to do the right thing, the right thing consisting in conforming to the expectations of whatever group he happened to be with at the moment. When with the tribe Bob did what the elders told him to do. If they disagreed among themselves, Bob waited until the majority decision was clear and then added his voice to the chorus of agreement. The same faithfulness which caused his white employers to label Bob "a good boy" caused the tribal elders to regard him as among the sounder of the young men, though they deplored his tendency to spend so much time in Darwin. But even on his trips to Darwin Bob did not depart too much from the norms for men of his age who had been children when the Mission came and who therefore constituted a post-white generation. He did not stay more than three or four months at a time in Darwin, he returned for all the steps of his initiation ceremonies, he observed his food and other taboos even when in Darwin, and during his sojourns there he never caused scandal back-home by getting into the slightest "trouble." He went to Darwin when the tribe could raise no valid objection to his going, he returned whenever his absence led to criticism. Bob was a barometer of which line offered the least resistance at any given time. His chief motivation seemed to be to escape public attention, to always be where he would attract the least notice.

The only occasion I ever saw Bob forced to emerge from the background and take the center of the stage was on one occasion when he returned from Darwin and was told by the local gossips that his wife had been unfaithful to him during his absence. The man involved was—not surprisingly—his brother Louis. This really put Bob on the spot. In pre-white days a youngster like Bob would not have had a wife, and therefore the situation of a man of Bob's tender years calling an older man to account for seducing his wife could not have arisen. The traditional pattern in seduction cases is for the husband, necessarily an older man, to accuse the alleged seducer, necessarily a young man and therefore a bachelor and a person of no importance, and demand vengeance on him. The accuser is, therefore, traditionally a man of weight and prestige and dignity, and carries on his case against the seducer with style and authority. The accused on the other hand, being young and a person of no importance, stands abashed, cowed and silent, looking guilty while the outranged husband showers him with tirades of abuse, followed finally by spears or throwing-sticks. In the case of Bob versus Louis the casting of these traditional roles was all wrong. Bob, overcome with embarrassment, did his best

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 177 183 561 684 to give an imitation of an angry and indignant elder telling off an impertinent "young punk,"[11] but even to the Tiwi, the spectacle of the subservient and retiring Bob trying to overawe and browbeat the formidable and completely self-reliant Louis was such a perversion of the traditional pattern that it bordered on the farcical. As soon as it was over and the conventions were satisfied, Bob, pale and shaken by the unwonted initiative and aggressiveness he had been forced to display, hurried back to the oblivion of Darwin where no such demands were made on a good boy, and, presumably to ensure that he would not be forced to go through such an ordeal again, took the rather unusual step of taking his wife along with him this time.

157 The above brief sketches convey perhaps some idea of the variation in personalities of the five brothers. Obviously no definite conclusions can be drawn from material of this sort. It is merely suggestive of possibilities for theory. What it seems to suggest is, however, at variance with the idea that personality is substantially uniform in the simpler societies. No attempt has been made in this paper to explore the full gamut of personal differences among the Tiwi. By adding half a dozen other individuals (including such as Tu'untalumi and Dooley, already briefly mentioned) to the five siblings we have discussed above, it would be easy to widen the number of "personality types" illustrated. By confining our attention to the sons of Turimpi we have avoided an arbitrary selection of contrasting individuals; the five men selected were chosen *not because* they were different *but because* they were brothers. How different they are in that vaguely defined thing called personality is largely a matter of opinion depending almost entirely upon what is regarded as a "personality" difference. All that we would here claim for them in the way of difference is that on any continuum for a single trait the five sons of Turimpi range themselves about as differentially as any five average men are likely to do in our culture. In aggressiveness, for example, Mariano is well toward one end of the range, Bob well toward the other; Tipperary, Louis and Antonio at different points in between. In decisiveness or decision-making, Mariano, Louis and Tipperary belong to the heavily positive side, Antonio and Bob on the heavily negative side. But if we couple with decisiveness the ability to win friends and influence people, Tipperary, the decisive and popular, must be sharply separated from Louis and Mariano, decisive but unpopular. The three aggressive dominating types differ markedly among themselves in what might be called interest in life or chief motivating force, Mariano expressing his need for dominance through political channels, Louis through sex, Tipperary through laughter and kidding. On an introvert-extrovert continuum, Louis the silent withdrawn lone-wolf has to be placed well toward the introvert pole, with Mariano not very far away from him, but with Tipperary the out-giving friendly "Rotarian" kidder at the other extreme, and Antonio well down toward Tipperary's end. These are of course just a few of the possible ranges along which the sons of Turimpi have to be located.

Whatever facet of behavior we seize on for comparison, we find these five

423 refer to one another as *gia yirt'amini* (my "one grandfather") in preference
613 to *gi'iwuni* (my brother), or *gia kalipini* (my half-brother), which is the
601 normal term of address.

423 A member of another horde found trespassing upon the territory
685 of the *Tiklawila* would be killed immediately unless he had been invited for
609 a corroboree or some such festival. A member of the same horde who,
621 not belonging to the *yirt'amini* group, trespasses in *Tayio* would not be put to death, but he and his relatives would become embroiled in a serious quarrel with the group.

423 *Tayio* is the best example of this peculiar institution because being
613 in an out-of-the-way peninsula no one needs to go there except people
621 who have a right there. Consequently the *Tayiauwila* can exercise a much stricter supervision and hence as a matter of fact guard their rights more jealously than the people with such rights over districts that lie upon the main roads of the two islands. Nevertheless the whole of *Tiklaru* is divided into such districts and the whole of the *Tiklawila* into such *yirt' amini* groups.

Thus bordering on the *Tayiauwila* to the east, we find the *Arupula* who have similar hunting and food-collecting rights over *Arupi*, the coastal district in the middle of the south coast of Bathurst Island. The origin of their title is lost in obscurity inasmuch as nobody to-day knows who the ancestor was or exactly where is the grave that gave them such a right. Nor is the *Arupula* title respected as much as is the *Tayiauwila* partly because *Arupi* is crossed by several "high-roads"—notably the only road to *Tayio* from the east, and the *Wrayngwila* road to the Mission Station —but even more because the present representatives of the *Arupula* are either uninitiated youths or peaceful old men.

423 This introduces what is perhaps the main factor in the perpetuation
628 of this institution—the power of the *yirt'amini* groups to enforce their
613 rights. The ownership of a particular territory by a horde and the
685 punishment of trespass upon it can always be enforced because there is always a certain number of fighting men in the horde. Hence horde-ownership is respected. In the *yirt' amini* group, however, periods frequently occur when the group is not strong enough to enforce its claims, and unless the claims are constantly brought under the notice of the rest of the horde they are ignored. The result is that unless the family gets a new lease of life by boys growing up into formidable warriors, such a

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

period is the prelude to the complete lapsing of the title to the district. 423
The prominent part played in this institution by the father's father and the 628
fact that most of the present districts held on such a title are held from the 613
father's father whereas comparatively few are held through an ancestor 685
(necessarily more remote) who has been forgotten, seems to indicate that *yirt' amini* holdings do not last more than three generations before they lapse for want of sufficient able-bodied men to enforce them.

It must not be imagined that the whole of Melville and Bathurst 423
Islands are divided into such holdings nor indeed that everyone in the tribe 613
belongs to such a group. The main obstacle to this lies in the self- 621
evident fact that if one's father's father dies in the territory of another horde, as must have quite frequently have happened in the days of marauding expeditions between hordes, there can be no such thing as a *yirt' amini* holding of the district wherein he died. Moreover there are numbers of the Tiwi whose fathers and grandfathers died young, and the essence of the system is that the grandfather should have been old enough to have sufficient male children and grandchildren to enforce the claim.

It can easily be seen from the above how it comes about that each horde has a number of names, since each one of the *yirt' amini* group-names 621
is liable to be applied to the whole horde merely by adding *-ila* or *-ula* to 101
the name of the district they control.

Spencer's list of horde names is at variance with mine, because he 101
did not realize this. Out of six men of the *Tiklauwila*, one might easily 114
get six different answers to his question as to their "country," each 103
giving the name of his *yirt' amini* group. It is quite possible that the 621
horde names that are used here—*Tiklauwila*, *Munupula*, etc.—are really *yirt' amini* names that have become extended to include a whole horde either by the identification of a very powerful *yirt' amini* group with a horde in the eyes of the rest of the tribe or by the former horde name becoming tabu and a *yirt' amini* name being substituted. This view is strengthened by the fact that in one or two of the hordes, the horde name is still in use as the name of a district. Thus whereas the whole of the territory of the *Wilraygwila* on the north of Melville is technically *Wilraygu*, the native name for Karslake Island, a small portion of that territory, is *Wilraygu*. Similarly *Malau* is a creek in the territory of the *Malauila* horde.

A man is born into the horde of his father. Should his father die and 591
his mother be taken by a member of another horde he goes with her, and [611]
WHILE THE WOMAN WILL ALWAYS BE LOOKED UPON 621
AS BELONGING TO HER FORMER HORDE, THE CHILD [768]
CHANGES HIS, TAKING THAT OF HIS STEPFATHER.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

571 he had arrived there as a member of a large war party. This situation stemmed
602 from the coexistence, on the one hand, of the intricate web of kinship that
628 united everybody present and made the problem of who would support whom unpredictable enough, and, on the other, the intricate network of deals and promises and personal alliances and obligations that every senior Tiwi man had woven inside the kinship system. A Tiwi elder did not, for example, have one category of relatives called his mother's brothers; he had at least three different categories of mother's brothers. There were those mother's brothers who had given him nothing, those who had given him wives, and those who had promised him a wife but were dragging their feet on delivery, or even trying to renege on their promise. In pressing a case against one of this third category, an elder might quite conceivably alienate some of his mother's brothers of the second category. Nor could he be sure of the support of even his own brothers, since they were certainly cultivating, and possibly undercutting him with, the same donors of daughters as he was involved with. Perhaps the nondelivery, which was the whole basis of his case against the mother's brother, had been instigated by his own brother trying to engineer a rebestowal of the girl to him. Because of the two networks, that of formal kinship obligations and that of marriage deals, two Tiwi seniors engaged in a dispute had no impartial body to whom they could submit their arguments about breach of contract. Disputes between a young man and an elder could
[674] be submitted to the publicly witnessed duel, since these were not breaches of contract but cases of trespass by the young men, and as such were crimes.
[626] Impartial public opinion upheld the old men and punished the young men every time. The old men's arguments with each other, however, could not be
[686] so adjusted, since they involved marriage deals (as distinct from seduction) and in marriage deals everybody was involved and nobody was impartial. Where any senior stood on any marriage deal in dispute depended on how that
[557] deal fitted into his own conniving. In that area of life, every adult man had his own axes to grind and a disinterested group of umpires was impossible to find.

Thus Tiwi battles had to be the confused, disorderly, inconclusive
628 things they always were. They usually lasted all day, during which about
578 two-thirds of the elapsed time was consumed in violent talk and mutual abuse between constantly changing central characters and satellites. The remaining third of the time was divided between duels involving a pair of men who threw spears at each other until one was wounded, and brief flurries of more general weapon throwing involving perhaps a dozen men at a time, which ended whenever somebody, even a spectator, was hit. As a result of this full day of violence, perhaps a few of the cases would be settled that night—by a father handing over his delayed daughter, or a man with a disputed wife relinquishing her to her rightful husband—but when the war party left next day to return home, the number of cases settled was likely to be less than the number of new feuds, grievances, and injuries that had originated during the day of battle. For not only did the participants carry away from the battlefield a vivid memory of all the physical wounds, intended or accidental, inflicted by whom

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 relatives, soon caught up with them. Several cases of such elopements occurred
583 during the period of fieldwork, including the case of one young couple (Peanut and Jumbo's wife) who made repeated attempts to elope over a period of several years. But despite the relaxation of standards that white contact had
[626] brought, as long as they remained on the islands these violators of the system were soon forced back into conformity by outraged public opinion and its punitive sanctions. Unless he fled to the mainland with his girl, the young bachelor who stole an old man's young wife had to restore her sooner or later to her rightful husband. Under pre-white conditions they could not flee to the mainland; if they tried, they both probably drowned on the way or at least were never heard of again.

Thus the isolation of the Tiwi made the rule of the gerontocracy much
182 more absolute, and the enforcement of it much more effective than was possible
691 for any of the mainland tribes where violators of the rules could skip across the border. Tiwi bachelors had to be satisfied, by and large, with casual and temporary liaisons and even in these, because of the constant suspicion of the old husbands and the constant spying and scandalmongering of the old wives, they had to be prepared to be often caught and, when caught, to be punished.
[578] Thus we come to another of the main emphases in Tiwi culture—the enormous frequency of disputes, fights, duels, and war parties arising directly or indirectly out of cases of seduction. If we may call this area of life the legal area, then over 90 percent of legal affairs were matters in which women were in some way involved.

627 THE DUEL The Tiwi formula for handling seduction was very
684 straightforward and clear-cut in its formal outline. Since senior men had young wives and young men had not, seduction was necessarily viewed as an offense by a young man against a senior man. Hence the charge was always laid by the senior and the younger man was always the defendant.[1] At night in camp the accuser hurled his charges at the offender. We described earlier the alternatives available at this stage to both parties. Two of those alternatives were for the old man to press the matter to a public "trial," either the next day, if the camp was already a large one, or else on the next occasion when both men were present in a big gathering.

The basic shape of all Tiwi trials was standardized in the form that we have been calling the duel. Everybody present—men, women, children, and dogs—formed a rough circle in an open space, sitting or standing according to their degree of excitement at the moment. At one end stood the accuser,
[302 the old man, covered from head to foot in white paint, with his ceremonial
411] spears in one hand and a bundle of the more useful hunting spears in the

[1] Under pre-white conditions this had to be so. After the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, some young men through Mission manipulation got a young wife at an age that would have been impossible earlier. This resulted in an occasional case around the Mission where a *young* husband charged a man older than himself with seducing his wife. The resulting duel, with an older man as defendant, was regarded by the Tiwi as both embarrassing and ludicrous, perhaps analogous to the average American's attitude toward female professional wrestlers. (See Hart 1954 for a case of this sort, the duel of Bob v. Louis.)

755 death was an early patient. The new witch-doctor applied his lips to her chest and appeared to suck out a dirty, rusty rag, a piece of wire, and a few pebbles, together with some blood (which he probably produced by biting his tongue).

The woman died; but all the people uttered loud exclamations of wonderment at the cleverness of the doctor, and a collection, [276] chiefly of sticks of tobacco, was made to mark their approval of such distinguished surgical attainments. Similarly, when some youngsters had become entangled with a school of jelly fish while bathing in the Strait, one baby at least being quite unconscious, the old fellow performed his ritual, and collected, when the patients had all revived after treatment with ammonia by the mission fathers. Such are some of the trials and problems that have to be faced in dealing with the islanders.

622 And now we encountered Mariano. "This chap calls himself king," I was informed; "but nobody recognises his authority." Mariano was a fine, upstanding man, and he carried a bundle of many-pronged and gaily-painted spears. "Me king!" said Mariano to me as we came up. "Hullo, King!" said I, and Mariano proudly inflated his chest at this highly proper recognition of his royal status. But, if Mariano is not king, he is at 721 least a person of some importance. They had been holding a 727 war on the islands for the previous six months or so, and arrangements for the next battle were being held up pending Mariano's decision about a corroboree at which his presence was essential. At the moment he could not make up his mind to leave the mission station, so war and corroboree were both in abeyance.

WARS are of frequent occurrence on the islands. The current combat was in connexion with the possession of a very young lubra; but, since there had been only two casualties (one man had lost an eye, and another warrior had had a leg broken) in the six months, in all probability she will have died of old age before the matter is settled, unless, of course, the warriors tire of this as a pretext and come to some arrangement. Any old excuse is good enough to start a war. If nothing better offers, they get one up "Married v. Single." Father Gsell approves of the wars.

As he says, they are the only form of manly recreation that the islanders have. It is seldom that anyone is hurt, and the battles are rather in the nature of a somewhat dangerous cricket-match with fast leg-theory permitted and encouraged. A cleared space in the forest is necessary for a battle, and consequently the mission aerodrome is a favourite site for the usually bloodless encounters. When battle is raging there, it is necessary to give the excited small boys of the mission school a holiday. They join in, too, and have great fun throwing stones at their elders.

726 Each engagement of a war is conducted with due regard to ceremony. The opposing factions line up with the width of the chosen battlefield between them. Messengers from each side march out and meet half-way between the two forces and, formal arrangements being made, return majestically each to his own side. Then each army makes a fire, round which the warriors race with spears upheld, getting closer and closer in their frantic circlings. They leap through the flames, burning the hair from their legs, and finally the circle becomes so close that the excited warriors, regardless of hot coals, tramp the fire out. With a yell of defiance, spears are cast in the air as high as the warriors can throw them.

[p. 16(B)]

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[p. 16(B)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

726 One man will then take a step or two forward, hold up a hand, and stamp vigorously, and all the warriors of his side will copy his actions. "Let 'em all come!" is the attitude adopted. If the enemy does not start hostilities at once, they throw their spears down and jump about like wallabies to show their contempt for the sluggard's marksmanship. They are, however, careful not to get too far away from their own weapons, on which they pounce immediately the first spear is hurled by their opponents. The air is soon thick with flying spears and war-clubs, and the exchange goes on until some unlucky warrior is really hurt, when the engagement ceases.

727 BOTH sides gather round, howling their dismay, until repairs to the injured have been effected. A red-dyed ball of goose-
[781] down, which is hung from the neck by a string woven of human hair, is held before the mouth as a charm to divert the missiles, but the warriors owe their immunity from death or serious injury to their own remarkable eyesight and to the dexterity with which they evade, or turn to one side, the hurtling weapons of the enemy. The war-clubs used by the islanders are far more
411 difficult to dodge than the spears, which come straight at you.

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A BATHURST ISLANDER BRANDISHES HIS CLUB.

The war-club is merely a short, bent stick with a knob at one end; but, spinning in the air like a boomerang, it can be thrown for amazing distances by the islanders, considerably over a hundred yards, and not far off two hundred. This weapon is not thrown straight at an opponent, but at a stone, or a tuft of

[P. 17(A)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca.1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

411 grass, in the foreground, so that the whirling club slithers on in an unforeseen and most unpleasant manner. It may rise as high as a man's head, or it may strike him on the shins.

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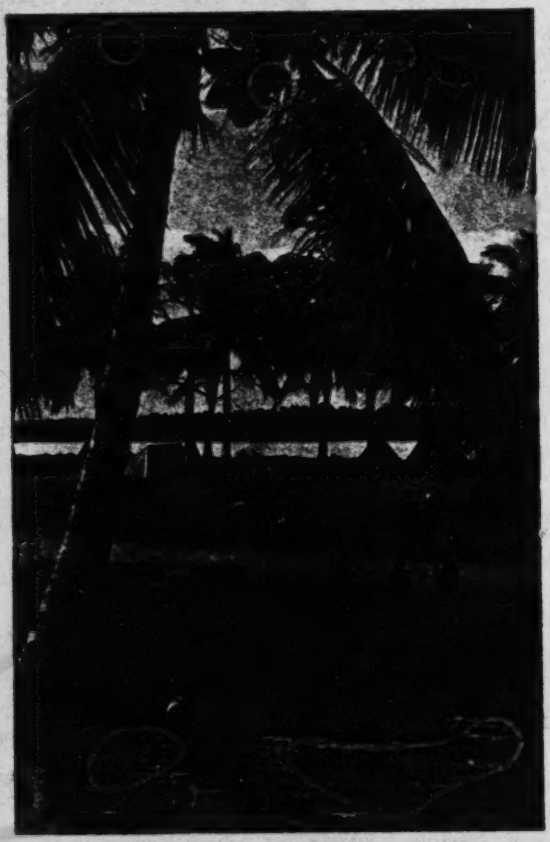

NATIVE "HOUSES" UNDER THE COCO-NUT PALMS AT BATHURST ISLAND MISSION.

726 Sometimes, as in the days of chivalry when English and French knights rode out before the main battle, eight men will advance to fight eight men of the other side, one pair at a time, each warrior throwing his spears and clubs in turn. [198] Sentries are then posted to one side, before and behind the combatants. As a warrior with a stock of pidgin English put it, "That feller, him look out front side. That feller, him look out back side."

At times warriors arrive by canoe to fight a duel on the beach close to the mission station. These are frequently more serious combats, and then men who are camped under the palms chase the duellists off; but these always land later farther down, and fight it out in the long run. Just before my visit, there had been fought the only naval battle in the history of the islands. The encounter took place in the mouth of Apsley Strait to the accompaniment of excited yells as canoes overturned when warriors stepped unevenly in dodging the flying spears. Nobody

[p. 17(B)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

726 received any serious damage, and it seemed to have been a most enjoyable occasion. An islander, who had seen the world from the decks of many luggers, made a remark that was truer than he knew, "When white feller go to war, he takem rifle, he takem

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HUNTING TURTLE, FROM A DUG-OUT CANOE NEAR BATHURST ISLAND.

bomb. Some feller *must* be killed! White feller silly b——!" It cannot be said that the mission fathers have a dull time at Bathurst Island.

797 There are two sisters of the order at the Mission Station. In addition to teaching the girls, they attend to all household mat-

[p. 18(A)]

755 death was an early patient. The new witch-doctor applied his lips to her chest and appeared to suck out a dirty, rusty rag, a piece of wire, and a few pebbles, together with some blood (which he probably produced by biting his tongue).

The woman died; but all the people uttered loud exclamations of wonderment at the cleverness of the doctor, and a collection, [272] chiefly of sticks of tobacco, was made to mark their approval of such distinguished surgical attainments. Similarly, when some youngsters had become entangled with a school of jelly fish while bathing in the Strait, the baby at least being quite unconscious, the old fellow performed his ritual, and collected, when the patients had all revived after treatment with ammonia by the mission fathers. Such are some of the trials and problems that have to be faced in dealing with the islanders.

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[p. 16(B)]

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[P. 17(A)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked
789 what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on
[754] the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation.
13 Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because
[182] they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life—
[789] for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals
[164 (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws)
731] scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago.
[761 Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not
764] magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their
101 cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next
131 door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature,
182 though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic
754 making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

784 The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; graveposts were *pukimani*

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

162 592 621 as a team and the food they produced was consumed by the thirty-two total members of the establishment. For comparative purposes in Table III we list Ki-in-kumi's establishment as Unit I and give the personnel breakdown of the other six establishments that made up the total population of Malau. Unit II is the joint enterprise maintained by the other two senior elders, the brothers Enquirio and Merapanui. To this we have added the pathetic and ostracized Teapot and his motherless son, since when they ate at all they ate as hangers-on of the Enquirio-Merapanui menage. Unit III is the establishment jointly maintained by the brothers White Man and Ku-nai-u-ua. Since the oldest wife of Ku-nai-u-ua was Summit's mother, that young man, together with the elderly ex-widow who was so far his only resident wife, lived in this establishment. Units IV and V present no difficulty; they are the small households of the other two junior elders Pingirimini and Tipiperna-gerai respectively. Unit VI is the joint enterprise of Gitjara and L. F. B., containing largely old ladies and young men. Unit VII is the remarkable menage that had gathered round the elderly widow whom young Banana had illegally "married." To this couple

TABLE III
THE FOOD PRODUCTION UNITS OF MALAU

Unit	Married Males	Unmarried Males[a]	Old Wives[b]	Young Wives	Girls Under 14	Total Persons
I	3	8	5	11	5	32
II	3	9	1	7	11	31
III	3	2	2	3	5	15
IV	1	5	0	1	1	8
V	1	2	0	1	2	6
VI	2	5	3	0	1	11
VII	1?	4	1	0	0	6
Total	14	35	12	23	25	109

[a] Unmarried males include all males from male infants to men around 30, or more.
[b] The division between old wives and young wives is arbitrary. Several of the young wives were 40, others only 14 or 15.
? The question mark in Unit VII refers to the difficulty of deciding whether Banana should be classified as married.

had attached themselves Tiberun (Banana's unmarried older brother), two younger brothers, and another male orphan who had apparently moved in [736] for want of some better place to eat. The Banana menage thus had somewhat the appearance of a case of economic polyandry and somewhat the look of a fraternity house with an elderly housemother in residence. We include it as Unit VII since by so doing we are able to include in Table III all the hundred and nine people who made up the Malauila band in 1928-29 and allocate all of them to the economic units in which they functioned as food producers and food consumers.

The data in Table III merit close study. These seven establishments illustrate in capsule form several of the more significant emphases in Tiwi career patterns; indeed each might be said to illustrate some time point in the life careers of adult men and/or some degree of success or lack of success in becoming an influential man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 592 them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that 159 his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few un- 177 comfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped 592 with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose [736 deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother 968] had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased [584 younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Car- 589] mel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were [607] two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1] [602] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

177 We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led 162 by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a list- 571 ing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent. [768 Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had 604 daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the 584 "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar- 177

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing. 768 [428] [783] [825]

(a) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulaninbuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers". 764

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[83] from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *tokwiangu* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs. 302 751 775

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[84] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground 764

[83] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[84] After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditis* fear the light. 123 775

For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 and dug the grave, which was about six feet long and five feet six inches deep. But when, in the middle of the afternoon, four men appeared, carrying the body, in a fully extended position, and placed it beside the unfinished grave, a number of women, painted all over in white, sat beside the corpse and cried heart-brokenly until the grave was finished. There was a chorus of wailing [302] from both men and women when one of the "workers" painted *Pulanimbuwi's* body entirely in white (Pl. 23A), as additional camouflage to confuse [751] his wife's *mopaditi*.

The ceremonials associated with the burial started when first the husband, then a near relative, dancing astride the corpse, called out loudly, "*Yook, yook*". This ritual, called *wuramu*, was first introduced by the pelican-man at *Purukupali's* ceremony. At the present time it is performed by close relatives [775] of the dead, its object being to scare the *mopaditi* into the grave where it will not be a menace to the living.

After this ritual, two other men entered the grave and, standing, one either end, took the dead body from those above. Amid the sounds of wailing women and the clapping of men's hands on their buttocks, the corpse was gently laid on a bed of transverse logs on the bottom. Other "workers" cut green branches and placed them across the top of the grave.

The husband, carrying a lighted firestick, then entered the grave, burnt the hair on his legs and left immediately. The aborigines believe that the [775] *mopaditi*, smelling the burnt hair of her husband, and thinking he was beside her, stayed quietly in the grave.

The bushes were thrown into the grave, logs, about five feet long,[55] laid on top, and the hole was filled in, leaving a small mound which was covered with sheets of paper-bark (Pl. 24C). Short sticks were driven into the ground at the head and foot of the grave, on one of which the husband hung the meagre belongings of his wife.

764 Both men and women then performed a series of dances, the men danced 535 the flying fox, shark and crocodile, while both the elder and younger women moved in a line toward the grave, holding large green leaves in their hands, palm upward, symbolizing the dead woman when a small child, being carried by her mother.

A woman, holding her breasts, impersonated *Nulatini's* mother feeding her, while a near male relative mimed the mother carrying *Nulatini* as an infant.

764 At the conclusion, *Pulanimbuwi* seated himself at the head of the grave,

[825] [55] The aborigines explained that the logs kept the dogs from unearthing the body, but as, at the present time, the body is over five feet underground, this does not appear to be the reason. It may be that, when tools were more primitive and graves not so deep, these precautions were necessary.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(a) One of the first series, when the "workers" were appointed, which was held in the main camp. 765

(b) One of the second series, held at a ceremonial ground mid-way between the first and the place of burial.

(c) An *ilanis* performed by the Bathurst Island group who attended to take part in the final *pukamuni* rituals.

(a) *The First Ilanias*

The first series of *ilanias* was performed on a ceremonial ground, about forty feet in diameter, adjacent to *Wurarbui's* camp. All stones and tree roots had been dug out so that the dancers would not injure their feet. In the centre of the dancing circle, or *milimika*, a fire was laid ready for the later ritual of *wandiatapinda*, or fire-jumping,[69] a ritual which was carried out at most but not all of the *ilanias* (Pl. 24B). At some of the later *ilanias*, particularly at the second *milimika*, aborigines, close relatives of the dead, performed a similar ritual by climbing a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and dead leaves (Pl. 23C).

Although I suspect that the ritual of jumping over the fire once had a deeper significance, the present day belief is that the fire, by burning the hair on the legs of the aborigines, protects them from stumbling over logs; from their limbs becoming tired on long journeys, or from dead trees falling on them as they travel through the forest. The smoke from the fire also brought them good health. No women took part in the *wandiatapinda* rituals, although the men often held their small children in the smoke. [751] [372]

Wurarbui, the ceremonial leader or *alouwia* (frontispiece) of the *Waniampari's pukamuni* rituals, was an intelligent, sophisticated aboriginal, who had worked for long periods in Darwin, and, more recently, had visited the southern States to dance before the Queen of England. 765 177

Because of his knowledge of European ways and the goods of the white man, the songs and dances of this first series of *ilanias* were a curious mixture of the old and the new cultures. Although most, if not all, of the dances performed at the *ilanias* are traditional and totemic, it is permissible to modify them for the song of the moment. [176]

The ceremony opened when the assembled aborigines, about twenty of them, standing within the *milimika*, gave the low-pitched honey call, with the high-pitched mosquito call, which precedes and finishes all *ilanias*.

[69] Spencer (1928, p. 648), saw this rite at Cockle Point, on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), during 1911. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

blood from the arm of the victim, yet leaves no wound. As the sick person 753
becomes weaker, the *Papinjuwari*, making himself sufficiently small, enters 776
the body through the mouth, and, by drinking up the rest of the blood, kills the victim.

776
[532x]

FIG. 12. *The Spirit People*
The Meteor-man, Papinjuwari.

On his return to Wangidji, the meteor-man vomits the stolen blood into a bark container. This provides a drink for the assembled *Papinjuwaris*.

The aborigines stated that, as the Tiwi have no medicine men, they are [751]
without protection against these dangerous spirit people.[42] [756]

Pl. 47C is a simple bark painting of the *Papinjuwaris*. The white figures are 532x
the ghoulish sky-people, the crescents are moons, and the circles, stars.

Fig. 12 is the copy of a crayon drawing showing a *Papinjuwari*, *a*, inside 776
of his paper-bark hut at Wangidji. On either side of him at *b*, *b*, are the large

[42] Spencer, 1928, p. 671, refers to a song chanted in a *Kulama* ceremony which is supposed to protect the initiates from an evil spirit, the shooting star, *Mabiwa* (almost certain to be my *Papinjuwari*); Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 282, who call the meteor man, Papinowari, or Lamparapari, state that, if a piece of dried blood of a person is burnt, the smell will attract the meteor-man. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat and so prevent the theft. 776 821 648

The Maratjis at Maundu

Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained by the faeces of the *Maratjis*. 776 778

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandubuka* totem are the only people safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from his own armpits, rubs it over his companion. 751 776 [827]

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then, walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi* which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of Maundu. [437] [753] [164]

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon, they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an aboriginal, called *Alumgun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this taboo. [841] [784]

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu. 532 x 778

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained) water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the 776

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

All those in number one group belong to the same clan, and are "opposite" to those of number two group, who also belong to one clan. The lines A, B, C and D are intermarrying groups, i.e. Ego marries his *yabunaiya*, etc. 582 61 [614]

Of course, relationship terms also include others denoting the type of relation or blood tie. For instance, a mother's brother or a sister's son (group) when distantly related to Ego could be his father-in-law and would then be called *YUNARENIWA*. A true father is *ERINGANI*, a father's sister, *yananiya*; father's father *ARMINI*; father's mother, *armma*; mother's brother's own daughter, *yamuina*, and one son, *YAMUWANINI*[4]; half brother is *INGULABINI* and a half-sister *inguleba*.[5]

This system of marriage is not unlike the Murngin and Anula system and also is the same as the *wadji wadji* (wrong side marriage) of the Mudbara. In one, cross-cousins—not *inguleba*—can marry, while in the true Mudbara cross-cousin marriage is prohibited. 582

Rites. The rituals centre around the Kulama. The underlying principle of this is to ensure that the Kulama (a small hot yam that embodies the spirit of the "old woman" and guardian of the horde) is cooked correctly, for this ensures her protection against Maradji, the rainbow snake, another old woman who can cause evil to come upon them and "swallow them" up. It is performed during the wet season by each family, and is said to bring about a plentiful supply of food. The Kulama is also used to pass the initiates, both male and female, from a lower to a higher order in the social scale, although I myself could not see that any important results were obtained by the initiates through the ritual.[6] 796 [561]

Some result, or at least protection, however, is obtained: if the Kulama is not sung or danced at the prescribed time or place, the Marakarti (spear grass) and also the ring used for cooking the Kulama yams at the ritual, would give rise to a poison, *Tani*, which would pass into the air and cause sickness; perhaps a youth who had not passed through the Kulama would sicken and die. On the other hand, a youth who has passed through the ritual may gain a certain satisfaction by believing that he can drive the sickness away and protect the family. In addition, the Kulama is not only an increase ritual for yams; in it the father also "sings" the name of his child in a form of song, *apa*, and foretells in a dream that a certain spirit "shade" will be incarnated through one of his wives at some future date; for these children are waiting at that "spirit dreaming" place called Bilawuwi. In other words, it is a human increase ritual. [751] [842]

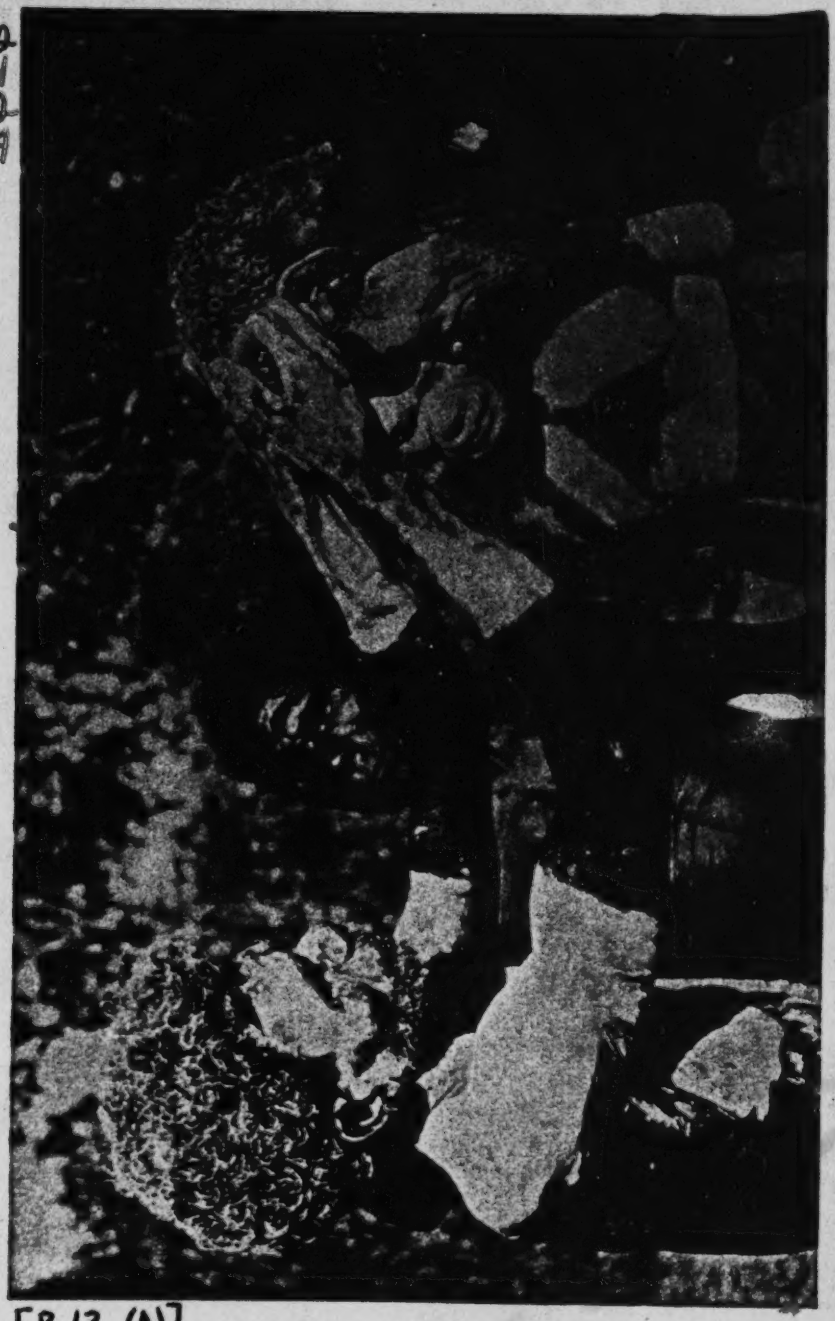
[4] These are true cousins and cannot marry.

[5] This *inguleba* native is the term for persons who are taboo to Ego; they cannot approach Ego's wives, as their sweat must not touch. They are people who are "out of line" in relationship. For instance, if a Kudjarli man marries two women, one a Tukambani and the other a Miatai, his children would be of two different *pukui* or totems. These children, half-brothers and half-sisters, are *inguleba* to each other.

[6] It is unlike the Karawadi of the subincised people, in which the initiate is freed of certain food taboos, and again in the Kudidjingara, through which the old men receive magical power to levy tribute from the young people of the tribe, who have not passed through that ritual.

11;Goodale E-5 (1954,1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

302
●751
142
884



RUBBING PAINT into the hair is supposed to prevent illness, and daubing it on the arms and legs wards off broken bones.

[P. 13, (A)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Thwi CE20

884
252
291
516

HOT EARTH over baked *Kulama* yams is removed. Yams that are to be eaten at end of ritual must be resoaked in water.

[824]

SOME COOKED YAMS are cut, peeled, and mashed. Water and paint are then added. Yams are always handled with respect.

[951]
[850]

MEN RUB MASH on bodies to insure health, then do so to the uninitiated young, whose health is paternal responsibility.

[P. 16. (A)]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

A *mopaditi* has been known to hit an aboriginal on the head with a throwing stick, causing him to foam at the mouth and become stiff and rigid. The natives cure this *mopaditi* sickness by heating pads of paper-bark and pressing them against the sides of the face or over the sick man's ears until his muscles relax. 775 753 757

Once, when a young woman went hunting in the forest by herself, a male *mopaditi* took her away, fed her on a special bush food until she became, like the *mopaditis* themselves, invisible to human eyes. One evening, after many weeks, the *mopaditi* brought the girl back to a place near the camp, stood her against a tree, gave a loud whistle and left.

When relatives found her, she was demented and deaf, with cold, clammy skin and staring eyes. Quickly they lit a fire, heated her hands, and held them, palms inwards, against the sides of her face. When her body became a little warmer, her relatives pressed heated pads of paper-bark against the sides of her face and over her ears, until she went to sleep. After several days of such treatment, the girl recovered and was able to tell what had happened.

The old men warned her never again to go walking in the forest by herself because should the *mopaditis* recapture her, it might not be possible to bring her back to health.

The aborigines also told me about the time when some *mopaditis* stole an old woman, *Incampuna*, took her into the jungle and covered her with boughs. When her relatives found her, sick and unconscious, they brought her back to camp, shouting loudly to stop the *mopaditis* from following. As before, they applied heated pads of paper-bark to "open up" her head until she became well again.

Plate 47A, B, pictures the grave of the wife of the artist, *Muramajua*. At *a*, is the face of the spirit of the wife, the horse-shoe design, *b*, representing her hair. The oval *e*, is a small stringy-bark tree, *o*, a large stringy-bark tree, and *p*, are bloodwood trees near the grave. 532 x

At *k*, is a stony hill near the burial place, *l*, *n*, are areas of jungle near by, and *m*, is the forested uplands.

A long fighting-stick, *tumutukamuta*, *g*, and a throwing stick, *muruguna*, *j*, are used by the *mopaditis* to strike their human victims on the head, and make them insensible.

2. DEATH AND BURIAL

Although there were minor differences between the burial of the man, *Waniamperi*, the details of which I gathered from informants, and the burial 764

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 of *Pulaninkuwi's* wife, *Nulatini*, which I saw, the general pattern was similar. I shall, however, describe both burials, that of *Nulatini* being the more detailed.

(1) *The Burial of Waniamperi*

On the day that *Waniamperi* died, *Marawani*, one of his near relatives, who wanted the dead man buried near his mother, paid a young "worker"[88] a sum of money and two loin cloths to dig the grave.

When the corpse was brought to the burial ground, a number of relatives had a last look at the dead man before he was laid on a series of logs, placed transversely across the bottom of the grave.

This act was a signal for concerted mourning, the women beating themselves with sticks and the men cutting their heads. For personal safety it is [753] imperative that each man and woman show excessive grief, real or feigned, [626] otherwise the *mopaditi*, annoyed at the lack of grief, will make the offending person ill.

After the mourning died down, the "workers" placed boughs on the body and filled in the grave, leaving a small mound on top (Pl. 24c).

[533] While this work was being carried out, the relatives stood on one side of the grave, either singing the *amburu*, the mourning song, or the rain song of Wailu, the totem of *Tiparawilimiri*, *Waniamperi's* father. To the chanting [535] of this song, the men acted the rain dance (Pl. 30B). The aborigines did not stage the totemic dances or chant the songs belonging to the fire totem of Wuriupi (*Waniamperi's* own totem), because, to have done so, would have especially attracted the attention of his *mopaditi*.

The "workers" laid *Waniamperi's* personal belongings at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tied his loin cloth and tobacco to the top of a thin sapling which had been driven into the ground at the head of the grave, made a large fire, and left a container of water.

The aborigines believe that the *mopaditi*, seeing his belongings near at [775] hand, water to drink and fire to warm himself and cook the food he gathers in the surrounding forest, will stay near the grave until the time comes for him to leave the locality.

While the "workers" were engaged on those tasks, the rest of the burial party quietly left, not looking behind, lest the *mopaditi* follow them to their camp.

[767] [88] These "workers" or *wanaras*, being distant relatives of the dead, are in little danger from the *mopaditis*. Therefore, it is safe for them to clean the site, dig the grave, handle the body, and carry out other tasks associated with burial. They are paid for their work by the chief mourners at the final *pukamuni* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 of the *kulama* ceremony, became the boobook owl, his wife, *Pistama*, the
881 barn owl, *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, *Jirakai*, the white-headed sea-eagle, *Tupatupini*, a small owl, and so on.

(2) *The Second Kulama Ceremony*

After the close of *palaneri* times, the *Ningauis*, a spirit people, who had been present at the first *kulama*, performed a second ceremony on the same island, Turiturina, as was used by *Purutjikini* during the creation period. On the second occasion, the *Ningauis* carried out the complete *kulama*, which included not only the preparation of the poisonous *kulama* yam for food, but also the performance of all the grades of initiation from that of the *Marukumuni* to the *Mikingula*.

At its completion, the *Ningauis* decreed that the form of the ceremony with its proceeding and initiation rituals, should always be the same. The aborigines believe that if this form is altered, a mysterious sickness, called
[753] *saini* will punish them by making everyone ill.

(3) *The Myth of the Ningauis*

After the second *kulama*, the *Ningauis* made their home in the mangrove swamps of a small island, Imaluna, near Cape Helvetius, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1).

The *Ningauis* are somewhat like the present-day aborigines, except that
776 they are small people, about two feet high, with long hair and very short feet, their footmarks resembling those of an oversized dog. The aborigines often see these tracks on the edge of the mangrove swamps of Imaluna (Pl. 22c).

Should an aboriginal, when hunting through the swamps, go too near a home of the *Ningauis*, one of the *Ningauis* by calling, "Eeh", would cause the whole place to be suddenly enveloped in complete darkness. The native could bring the light back again by striking the trunk of a mangrove tree with a stick, but, in the meantime, the *Ningauis*, by taking advantage of the darkness, would have sneaked away. Therefore, no aboriginal has seen a *Ningaui* even though they are often heard in the mangrove swamps calling "Eeh, eeh", to each other.

When the *Ningauis* chant their songs after dark, the mangrove swamps become as brightly lit as in the day-time. There are stories of how aboriginal hunters, lured by the songs and the light, have wandered among the tangled mangroves to see what was going on, but as soon as the *Ningauis* heard the intruders, they finished their song with the word "Eeh",[18] which made the

[533] [18] The *Ningaui* songs chanted by *Jikunghakumi*, at one of the *ilanias* of *Wanampari* (p. 74), all ended with a long drawn-out "Eeh".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, 881
dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp, and prepared them for cooking.

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42B).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place 302
where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42B), 881
and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh", threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[33] It is [821]
believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunderstorms and so prolonging the wet season.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikingulas*, the *Mikiatarinas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts, 881
went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* [386]
sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a [824]
line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[34]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the [775]
portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always [824]
present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the *kulama* people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates then sat down to a meal of the edible yams.

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a *pukumuni* man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any [753]
part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them [626]
ill.

[33] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[34] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 463, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated men.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

88 ill. The *Marukumunis* were fed behind their bark shelter and the *Wadjeniatis* in the open camp.

(2) *The Opening Rituals*

After dark, on the day following the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, the fully initiated *kulama* men, and all people above the grade of *Mikinatrina*, prepared for the opening ceremony by clearing an oval about fourteen feet long and six feet wide. The *Marukumuni* initiates were brought from their hiding place, the *Wadjeniatis* from their camp and both were seated just outside the ceremonial ground. Neither of those grades, however, took part in the opening rituals.

[372] [753] In the middle of the ceremonial ground were two smouldering logs, but no flames, for fear of attracting *tabi*, the *kulama* sickness. Among the trees outside of the ring, were a number of families of uninitiated men, women and children.

Normally the *kulama* party would have been made up of *Mikiataras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, and the songs chanted by the men in that order.

177 533 881 539 On the occasion of our visit the ceremony opened when a *Mikingula*, *Wurarbati*, seated on the ground, beating his throwing sticks, started to hum a song softly. Becoming more confident, he stood up, and pacing backward and forward still beating his sticks, chanted the following three songs.[88]

(*a*) "My father was king, therefore I am the Prince of Wales. As King George was King, so was the old man on the hill, my (dead) father. I will have warships, money and a flag of red and white." When the singer mentioned his dead father there was a high-pitched wail among the near relatives.

(*b*) The second song dealt with the invitation he had received to dance before the Queen of England. "When the Queen was in England, she said 'I would like to see a black-fellow dance', and so I went up. King Philip watched me a lot while I danced."

(*c*) "My uncle in Darwin said to me 'Why haven't you made a lot of *pukamuni* arm rings. If you don't soon do so, you'll cause a lot of trouble among the *pukamuni* people."

Muramajua also chanted three songs;

(*a*) In the first, of which I did not collect the words, he explained, at length,

[88] This man, who was the ceremonial leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, described earlier, had been invited, only a few months previously, to visit the southern States, and dance before the Queen of England. Naturally, this left such a strong impression on his mind that many of his songs dealt with that remarkable experience.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

how a slow canoe journey had made him late for a recent *pukamani* ceremony. 177

(*b*) "I was sick in the Darwin hospital. Sister Philips said it was because I had had too much grog." 533 539

(*c*) "There was a man at Cockle Point (opposite the Bathurst Island Mission), who wanted to kill me with a spear. So I changed myself into a mullet and he didn't see me." 881

Another singer chanted,

(*a*) "I am a goose and a man cast his throwing stick and hit me." 533

(*b*) "I want that girl from Bathurst Island to wash her with fresh water to make it square for giving away my sister."[86] 539 881

Another *Mikingula*, *Palitara*, aired his differences with a woman, *Batali*, in the following song.

(*a*) "I fed *Batali*, but she did not give her daughter to me as a wife."[87]

(3) *Collecting the Kulama Yam*

Early on the following morning, the *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinaras*, the *Mikinarimas* and *Mikingulas*, went to the ceremonial ground of the previous evening. They first dipped their hands in a bark container filled with water, throwing some over their bodies; then, taking a mouthful, they squirted water into the air in imitation of rain, afterwards calling out "Oom-oom", to symbolize thunderstorms. Taking two small sticks, one in each hand, the men used them to clean the wax from their ears, afterwards standing the sticks upright in the ground.[88] 881 [515]

Placing their palms on a sheet of bark covered with white paint, the men patted their hair, chest, wrists and pubes (Pl. 44c), turning toward the north as they again called out "Oom-oom", in imitation of thunder.

Following this ritual, each *kulama* man painted another with a design in white (Pl. 42L). The leader then picked up the bark basket, held it on his arm, and facing north, south, east and west, again called "Oom-oom", while he made a drum-like sound, symbolical of thunder, by hitting the basket with his hand. After this the men set out to collect the *kulama* yams. They were

[86] I did not find out the significance of this ritual.

[87] When a woman promises her daughter to a man, it is the duty of the future son-in-law to give her continuous presents of food. On this occasion, the woman had accepted *Palitara's* gifts, but when her daughter was old enough, she gave the girl to another man. [584]

Quarrelling at a *kulama* ceremony is forbidden, otherwise *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, will destroy all the participants. This prohibition allows an aboriginal, such as *Palitara*, to air his grievance without causing a quarrel, even though, as on this occasion, the defaulting person was present. [626] [753]

[88] The meaning of this ritual is obscure. According to the aborigines it prevents trouble and quarrelling during the *kulama* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

881 led by the *Mikinatrinas*, carrying the baskets, followed by the *Mikinataras*, the *Mikiatarimas*, and the *Mikingulas*. No *kulama* woman accompanied this party.

As the *kulama* men entered the jungle they separated, each searching for vines which indicated the presence of the yam.[80] Before digging, however, the [824] *kulama* men, softly calling "Oom-oom", gently patted the ground to wake [753] up the yams, for, should any yam get a fright, its spirit, becoming annoyed, would make everyone ill with the *kulama* sickness. When digging the yams, the men were most careful not to break even one of the fine roots (Pl. 44D).

On filling in the holes, the men again made the thunder call, "Oom-oom", [821] which, they said, would cause more rain to fall before the day was over. One aboriginal accidentally broke a *kulama* yam while digging it. Instantly, he was on his feet, and, with the broken yam in his palm, dodged in and out among the trees, to escape the spirit of sickness released by the angry yam. After a few minutes, however, he returned, placed the broken yam carefully in the basket with the rest, and resumed his digging. His companions said that it was fortunate that he had only damaged the yam slightly, otherwise, its spirit would have made not only the careless aboriginal, but all of the *kulama* people ill.

When sufficient yams were collected, the party returned to camp in the same order as they went out, i.e., *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinataras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*. The *Mikinatrinas* carried the yams to the foot of a blood-wood tree, called the *wuringaleta*, cleared the grass from around the base and, taking the yams from the basket, placed them on the ground. They were covered with leaves by the female initiates, the *Mikinatriningas*.

(4) *The Preparation of the Ceremonial Ground*

In the late afternoon, the *kulama* men and the male initiates, excluding the *Marukumuni* and the *W'adjeniatis*, prepared the ceremonial ground, the *milimika*.

372 The men walked toward an open space in the forest, and with low cries, 881 beat the ground with sticks, while the leader, pulling up a tuft of grass, threw it into the air. At the place where it fell, the men dug a small circle, the *tumarapi* (navel), in which the yams were to be cooked. Then, sitting down, the men pushed the sand and grass outwards with their feet until the *milimika*, about fifteen feet in diameter, was cleared and surrounded by a low mound of earth and grass.

[222] [80] The *kulama* yam (*Dioscorea sativa*, variety *rotunda*) (Pl. 44D), is about the size of a [137] hen's egg and covered with hairs similar to a beard. It is held in the palm of the hand until it is placed carefully in the bark basket.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER V

The Spirit People of the Tiwi

776 775 THE TIWI believe that a number of spirit people live on the land, in the swamps, the sea and the sky of their tribal country. They are: the *mopaditis* (p. 61), the spirits of the dead whose homes are in the various totemic localities; the *Ningauis* (p. 124) of the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island; the *Maratjis*, or rainbow people, living in the swamps; the *Pitipinuis*, or spirit children, who later become aboriginal children; the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, of the shallow sandbars of the sea; the *Papinjuwaris*, the meteor-men, who live in a place in the sky, far away to the west, and the *Paramanuas*, who often befriend the aborigines.

Although the aborigines are afraid of the *Papinjuwaris*, the *Maratjis* and, to some extent, the *Mopaditis*, they do not particularly fear the other spirit people.

000 The aborigines of Oenpelli, western Arnhem Land, however, believe that their countryside is inhabited with a multitude of spirit people (Mountford, 1956, p. 181), some dangerous and some harmless. This is unusual in aboriginal Australia, most tribes fearing only the spirits of the dead.

1. THE METEOR-MEN, THE PAPINJUWARIS

776 The *Papinjuwaris* live, with their wives and children, in a large paper-bark hut at Wangidji, a place far away to the west, where the sky ends.

The men, large and heavily built, have only one eye as bright as a star. The aborigines often see a *Papinjuwari* streaking across the sky, a blazing firestick in one hand and a fighting club in the other.

The *Papinjuwaris* are ghoulish people, who, although their food consists of bandicoots and large centipedes (Fig. 12), are always craving for the bodies of the dead and the blood of the sick to satisfy their degraded appetites.

[821] One evening, the aborigines pointed out a brilliant meteor which they said was a *Papinjuwari*; he was taking the body of *Waniampari*, whose grave was not far from our camp, back to his companions at Wangidji.

● 753 776 When a *Papinjuwari* hunts for blood, he locates a sick person (by smell), and standing some distance away (they can make themselves invisible) sucks

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

blood from the arm of the victim, yet leaves no wound. As the sick person becomes weaker, the *Papinjuwari*, making himself sufficiently small, enters the body through the mouth, and, by drinking up the rest of the blood, kills the victim. 753 776

776 [532x]

FIG. 12. *The Spirit People*
The Meteor-man, Papinjuwari.

On his return to Wangidji, the meteor-man vomits the stolen blood into a bark container. This provides a drink for the assembled *Papinjuwaris*.

The aborigines stated that, as the Tiwi have no medicine men, they are without protection against these dangerous spirit people.[42] [751] [756]

Pl. 47c is a simple bark painting of the *Papinjuwaris*. The white figures are the ghoulish sky-people, the crescents are moons, and the circles, stars. 532x

Fig. 12 is the copy of a crayon drawing showing a *Papinjuwari*, *a*, inside of his paper-bark hut at Wangidji. On either side of him at *b*, *b*, are the large 776

[42] Spencer, 1928, p. 671, refers to a song chanted in a *Kulama* ceremony which is supposed to protect the initiates from an evil spirit, the shooting star, *Mabinua* (almost certain to be my *Papinjuwari*); Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 282, who call the meteor man, Papinowari, or Lampinpari, state that, if a piece of dried blood of a person is burnt, the smell will attract the meteor-man. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 the background is the sea. The white central transverse panel is the beach at
776 Wulrungku.

The meaning of the designs on the lower panel are similar, the black central and branching lines representing the tracks made by the *Pitipituis* as they travel to and from their camps (the black discs); the encircling lines represent the sand around those camps, and the painted background, the jungle which shelters the little people.

3. THE PARAMANUAS[48]

776 The *Paramanuas* are short, particularly active, agile men, about three feet high, with thick, powerful limbs, tusk-like teeth, and projecting toe and finger nails.

In general, except for these details, they resemble the aborigines in appearance, eat the same foods and follow a similar way of life.

They live in many places throughout Melville and Bathurst Islands, but no one except those captured by the *Paramanuas*, has seen either them or
[753] their homes. As they dislike being talked about, and often make those people
[124] ill who do so, I found it somewhat difficult to gather information about the *Paramanuas*.

The homes of the *Paramanuas*, their wives and their children, are spacious underground caves, the entrances to which are openings either in the side of termite mounds, or hollow trees. In these caves, the men store their utensils,
[343] weapons and food (Fig. 14). Their cooking fire, like that of the aborigines, is always outside of their camp.

Occasionally a *Paramanua*, wishing to befriend an aboriginal, will watch
776 him for some time. Then one day when the aboriginal is hunting by himself,
787 the *Paramanua* will cast a spear at him. But, before the spear has reached its mark, the *Paramanua* will have caught it and, standing at the back of the aboriginal, will be tickling his ribs. The aboriginal, thoroughly scared, turns to strike his opponent, only to find him again at his back. This game goes on until the aboriginal is exhausted, dizzy and confused. Then hitting him on the side of the head with an open hand, rendering the aboriginal unconscious, the spirit man picks up the prostrate man and carries him to the underground home of the *Paramanuas*.

Awaking to find himself in a dark place, the aboriginal is terrified, but on receiving plenty of food from the *Paramanuas*, and treated with every kindness, the aboriginal loses all fear, and as the weeks go by, all sense of time.

[48] Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to these little people as Barminuar.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat and so prevent the theft. 776 821 648

The Maratjis at Maundu

Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained by the faeces of the *Maratjis*. 776 778

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandubuka* totem are the only people safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from his own armpits, rubs it over his companion. 751 776

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then, walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi* which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialuni*, whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of Maundu. [827] [437] [753] [164]

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon, they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an aboriginal, called *Alunugun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this taboo. [841] [784]

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu. 532 x 778

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained) water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the 776

797 of North Australia, they are fond of a joke. They chuckled
522 delightedly. Father McGrath can preach in the native language,
but dear old Father Goell (every one on the north alludes to him
in these affectionate terms) must deliver his sermons in pidgin.
[198] Sometimes this greatly amuses the congregation, and many
spirited and life-like reproductions are enacted again and again
after the service.

797 WHILE taking a walk round the grounds of the mission
station, an urchin of no more than three and a half years of age
●753 was pointed out. That very morning this little fellow had
761 plunged into the shark-infested straits and saved his baby sister
from drowning. She was unconscious when brought ashore, and
the usual methods of resuscitation were followed by Father
McGrath, who had hurried to the scene. Then arose one of the
difficulties the mission staff are constantly encountering. All the
[754] ills that befall the islanders are attributed to magic. No black
ever dies a natural death: always there is some evilly-disposed
person responsible!

When treatment was commenced, the child had been laid on her stomach while the water was pushed out of her body. The blacks had seen an apparently drowned boy revived when laid on his back, and immediately became excited and angry. It was necessary to turn the child over for a while, otherwise the mission fathers would have been held responsible if she had not recovered. And, all the time that treatment was in progress, an old woman (very much in the way) had sung in the baby's ear.

In the opinion of the women who had gathered round, it was the singing that brought the little girl back to life, and her recovery had nothing whatever to do with the father's efforts, although he would have been held responsible if he had not been able to save her! The old men have some glimmerings of common sense, but the old women are terrible old witches and it is quite impossible to convince them.

When anyone is sick, it is the invariable custom to sing a monotonous phrase over and over again in the patient's ear to bring him back to health; and, wherever a pain is felt, it is usual to cut the skin down to the third integument to let the sickness out. On one occasion a man was suffering from acute abdominal pains, and his relations, who wanted to cut him open, came to the mission fathers to seek their approval of this drastic treatment. Here was an awkward predicament! If the sick man was cut open, he was sure to die; and, since nothing would induce him to go to the hospital at Darwin for skilled attention, he might die in any case. In either event the fathers would be held responsible. They stood firm and refused their approval. However, while the relations were hesitating in view of the emphatic assertions of the mission fathers, the man made a surprising recovery. The cure was of course ascribed to the singing, not to the good advice that kept the man on a starvation diet of water only.

755 The islanders firmly believe that they will be poisoned if they go to Darwin for treatment, but they will always trust their own people. One man, who had been employed on a pearling lugger (all the islanders are naturally good seamen), had a leg taken by a crocodile, and was forced to find some new way of making a living. He had learnt a lot too much in the years that he was away, and, on his return to Bathurst Island, he set up in practice as a witch-doctor. A woman on the point of

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked
789 what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on
[754] the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation.
13 Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because
[182] they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life—
[789] for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals
[164 (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws)
731] scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago.
[761 Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle
764] that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their
101 cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next
131 door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature,
182 though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic
754 making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

784 The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; graveposts were *pukimani*

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint 764
from his body (Pl. 23E).

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly, while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial, [304] and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real. [785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn, everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual, originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's pukamuni*, was supposed [775] so to confuse the *mopaditi* of *Nulatini* that, should she leave the grave, she would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey, then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over.

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopaditi* to warm herself and to cook her [775] food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanimbuwi*, who should have departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23 D).

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the 765
death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark, was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as instructed by *Jibungliatuni* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp could not see it.

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the 761
dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines, believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being, not the result of natural causes.

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby [825] looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, [754] having been responsible for the death,[56] had changed himself into a

[56] This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the messer-man, *Papinjuwari*, to an enemy.

I was told that

765 the old man had chanted about the *Tawala*,[1]
533 who had planted magic on the beaches to
the north at the beginning of the wet season.
● 754 The sun heated the magic, and up it went
[648] like smoke and the wind blew it all about.
The magic works on the blackfellow with a
feeling like a snake crawling up the legs.
It moves up to his stomach, and when it
reaches his heart he eats no more and dies.
He also sang that he was an old man, his
wind was short and soon he would die. Later
he sang of a fight he had had with another
tribe. Later he sang of people who came
and fed him while he was sick. When
standing in the water he was calling on the
others to make the ceremony. When he
threw up the stones he called *uei tua*, i.e
"finish."

754 During the next four weeks I visited
tribes in various parts of the islands and
heard the same story. I was shown a
sample of the magic. It was a tightly
woven string bag about the size of a billiard
ball and stuffed with kapok. This was said
to have been "sung" before it was buried.

124 Statistics of the mortality of the epidemic
902 presented a problem. The only words for
numbers which I could obtain with certainty

[1] The *tawala* were mainland blacks in the employ of local white men. They were called *tawala* ("lightning") after the guns carried by their employers.

[p 80-A]

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

796 An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch his wives or children, because a deadly sweat called *kilamini* comes from his body and 827 will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

[88] Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the 764 Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *eminkey* of 775 the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yatarahs*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

Culture Heroes. They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the 773 "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-776 tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumereka*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orati*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marakarti*.

The Present Day Spirits. Some spirits vitally affect their present lives. 776 Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain [82] spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

Magic. Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs 754 slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *kulumpara*. It is interesting to compare the Aaula belief; if a person is sung with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Sickness is cured by beating the ground around the victim to hunt the evil spirit away. Likewise, a song, Upripu, is sung by the wives of the sick man to make him better. The *Kurewa*, a pointed bone, or sometimes a tomahawk is used to stab a person's urine or an article his body has touched (e.g. a bark he has lain upon to sleep) and so cause him to die. Blood thrown into the sea will cause a violent wind and a big tide. The Kulama rite will bring about the same result. No instance has been found of magic being used to entice the spirit from a person's body, yet if a person failed to show sympathy for the dead, the dead person's "shade" would cause that person to die and then run away with his "shade." To mention the name of the newly dead is taboo. If a person accidentally does this he must immediately hit his mouth and spit to cleanse it of the evil.

Names. The names given to the women and men are of three types; the first is the actual name and is given to a person at the Kulama rite; this is an ordinary word such as "honey nest," etc., but it is always in a different language from the ordinary one which is used everyday. The child also receives the name of his father, father's brother or father's sister; this is a traditional name. Then, in the case of a male, come the terms denoting his initiation grade in the Kulama. First stage—*Murakmani*; second stage—*Wadjaneta*; third stage—*Migingartiya*=first song and *Midjintera*=second song; fourth stage—*Mekearterima*=third song; and finally, *Makagala*, which denotes that the man is qualified to conduct a Kulama. Likewise, both sexes have grade names denoting their status in the Pukamane death ritual. Male terms: first stage—*waniati*; second stage—*warunerera*; third stage—*wanereterima*; fourth stage—*wanderara*. With girls and women these names are the same except for the ending denoting the sex.

In the case of women there are terms denoting age or condition. *Kudjine*—child; *alinga*—girl; *miriyaleta*—puberty; *murogarbra*—breasts developed; *piramuruka*—first sign of pregnancy; *paprungala*—pregnant woman; *wanantaka*—woman who has a child dead, and *umparu*—widow. Other terms are *pitukwen*—widower; *mentungini* and *padrubayga*—boy and girl respectively, whose mother is pregnant; *indjula*—a woman whose breasts have fallen; and as on the mainland, a mother is always called by the sex of the child she carries in her arms: *oriowri* if a boy, *kudjine* if a girl.

Language. The language is peculiar. In many instances, owing to the masculine and feminine endings of the words, the women seem to speak a different language to the men. In addition, another language, or set of words, which is very rarely spoken, seems to obtrude itself. Thus one article will have many names. This is brought about by the strong death-taboo on names; as soon as a native dies, his names and his son's names are taboo and others are substituted. In this way every year new words are coined. Only recently at a Kulama two new ones appeared as a consequence of this taboo. *Purinteriya*, new name for tree, and *alepwa*, new name for coconut. Or a Kulama name may be given as, say, *wilinkurawa*, the meaning of which will be given as honey nest; and yet numerous words for honey are nothing

797 of North Australia, they are fond of a joke. They chuckled
522 delightedly. Father McGrath can preach in the native language,
but dear old Father Gsell (every one on the north alludes to him
in these affectionate terms) must deliver his sermons in pidgin.
[198] Sometimes this greatly amuses the congregation, and many
spirited and life-like reproductions are enacted again and again
after the service.

797 WHILE taking a walk round the grounds of the mission
753 station, an urchin of no more than three and a half years of age
761 was pointed out. That very morning this little fellow had
plunged into the shark-infested straits and saved his baby sister
from drowning. She was unconscious when brought ashore, and
the usual methods of resuscitation were followed by Father
McGrath, who had hurried to the scene. Then arose one of the
difficulties the mission staff are constantly encountering. All the
[754] ills that befall the islanders are attributed to magic. No black
ever dies a natural death: always there is some evilly-disposed
person responsible!

When treatment was commenced, the child had been laid on her stomach while the water was pushed out of her body. The blacks had seen an apparently drowned boy revived when laid on his back, and immediately became excited and angry. It was necessary to turn the child over for a while, otherwise the mission fathers would have been held responsible if she had not recovered. And, all the time that treatment was in progress, an old woman (very much in the way) had sung in the baby's ear.

In the opinion of the women who had gathered round, it was the singing that brought the little girl back to life, and her recovery had nothing whatever to do with the father's efforts, although he would have been held responsible if he had not been able to save her! The old men have some glimmerings of common sense, but the old women are terrible old witches and it is quite impossible to convince them.

When anyone is sick, it is the invariable custom to sing a monotonous phrase over and over again in the patient's ear to bring him back to health; and, wherever a pain is felt, it is usual to cut the skin down to the third integument to let the sickness out. On one occasion a man was suffering from acute abdominal pains, and his relations, who wanted to cut him open, came to the mission fathers to seek their approval of this drastic treatment. Here was an awkward predicament! If the sick man was cut open, he was sure to die; and, since nothing would induce him to go to the hospital at Darwin for skilled attention, he might die in any case. In either event the fathers would be held responsible. They stood firm and refused their approval. However, while the relations were hesitating in view of the emphatic assertions of the mission fathers, the man made a surprising recovery. The cure was of course ascribed to the singing, not to the good advice that kept the man on a starvation diet of water only.

755 The islanders firmly believe that they will be poisoned if they go to Darwin for treatment, but they will always trust their own people. One man, who had been employed on a pearling lugger (all the islanders are naturally good seamen), had a leg taken by a crocodile, and was forced to find some new way of making a living. He had learnt a lot too much in the years that he was away, and, on his return to Bathurst Island, he set up in practice as a witch-doctor. A woman on the point of

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[p. 16(A)]

755 death was an early patient. The new witch-doctor applied his lips to her chest and appeared to suck out a dirty, rusty rag, a piece of wire, and a few pebbles, together with some blood (which he probably produced by biting his tongue).

The woman died; but all the people uttered loud exclamations of wonderment at the cleverness of the doctor, and a collection, [272] chiefly of sticks of tobacco, was made to mark their approval of such distinguished surgical attainments. Similarly, when some youngsters had become entangled with a school of jelly fish while bathing in the Strait, one baby at least being quite unconscious, the old fellow performed his ritual, and collected, when the patients had all revived after treatment with ammonia by the mission fathers. Such are some of the trials and problems that have to be faced in dealing with the islanders.

622 And now we encountered Mariano. "This chap calls himself king," I was informed; "but nobody recognizes his authority." Mariano was a fine, upstanding man, and he carried a bundle of many-pronged and gaily-painted spears. "Me king!" said Mariano to me as we came up. "Hullo, King!" said I, and Mariano proudly inflated his chest at this highly proper recognition of his royal status. But, if Mariano is not king, he is at 721 least a person of some importance. They had been holding a 727 war on the islands for the previous six months or so, and arrangements for the next battle were being held up pending Mariano's decision about a corroboree at which his presence was essential. At the moment he could not make up his mind to leave the mission station, so war and corroboree were both in abeyance.

WARS are of frequent occurrence on the islands. The current combat was in connexion with the possession of a very young lubra; but, since there had been only two casualties (one man had lost an eye, and another warrior had had a leg broken) in the six months, in all probability she will have died of old age before the matter is settled, unless, of course, the warriors tire of this as a pretext and come to some arrangement. Any old excuse is good enough to start a war. If nothing better offers, they get one up "Married v. Single." Father Gsell approves of the wars.

As he says, they are the only form of manly recreation that the islanders have. It is seldom that anyone is hurt, and the battles are rather in the nature of a somewhat dangerous cricket-match with fast leg-theory permitted and encouraged. A cleared space in the forest is necessary for a battle, and consequently the mission aerodrome is a favourite site for the usually bloodless encounters. When battle is raging there, it is necessary to give the excited small boys of the mission school a holiday. They join in, too, and have great fun throwing stones at their elders.

726 Each engagement of a war is conducted with due regard to ceremony. The opposing factions line up with the width of the chosen battlefield between them. Messengers from each side march out and meet half-way between the two forces and, formal arrangements being made, return majestically each to his own side. Then each army makes a fire, round which the warriors race with spears upheld, getting closer and closer in their frantic circlings. They leap through the flames, burning the hair from their legs, and finally the circle becomes so close that the excited warriors, regardless of hot coals, tramp the fire out. With a yell of defiance, spears are cast in the air as high as the warriors can throw them.

[p. 16(B)]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

blood from the arm of the victim, yet leaves no wound. As the sick person becomes weaker, the *Papinjuwari*, making himself sufficiently small, enters the body through the mouth, and, by drinking up the rest of the blood, kills the victim. 753 776

776 [532x]

FIG. 12. *The Spirit People*
The Meteor-man, Papinjuwari.

On his return to Wangidji, the meteor-man vomits the stolen blood into a bark container. This provides a drink for the assembled *Papinjuwaris*.

The aborigines stated that, as the Tiwi have no medicine men, they are without protection against these dangerous spirit people.[48] [751] [756]

Pl. 47C is a simple bark painting of the *Papinjuwaris*. The white figures are the ghoulish sky-people, the crescents are moons, and the circles, stars. 532x

Fig. 12 is the copy of a crayon drawing showing a *Papinjuwari*, *a*, inside of his paper-bark hut at Wangidji. On either side of him at *b*, *b*, are the large 776

[48] Spencer, 1928, p. 671, refers to a song chanted in a *Kulama* ceremony which is supposed to protect the initiate from an evil spirit, the shooting star, *Mobinua* (almost certain to be my *Papinjuwari*); Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 282, who call the meteor man, Papinowari, or Lamparapari, state that, if a piece of dried blood of a person is burnt, the smell will attract the meteor-man. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

A *mopaditi* has been known to hit an aboriginal on the head with a throwing stick, causing him to foam at the mouth and become stiff and rigid. The natives cure this *mopaditi* sickness by heating pads of paper-bark and pressing them against the sides of the face or over the sick man's ears until his muscles relax. 775 753 757

Once, when a young woman went hunting in the forest by herself, a male *mopaditi* took her away, fed her on a special bush food until she became, like the *mopaditis* themselves, invisible to human eyes. One evening, after many weeks, the *mopaditi* brought the girl back to a place near the camp, stood her against a tree, gave a loud whistle and left.

When relatives found her, she was demented and deaf, with cold, clammy skin and staring eyes. Quickly they lit a fire, heated her hands, and held them, palms inwards, against the sides of her face. When her body became a little warmer, her relatives pressed heated pads of paper-bark against the sides of her face and over her ears, until she went to sleep. After several days of such treatment, the girl recovered and was able to tell what had happened.

The old men warned her never again to go walking in the forest by herself because should the *mopaditis* recapture her, it might not be possible to bring her back to health.

The aborigines also told me about the time when some *mopaditis* stole an old woman, *Incampuna*, took her into the jungle and covered her with boughs. When her relatives found her, sick and unconscious, they brought her back to camp, shouting loudly to stop the *mopaditis* from following. As before, they applied heated pads of paper-bark to "open up" her head until she became well again.

Plate 47A, B, pictures the grave of the wife of the artist, *Muramajua*. At *a*, is the face of the spirit of the wife, the horse-shoe design, *b*, representing her hair. The oval *c*, is a small stringy-bark tree, *o*, a large stringy-bark tree, and *p*, are bloodwood trees near the grave. 532 x

At *k*, is a stony hill near the burial place, *l*, *n*, are areas of jungle near by, and *m*, is the forested uplands.

A long fighting-stick, *tumutukamuta*, *g*, and a throwing stick, *muruguna*, *j*, are used by the *mopaditis* to strike their human victims on the head, and make them insensible.

2. DEATH AND BURIAL

Although there were minor differences between the burial of the man, *Wuniamperi*, the details of which I gathered from informants, and the burial 764

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 0120 Tiwi 0120

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. Harney and A. P. Elkin[1]

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and 136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog 825 (*wongine*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may 757 often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] [1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. Elkin.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 789 nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on [754] the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation. 13 Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because [182] they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life— [789] for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals [164 (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws) 731] scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago. [761 Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle 764] that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their 101 cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next 131 door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature, 182 though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic 754 making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

784 The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; graveposts were *pukimani*

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint from his body (Pl. 23E). 764

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly, while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial, and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real. [304] [785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn, everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual, originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's pukamuni*, was supposed so to confuse the *mopaditi* of *Nulatini* that, should she leave the grave, she would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey, then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over. [775]

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopaditi* to warm herself and to cook her food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanimbuwi*, who should have departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23 D). [775]

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark, was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as instructed by *Jibungliahuni* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp could not see it. 765

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines, believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being, not the result of natural causes. 761

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, having been responsible for the death,[80] had changed himself into a [825] [754]

[80] This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the mature-man, *Papinjuwari*, to an enemy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

761 825 [761] wallaby, so that he could see the grave of his victim without being recognised.

On one occasion, when I was travelling with *Pulanimbuwi*, just after the death of his wife, he went to her grave, carefully searched the ground for tracks, then lifting up the sheets of paper-bark, examined the mound. Later, *Pulanimbuwi* announced that a *Maraji* (p. 154) had killed his wife, *Nulatini*, by getting inside of her body. But, although still there when she was buried, the *Maraji* had escaped through the hole *Pulanimbuwi* had seen in the mound.[87]

(2) *The Seclusion of the Grave*

769 The grave of *Waniamperi* was about a hundred yards from the road between our camp and the Snake Bay aboriginal settlement. Although aborigines, who were only distantly related to the dead man, walked backward and forward along this road, all the *pukamuni* people had to take a roundabout path from which it was not possible to see the grave site.

One night, *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, had to pass along the road to our camp. When he was approaching the position from which the grave site could be seen in the day-time, his wife, wrapping his head in a blanket, led him past the spot. This practice was only allowed at night; it was prohibited during the day.[88]

[775] [784] No aboriginal man hunted the creatures, or woman gathered the plant foods adjacent to the grave, so that, should the *mopaditi* of *Waniamperi* return to his burial place for a while he would find ample food.

4. THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONIES, THE ILANIAS

(1) *The Ilanias of Waniamperi*

765 About two months after the burial of *Waniamperi*, *Wurarbuti*, the ceremonial leader of the Melville Island people, sent message sticks to Bathurst Island aborigines telling them that the *ilanias* (preliminary rituals) of *Waniamperi* were about to start.

[123] We saw eleven of *Waniamperi's ilanias*. But, as they were more or less the same, I will describe only three.

[87] *Pulanimbuwi's* action was viewed with considerable disfavour. He, as a near relative, should not have gone near the grave until the final rituals. Only the *wanaras* (workers) who cut the poles are allowed to do that. [765]

[88] Under the normal tribal conditions, these precautions would have been unnecessary, because the place of burial would then have been in some distant, unfrequented locality. [183]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca.1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

797 of North Australia, they are fond of a joke. They chuckled
522 delightedly. Father McGrath can preach in the native language,
but dear old Father Gsell (every one on the north alludes to him
in these affectionate terms) must deliver his sermons in pidgin.
[198] Sometimes this greatly amuses the congregation, and many
spirited and life-like reproductions are enacted again and again
after the service.

797 WHILE taking a walk round the grounds of the mission
753 station, an urchin of no more than three and a half years of age
was pointed out. That very morning this little fellow had
● 761 plunged into the shark-infested straits and saved his baby sister
from drowning. She was unconscious when brought ashore, and
the usual methods of resuscitation were followed by Father
McGrath, who had hurried to the scene. Then arose one of the
difficulties the mission staff are constantly encountering. All the
[754] ills that befall the islanders are attributed to magic. No black
ever dies a natural death: always there is some evilly-disposed
person responsible!

When treatment was commenced, the child had been laid on her stomach while the water was pushed out of her body. The blacks had seen an apparently drowned boy revived when laid on his back, and immediately became excited and angry. It was necessary to turn the child over for a while, otherwise the mission fathers would have been held responsible if she had not recovered. And, all the time that treatment was in progress, an old woman (very much in the way) had sung in the baby's ear.

In the opinion of the women who had gathered round, it was the singing that brought the little girl back to life, and her recovery had nothing whatever to do with the father's efforts, although he would have been held responsible if he had not been able to save her! The old men have some glimmerings of common sense, but the old women are terrible old witches and it is quite impossible to convince them.

When anyone is sick, it is the invariable custom to sing a monotonous phrase over and over again in the patient's ear to bring him back to health; and, wherever a pain is felt, it is usual to cut the skin down to the third integument to let the sickness out. On one occasion a man was suffering from acute abdominal pains, and his relations, who wanted to cut him open, came to the mission fathers to seek their approval of this drastic treatment. Here was an awkward predicament! If the sick man was cut open, he was sure to die; and, since nothing would induce him to go to the hospital at Darwin for skilled attention, he might die in any case. In either event the fathers would be held responsible. They stood firm and refused their approval. However, while the relations were hesitating in view of the emphatic assertions of the mission fathers, the man made a surprising recovery. The cure was of course ascribed to the singing, not to the good advice that kept the man on a starvation diet of water only.

755 The islanders firmly believe that they will be poisoned if they go to Darwin for treatment, but they will always trust their own people. One man, who had been employed on a pearling lugger (all the islanders are naturally good seamen), had a leg taken by a crocodile, and was forced to find some new way of making a living. He had learnt a lot too much in the years that he was away, and, on his return to Bathurst Island, he set up in practice as a witch-doctor. A woman on the point of

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

To avoid constant use of the awkward phrase "mourning ceremony," we refer to it as the funeral though it took place some considerable time after the burial of the body. How long a time elapsed between the burial and the funeral depended upon the importance of the dead person. The more important the deceased, the longer it took after his or her burial to prepare for the funeral, both ceremonially and practically. Babies frequently had no funeral ceremonies at all, especially if they died very young and unnamed. Children were given small funerals, held within a month or so after the death, and the people present were merely the members of the local households. Young adult men and all adult women had funerals of medium size, and old men had the biggest funerals of all. Big funerals were rarely held in the wet season because of the height of the grass and bush and the consequent difficulty of travel. The season after the end of the rains (April-May-June) was a favorite time for funerals since by then people were moving again and there was then an accumulated backlog of funerals to be held for people who had died late in the previous dry season or during the wet. The mourning ceremonies of two or more people were sometimes held together; this obviously required that they be buried close together, although they need not have died at the same time. Seeking as usual to increase his importance in the public eye, a man might hold the medium-sized funeral of one of his children at the same time and place as the big funeral of an important elder—provided their graves were close together—even though two or three months had separated the two deaths.

The actual burial of the body immediately after death was usually a small affair attended only by whatever people happened to be in the vicinity. But some Tiwi ancients were on their last legs for months before they finally expired, and it was typical of Tiwi psychology that people should maneuver to be present when a death occurred. Until the anthropologist understood that even death had its political aspects, he could not understand why the Tiwi were always so anxious to hang around the camp of an old man who was taking an awfully long time to die. Since so very little happened at the actual time of death, this desire to be on the spot seemed merely morbid curiosity.[8] But it was not. A death immediately divided the whole tribe into two groups: a small group of relatives who automatically became mourners and therefore in a state of strict taboo, and the rest who were not sufficiently close to the deceased to have to assume a state of *pukimani*. The mourners, being *pukimani*, could do scarcely anything except weep and wail and gash their heads with stone axes. They could not touch the body or wrap it in bark; nor could they dig the grave, nor put the body in, nor fill in the hole. They had to ask non-mourners to carry out these tasks and thus became obligated to those non-

[8] How else was one to interpret the reluctance of Hart's party to move on, after spending three weeks waiting for old Tamboo to die, and the old man still lingered on? "Let's wait another day; maybe he'll die tomorrow" was the invariable response to suggestions that we move. "And if he does die, what will happen?" "Nothing; we'll move on then." But this was early in the fieldwork period, before Hart realized the all-pervasive character of Tiwi opportunism.

disembarked on the edge of a large expanse of wet, grassy marsh. 123
On the bank a few low trees provided cover for the hunters, who 223
spread out about fifty yards apart. We waited. Then in the distance the first flock of six geese appeared, flying low over the marsh. They were not headed for us, but passed over the line of hunters about a hundred yards upstream. We could not see the hunters, but the same six geese continued safely after passing the firing line. Now another small group of geese seemed to be heading in our direction. Albert slowly took his position, his legs apart, the left stretched in front, the right somewhat bent as his body arched backward. One *milingani* he held near the charred end in his right arm which was so far back over his head that the tip of the stick almost touched the ground. As counter balance, his left hand, holding several spares, was pointed forward toward the geese. Just as the geese were to pass over our heads, they swerved and went instead over the man to the right of us. You could hear the whir of the stick as it was thrown with tremendous force up into the air, turning end over end, and then the 'thwack' as it reached its mark. A goose, its neck hanging loosely, spiralled down, to land with a splash close to the hunter's feet.

Now the flocks were more numerous as the dusk grew thicker. Soon a group flew directly overhead and Albert aimed and threw, but the spiralling stick slid off the wing tip of the lead goose and he continued, somewhat shaken but quite unharmed. Again and again Albert threw at the increasing numbers of honking homeward-bound geese, but when the last stick was thrown and it was quite dark, we still had no geese. When we gathered, it was found that [763 out of ten hunters with perhaps three hundred sticks thrown, only 777] two sticks had found their mark. This was not good. Albert was worried. "Maybe someone bin die, make me bad luck."

Later that evening Black Joe started singing a chant. 223
"*Mobuditi*, plenty goose here; give us some." I asked him 789
whom he was singing to and, although names of the dead are most 775
infrequently mentioned for fear that the ghost of that person, its *mobuditi*, will hear it, this was one occasion where the *mobuditi* could do more good than harm. So the *mobuditi* of Bangri was called upon. Bangri, it was explained, had been a big man, "Plenty wives, maybe hundred. This his country; him grave close up along

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Top to bottom: Timalarua, the canoe maker; Tiwi spears; mourning ceremony around graveposts.

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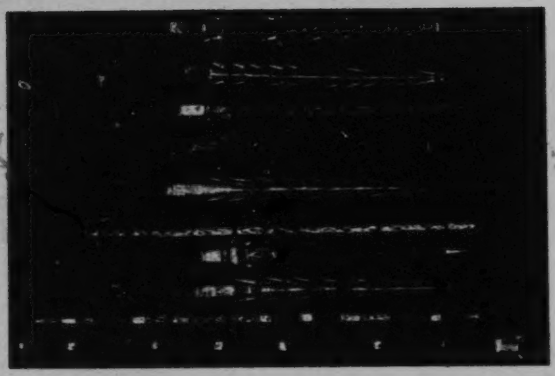

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765

[p x is blank]
[p xi]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not
609 real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human
[101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

[173] Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate
171 to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distributional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how
[411] isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their
[531] wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus-
[764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the
[511] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

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[177 [1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the
524] result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

quietly slipped away to some other camp and was not seen the following morning. The matter might then die, depending largely on whether the old husband wanted to carry it further or was content to drop it. If the young man was still in camp the following day, the old man might insist on a duel then and there, but it would take place only if the camp were large, since Tiwi duels were essentially legal actions and as such needed a sizable audience for their correct staging. Disputes between men, of which old men accusing young men of seduction were by far the most common type, usually remained at the verbal level until a large body of spectators was available. Since such large concentrations of many households were necessary for the performance of the main collective ceremonials, it was at the time of these ceremonials that most verbal arguments were pushed by the aggrieved party to the action level.

During the dry season (April to November) when travel was easy, the only collective ceremonials sufficiently important to draw together a large number of households were those held for the funerals of big men. In the wet season (November to March) when the grass and bush were high and travel was difficult, the main collective phases of the male initiation ceremonies were held (see Chapter 4), and these brought together for a few weeks at a time large numbers of households. The funeral ceremonies for adults were always held some considerable time after the death and burial of the deceased. How long a period elapsed between the death and the funeral ceremonies depended on the expected size of the gathering, and this figure correlated, at least roughly, with the importance of the deceased. Here again the overriding consideration was food supply, since the chief mourners (that is, the deceased's closer relatives) had to feed everybody who came to the funeral while the ceremonies lasted, which might be almost a week. The more important the dead person the bigger the crowd at his funeral, and hence the greater the amount of time needed by the mourners to arrange the catering. As much as a year might elapse between the death and the time when the mourners felt that the funeral arrangements—especially the food supply, but also the ceremonial preparation—were sufficiently well in hand to permit them to set a date and send out invitations for the funeral ceremonies. Funerals, therefore, were not held at regular times but were individually scheduled at times fixed by the chief mourners. They were always held in the dry season, however (except those of young children, to which nobody came in any case), and therefore an old man who had a dispute to settle or a case to try publicly could always depend on a few big funerals being held in the not very distant future which would provide the large audience necessary to make the settlement of the dispute legal. During the wet season the *kolema* phases of the initiation ceremonial always drew a large attendance; the annual time of these was pretty definitely fixed by the ripening of the *kolema* yams.

Hence the verbal wrangles in the small scattered encampments at night, about seduction during the day, could have any one of three outcomes, depending largely upon the determination of the old man-accuser and the demeanor of the young man-accused. If by the following morning the young man had disappeared and showed no further interest in the old man's menage, the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

627 staged and this was usually sufficient to incapacitate the offender and make
684 him decide to move—at least for a while—into some other district. The group thus hastily convened to mete out public justice seldom numbered more than sixty or seventy people (seven or eight households) and having been convened *ad hoc* would remain camped together only for the forty-eight hours or less needed to deal with the emergency.

Joint Activities

This discussion of the alternative lines of action open to an outraged
796 household head enables us to specify the relatively rare occasions during the
619 year when the dull, quiet, day-by-day, food-gathering routines of the dispersed
527 household camps were interrupted by events that required many households to
●764 gather together in one place and indulge in joint action. Foremost among these
221 occasions were big funerals and the *kolema* ceremonial, both of which were mentioned above. These were the main religious events of the year, full of dancing, singing, wailing, and excitement. The excitement was the psychological result of so many people being together at the same time, a rare experience in the life of any Tiwi. Since the *kolema* ceremonial was an annual event and even the most enthusiastic funeral goer did not attend more than three or
[887] four really big funerals in the course of a year, we may reckon that even an old and important man, much concerned with ritual observances, would probably find himself a participant in such crowd activities on not more than some six occasions per year. For less important men and for women and children the number of such occasions was less than six. The *kolema* ceremonial lasted two weeks or more, big funerals, even when they became the occasion for carrying on other public business, did not last more than four or five days each. Hence we may reckon an average of about a week each for the half-dozen times a really big man spent in the company of a sizable crowd of fellow tribesmen, giving a total annual average of about six or seven weeks at most out of every fifty-two—or a little less than 10 percent of the year spent by an old important man in large ceremonial activities or what Durkheim calls the collective life of the tribe.

In addition there were the smaller gatherings, such as the funerals of
527 younger men and most women, and the calling together of a number of house-
619 holds to settle a dispute in the manner we have described above. These were
764 collective occasions also but they brought together a considerably smaller
571 crowd. A really big man's funeral was likely to draw over three hundred people or even as much as one-third of the whole tribe.[4] Not only did many

[4] Tamboo's funeral in May 1929 (he died in the previous August) drew practically the full band membership (men, women, and children) of the four Bathurst Island bands; almost all the Munupula; many Mandiimbula; and large delegations from the remaining three bands. With such a crowd, an actual head count was difficult, especially of the children, but there must have been over four hundred people present. Needless to say, excitement was intense; more fights occurred, more insults were exchanged, more ancient feuds revived and new ones started, and more food consumed than at any funeral in living memory. At least that was the opinion of Tamboo's chief mourners, but since it was they who threw the party and had to pay for it, they may have been biased.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Not only did many

people come to such a funeral to express their kinship with, and pay their 527
respects to, the deceased, but as mentioned above, many men with disputes to 571
settle or fights to pick let such matters ride until the next big funeral was 619
called and then took advantage of the large crowd to provide the necessary 764
witnesses for the transaction of the outstanding legal business. Gatherings of 627
many households for purely legal affairs, without funerals or *kolema* ceremonial as the main *raison d'etre* for the gathering, were comparatively rare and when they did occur they were usually called by one man, to settle one case only, and hence did not promote the attendance of very many households. Similarly, the funerals of most women and of younger and therefore less important men drew together at most ten or twelve households and a few other individuals, so that the crowd was usually not above one hundred people at the most. A single *ad hoc* legal duel, even when an episode in a long-drawn out and notorious dispute, seldom drew more than this number. Duels always attracted some spectators who came for the excitement, even though not personally involved, provided of course they were camped somewhere in the vicinity.

This second type of collective gathering, of which the smaller funerals and the single duels were the main occasions, might then require the attendance of a household head, accompanied by some or all of his household members, perhaps five or six times a year. These gatherings would each last less than forty-eight hours, and since the people the household head met at them would mostly be people of his own band or of closely adjoining bands, the excitement of seeing unfamiliar faces—people not seen for over a year perhaps—would be absent. We may reckon that attendance at these smaller, more localized gatherings, and the participation in group activity which they entailed, took up two more weeks, all told, out of the yearly round. When these two weeks are added to the six or seven already estimated for the time spent by a busy public man at the large gatherings, we find that even the busiest and most gregarious senior elders spent less than ten weeks out of the fifty-two in collective activity outside their immediate households.

To complete the list of occasions which called for joint activity by the 224
members of several households, we must include the joint kangaroo hunt. This activity was very localized and very spasmodic, occurring only when and where conditions were right and somebody felt sufficiently energetic to organize it. Much of the Tiwi country is a mixture of dense scrub and relatively [137]
open savannah; kangaroo are relatively easy to hunt in the latter but very hard to get near in the denser types of vegetation. The native method of hunting was based on getting as close as possible to the animal before it saw or heard the hunter. If it detected the hunter, it fled, and no Tiwi in his senses ever threw a spear or a throwing stick at a moving kangaroo.[8] Only when the animal was standing still and the hunter was close enough to aim carefully at a vital part was the spear thrown. At certain seasons of the year, particularly 221
after the end of the wet and early in the dry season, many sections of good 224
kangaroo country gave very poor hunting returns because the grass had become

[8] The up-and-down movement of a hopping kangaroo in flight makes it an extraordinarily difficult target even for skilled white hunters armed with shotguns or rifles.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

outdance and out-sing and out-party most of the men fifty years younger than himself.[6] 159 888

Since Tu'untalumi was a senior Tiwi household head who spent more of his time attending festivals, funerals, fights, and other collective occasions than did most of his contemporaries, it is instructive to examine his movements over a full year. If he had kept an engagement book during 1928-29, it would have looked something like this: 159 887

Early April (end of wet season): Leaves his home base in Tangio where he has spent most of the wet season and visits the Mission station to attend a few small funerals (children who have died at the Mission in the preceding months). During these funerals a series of fights and duels also takes place. Total people present: perhaps fifty or sixty. Time thus spent in helping to wind up public business: five days. Returns home to Tangio and remains there for rest of April. [797]

End of April: Goes to Rangu with a big party of other Tiklauila for a funeral (junior elder). Fairly big funeral, lots of people, lots of disputes. Time away, including leisurely journey to and from Rangu, about two weeks. Gets back home about middle of May. [764 166]

Middle of May—end of June: Lives quietly at home with his household in Tangio.

About July 1st: Goes to Mission for a few days, "visits" with whoever is there. Tries out a new composition of his own (song and dance) on group camped at Mission. Returns home for rest of July. [533 535]

Last week of July: Taking his younger wives and their children with two senior wives in charge of them, sets out for Malau for a big funeral with lots of people and fights. There he performs his new dance; is much consulted on ceremonial matters by the Malauila; gets into a few fights himself but handles them with dignity and honor; remains in Malau two weeks; stops off to visit and attend a small funeral with the Munupula on his way back; has a fight with a Munupula while there; returns to the Mission; stays there a day or two dispensing all the news from Malau and Munupi to those camped there; issues invitations for a grass burning in some sections of Tangio which were not burned in April or May. Goes on home to Tangio where some of his older wives have remained during his absence. Total time away: about three weeks. [166]

End of August: Is joined in Tangio by several other Tiklauila and Rangwila households whom he has invited. Grass burning and joint kangaroo hunting goes on for four or five days. Dancing and partying at night. After five days most of visiting group leave and he and his household remain alone in Tangio until well into October. [224]

[6] There is no suggestion that Tu'untalumi was in any way an official ritual leader. All old men, by virtue of their years, were to some extent ritual leaders; he had merely worked harder and longer at it than most of them. His tirelessly joyful personality had a good deal to do with his success in the self-established role. In a culture that might be thought likely to make all its men gloomy, anxiety-ridden introverts, he was a warm, happy, dignified old extrovert and he was widely admired. [156]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 887 [166] *Middle of October*: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[9] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing.

[578 764] *End of October*: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

[881 574] *End of January*: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

[881] *End of February*: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, 571 even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

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[177] [548] [9] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeimpi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

171 nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked
789 what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on
[754] the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation.
13 Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because
[182] they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life—
[789] for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals
[164 (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws)
73] scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago.
[761 Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle
764] that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their
101 cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next
131 door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature,
182 though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic
754 making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

784 The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; graveposts were *pukimani*

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

once erected on the grave; the names of dead people immediately became *pukimani* on their deaths and could not be used, and the same was true of all the names bestowed by a dead man on the children of his household and all the other words in the language that sounded similar to the name of the dead man.[4] All ceremonials and rituals were *pukimani* as were the main performers and the armlets, neck ornaments, and other ceremonial objects. People in a *pukimani* state had to observe all sorts of avoidances of and abstentions from everyday actions, particularly with regard to food and sex. Close relatives of dead people could not touch food but had to be fed by nonmourners. That pillar of rigid orthodoxy, Tu'untalumi, was virtually never able to feed himself but was in a *pukimani* state almost the whole year round and needed one of his wives to feed him. (Another advantage of a large household.) Certain spots in the bush or on the banks of streams were *pukimani* places; the dimly seen outline of the Australian coast was *pukimani* as was the ocean near Cape Keith where the Tiwi ancestors had first created the Tiwi world; and finally, the violation of a *pukimani* restriction rendered the violator *pukimani*.

Pukimani as thus applied to people, places, things, names, words, restrictions, and avoidances, meant both sacred and taboo, and was clearly one of that widespread class of words and concepts that is almost standard among the simpler societies. The only noteworthy thing about its Tiwi form is that *pukimani* was a state which people did not actively seek to enter but which happened to people regardless of their wishes. Furthermore, when a man found himself in a state of *pukimani*, his behavior was automatically prescribed for him and for the duration of his *pukimani* condition he observed his avoidances and his abstentions just as automatically as he dropped them when his *pukimani* period expired. When he became *pukimani*, he punctiliously fulfilled the requirements because if he did not, he was likely to be unsuccessful in his enterprises. Big men simply did not dare to be casual about the requirements lest their reputations suffer and they lose face and influence. Less successful men were occasionally explained as probably being secret violators. "His wives and daughters all seem to die young; he must have broken some *pukimani* restrictions sometime" was a reason often given for somebody's failure to be as successful as he might have been. It was noticeable in such explanations of nonsuccess that the failure, or in our terms the bad luck, was attributed to the violation of the taboos, never to the active displeasure of the spirits. The spirits simply did not figure in the picture.

Apart from the big ceremonial occasions, a Tiwi did not have much concern with religion in his everyday life except through some aspect of the *pukimani* system. It was only through *pukimani* that the sacred world impinged upon him at all for most of the year. Since *pukimani* was a condition that could not be actively sought but "just happened" to a person every so often by such common events as the death of a relative, his wife giving birth, or his

[4] When a man named Tibuki died in 1928, a crisis occurred at the Mission where the natives were supposed to make their requests in pidgin English. How could they now ask for tobacco, since that word was now *pukimani*?

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

sister's son being initiated, the attitude of a Tiwi toward the whole *pukimani* state was essentially a passive attitude. *Pukimani* behavior was something one accepted and conformed to when required; it was in no way an active attempt to change nature, people, food, gods, spirits, or anything else in the universe. It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that since their *pukimani* system offered them no handle by which to seek actively to alter the universe in which they lived, the Tiwi found that universe to their liking as it was. Unlike the tribes of central Australia who lavished a lot of thought upon magical methods of improving the food supply or the rainfall, the Tiwi believed and acted on the belief that as long as they observed their *pukimani* taboos, the food would continue to be as abundant and the rains as regular as they had always been. The central Australians, by seeking to coerce nature through magic, suggest that they found nature unsatisfactory; the Tiwi, by relying upon passive taboo-observance alone, suggest rather that their relationship to nature was an acceptable equilibrium that they wanted to preserve, not change. And if everybody observed his *pukimani* taboos when required, that equilibrium would remain undisturbed. Hence the antisocial man in Tiwi was not the maker of individual magic (he was unknown, anyway) but the nonobserver of taboo. By his nonobservance he threatened to upset the normally satisfactory equilibrium between man and nature. For a senior Tiwi male to be charged publicly with breaking *pukimani* rules was a disgrace and a blow to his prestige and his position in public opinion. His behavior was possibly a sin against the spirits but it was certainly a shame in the eyes of his fellows. *Pukimani* observance was thus a matter of respectability to a much greater degree than it was a matter of pleasing the spirits.

DEATH As was mentioned above, death is the natural phenomenon around which the Tiwi had woven their most elaborate web of ritual. The most frequent and most important Tiwi ceremonies were the mourning ceremonies, and they came in three sizes—small, medium, and large—depending on the age, sex, and importance of the dead person. The mourning ceremonies which drew the crowds were not held until some time after the death and burial. All bodies of dead persons were buried within twenty-four hours of their death by digging a hole near the camp where the death had occurred and placing the body, wrapped in bark, in it. Near most well-used camping spots there was already a graveyard marked by old graveposts, and the latest corpse was buried there or near there. Seldom was the body carried any distance for burial. If a person died even less than a mile from an old burial ground, there was little inclination to carry the body that far. He would be buried, instead, within perhaps a hundred yards of where he died. This had certain awkward repercussions for social organization, since occasionally a person died while away from his home district and, being buried where he died, his ceremonies were held and his posts erected in a district in which his immediate family did not live. Young men often used this to validate a change of residence, giving as their reason for living in a band territory in which they had not grown up, the location there of their father's graveposts.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

To avoid constant use of the awkward phrase "mourning ceremony," we refer to it as the funeral though it took place some considerable time after the burial of the body. How long a time elapsed between the burial and the funeral depended upon the importance of the dead person. The more important the deceased, the longer it took after his or her burial to prepare for the funeral, both ceremonially and practically. Babies frequently had no funeral ceremonies at all, especially if they died very young and unnamed. Children were given small funerals, held within a month or so after the death, and the people present were merely the members of the local households. Young adult men and all adult women had funerals of medium size, and old men had the biggest funerals of all. Big funerals were rarely held in the wet season because of the height of the grass and bush and the consequent difficulty of travel. The season after the end of the rains (April-May-June) was a favorite time for funerals since by then people were moving again and there was then an accumulated backlog of funerals to be held for people who had died late in the previous dry season or during the wet. The mourning ceremonies of two or more people were sometimes held together; this obviously required that they be buried close together, although they need not have died at the same time. Seeking as usual to increase his importance in the public eye, a man might hold the medium-sized funeral of one of his children at the same time and place as the big funeral of an important elder—provided their graves were close together—even though two or three months had separated the two deaths.

The actual burial of the body immediately after death was usually a small affair attended only by whatever people happened to be in the vicinity. But some Tiwi ancients were on their last legs for months before they finally expired, and it was typical of Tiwi psychology that people should maneuver to be present when a death occurred. Until the anthropologist understood that even death had its political aspects, he could not understand why the Tiwi were always so anxious to hang around the camp of an old man who was taking an awfully long time to die. Since so very little happened at the actual time of death, this desire to be on the spot seemed merely morbid curiosity.[8] But it was not. A death immediately divided the whole tribe into two groups: a small group of relatives who automatically became mourners and therefore in a state of strict taboo, and the rest who were not sufficiently close to the deceased to have to assume a state of *pukimani*. The mourners, being *pukimani*, could do scarcely anything except weep and wail and gash their heads with stone axes. They could not touch the body or wrap it in bark; nor could they dig the grave, nor put the body in, nor fill in the hole. They had to ask non-mourners to carry out these tasks and thus became obligated to those non-

[8] How else was one to interpret the reluctance of Hart's party to move on, after spending three weeks waiting for old Tamboo to die, and the old man still lingered on? "Let's wait another day; maybe he'll die tomorrow" was the invariable response to suggestions that we move. "And if he does die, what will happen?" "Nothing; we'll move on then." But this was early in the fieldwork period, before Hart realized the all-pervasive character of Tiwi opportunism.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 557 571 764 mourners for their services. Death, in other words, incapacitated the relatives, so the nonrelatives swarmed in to "help" them—that is, take advantage of their incapacity. A man who could say, "I helped to dig your mother's grave" had a hold for the rest of his life over the man or men to whom he could say it. Such a hold was not as strong, of course, as that of a man who could say, "I helped you get your first bestowed wife," but the difference of obligation was only a difference of degree. The Tiwi were always "helping" each other, but the man who was "helped" therefore "owed" something to his helper. At deaths, mourners mourned and nonmourners did the work; therefore the mourners "owed" the nonmourners, and such debts were carried on the same mental ledgers as other debts, such as marriage debts.

182 571 765 [764] When deaths occurred suddenly and unexpectedly, the mourners had to choose their helpers for the burial from the relatively few people present at the time, and were thus often forced to become obligated to men they did not much relish being under obligation to. At the funerals the same bookkeeping mentality prevailed, but since these were not held until months after the death and burial, the chief mourners had time to select their helpers with care and political finesse. Satellites were very useful in this connection, since a man could ask his satellites to perform the necessary ceremonial services and thus get a return from them for the debts of gratitude they already owed him. This was one reason why a skillful Tiwi politician did not by any means select only close kinsmen for satelliteship. A death which made him *pukimani* was likely to make his close kinsmen *pukimani* also, hence he needed some satellites who were not close kinsmen.

182 557 571 765 [462] In the interval between the burial and the funeral, the chief mourner, on behalf of all the mourners but fairly independently if he were a big man, allocated all the jobs that had to be done in preparation for the funeral. Everybody who came had to be fed by the mourners, and the collection and hoarding of the necessary food devolved on the women of the mourning households. Thus the mourners provided the food, but everything else necessary had to be prepared by nonmourners. The chief item among the ceremonial necessities was the graveposts. The prohibition on mourners approaching the body and the grave extended to the posts, and therefore the cutting, carving, erecting on the grave, and painting of these central features of the funeral ceremonies had to be carried out by nonmourners, "asked to cut the posts" by the chief mourner. Here there was much room for influence maneuvers. A big man acting as chief mourner for a dead relative wanted the funeral to be as lavish as possible, to show his own importance. But the more important the [554] nonmourners he selected to cut the posts for him, the more he owed them for their services. Such a request was in the nature of asking a favor, and to ask a favor was to put oneself in a subordinate position, in terms of influence. The Tiwi power orientation was so ingrained that, even when acting as chief mourner, an elder could not avoid making his requests and allocating the ceremonial tasks so as to gain ground if possible, or at least not lose any ground, in the influence and prestige race.

765 The mourning ceremonies, though prolonged for several days of con-

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 Circles *a*, *a*, are places where the women stood at *Purukupali's* ceremony, ×[532] and lines *c*, *c*, the paths they made as they danced toward the central dancing ground, the *milimika*.

According to other informants, the honey-men from Bathurst Island and [184] other groups from western Melville Island assembled and performed an *ilania* at Tuju, while the people from south and south-western Melville Island performed yet another *ilania* at Puntubu (Fig. 1).

At the conclusion of these *ilanias* the mythical people from the west met +[532] at Rulijunga, where *Mantinuria*, one of the eucalyptus-tree women (Pl. 18A) had prepared a ceremonial ground for them. Here the assembled people performed another *ilania*, after which they moved off as a body to Timbaranapi, where the "workers", having cut the poles and prepared the *pukamuni* spears, baskets and other paraphernalia, had already assembled for the final *ilania*.

After a ceremonial fight[22] and the performance of the *ilania* ceremony, the men and women travelled to Tapararimi by different paths to carry out the final rituals.

×532 A simple bark painting, Pl. 2A, pictures the *pukamuni* ground of *Purukupali* 773 at Tapararimi.

The lower black space is the ceremonial ground (*milimika*) on which the participants performed their dances, and the white area on the top, the several honey-men, one of whom, *Talinini*, was in charge of the rituals.

The five upright vertical panels are the *tudinis* (*pukamuni* poles); the lower line of black horizontal rectangles represents the red ochre, and the upper line of rectangles, black paint, with which the performers decorated themselves.

The dots represent paint on the bodies of the caterpillar men, the *Malu-daienini*, who, at the close of the ceremony, transformed themselves into the [821] Milky Way.

The *pukamuni* rituals and those who mourned beside the poles at Tapararimi are illustrated on a bark painting, Pl. 2D, E.

The central black oval, *c*, is the swift whirlpool off Impanili, where *Purukupali*, walking along the track, *f*, *f*, with his dead son in his arms, drowned himself.

[22] In the ceremonies of the present day, the "workers" when they return from cutting [764] the poles, which are adjacent to the grave, are looked upon as *mapaditis* (spirits of the dead). Before the *ilania* can proceed, the *pukamuni* men and the "workers" take part in a ceremonial fight (Pl. 25D), in which the "workers" (as *mapaditis*) are vanquished. During creation times, a similar fight took place at Timbaranapi, when the *pukamuni* people from the west coast met the "workers" from the east.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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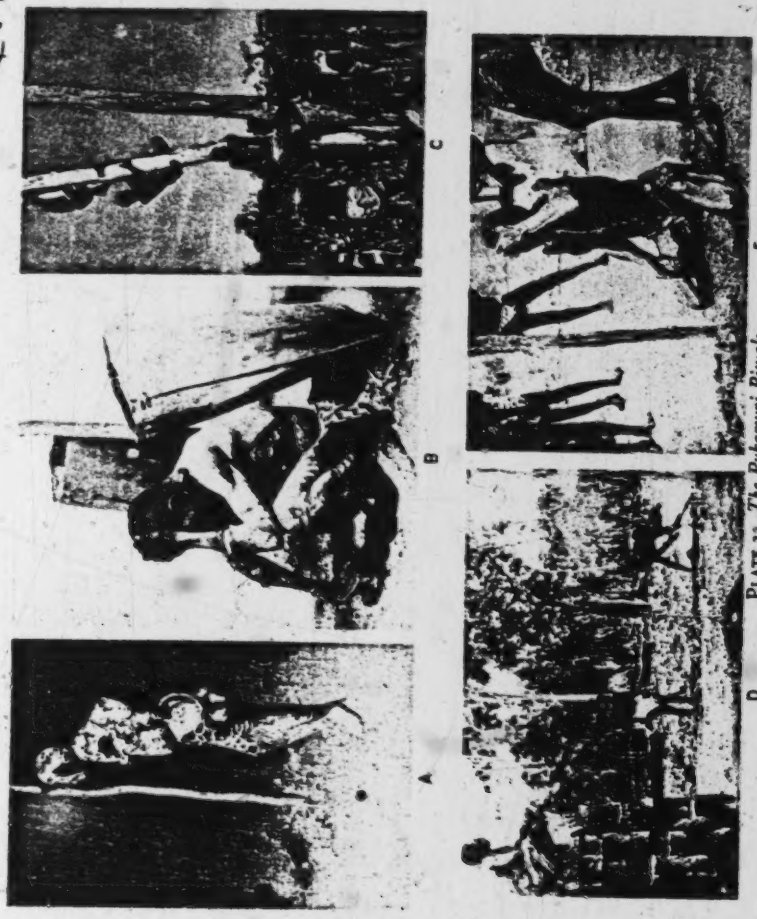

PLATE 23. *The Pukamani Rituals*

A, Pulanimbuwi decorated for Burial Rituals; B, Pulanimbuwi mourning; C, Rite of Wandiatapinda; D, Final Scene at Grave; E, Pulanimbuwi being washed.

[p. 44 b]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Logger-head Turtle-woman, Ringa, at Jutapinta

773 At the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, *Ringa*, the logger-head turtle, with *Garagalani*, the hawk-bill turtle, were responsible for making the large bark ceremonial baskets.[27] When, at the close of the creation period, the men and women changed themselves into creatures or plants, the turtle-women, including *Ringa*, became the sea-going turtles.

×532 778 Pl. 12c deals with the totemic place of the logger-head turtle, a submerged reef, called Jutapinta, some miles north of Karslake Island. The central figure is the reef, the totemic body of the woman, *Ringa*, and the encircling dark-coloured area, *a*, the white sand on the sea bottom. At *b*, is the sea-water, and *c*, *c*, etc., are black rocks under the water, which today are frequented by the logger-head turtles. The yellow bands, *d*, *d*, etc., indicate the seaweed, and the white dotted areas, *e*, *e*, etc., the oysters that live on the reef. The dots, surrounding the central figure, symbolize the eggs inside the body of the logger-head turtle. Unlike the green or hawkbill turtles, the logger-heads do not lay their eggs on the sandy shore.

The Crocodile-woman, Wilinduela, at Wilindu

773 Toward the close of the creation period, the woman, *Wilinduela*, and her sister, *Numanirakala*, were sent out by their brother, *Tukimbini*, to establish totemic centres on northern Melville Island. When they reached Shark Bay, *Wilinduela* stayed on the high ground, i.e., Wilindu Island, while she sent her younger sister to Numanira, a reef uncovered only at low water. Before the two sisters separated, however, they camped together on the mainland at Mundinju (Pl. 10A).

×532 778 The black centre of Pl. 11A, is the totem place of the crocodile-woman on Wilindu Island, the surrounding white circle indicating the jungle around the totemic place. The small black discs are dark-coloured rocks on the cliffs, and the ligher-coloured, rocks on the sea beach. The outer circle is the sea.

On Pl. 11B the central disc is Wilindu Island, while the four circles on its circumference are freshwater springs.

The lower panel *a*, indicates black and *b*, yellow rocks on the coast; *c*, and *e*, *e*, etc., are areas of jungle; *f*, is a rock projecting from the sea, and *h*, the shores of Shark Bay. Poisonous yams, *kuku*, are indicated at *d*, and edible yams at *g*. The many circular discs are oysters on the rocks at Wilindu.

[462] [764] [27] At the conclusion of the present-day burial rites, these baskets, made by the women and painted by the men, are placed on the top of the burial poles as presents to the dead.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

A *mopaditi* has been known to hit an aboriginal on the head with a throwing stick, causing him to foam at the mouth and become stiff and rigid. The natives cure this *mopaditi* sickness by heating pads of paper-bark and pressing them against the sides of the face or over the sick man's ears until his muscles relax. 775 753 757

Once, when a young woman went hunting in the forest by herself, a male *mopaditi* took her away, fed her on a special bush food until she became, like the *mopaditis* themselves, invisible to human eyes. One evening, after many weeks, the *mopaditi* brought the girl back to a place near the camp, stood her against a tree, gave a loud whistle and left.

When relatives found her, she was demented and deaf, with cold, clammy skin and staring eyes. Quickly they lit a fire, heated her hands, and held them, palms inwards, against the sides of her face. When her body became a little warmer, her relatives pressed heated pads of paper-bark against the sides of her face and over her ears, until she went to sleep. After several days of such treatment, the girl recovered and was able to tell what had happened.

The old men warned her never again to go walking in the forest by herself because should the *mopaditis* recapture her, it might not be possible to bring her back to health.

The aborigines also told me about the time when some *mopaditis* stole an old woman, *Incampuna*, took her into the jungle and covered her with boughs. When her relatives found her, sick and unconscious, they brought her back to camp, shouting loudly to stop the *mopaditis* from following. As before, they applied heated pads of paper-bark to "open up" her head until she became well again.

Plate 47A, B, pictures the grave of the wife of the artist, *Muramajua*. At *a*, is the face of the spirit of the wife, the horse-shoe design, *b*, representing her hair. The oval *c*, is a small stringy-bark tree, *o*, a large stringy-bark tree, and *p*, are bloodwood trees near the grave. 532x

At *k*, is a stony hill near the burial place, *l*, *n*, are areas of jungle near by, and *m*, is the forested uplands.

A long fighting-stick, *tumutukamuta*, *g*, and a throwing stick, *muruguna*, *j*, are used by the *mopaditis* to strike their human victims on the head, and make them insensible.

2. DEATH AND BURIAL

Although there were minor differences between the burial of the man, *Wanimperi*, the details of which I gathered from informants, and the burial 764

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 of *Pukimbuwi's* wife, *Nulatini*, which I saw, the general pattern was similar. I shall, however, describe both burials, that of *Nulatini* being the more detailed.

(1) *The Burial of Waniamperi*

On the day that *Waniamperi* died, *Marawani*, one of his near relatives, who wanted the dead man buried near his mother, paid a young "worker"[88] a sum of money and two loin cloths to dig the grave.

When the corpse was brought to the burial ground, a number of relatives had a last look at the dead man before he was laid on a series of logs, placed transversely across the bottom of the grave.

This act was a signal for concerted mourning, the women beating themselves with sticks and the men cutting their heads. For personal safety it is [753] imperative that each man and woman show excessive grief, real or feigned, [626] otherwise the *mopaditi*, annoyed at the lack of grief, will make the offending person ill.

After the mourning died down, the "workers" placed boughs on the body and filled in the grave, leaving a small mound on top (Pl. 24c).

[533] While this work was being carried out, the relatives stood on one side of the grave, either singing the *amburu*, the mourning song, or the rain song of Wailu, the totem of *Tiparawilimiri*, *Waniamperi's* father. To the chanting [535] of this song, the men acted the rain dance (Pl. 30B). The aborigines did not stage the totemic dances or chant the songs belonging to the fire totem of Wuriupi (*Waniamperi's* own totem), because, to have done so, would have especially attracted the attention of his *mopaditi*.

The "workers" laid *Waniamperi's* personal belongings at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tied his loin cloth and tobacco to the top of a thin sapling which had been driven into the ground at the head of the grave, made a large fire, and left a container of water.

The aborigines believe that the *mopaditi*, seeing his belongings near at [775] hand, water to drink and fire to warm himself and cook the food he gathers in the surrounding forest, will stay near the grave until the time comes for him to leave the locality.

While the "workers" were engaged on those tasks, the rest of the burial party quietly left, not looking behind, lest the *mopaditi* follow them to their camp.

[88] These "workers" or *wanaras*, being distant relatives of the dead, are in little danger [767] from the *mopaditis*. Therefore, it is safe for them to clean the site, dig the grave, handle the body, and carry out other tasks associated with burial. They are paid for their work by the chief mourners at the final *pukamuni* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing. 768 [428] [783] [825]

(2) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulanimbuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers". 764

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[53] from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *tokwiangu* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs. 302 751 775

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[54] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground 764

[53] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[54] After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditis* fear the light. 123 775

For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 and dug the grave, which was about six feet long and five feet six inches deep. But when, in the middle of the afternoon, four men appeared, carrying the body, in a fully extended position, and placed it beside the unfinished grave, a number of women, painted all over in white, sat beside the corpse and cried heart-brokenly until the grave was finished. There was a chorus of wailing [302] from both men and women when one of the "workers" painted *Pulanimbuwi's* body entirely in white (Pl. 23A), as additional camouflage to confuse [751] his wife's *mopaditi*.

The ceremonials associated with the burial started when first the husband, then a near relative, dancing astride the corpse, called out loudly, "*Yook, yook*". This ritual, called *wuramu*, was first introduced by the pelican-man at *Purukupali's* ceremony. At the present time it is performed by close relatives [775] of the dead, its object being to scare the *mopaditi* into the grave where it will not be a menace to the living.

After this ritual, two other men entered the grave and, standing, one either end, took the dead body from those above. Amid the sounds of wailing women and the clapping of men's hands on their buttocks, the corpse was gently laid on a bed of transverse logs on the bottom. Other "workers" cut green branches and placed them across the top of the grave.

The husband, carrying a lighted firestick, then entered the grave, burnt the hair on his legs and left immediately. The aborigines believe that the [775] *mopaditi*, smelling the burnt hair of her husband, and thinking he was beside her, stayed quietly in the grave.

The bushes were thrown into the grave, logs, about five feet long,[55] laid on top, and the hole was filled in, leaving a small mound which was covered with sheets of paper-bark (Pl. 24C). Short sticks were driven into the ground at the head and foot of the grave, on one of which the husband hung the meagre belongings of his wife.

764 Both men and women then performed a series of dances, the men danced 535 the flying fox, shark and crocodile, while both the elder and younger women moved in a line toward the grave, holding large green leaves in their hands, palm upward, symbolizing the dead woman when a small child, being carried by her mother.

A woman, holding her breasts, impersonated *Nulatini's* mother feeding her, while a near male relative mimed the mother carrying *Nulatini* as an infant.

764 At the conclusion, *Pulanimbuwi* seated himself at the head of the grave,

[825] [55] The aborigines explained that the logs kept the dogs from unearthing the body, but as, at the present time, the body is over five feet underground, this does not appear to be the reason. It may be that, when tools were more primitive and graves not so deep, these precautions were necessary.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint from his body (Pl. 23E). 764

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly, while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial, and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real. [304] [785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn, everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual, originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's pukamuni*, was supposed so to confuse the *mopaditi* of *Nulatini* that, should she leave the grave, she would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey, then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over. [775]

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopaditi* to warm herself and to cook her food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanimbuwi*, who should have departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23 D). [775]

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark, was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as instructed by *Jibunglialumi* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp could not see it. 765

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines, believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being, not the result of natural causes. 761

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, having been responsible for the death,[86] had changed himself into a [825] [754]

[86] This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the meteor-man, *Papinjuwari*, to an enemy.

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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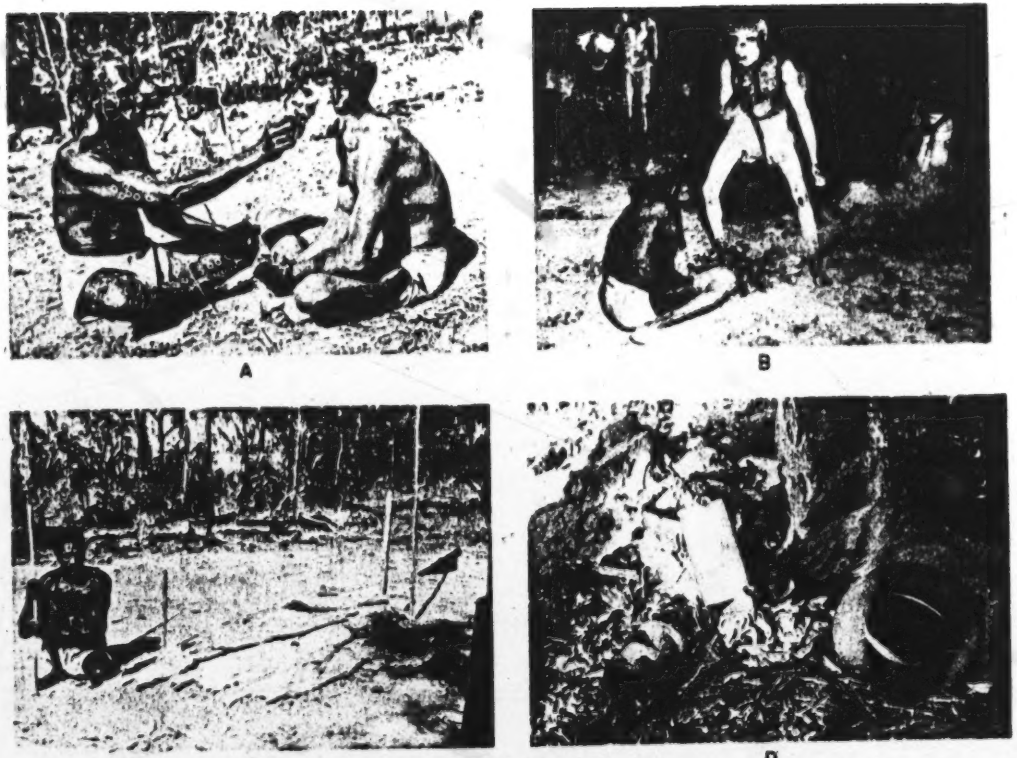

PLATE 24. *The Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Feeding Pukamuni Man; B, Rite of Wandiatapinda; C, The Grave; D, Belongings of Dead Man, Waniamperi.

(p. 72 A)

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

corrobboree of the Melville Islanders, but it appears that he regarded the [114] demonstration as hostile. He writes that "the dance consisted chiefly of the per- 527 formers leaping two or three times successively out of the sea, and then violently 535 moving their legs so as to agitate the water into a foam for some distance around them, all the time shouting loudly and laughing immoderately; then they would run through the water for eight or ten yards and perform again; and this was repeated over and over as long as the dance lasted."

During none of these ceremonies, or indeed anywhere on the island, did I see [771] anything of totemism in the scientific sense of the word. This fact is in accordance [114] with my observations in Central and North Australia, and my negative evidence is amply borne out by the researches of Drs. W. E. Roth and H. Klaatsch and others.

Pastimes.

The sham-fights of youths with small arrow-shaped spears have already been 524 mentioned. Children were observed upon the beach competing in running and long jump. A favourite amusement of the younger folk on a breezy day is to collect the light globular seed-heads of the "spring rolling grass" (*Spinifex hirsutis*), that grow on every sand-hill near the coast, and take them to the beach and there release them on the hardened sand. Driven along by the wind, these seeds travel over the surface at no mean pace. Allowing them to gain a fair start, the children bolt after them and endeavour to overtake them and pick them up from the ground while dashing past them at full speed in "cow-boy" fashion.

Another game is that of hand-ball. The seeds of the zamia (*Cycas media*) take the place of a small ball. Two lads stand facing one another and hit the seed to and fro with the palms of their hands, after the style of a modern game of tennis.

Despite their keenness of sight and quickness of hand, they are, nevertheless, [147] very backward in catching with their hands an object which is thrown at them.

Burial Method.

The aborigines of Bathurst and Melville Islands have a unique and elaborate 764 method of burial; graves have been found on both islands. It appears that the favourite places for burying the dead are there, where a jungle or mangrove-thicket breaks to the ordinary eucalypt-woodland, usually near to the sea-coast or to a native water.

Historically we have to note several observations in this connection.

Sir Gordon Bremer[1] mentions having discovered a grave on Bathurst Island in 1824. "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it

[1] *Imperial Parliamentary Paper*, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, London, March 27th, 1843; also in *The Genesis of Queensland*, by H. S. Russell, Sydney, 1888, p. 34.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there, and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilized people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed round with trees of 7 feet or 8 feet high, some of which were carved with a stone or shell, and further ornamented by rings of wood, also carved. On the tops of these posts were placed the waddies of the deceased. . . . At the head was placed a piece of a canoe and a spear, and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and the earth were cleared away from the sides, and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."

Major Campbell,[1] who in 1826 relieved Captain Barlow as commandant of Fort Dundas, in his interesting memoir to the Royal Geographical Society also refers to native graves observed by him. He writes: "It appears to be the custom of the natives to bury their dead, their burial places being in retired spots near their most frequented encamping ground. The burial place is circular, probably 10 or 12 feet in diameter; it is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberds, 14 or 15 feet high; and between these the spear and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground." This description applies equally well to those seen by us, [114] with the exception that the cleared circular space was considerably larger in our case, while the height of the posts, above the ground, was less.

171 764 In 1847, Bete Jukes,[2] naturalist to the expedition of H.M.S. "*Fly*," described and figured a native tomb seen at Port Lihou in Endeavour Strait; "Round a central mound of sand there had been a broad ditch or hollow scooped out and swept quite clean for several yards in width. The mound was of a quadrangular form, 8 feet long, 4 feet wide, and 3 feet high. A stout post stood upright at each corner, and the sides were ornamented by rows of the ribs of the dugong placed regularly along them. . . . On each post was either a large shell or the skull of a dugong, and on the grave were several other dugongs' skulls and shells of the *Nautilus pompilius*. All these, as well as the posts, were smeared with red ochre." Additional interest is attached to the description of Jukes, since he states that "between the two posts, near the sea, a long stick had been inserted, ornamented with feathers and streamers of grass, and fastened to the post by other cross-sticks similarly ornamented." From this wording, and more so from the [778 114] figure reproduced by him, it would seem that the decoration between the posts was one of those sacred ornaments to which I have elsewhere referred as the *wanaingi*.[3]

[1] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 158.

[2] *Narrative of the Surveying Voyage H.M.S. "Fly,"* vol. i, pp. 149 and 150 (1847).

[3] *Vide* also George French Angas, *S. Australia*, illustrated, 1847, Plate XXIV; Edge Partington, Album III, Plate CXIV; Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes Cent. Australia*, pp. 230 and 231; W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies, Queensland Aborigines*, Fig. 427;

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

A record of something of the kind having existed on the mainland is contained in MacGillivray's narrative (1852). In referring to the burial-ceremonies of natives of the Cobourg Peninsula, this author[1] states that "when decomposition has gone on sufficiently far, the bones are carefully removed, painted red, wrapped up in bark, and carried about with the tribe for some time; after which they are finally deposited, either in a hollow tree or a shallow grave, over which a low mound of earth and stones is raised, occasionally ornamented with posts at the corners." 171 765

This same author refers to similar burial ceremonies which he observed of the "Kowraregas," natives inhabiting the Prince of Wales group of islands, situate near Cape York in Torres Strait. He writes[2] of a grave he saw at Port Lihou, some time after Bete Jukes' visit: "When the head of a family dies at Muralug, the body is laid out upon a framework[3] of sticks raised a foot from the ground and is there allowed to rot . . . until the head of the corpse becomes nearly detached by the process of putrefaction, when it is removed and handed over to the custody of the eldest wife. . . . The body, or rather the headless skeleton, is then interred in a shallow grave, over which a mound is raised, ornamented by wooden posts at the corners painted red, with sometimes shells or other decorations attached to them. . . ." 171 764

Perhaps it would not be out of place to make a passing reference to the native burial-place discovered by Captain Sturt[4] near Lake Buddah, off the Macquarie River, in New South Wales (latitude 32° 5′, longitude 148° 10′). "It consists of an oblong mound, with three semicircular seats. A walk encompassed the whole from which three others branched off, for a few yards only, into the forest. Several cypresses, overhanging the grave, were fancifully carved on the inner side, and on one the shape of a heart was deeply engraved." A similarity of method will be apparent. Instead of having separate carved posts surrounding the grave, the natives of Macquarie River carved the trees surrounding it. The walk encompassing the mound might be regarded as the equivalent of the cleared space characteristic of the island graves.

Mr. P. Foelsche and I have described painted and ornamented poles that are erected close to the graves of deceased members of the Larrekiya tribe in the Port Darwin district.[5]

During our geological explorations of the north-west coast of the Northern 764

R. Clement, *Publication of Royal Ethnological Museum at Leiden*, series ii, No. 6 (Catalogue by J. D. E. Schmeltz), vol. xvi, Plate V, Fig. 8; H. Basedow, *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxviii, 1904, pp. 22 and 28, Plate III, Fig. 4; H. Klaatsch, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1906, pp. 792, and 1907, p. 854.

[1] J. MacGillivray, *Narrative of the Voyage of H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* 1852, vol. i, p. 149.

[2] *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 32.

[3] *Vide* references given by me in *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 6.

[4] *Vide* Charles Sturt: *Two Expeditions into the Interior of Southern Australia*, London, 1834, vol. i, p. 14, and frontispiece.

[5] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 5, and *op. cit.*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 7.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 Territory in 1905, Messrs. Brown and Gee[1] found, near Luxmore Head on Melville Island, "a grave enclosed by wooden slabs, portions of which had been burnt. Aboriginal markings were faintly discernible in places on the wood, and some of the posts had the wood cut away at the top, leaving two spike-like horns at the sides; others had the wood cut away from the outside towards the centre, leaving a short spike standing up in the middle of the post."

As I was examining the Rivers' country on the mainland at the time, I did not personally see the find.

Soon after Professor H. Klaatsch, when visiting Melville Island, discovered close to the site of the old naval settlement of Fort Dundas a "grave decorated by monuments." Professor Klaatsch[2] describes the find as follows: "The grave was surrounded by nine wooden pillars, arranged in an elongated oval, each post differing in size and shape from its fellow. The longest was about 6 feet, and each was variously painted in yellows and reds."

114 764 Bremer, Campbell, and Klaatsch found implements and weapons, presumably the belongings of the deceased, lying upon the grave or the grave-posts or stuck upright into the ground. They mention spears, waddies, bark water-vessels and baskets of fan-palm leaves.[3] No relics of this kind were noticed by me; in explanation thereof I state that such are likely to be destroyed by the numerous bush-fires occurring on the island, and secondly, in the case presently to be described, on account of the immature age of the individual, since children rarely are in possession of any belongings. I have, however, recorded[4] a similar custom from Central Australia.

764 The discovery I am now about to describe was made in the south-eastern corner of Bathurst Island. The grave was situated not far from the coast and on the edge of a eucalypt forest, adjoining a thicket of mangroves (*vide* Plate XIII, Figs. 1 and 2). The space was cleared; a circular patch of ground, 8 metres in diameter, had been artificially elevated by a few centimetres and swept clean.[5] It was bestrewn with numerous burnt fragments of shells of the edible *Telescopium fuscum* and *Cyrena casingtonensis*, and also with ashes. In the centre of the elevated patch was a small elongated oval mound, which indicated where the corpse had been buried. The direction of its longer axis was north-west by south-east. Five ornamented posts[6] surrounded the small mound in an irregular way;

[1] *Vide Report on Explorations by Govt. Geologist and Staff*, 1905, p. 28, and *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, vol. xi, 1907, p. 546.

[2] *Proc. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, vol. xi, 1907, pp. 586–8, and *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, vol. xxxix, 1907, pp. 678 *et seq.*, Plate IX.

[3] *Cf.* H. Basedow, *Proc. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxi, 1907, p. 38, Figs. 40 and 41.

[4] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxviii, 1904, p. 24, Plate VI, Fig. 1.

[5] Whether this was done to guard the grave-posts against bush fires or to facilitate the detection of an imaginary visit of the evil spirit ("devil devil"), as is the case in Central Australia, or both, is still unsettled.

[6] Another grave, situated not far from the one under consideration, was surrounded by the remnants of nine posts.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

four skirting the north-eastern edge and only one standing on the opposite side, 764
near to the south-eastern end. Before I exhumed the skeleton, the natives informed me that a male infant had been buried there. I am inclined to believe that this information was gathered from the arrangement of the posts and their markings, rather than that they recollected the identity of the child. The grave had apparently stood for some years, for upon digging down to the skeleton, several fair-sized roots of trees, that had grown subsequently, had to be cut through. At a depth of half a metre a layer of decayed pieces of timber, longitudinally laid, was found; under this rested the skeleton. It was, indeed, that of an infant, not many months old. Several men of the local tribe gave me voluntary assistance in the exhumation of the skeleton, and did not in the least object to handle the bones and carry them for me.

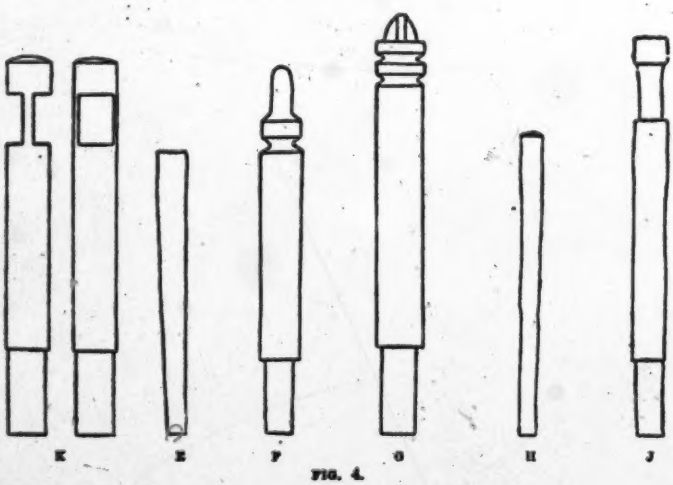

FIG. 4.

The ornamental posts surrounding the little central mound are all of wood, 532
namely the trunks of the heavy iron wood and of a lighter timber (perhaps that 764
of the corkscrew palm or *Pandanus*). They are circular in section and of various diameters and heights. The top ends of the three largest posts are carved in the manner described below. All of them still showed traces of having been painted with ochres in a most elaborate manner. The designs were, however, incomplete, so that I had them freshened up by the natives, who willingly consented to do so and exercised the greatest care to apply the colours in precisely the same positions as they originally occupied. The four posts along the north-eastern edge of the mound stood practically in a straight line, while the remaining one was at the head end of the opposite side. No two of them are alike either in size, method of carving, or colour ornamentation. It is safe to assume that each post has its significance, since the natives could decide the age and sex (and possibly many

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

532 764

FIG. 5.

things more) of the interred and could reproduce the designs, upon request, with so marked a degree of precision and certainty.

The post that stood alone on the south-western side is no doubt of particular importance (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5b). It stood 123 centimetres above the surface and 11 centimetres in the ground. The circumference at the top, which is flat, is 42 centimetres and the post tapers very slightly downwards (*vide* Fig. 4, E). The post shows no signs of any carving. Its surface is, however, charred, and two simple, but effective, if not grotesque, designs in white pipe-clay have been drawn upon it (*vide* Fig. 5). These, without doubt, are in representation of two crocodiles or lizards, in profile, with their dorsal surfaces opposed but not in contact. I take it that these designs, and consequently this post, represent the family crest of the deceased.

The post at the south-eastern corner (the head end) stood 140 centimetres above and 37 centimetres below the level of the ground, the latter length having been reduced in thickness by about 3 centimetres all round (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5a). The top surface is practically flat. For a distance of 22 centimetres down, the wood has been cut away to a depth of from 3 to 4 centimetres all round (*vide* Fig. 4, F). At that distance it slopes outwards through 3 centimetres of vertical measurement to a collar 7 centimetres in width; it being the same diameter as the main pillar. Below the collar, material has again been cut away circumferentially in a V-shaped fashion; the intervening vertical space between the slopes of this notch measuring but

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

1 centimetre. From this furrow downwards the post has a uniform circumference of 54 centimetres. The colour-ornamentation (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 1) is briefly as follows: the portion of post reduced in thickness at the top is yellow for a quarter of its length and red for the remainder. The collar is divided into nine squares, yellow in outline and on a red background. Yellow lines, drawn from corner to corner, intersect at the middle of each square. Below this, the post is divided by five vertical bands. The one that faced the grave is waved: it is drawn in yellow ochre bordered with red. Upon the side diametrically opposite (*i.e.* the side seen on approaching the grave) are two vertical bands of yellow, about 15 centimetres apart. The spaces on either side of them are again subdivided by two slightly curved vertical bands of white, bordered with yellow. Occupying each of the three longitudinal spaces between these white bands are one elongate-oval figure in the centre and one-half such figure at the top and bottom of each respectively. Connected with the top and bottom ends of these figures are singly, doubly or multiply bent processes; the groups being separated from one another by horizontally laid shields. It is clear that these designs are intended to represent human figures in various artistically modified forms. Strange transformations of the limbs into snakes are visible on the left; while similar forms stand alone in the bottom corner of either side. 532 764

Such transformations are not infrequently met in primitive art, and from such latitude and privileges on the part of the artist there is no doubt all modern ornamental and emblematical designs have originated. The figures are drawn in red, bordered and shaded with yellow bars and crosses. The central, lowest figure is shaded in imitation of the zamia palm leaf, similar to the body ornamentation described above. All the spaces between the limb-like processes are filled in with bunched circlets or simple and criss-cross shading. The last-named method is also found among the designs of mainland natives.[1]

Next to this head-post, along the north-western edge of the mound, at a distance of about 65 centimetres from centre to centre of post, stands the largest, heaviest, and most elaborately decorated post (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5c). Its height above ground was 160 centimetres; its total length is 203 centimetres. The circumference is from 62 to 64 centimetres. For a distance of about 12 centimetres from the top, material has been cut away at two sides diametrically opposite, to a depth of from 4 to 5 centimetres, but at the points of emergence of an axis at right angles to this diameter, a vertical strip of timber has been left intact; the top is rounded off in the direction of this axis, which, moreover, ran parallel to the long axis of the mound (*vide* Fig. 4, G). Beneath this headpiece, two such notches, as described of the last-mentioned post, have been cut; the width of the collars so formed and the furrows, respectively, being each from 4 to 5 centimetres. The thickness of the part that stood in the ground has been reduced by from 1½ to 2 centimetres all

[1] *Vide* for example H. Basedow: *Archiv f. Anthrop.*, vol. vii, parts 2 and 3, 1908, p. 219 (Fig.).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 764 round. The ochre ornamentation is in three colours: white, yellow, and red. The design is quite symmetrical as regards the disposition of its constitutent parts (*vide* Plate XVIII, Fig. 1). In the centre of the post, on the side away from the grave, stands a figure resembling a St. Andrew's Cross, the arm on the left being yellow, bordered with red, that on the right, white, bordered with yellow. On either side of this figure, and at equal distances from it, are vertical bands of white bordered with yellow; in between are various elongate shield-shaped figures, symmetrically placed and enclosing circles or bars. All the remaining spaces are filled in with cross-hatched shading and circlets in the three specified colours. Between the two upper arms of the cross stands a red T-shaped figure, resembling the emu-track of the mainland tribes, but that it is intended to represent such is doubtful, since the emu (*Dromaeius novae hollandiae*) was not observed on either of the islands.

The next post[1] stood 50 centimetres further north-west (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5d). It is the smallest and made of light wood. Its length above ground was 120 centimetres, and the total original length was about 145 centimetres. The last-named measurement could not be taken with accuracy because a dry rot had set in and destroyed part of the timber. The circumference is from 29 centimetres at the top to 26 at the level of the ground. The top surface is rounded off but otherwise the structure is plain (*vide* Fig. 4, H). The colouring (*vide* Plate XVIII, Fig. 2) is as follows: top surface yellow; underneath, for a depth of 10 to 13 centimetres, the post is red, then follow thin alternate horizontal bands of yellow, white and yellow. Below, the surface is subdivided into a number of trapezoid and triangular spaces by two crosses resembling that of the post previously described, the one in white, the other in yellow. Of the intervening spaces, alternate fields are filled in with circlets of red, surrounded by yellow, and arranged in horizontal rows of from one to three, which are separated by horizontal bars of red. The other fields are painted red and are shaded with transverse bands of yellow.

Lastly, the post standing at the foot end of the grave, that is at the north-western corner, was 40 centimetres from the last described. Its total length is 193 centimetres and it stood 156 centimetres above the ground (*vide* Plate XIV, Fig. 5e). The circumference varies from 45 centimetres at the top to 39 centimetres at the ground-level. The top surface is rounded. At a distance of 10 centimetres from the crest, the wood has been cut away circumferentially for a depth of 2 centimetres and a vertical distance of 28 centimetres (*vide* Fig 4, J). From this level to that of the old ground-line the post is plain, but, below the ground-

[1] The posts surrounding the other grave, mentioned in the footnote on p. 314, were apparently of a similar nature. Bush fires had seriously damaged them. One, however, was cut through at a distance of 15 centimetres from the top, leaving only two narrow strips of timber on either side to support the headpiece thus formed. Whether or not a sexual designation was hereby intended I could not definitely ascertain, but presume so. The "spike-like horns at the side" referred to by Mr. Gee (p. 314 above) must be regarded as the remnants of a post of similar type to this whose crown has been destroyed by fire (*vide* Fig. 4, K).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

level, further material has been cut away to reduce its thickness by about 1 centimetre all round. The top portion, which has the appearance of a knob, has been daubed with red ochre; the sunken portion, immediately beneath, is white (*vide* Plate XVII, Fig. 2). The lower surface of the post bears five vertical bands, three being of white pipe-clay and two of yellow ochre. Two of the former have a border of red, the third one of yellow; and both of the latter (yellow) are bordered with white. Three of the intervening spaces are shaded with inclined lines of white, the remaining two are each filled with a vertical row of white cricoid figures. The original surface upon which the pattern was drawn is charred. 532 764

Having persuaded the natives to repaint the designs on the tomb-posts, in places where they were defective or missing, they set about the work with enthusiasm and did not rest until they had repainted the whole of the surfaces. To accomplish this they leaned the posts against trees and divided themselves into small groups of two to four, each of which undertook part of the work (*vide* Plate XVI, Figs. 1 and 2). Youths were sent to the main camp, whence they soon after returned with lumps of red and yellow ochre and white pipe-clay (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 2). From these they broke off small pieces and crushed them by hand in the strong concave shells of the bivalve mollusc *Cyrena essingtonensis*.[1] To this crumbled pigment sufficient water was added to make a thick paint, more water being added from time to time as required. One might look upon these shells containing the mixed paint as representing primitive palettes (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 1). The paint is applied to the surface by means of crudely made, yet effective, brushes. Short pieces of the creeping calamus are cut with the sharp edge of a shell and one or both of their ends chewed until all the fibres have become separated (*vide* Plate XV, Fig. 3); much in the same way as the flower-stalks of the fan-palm are chewed when feeding on honey (*vide* p. 300). Both of these small artists' requisites are highly interesting inasmuch as they show us a decidedly primitive, yet to the present day practically unaltered stage in the evolution of art. [126] 386 [413] 532 [413]

It is evident that the posts have been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk. Captain Flinders[2] as far back as 1803 noticed that the natives on the north coast (Caledon Bay) were familiar with the use of iron instruments and that they tried to steal his axes. He, therefore, suspected that "they had been previously visited by people possessing iron instruments." Later, he was himself able to confirm this supposition when he discovered, near to Cape Wilberforce, a fleet of proas from Macassar, the crew of which were in the habit of visiting the north coast of Australia to collect trepang, which they took to Timor and sold to the Chinese.[2] 412 [302] 177 171

[1] We have before us an interesting analogy, when we recollect that in our own country the shells of fresh-water mussels were, in former days, much used and are still used as a receptacle for mixing water-colours; whence also the name *Unio pictorum*.

[2] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, pp. 213 and 228–231.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 177 412 When Captain King[1] dropped anchor in Apsley Strait in 1818, and came into contact with natives near Luxmore Head on Melville Island, he noticed that "they repeatedly asked for axes by imitating the action of chopping."

171 764 532 Ethnologically these tomb-posts are of the greatest importance. With the exception of the records left by Jukes and MacGillivray, we know of nothing of the kind existing nowadays on the mainland. That, however, the inhabitants of some of the Torres Strait islands adopt methods of preserving the memory of their dead by means of painted and decorated structures of a different type is an established fact. The Continental Australian certainly, also, has methods of his own to mark a place of burial, but in a decidedly more transitory and less laborious way. The latter leaves already existing belongings of the deceased upon the grave; the islander, in addition, surrounds the spot with specially prepared posts such as have been described herein. Apart from the carvings, the painted designs, alone, are quite superior to anything existing on the mainland. The marked symmetry of the individual patterns and their diversity, when compared with one another, can hardly find a parallel on the mainland. We might look upon these island productions as representing interesting and independent transition stages between the primitive art of the Continental Australian, on the one hand, and the more perfected types of equatorial island tribes to the north of Australia, on the other.

APPENDIX.

NATIVE OCHRE DRAWINGS ON BARK FROM MELVILLE ISLAND, NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA.

531 While visiting Bathurst Island in 1911, I also entered several of the inlets of Melville Island from Apsley Strait. At one point, not far from the southern entrance to the Strait, where some aborigines were living in huts near to Cooper's Buffalo-Shooters Camp, I found the drawings here described. They were upon sheets of bark of the Woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*), used for building their shelters and huts. All drawings are in pipe-clay and red ochre; these materials having been smeared or squirted on to the bark in the form of a thin paste or in aqueous suspension. Typical among the drawings of the aboriginals on the mainland are the negative imprints of hands produced by holding the palm of the hand flat against the surface and squirting a mouthful of pipe-clay or ochre, suspended in water, against the back of the hand and around it. The surrounding surface is thus coloured so that, when the hand is removed, its outline stands out conspicuously by the absence of colour.[2]

[1] *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, pp. 111 and 121.

[2] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, 1907, vol. xxxi, p. 56, Plate XII. Among other references note E. Giles, *Australia Twice Traversed*, 1889, vol. i, p. 78. "The drawing is done

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Balers made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

314 396 137 Fig. 1. Forest scene on Bathurst Island. From the stringy-barked eucalyptus on the left side of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe. Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
501 Fig. 2. Various types of paddles in use on Bathurst Island. About $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.

PLATE XIII.

764 Figs. 1 and 2. Distant and near view of a native grave, surrounded by five carved and painted posts, Bathurst Island. Note the cleared space and the position of grave, viz.: at the junction between open woodland and thicket. A tall Bathurst Islander in seen in Fig. 2.

PLATE XIV.

415 Fig. 1. A melon-shell (*Melo diadema*) used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Fig. 2. A *Fusus priei* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 764 Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e. Painted and carved posts of native grave shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XV.

415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cyrena easingtonensis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
317 386 Fig. 2. Lumps of yellow ochre (on the left), white pipe-clay (in the centre), and red ochre (on the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus australis*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
301 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (?). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 532 764 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE XVII.

Fig. 1. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5a (Plate VIII) shown in plan; modified forms of the human figure are embodied. 532

Fig. 2. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5c (Plate VIII) shown in plan. 764

PLATE XVIII.

Fig. 1. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5c (Plate VIII) shown in plan. 532

Fig. 2. Coloured ornament of grave-post No. 5d (Plate VIII) shown in plan. 764

PLATE XIX.

Pipe-clay drawings on a sheet of bark of the stringy-barked eucalyptus (*E. tetrodonta*), from a native hut on Melville Island. The plate includes negative imprints of hands (Fig. 1), and drawings of a sailing craft (Figs. 1 and 2), and of a frog (Fig. 3). ¼ natural size. 531 532

PLATE XX.

Pipe-clay drawing of pearling lugger in full sail; bark from a native hut on Melville Island. About ¼ natural size. 532

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

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FIG. 1.

FIG. 2.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 7]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 322 - ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XIV.

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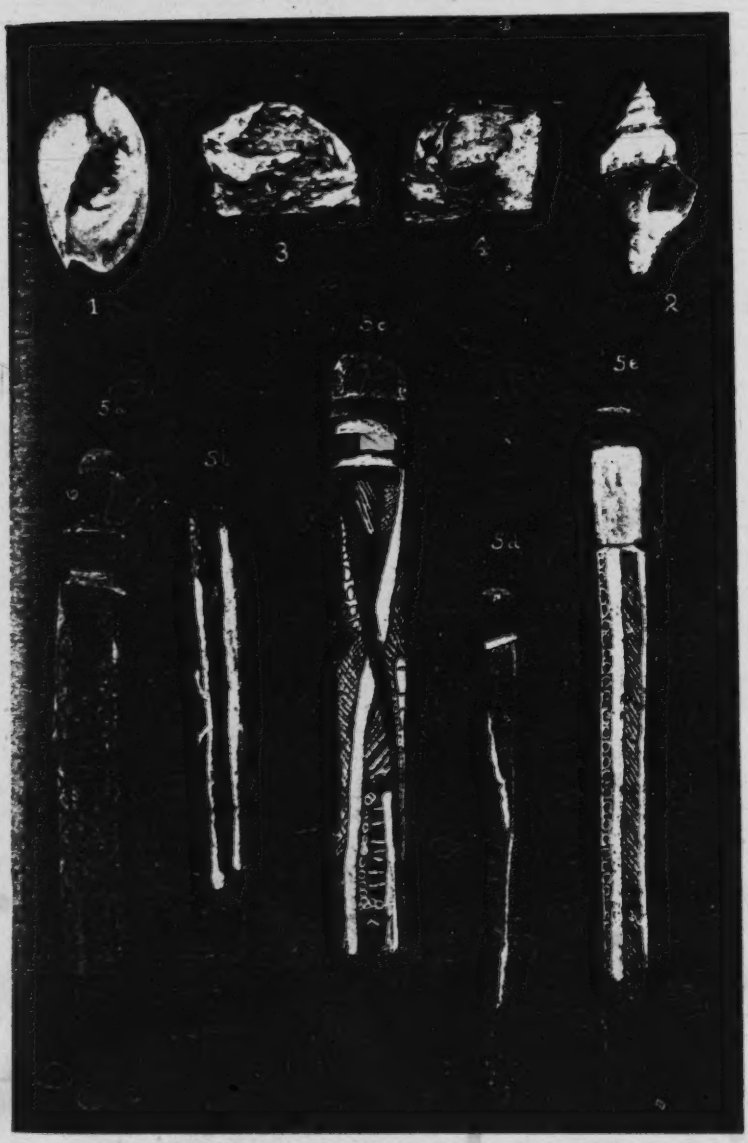

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE B]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE p. 322 - ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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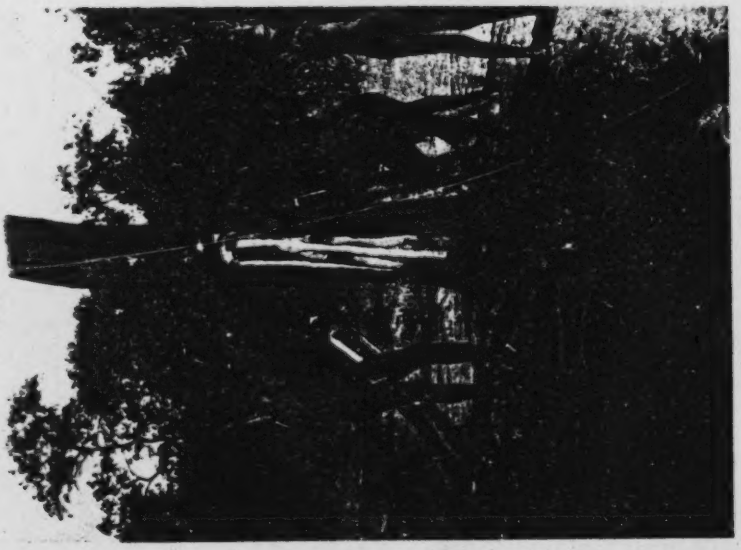

FIG. 1.

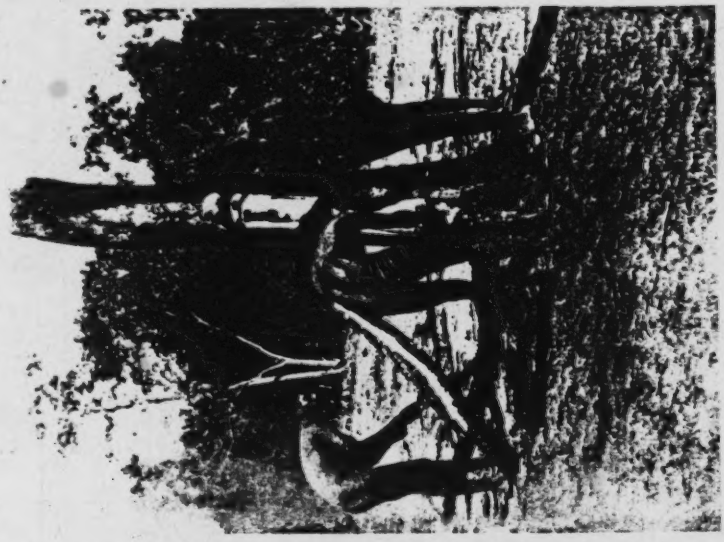

FIG. 2.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 10]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 322 - ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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FIG. 2. FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 11]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE p. 323 – ANALYST]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XLIII, 1913, Plate XVIII.

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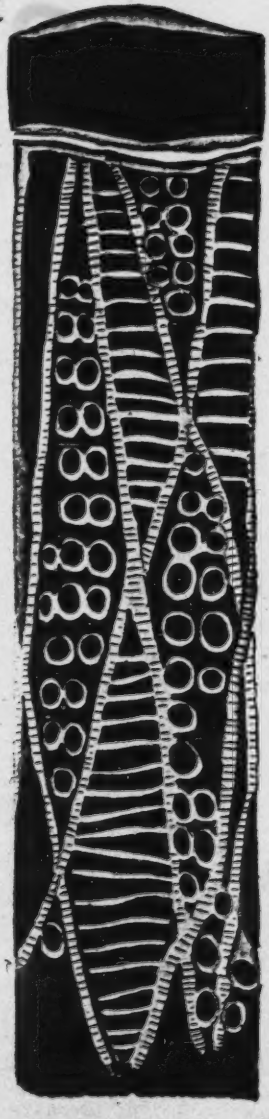

FIG. 2.

FIG. 1.

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 12]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE P. 323 – ANALYST]

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

796 An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch his wives or children, because a deadly sweat called *kilamini* comes from his body and 827 will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

[88] Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the 764 Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *emukery* of 775 the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yatataka*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

Culture Heroes. They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the 773 "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-776 tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumereka*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orati*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marakarti*.

The Present Day Spirits. Some spirits vitally affect their present lives. 776 Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain [821] spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

Magic. Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs 754 slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *kulumpara*. It is interesting to compare the Anula belief; if a person is sung with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

582 and for Tiwi fathers' statements that they can only "find" children
614 in their own country.

Today, with nonlocalized sibs, both the sib and the local group are
582 considered in the exchange of woman, which is direct with reference
614 to sibs but indirect with reference to local groups. Such exchange
may in some cases involve sibs and countries or *tungarima*, in others
621 sibs and districts or subcountries. I found that approximately 50 per cent of local-group exchanges were between *tungarima* and 50 per cent within the *tungarima*.

582 With local-group exchange and unilateral cross-cousin marriage preferred and predominant, we have an indirect but circular marriage exchange system. We cannot, however, consider the entire society as being involved in a single marriage exchange system. The system is best seen from the point of view of a single male Ego, whose marriages are systematized according to rules which are society wide, but whose actual marriages are determined by past affiliations which can be and often are variable with respect to sib and local-group exchange.

That the Tiwi system is Ego-oriented is most evident when a
554 male Ego dies and his relatives foregather for his funeral ceremonies
571 (Goodale 1959). If such an Ego has lived a full life, he will be affiliated at the time of his death with a number of social groups. He is affili-
764 ated by birth with a matrilineal sib. By his father's death he is affiliated with a local group and a *tungarima*, which may or may not be the same as the group with whom he currently resides; in either case he is affiliated with the latter and will be buried among them. Through marriage, Ego is likewise affiliated with one or more additional sibs and local groups.

Only those persons who belong to the several above-mentioned
601 groups with which the deceased is actually affiliated are expected to
764 honor him by attending his funeral ceremony. When death occurs, these individuals are terminologically reclassified into four cate-
602 gories, from the members of each of which similar behavior is expected. The spouse and spouse's siblings become *ambarui*. Cross-cousins, MoFa, FaMo, BrDaCh (ws), and SiSoCh (ms) all become *yempi*. Siblings and parallel cousins, MoMo, FaFa, BrSoCh (ws), and SiDaCh (ms), regardless of their sib affiliations, are classed together as *pudawi*. All kinsmen in the first ascending and first descending generations are classed as *unandawi*. Since, however, there is a distinct role differentiation between Fa, FaSi, and SoCh (ms), on the one hand, and Mo, MoBr, and SiCh (ms), on the other, I suspect there may be a terminological distinction which escaped me, inasmuch as these "funeral terms," with the exception of *ambarui*, are no longer in use.

Conclusion

582 In this paper I have considered the form and nature of the varying types of contracts that lead to marriage among the Tiwi. I have

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Fig. 15. Weather-worn poles mark the grave of someone long dead but not forgotten

223 789 775 bush. He bin die long time ago." This had been his country while alive and it was still his country, for his spirit remains near the grave and still hunts the wild animals and birds, while the spirits of his wives collect the wild yams, and his little spirit children play in the bush. Bangri will share this food with others who come, and their *mobuditiies*, should they die and be buried in the country, for as long as his name is remembered, and until his grave-posts rot with the passing of time.

123 But Bangri was not cooperative. The next day the hunters found little game in the bush and the women turned to the laborious [222 224] job of digging six-foot holes with a stick to obtain the small yams that are to be found at this season. Again the grass was too thick, the snakes too cheeky, and Albert advised against our going bush. [152 777] I decided the more logical explanation was that Albert considered we ourselves had ample food, and besides he was sincerely worried about his long run of bad luck. But he left with the others that [223]

171 boomerang, is unknown to the islanders. Ceremonial customs,
[411] language, origin, and burial rites all differ from those of the mainland tribes, and constitute an interesting study for anthropologists. They are the only aborigines who erect memorials on
764 the graves of the departed, and, in the forest beside the aerodrome, you may see a typical grave surrounded with queerly-
[322 carved ironwood totem-poles. The poles, some eight feet in
532] height, are carved in varying patterns. They had been painted in highly decorative designs with red, yellow, and white ochre, with black bands of charcoal to give sharp and artistic contrast. Each kindred totem to that of the deceased must place a pole at the grave. Failure to erect a pole is supposed to signify that no sorrow is felt for the death, and punishment will follow. Something unpleasant always *does* happen to those who neglect this duty.

797 AFTER these necessary digressions, let us return to my visit to the mission station. We followed the fathers over the stile, up an avenue of palms, and on through the garden, where
[245] pineapples and bananas grow, and there are rows of immense and beautifully shady mango-trees. Sturdy, fuzzy-headed aborigines strode in front (one of them had just come in with
[262] a couple of kangaroos for the larder), and the boys trooped along behind us. The quarters of the fathers are very much those of bachelors, perfectly bare, with guns in the corners and a few native weapons and curios hanging on the walls.

Here two lubras brought us morning tea, and here I learnt much of the foregoing matters. The fathers themselves are entertaining men of the world, and their white cricket shirts and khaki slacks gave no indication of their calling. The boys gathered at the foot of the steps leading up to the quarters,
797 and every now and then black-bearded Father McGrath would
522 banter them in their own language. Like all the native peoples

[p. 15 (B)]

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Top to bottom: Timalerua, the canoe maker; Tiwi spears; mourning ceremony around gravepósts.

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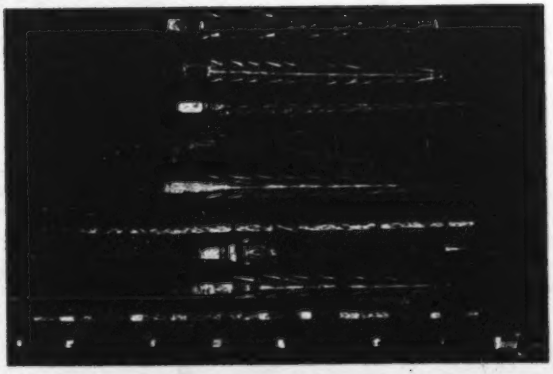

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[p. x is blank]
[p. xi]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

771 784 sister's son being initiated, the attitude of a Tiwi toward the whole *pukimani* state was essentially a passive attitude. *Pukimani* behavior was something one accepted and conformed to when required; it was in no way an active attempt to change nature, people, food, gods, spirits, or anything else in the universe. [181] It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that since their *pukimani* system offered them no handle by which to seek actively to alter the universe in which they lived, the Tiwi found that universe to their liking as it was. Unlike the tribes of central Australia who lavished a lot of thought upon magical methods of improving the food supply or the rainfall, the Tiwi believed and acted on the belief that as long as they observed their *pukimani* taboos, the food would continue to be as abundant and the rains as regular as they had always been. [171] The central Australians, by seeking to coerce nature through magic, suggest that they found nature unsatisfactory; the Tiwi, by relying upon passive taboo-observance alone, suggest rather that their relationship to nature was an acceptable equilibrium that they wanted to preserve, not change. And if everybody observed his *pukimani* taboos when required, that equilibrium would remain undisturbed. Hence the antisocial man in Tiwi was not the maker of individual magic (he was unknown, anyway) but the nonobserver of taboo. By his nonobservance he threatened to upset the normally satisfactory equilibrium between man and nature. [626] For a senior Tiwi male to be charged publicly with breaking *pukimani* rules was a disgrace and a blow to his prestige and his position in public opinion. His behavior was possibly a sin against the spirits but it was certainly a shame in the eyes of his fellows. *Pukimani* observance was thus a matter of respectability to a much greater degree than it was a matter of pleasing the spirits.

765 DEATH As was mentioned above, death is the natural phenomenon around which the Tiwi had woven their most elaborate web of ritual. The most frequent and most important Tiwi ceremonies were the mourning ceremonies, [554 561] and they came in three sizes—small, medium, and large—depending on the age, sex, and importance of the dead person. The mourning ceremonies which 562 drew the crowds were not held until some time after the death and burial. 764 All bodies of dead persons were buried within twenty-four hours of their death by digging a hole near the camp where the death had occurred and placing the body, wrapped in bark, in it. Near most well-used camping spots there was already a graveyard marked by old graveposts, and the latest corpse was buried there or near there. Seldom was the body carried any distance for burial. If a person died even less than a mile from an old burial ground, there was little inclination to carry the body that far. He would be buried, instead, within perhaps a hundred yards of where he died. This had certain awkward repercussions for social organization, since occasionally a person died while away from his home district and, being buried where he died, his ceremonies were held and his posts erected in a district in which his immediate family [591] did not live. Young men often used this to validate a change of residence, giving as their reason for living in a band territory in which they had not grown up, the location there of their father's graveposts.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

To avoid constant use of the awkward phrase "mourning ceremony," we refer to it as the funeral though it took place some considerable time after the burial of the body. How long a time elapsed between the burial and the funeral depended upon the importance of the dead person. The more important the deceased, the longer it took after his or her burial to prepare for the funeral, both ceremonially and practically. Babies frequently had no funeral ceremonies at all, especially if they died very young and unnamed. Children were given small funerals, held within a month or so after the death, and the people present were merely the members of the local households. Young adult men and all adult women had funerals of medium size, and old men had the biggest funerals of all. Big funerals were rarely held in the wet season because of the height of the grass and bush and the consequent difficulty of travel. The season after the end of the rains (April-May-June) was a favorite time for funerals since by then people were moving again and there was then an accumulated backlog of funerals to be held for people who had died late in the previous dry season or during the wet. The mourning ceremonies of two or more people were sometimes held together; this obviously required that they be buried close together, although they need not have died at the same time. Seeking as usual to increase his importance in the public eye, a man might hold the medium-sized funeral of one of his children at the same time and place as the big funeral of an important elder—provided their graves were close together—even though two or three months had separated the two deaths.

The actual burial of the body immediately after death was usually a small affair attended only by whatever people happened to be in the vicinity. But some Tiwi ancients were on their last legs for months before they finally expired, and it was typical of Tiwi psychology that people should maneuver to be present when a death occurred. Until the anthropologist understood that even death had its political aspects, he could not understand why the Tiwi were always so anxious to hang around the camp of an old man who was taking an awfully long time to die. Since so very little happened at the actual time of death, this desire to be on the spot seemed merely morbid curiosity.[8] But it was not. A death immediately divided the whole tribe into two groups: a small group of relatives who automatically became mourners and therefore in a state of strict taboo, and the rest who were not sufficiently close to the deceased to have to assume a state of *pukimani*. The mourners, being *pukimani*, could do scarcely anything except weep and wail and gash their heads with stone axes. They could not touch the body or wrap it in bark; nor could they dig the grave, nor put the body in, nor fill in the hole. They had to ask non-mourners to carry out these tasks and thus became obligated to those non-

[8] How else was one to interpret the reluctance of Hart's party to move on, after spending three weeks waiting for old Tamboo to die, and the old man still lingered on? "Let's wait another day; maybe he'll die tomorrow" was the invariable response to suggestions that we move. "And if he does die, what will happen?" "Nothing; we'll move on then." But this was early in the fieldwork period, before Hart realized the all-pervasive character of Tiwi opportunism.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

182 mourners for their services. Death, in other words, incapacitated the relatives,
557 so the nonrelatives swarmed in to "help" them—that is, take advantage
571 of their incapacity. A man who could say, "I helped to dig your mother's grave"
764 had a hold for the rest of his life over the man or men to whom he could say it. Such a hold was not as strong, of course, as that of a man who could say, "I helped you get your first bestowed wife," but the difference of obligation was only a difference of degree. The Tiwi were always "helping" each other, but the man who was "helped" therefore "owed" something to his helper. At deaths, mourners mourned and nonmourners did the work; therefore the mourners "owed" the nonmourners, and such debts were carried on the same mental ledgers as other debts, such as marriage debts.

182 When deaths occurred suddenly and unexpectedly, the mourners had to
571 choose their helpers for the burial from the relatively few people present at
765 the time, and were thus often forced to become obligated to men they did not
[764] much relish being under obligation to. At the funerals the same bookkeeping mentality prevailed, but since these were not held until months after the death and burial, the chief mourners had time to select their helpers with care and political finesse. Satellites were very useful in this connection, since a man could ask his satellites to perform the necessary ceremonial services and thus get a return from them for the debts of gratitude they already owed him. This was one reason why a skillful Tiwi politician did not by any means select only close kinsmen for satelliteship. A death which made him *pukimani* was likely to make his close kinsmen *pukimani* also, hence he needed some satellites who were not close kinsmen.

182 In the interval between the burial and the funeral, the chief mourner,
557 on behalf of all the mourners but fairly independently if he were a big man,
571 allocated all the jobs that had to be done in preparation for the funeral.
765 Everybody who came had to be fed by the mourners, and the collection and
[462] hoarding of the necessary food devolved on the women of the mourning households. Thus the mourners provided the food, but everything else necessary had to be prepared by nonmourners. The chief item among the ceremonial necessities was the graveposts. The prohibition on mourners approaching the body and the grave extended to the posts, and therefore the cutting, carving, erecting on the grave, and painting of these central features of the funeral ceremonies had to be carried out by nonmourners, "asked to cut the posts" by the chief mourner. Here there was much room for influence maneuvers. A big man acting as chief mourner for a dead relative wanted the funeral to be as lavish as possible, to show his own importance. But the more important the
[554] nonmourners he selected to cut the posts for him, the more he owed them for their services. Such a request was in the nature of asking a favor, and to ask a favor was to put oneself in a subordinate position, in terms of influence. The Tiwi power orientation was so ingrained that, even when acting as chief mourner, an elder could not avoid making his requests and allocating the ceremonial tasks so as to gain ground if possible, or at least not lose any ground, in the influence and prestige race.

765 The mourning ceremonies, though prolonged for several days of con-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus. Most of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony, when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners' state of *pukimani*.

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious occasions. The connecting link was the state of *pukimani* in which death put the relatives. Men in a state of *pukimani* were at a disadvantage in social and political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and thus their own *pukimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to them for many months, came to an end.

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the status of *Mawkumarni*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests. The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems; indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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riage with a boy who was willing to become the "worker" of the girl's controller.[8]

From the economic standpoint, the large household has much the same function as before the days of the Mission. The younger women go out together and gather food; the old women stay home with the young children. The younger men bring home choice items, which now are trade goods and money from Darwin. The "boss" of the great household is wealthy; today, he has food, tobacco, clothes, and usually sufficient money to gamble. The composition of the great households has altered, but their function is very much the same. The establishment of the monogamous Catholic Cabbagee is even larger than that of the polygamous old pagan, Ki-in-kumi, described in an earlier chapter; Cabbagee, with only one wife, has more women under his "control" than ever Ki-in-kumi had, despite his list of twenty-one wives. The Tiwi have thus been able to retain their large households even under the Mission-imposed system of monogamy.

177 182 592

The Change from Patriliny to Matriliny

In the pre-Cooper era of feuding, the largest significant units among the Tiwi were the bands; the Tiwi never, in that by-gone day, acted as a tribe, even in their attacks upon such outsiders as the British. In the 1950's, when informants talked of the old days they commonly mentioned that male members of old bands came together as units to go on war parties. These old bands did not have a strict rule of descent. But, as has already been indicated, the majority of the males were regarded all their lives as members of the band to which their father belonged. That is, the major unit of the old Tiwi social structure was patrilineal in emphasis.

621 [611]

There also existed in the old Tiwi pattern a strictly matrilineal clan organization, related primarily to totemism. One of the totemic animals of a clan stood for a member of that clan in the song composed to commemorate his death; for instance, the first line of the mourning song for a deceased male of the Red Paint Clan might be "I am red paint." Occasionally, several members of a clan helped one of their number in a fight, but this was apparently not very common before the Mission era. This clan-organization pattern prevailed among the Tiwi through about 1930. Then major and most unpredictable changes began.

614 [533] [165]

What does one expect to happen when a society which has a patrilineal emphasis, like the old Tiwi one, comes into contact with a European society where, if there is any emphasis, it is a patrilineal one? Although one would ordinarily expect a strengthening of patriliny, such was not the case among the Tiwi. The old social unit which was predominantly patrilineal was a territorial group with its major functions in the system of feuding. When the

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[8] By 1953, the terms "boss" and "worker" had come into the local Tiwi dialect to indicate superordinate and subordinate status interrelationships.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER III

The Pukamuni Ceremony

765 THE burial ceremonies of the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands,
182 based on the *pukamuni* of the mythical man, *Purukupali*, are, by far, the most important events in their ceremonial life.

These ceremonies, which allow the aborigines full expression for their grief, provide, at the same time, a complete cultural outlet for their philosophical beliefs, their music, their art and their dancing. No one, watching these
[781] primitive rituals, night after night, could fail to be impressed by the obvious pleasure experienced by both the participants and the onlookers.

114 Spencer (1928, pp. 647–52), is the only investigator to describe and illus-
765 trate any details of the *pukamuni* ceremony. Although he saw but one day of the ceremonials, and that of the closing rituals, he records, briefly, many of the procedures which we witnessed in 1954, i.e., the rite of fire-jumping (p. 73), the spearing of the grave (p. 83), and (p. 89), the "spearing" of one of the participants and the erecting of the poles. This evidence shows
177 that, in spite of the disturbing effects of civilization and the complete
765 ecclesiastical ban on Bathurst Island, the *pukamuni* ceremony is still a vital force in the lives of the Tiwi people.

During the six months the expedition was on Melville Island, Miss Jane
123 Goodale, Mr. W. E. Harney and I witnessed some, or all of the rituals of four *pukamuni* ceremonies; one of a man, *Waniamperi*, who had been buried within half a mile of our camp; another of an old woman, *Makapini*, who, against the wishes of her relatives, had been buried in the mission cemetery on Bathurst Island; still another of a premature infant; and, only a few weeks before I left Melville Island, one of *Nulatini*, the deceased wife of our helper, *Pulanimbuwi*.

I will describe the burials of *Waniamperi* and *Nulatini*, and the final rituals
123 of *Waniamperi* and *Makapini*. However, as we saw, in all, twenty-seven
128 *ilanias*, the general pattern of which was similar, I will describe but five of them; three belonging to *Waniamperi*, one to *Makapini* and one to *Nulatini*.[44] The short rituals, associated with the dead infant, will be treated as a separate unit.

[44] The final rituals took place after my departure from Melville Island. These will be dealt with by Miss Goodale.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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I. BELIEFS IN THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

The fear of the spirits of the dead and the desire of the living to propitiate them are the bases for the complicated burial rituals, not only of the Tiwi, but of all Australian tribes. 769 765

The Tiwi spirits of the dead, the *mopaditis*, live in self-contained communities at the various totemic places on Melville and Bathurst Islands. The *mopaditis* have the same appearance as the aboriginal folk, except that their bodies no longer have substance, being but nebulous images of their former selves. 775 [778]

No living person has seen these *mopaditis*, for they are invisible by day, white in the moonlight and black in the darkness. Although, normally, the *mopaditis* travel on the surface of the ground in the same manner as the aborigines, they are able, when crossing a river, or an arm of the sea, to walk on the surface of the water.

In the spirit land, the *mopaditis*, who are eternal, retain their totems (*pukwi*), marry spirit women of the correct tribal relationships, and have children who grow to maturity.[47] They eat the same food as the aborigines, going hungry if the hunting is poor,[48] and use the same implements and weapons.[49]

At the death of an aboriginal, the *mopaditi* rises out of the chest of the corpse. If the corpse is that of an infant, or a very small child, its *mopaditi* stays in the immediate neighbourhood, sleeping with the bereaved mother every night, but leaving in the morning before she wakes up. This continues until the woman has recovered from her grief.

After some months, the spirit child, now called a *buda-buda*, re-enters the body of its previous mother through her vulva and starts life again as a human being. [842]

On the other hand, if the person has lived for some time, its *mopaditi* stays around the grave, mourning because it has to leave its old companions. But after three days have elapsed, the *mopaditi* calls out "*Nimbungi*" (good-bye), and sets off, unaccompanied,[50] to the locality where it was born, which, before

[47] The aborigines are not certain whether the children, like their parents, have eternal life.

[48] This is unusual; in most of the aboriginal heavens I have heard of, for example, north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 323), there is ample, easily-gathered food. [171]

[49] These days, the *mopaditis* have even the modern wooden canoes, although, up to fifty years ago, their canoes, like those of the living people, were made from a folded sheet of bark. [177]

[50] Some aborigines believe that the father, or some close relative, comes to the grave and guides the spirit to its birthplace.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint from his body (Pl. 23E). 764

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly, while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial, and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real. [304] [785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn, everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual, originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's pukamuni*, was supposed so to confuse the *mopaditi* of *Nulatini* that, should she leave the grave, she would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey, then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over. [775]

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopaditi* to warm herself and to cook her food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanimbuwi*, who should have departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23 D). [775]

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark, was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as instructed by *Jibunglialuni* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp could not see it. 765

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines, believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being, not the result of natural causes. 761

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, having been responsible for the death,[88] had changed himself into a [825] [754]

[88] This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the meteor-man, *Papinjuwari*, to an enemy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

761 825 761 wallaby, so that he could see the grave of his victim without being recognised.

On one occasion, when I was travelling with *Pulanimbuwi*, just after the death of his wife, he went to her grave, carefully searched the ground for tracks, then lifting up the sheets of paper-bark, examined the mound. Later, *Pulanimbuwi* announced that a *Marayi* (p. 154) had killed his wife, *Nulatini*, by getting inside of her body. But, although still there when she was buried, the *Marayi* had escaped through the hole *Pulanimbuwi* had seen in the mound.[57]

(2) *The Seclusion of the Grave*

769 The grave of *Waniamperi* was about a hundred yards from the road between our camp and the Snake Bay aboriginal settlement. Although aborigines, who were only distantly related to the dead man, walked backward and forward along this road, all the *pukamuni* people had to take a roundabout path from which it was not possible to see the grave site.

One night, *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, had to pass along the road to our camp. When he was approaching the position from which the grave site could be seen in the day-time, his wife, wrapping his head in a blanket, led him past the spot. This practice was only allowed at night; it was prohibited during the day.[58]

775 784 No aboriginal man hunted the creatures, or woman gathered the plant foods adjacent to the grave, so that, should the *mopaditi* of *Waniamperi* return to his burial place for a while he would find ample food.

4. THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONIES, THE ILANIAS

(1) *The Ilanias of Waniamperi*

●765 About two months after the burial of *Waniamperi*, *Wurarbuti*, the ceremonial leader of the Melville Island people, sent message sticks to Bathurst Island aborigines telling them that the *ilanias* (preliminary rituals) of *Waniamperi* were about to start.

123 We saw eleven of *Waniamperi's ilanias*. But, as they were more or less the same, I will describe only three.

[57] *Pulanimbuwi's* action was viewed with considerable disfavour. He, as a near relative, should not have gone near the grave until the final rituals. Only the *wanaras* (workers) who cut the poles are allowed to do that. 765

[58] Under the normal tribal conditions, these precautions would have been unnecessary, because the place of burial would then have been in some distant, unfrequented locality. 183

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(a) One of the first series, when the "workers" were appointed, which was held in the main camp. 765

(b) One of the second series, held at a ceremonial ground mid-way between the first and the place of burial.

(c) An *ilanis* performed by the Bathurst Island group who attended to take part in the final *pukamuni* rituals.

(a) *The First Ilanias*

The first series of *ilanias* was performed on a ceremonial ground, about forty feet in diameter, adjacent to *Wurarbuti's* camp. All stones and tree roots had been dug out so that the dancers would not injure their feet. In the centre of the dancing circle, or *milimika*, a fire was laid ready for the later ritual of *wandiatapinda*, or fire-jumping,[69] a ritual which was carried out at most but not all of the *ilanias* (Pl. 24B). At some of the later *ilanias*, particularly at the second *milimika*, aborigines, close relatives of the dead, performed a similar ritual by climbing a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and dead leaves (Pl. 23C).

Although I suspect that the ritual of jumping over the fire once had a deeper significance, the present day belief is that the fire, by burning the hair on the legs of the aborigines, protects them from stumbling over logs; from their limbs becoming tired on long journeys, or from dead trees falling on them as they travel through the forest. The smoke from the fire also brought them good health. No women took part in the *wandiatapinda* rituals, although the men often held their small children in the smoke. [751] [372]

Wurarbuti, the ceremonial leader or *alouwia* (frontispiece) of the *Waniamperi's pukamuni* rituals, was an intelligent, sophisticated aboriginal, who had worked for long periods in Darwin, and, more recently, had visited the southern States to dance before the Queen of England. 765 177

Because of his knowledge of European ways and the goods of the white man, the songs and dances of this first series of *ilanias* were a curious mixture of the old and the new cultures. Although most, if not all, of the dances performed at the *ilanias* are traditional and totemic, it is permissible to modify them for the song of the moment. [176]

The ceremony opened when the assembled aborigines, about twenty of them, standing within the *milimika*, gave the low-pitched honey call, with the high-pitched mosquito call, which precedes and finishes all *ilanias*.

[69] Spencer (1928, p. 648), saw this rite at Cockle Point, on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), during 1911. [114]

765 Parading around the unlit fire in the centre of the *milimika*, the performers
177 chanted a telephone song, the literal translation of which is, "Hallo, that
533 telephone there, hallo, yes, yes," some, as they did so, imitating the winding
[539] of the handle of an old-type magneto telephone.

When the fire, which had been started by a young man, was well alight, the men performed the ritual of *wandiatapinda* by jumping through flames and smoke, each shouting "telegraphy".

The men again assembled at the edge of the *milimika*, and, led by the *alouwia*, called the localities on Melville Island where the white men had camped. As each name was called the aborigines shouted "*wia*" (yes).

One dancer held his hands high above his head, symbolizing a radio aerial, while his companions chanted the following words to the refrain of the telephone song:

[539] "The Queen sent a radio asking *Wurarbuti* and other men to dance for her."

Then followed songs related to the radio and the telephone. These were usually performed with the traditional steps and gestures, except that, at the end, the actor mimed the ringing up with one hand, and the holding of the
[535] telephone to the ear with the other.[60] As the men danced, the women moved into the *milimika* from the side, performing their own dance, the *amburu* (Pl. 30F), some of them crying and endeavouring to beat themselves. They were, however, restrained by their companions.

765 After a number of dances came the ceremony of appointing the men to carry out the work near the grave.

At the death of any person the tribe divides into two groups: the *puka-*
[616] *munis*, near relatives of the dead, who are forbidden to touch food with their hands (Pl. 24A), or go near the grave, and the distant relatives, who can visit the grave site without fear of attack from the spirit (the *mopaditi*).

At *Waniamperi's* first *ilania*, the ceremonial leader chose, from the latter group, ten men, the *wanaras*, colloquially called the "workers". It was their duty to cut and paint the burial poles (one each), help to clear the grave site and dancing ground of sticks and stones, and to carry out other menial tasks associated with the final rituals. For these tasks, the "workers" were paid on the last day of the rituals.

When "workers" were chosen, the aged brother, *Nalgui*, of the dead man,

[60] This mixture of the ancient and the modern, shows how a living culture gradually absorbs the characteristics of an adjacent people, particularly those from a culture as dominant as our own.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

announced that he had bought enough food from the store at the settlement to feed all the men who were to cut the poles.[61] 765

Following this announcement, the chief woman mourner, *Prupadau*, whose privilege it was to decide on the size of the burial poles, marked with her toe, in the dust of the *milimika*, the length and thickness of a series of oversized poles.

This led to a great deal of discussion between the leader, *Wurarbuti*, and the woman, *Prupadau*, before he finally persuaded her to reduce the dimensions of the poles to a reasonable size. *Prupadau* wanted the poles for her relative to be as many and as large as possible.

This matter settled, the "workers" brought a number of steel axes into the *milimika*. The *alouwia*, painting the handles white and putting red cross lines on the blades, stood the axes in the centre of the dancing ground. Then both the *alouwia* and the other performers walked around the axes singing the telephone song. [177] [531]

A series of traditional dances followed, representing *Jirakati*, the white-headed sea-eagle (Pl. 30j), *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Tjalati*, the jabiru (Pl. 29A).[62] Two women and two young boys performed the shark (*Taduwala*) dance (Pl. 25C), the ritual finishing with the honey and mosquito calls. The "workers" picked up their axes and walked away, accompanied by everyone except *Prupadau*, who remained behind, still chanting the *amburu* song of mourning. 535 765 [875]

(*b*) *The Second Ilanias*

The second series of *ilanias* was performed about halfway between *Wurarbuti's* camp and the burial ground. 765

In this series, we were able to see the traditional pattern of the *ilanias* in operation, including the return and feeding of the "workers" after their day's labour of cutting the poles near the grave site. The songs and dances, too, instead of referring, as in the first *ilanias*, to the goods of the white man, his radio and his telephones, dealt almost exclusively with dances belonging to the locality of Wallu, north-eastern Melville Island, the country of *Waniamperi's* father and the totemic place of fresh water, *Andjalui* (p. 42). [533] [177]

This series of *ilanias* could be divided into five sections,

[61] At the present time, this is just a traditional gesture, reminiscent of the days when it was the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the workers while they cut and painted the poles (Pl. 23B).

[62] In a creation myth, the jabiru is called *Tipuru-undunga*. It is likely that the bird has several names. Hart (1930, p. 280), draws attention to the multiplicity of names among the Tiwi. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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(i) The ceremonial fight between the *pukamuni* men and the "workers" returning from cutting the poles which are near the grave.
(ii) The feeding of the "workers" by the *pukamuni* men and women.
(iii) The totemic songs and dances.
(iv) The *pumati*, in which married men and women beat the relatives of their spouses with boughs.
(v) The rite of fire-jumping (*wandiatapinda*).

(i) *The Ceremonial Fight.* When, late in the afternoon, the "workers" were returning to the *milimika* from the grave site, where they have been cutting the burial poles, they announced their coming with the honey and mosquito calls.

The *alouwia*, who had assembled the *pukamuni* men in the *milimika* in readiness for this ritual, answered with the honey call.

The "workers" emerged from the forest in a body and, running toward the men in the *milimika*, cast short sticks, as spears, at the *pukamuni* men, who replied vigorously with throwing sticks, neither group of contestants, however, trying to hit the other.

The "workers" having exhausted their spears, rushed into the *milimika*, where, to the accompaniment of much laughter and good-humour, they wrestled with the *pukamuni* men (Pl. 25D), until they (the "workers") were pushed out of the *milimika*.[63]

(ii) *The Feeding of the Workers.* It is the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the "workers" while they are cutting and painting the poles.

On the edge of the *milimika* were two baskets, both painted red, one made by a woman of the rain and freshwater totem of Wailu, and the other by a woman of the fire totem of Wuriupi, the totemic place of the dead man, *Waniampuri*. Food caught or gathered by the *pukamuni* men and women was cooked and placed in those baskets for the "workers" only, it being taboo to all members of the *pukamuni* group.

After the "workers" had been "vanquished" in the ceremonial fight, the *pukamuni* men carried the baskets[64] into the centre of the *milimika* and there stood guard while the "workers" had their meal (Pl. 25B).

[184] [775] [789]

[63] There is no clear-cut belief behind this ritual. Some informants said that the "workers", having been adjacent to the grave for many hours, were inhabited by *mopaditii* who must be driven out before the "workers" are "safe" to associate with the *pukamuni* group; others said that the *mopaditii*, following close on the heels of the "workers" had to be frightened away by what, to them, appeared to be a real fight, before the *ilunias* could start.

[64] These baskets, though they always stood on the edge of the *milimika*, were not often used in the *ilunias* we witnessed, as the participants were able to get most of the food they required from the settlement. If, however, the burial ceremony had been held at some remote place, the *pukamuni* men and women would have had to spend the day in hunting in order to provide food for the "workers".

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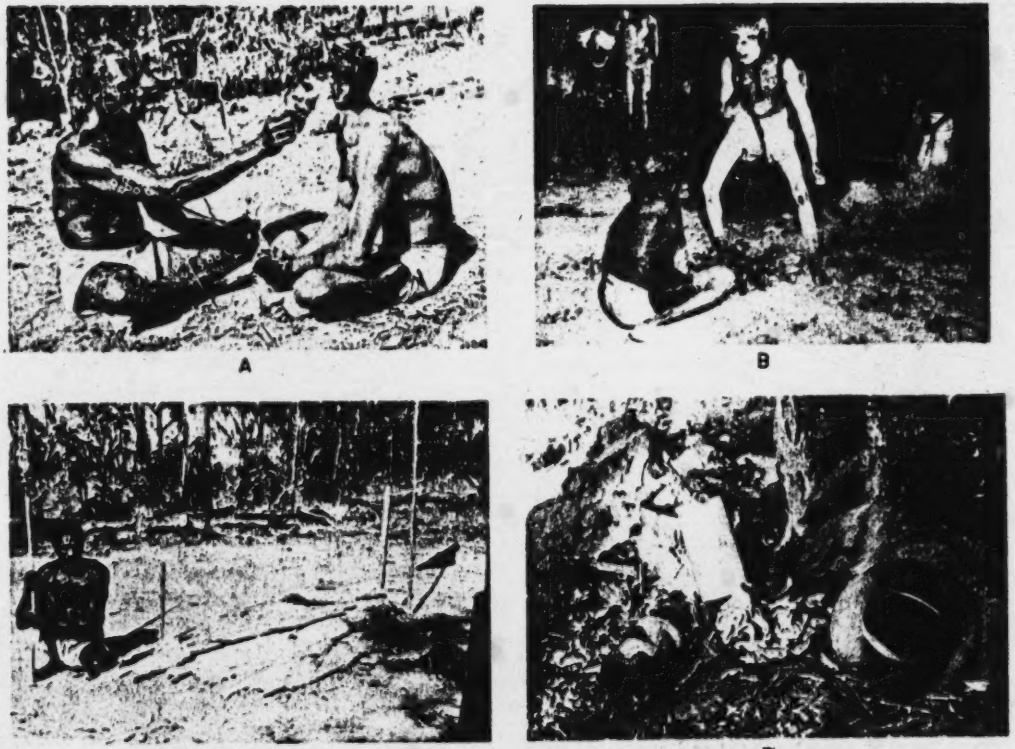

PLATE 24. *The Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Feeding Pukamuni Man; B, Rite of Wandiatapinda; C, The Grave; D, Belongings of Dead Man, Waniamperi.

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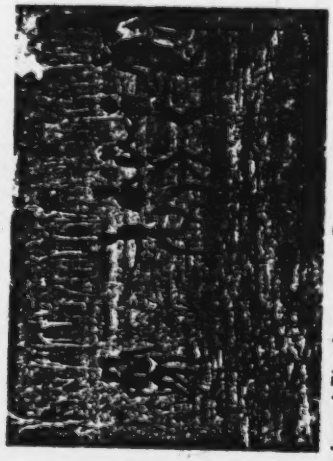

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PLATE 25. *The Pukamani Rituals*
A, Young Girls and Men Dancing; B, Feeding Pukamani Workers; C, Women and Boys Dancing; D, Ceremonial Fight at Ilania.

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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A

B

C

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PLATE 26. *The Final Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Erecting Poles on Grave; B, Arranging Gifts for Workers; C, The Basket Dance; D, Urumatjina's Dance.

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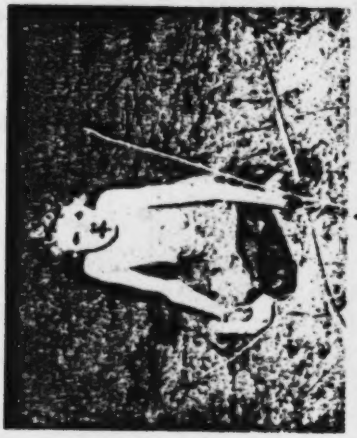
A



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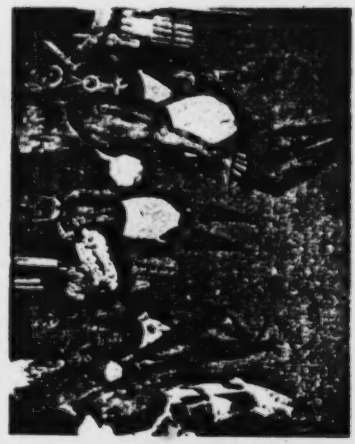

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PLATE 27. *The Final Pukamani Rituals*

A, Chief Woman Mourner; B, Scene at Burial Poles; C, Mourning at Burial Poles; D, Presentation of Gifts.

[p. 72 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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(iii) *The Totemic Songs and Dances.* At the completion of the meal, both the "workers" and the *pukamuni* men and women performed a series of dances to the accompaniment of traditional totemic songs. 765

Almost without exception, these songs and dances belonged to the totemic beings of Wailu, the country of *Tiparawilimiri*, the father of the dead man, *Wanimpari*.

These rituals were opened by the leader, who, standing in the centre of the *milimika*, called out the names of the totemic beings of Wailu, *Andjalui* (fresh water), *Pakadringa* (thunderstorm), *Tomituka* (rain), and *Bumerali* (lightning). As before, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wis*" after each name was called.

The men then chanted the rain song, "The heavy rain falls and the frog calls, *poki, poki, puturaka*", while the men danced, with their fingers pointing to the ground, symbolizing falling rain (Pl. 30B), and the woman, *Prupadau*, hopped along the ground in imitation of the frog-woman,[68] *Kwouk-kwouk*. As the dance proceeded, the men and *Prupadau* all imitated the actions of the frog-woman by hopping along the ground on their hands and knees. [539] 765 535

While the dance was in progress, the leader called out "*Tomituka*" (rain). *Prupadau*, picking up a sheet of paper-bark, held it over her head and shivered, and the men, their hands clasped tightly over their heads, shouted, "*Batua, batua*" (rain finish). This completed the dance. *Pulanimbiwi* danced the white-headed sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30J), before the *pumuti* began.

(iv) *The Pumuti.*[69] The *pumuti* rituals, which are always carried out with much goodwill, friendliness and laughter, were performed at most, if not all, of the *ilanias*, and, in a restricted form, at the final *pukamuni*. 765

At some stage, usually toward the end of the *ilania*, sometimes more than once, each man and woman, taking a bunch of leaves, or a roll of paper-bark and calling softly "*Ooh, ooh, ooh*", beat the wife, or husband, sisters, brothers, and all the near relatives of that particular spouse.

(v) *The Rite of Fire-jumping and the sending out of the Message Sticks.* The rite of fire-jumping, or *wandiatapinda*, carried out in the second series of *ilanias*, differed from that in the first series. Instead of the participants stepping over a fire (Pl. 24B), a number of the close relatives climbed a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and leaves (Pl. 23C). As each man 765 372

[68] The frog-woman, whose totemic place is Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island, is the mother of *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*.

[69] This ritual would tend to reduce tensions between the spouse and his, or her, relatives, which is considerable in some communities. [593] [578]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 slipped down the tree and jumped clear of the fire, the other participants
372 called his totemic name.

Toward the end of this series of *ilanias*, the "workers" announced that they had finished cutting the poles. The leader, the *alunwia*, hearing this, gave permission for the poles to be "cooked", i.e., burnt in a fire of blazing boughs, to provide a black ground on which to paint the designs. The leader [202] also ordered that the *purunkinas* (message sticks, Figs. 5, 6, 7), be sent out to the various totemic groups. These sticks intimated that the final *pukamuni* ceremonies would take place in about twenty days.

(c) *The Bathurst Island Ilanias*

765 About a week before the final burial rituals of *Waniamperi*, a number of aborigines from Bathurst Island, accompanied by their wives and *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, made their camp and cleared a ceremonial ground not far from the second *milimika* used by the Melville Island people.

The Bathurst Island *ilanias*, under the leadership of an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, followed the traditional form, except that the first two phases were omitted, i.e., the fighting and the feeding of the "workers".

Three groups of songs were chanted to the accompaniment of the appropriate dances.

(i) The *Ningaui* songs and dances.
(ii) The mission lugger songs and dances.
(iii) The jabiru (*Tjalati*) songs and dances.

(i) *The Ningaui Songs and Dances*

533 The leader, *Jibunglialumi*, and his companions chanted the following
539 *Ningaui* songs. These are the literal translations.
765 "I am the head man of the *Ningaui*, I am, Eeh, Eeh."[67]

"I push aside the mangrove branches with my hands, Eeh, Eeh."

"The *Ningauis* are out hunting. The calls of the white cockatoos tell them that someone is coming, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* woman, having just given birth to a child, sings—

"The flies are looking at me, the flies are crawling on my shoulder, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* man, looking at his newly born child, sings—

"Little new-born man lying on the ground, Eeh, Eeh."

[67] This is the call of the *Ningauis* which, the aborigines claim, they hear in the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. It is possibly the call of one of the swamp birds.

[825]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

Neither *Jilungilakuni* nor any of the Bathurst Islanders performed spirited 765
dances to these songs. The leader, impersonating a *Ningani*, walked round
the *milimika* with awkward, bent gait, either beating his music sticks together [534]
or holding his hands tightly against his sides with his fingers outstretched
(Pl. 30E).

Following the *Ningani* songs, the men lit a fire at the base of a eucalyptus tree which *Kasapi*, *Nangrinini*, and several other relatives of the dead man, climbed to perform the rite of *wandiatapinda*. As each man slid down the trunk, the aborigines called the totemic place of Waihu, and the names of rain, thunder and lightning. Later, the men performed the rain dance (Pl. 30B) in [535]
the *milimika*, while the women, coming in from the side, danced the *amburu* (Pl. 30F).

(ii) *The Mission Lugger Songs and Dances*

The dances started with a long *ai*, *ai*, *ai*, which announced that the boat 765
had been sighted. Then, while the men danced the sail of the boat, with their 533
hands held above their heads, the leader chanted— 535
177

"The waves beat the sides of the boat, but it goes straight on."

With high prancing steps and hands rotating one over the other, the aborigines mimed the engines and the propeller of the lugger.

"The engines spark together as the waves hit the side of the boat."

Other songs, to which the performers danced the relevant actions, were—

"The wake of the lugger."

"The lugger is on the slips ready to be painted."

"We are scrubbing off the old paint and giving it a new coat."

Every time *Kasapi*, the son of the dead man, took part in the dance, the women set up a wail.

At the conclusion of the boat songs, the men and women took part in the 765
pumuni, lightly beating each other's spouses and their relatives with boughs.

(iii) *The Jabiru Songs and Dances*

The last series of dances were given by a middle-aged Bathurst Island 765
man, *Nilizuma*, who imitated, with humorous gesticulation and much 535
abandon, the antics of the long-legged jabiru, *Tjalati* (Pl. 29A), as it walked, fished and rested in the lagoon.

The words of the *Tjalati* song were— [539]

"When *Tjalati* lifts one leg, he is ready to fly."

At the conclusion of the *Tjalati* dance, the *ilania* ended with the honey [825]
and mosquito calls.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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765 (2) *The Ilanias of Nulatini*

[123] We were able to see the opening mourning rituals, *iramparini*[80] of *Nulatini* and six of her *ilanias*.

[128] Rather than deal with all of these ceremonies in detail, I will describe the *iramparini* rituals and a typical *ilania*, in which the aborigines carried out all phases of the rituals, with the exception of the appointment of the "workers". Although the rite of *pumuti*, *wandiatapinda*, or feeding the "workers", did not take place at every *ilania*, they will be included in this description.

(a) *The Opening Mourning Ritual, Iramparini of Nulatini*

Ten days after the burial of *Nulatini*, the aborigines of Melville Island performed the ritual of *iramparimi*. The function of that ceremony was to express [775] grief over *Nulatini's* death, and to tell her spirit that, as she did not now belong to the same realm as themselves, she must leave her grave and return to her totemic country.

The ceremony was held about thirty yards from the camp of the dead woman. Most of the aborigines were present, but two men, *Pulanimbuwi*, the husband, and *Tupiatira*, *Nulatini's* nearest relative, took the leading parts.

The rituals opened in the late afternoon with *Pulanimbuwi*, painted in [302] white, elaborately decorated and carrying a long stick, walking slowly to- [533] ward the assembled people, singing the *amburu*, the women's song of mourning (Pl. 23A).

Every now and again, the husband stopped, leaned on his stick and looked round (apparently for his wife's *mopaditi*), before continuing on his way to the place of ceremony.

Coming out of the forest in an almost opposite direction was *Tupiatira*, also painted in white, waving green branches in his hands. About fifty yards from the old camp of *Nulatini*, *Tupiatira* called her name loudly, and, after listening for a while, announced that, as she had not answered, she must be dead.

As *Tupiatira* walked forward he continued to call, while *Pulanimbuwi*, now accompanied by his sister, *Kundi*, came in from the opposite direction, both singing the *amburu*. When the men were only a few yards apart the aborigines formed themselves into two lines, facing each other.

At a signal and a loud "*Book, book*" from *Pulanimbuwi*, an old man, [535] *Malumerinita*, accompanied by six to eight of the men, danced between the

[80] The *iramparini* of *W'aniampori* was performed before our arrival.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

lines as flying foxes (the totem of *Nulatini's* father),[60] their arms moving 765
alternately up and down and their little fingers pointed skyward (Pl. 30c). [535]

The dance finished, the assembled men accompanied by *Pulanimbuwi* and *Tupiatira*, with their arms around each other's necks, mourned hysterically for the dead, while the women danced the *amburu* on the outside of the group. Several times, in his grief, *Tupiatira* collapsed to the ground only to be lifted to his feet again by the still mourning husband.

The sounds of mourning continued for some time, gradually becoming less until *Nangrinini* gave the honey and mosquito calls, and the ceremony was over.

(*b*) *The Ilania*

At one end of the *milimika*, which was situated at the camp of the dead woman, was a pole on which *Pulanimbuwi* had tied a piece of printed calico as a flag.

The *ilania* opened when seven of the "workers" giving the honey and mosquito calls, emerged from the forest, and, running toward the *milimika*, cast sticks and pandanus leaves, as spears, at the *pukamuni* men who awaited them. There was general fighting and much laughter before the "workers" were ejected.

In the centre of the *milimika*, as food for the "workers" a woman had placed nine large cooked crabs which the "workers" distributed among [262] themselves. After this was done, the men performed the rite of *wandiatapinda* by either walking through or jumping over the fire which had been lit in the *milimika*. *Nulatini's* husband did not take part in this ritual but, with a flat fighting stick in either hand, wandered about the ceremonial ground, singing the *amburu*.

Following these rituals, the aborigines chanted a number of songs and 533
carried out the following dances, those of the flying fox being totemically 765
related to the dead woman's father.

(i) The flying foxes and the sea-eagle.
(ii) The crocodile.
(iii) The shark and the stingray.
(iv) The flag songs.

(i) *The flying-fox and sea-eagle songs*

"The flying foxes are out late, eating the blossoms of the stringy-bark [539]
and eucalyptus trees."

[60] As mentioned earlier, the totem of the dead person is never referred to in the *pukamuni* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 "The sea-eagle, *Jirakati*, dives upon the flying foxes, catching them in
539 her claws and eating them. The rest fly away."
765 "The flying foxes call to each other, the sea-eagle is attacking us—let us go."

As these songs were being chanted, a number of men clustered in the centre of the *milimika*, like a group of flying foxes in a tree.

With a loud call, *Nangrinini*, his outspread arms symbolical of the wings of the sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), "swooped" down, scattering them in all directions.

As *Nangrinini* returned to the outside of the *milimika*, the "flying foxes"
[535] reassembled and, with prancing steps again danced with their little fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30c).

The flying-fox songs continued—

"Cast your throwing sticks where the flying foxes are thickest and break many wings at one time."

"Hit the flying foxes so that they will drop in the mud."

"Cook the black flying foxes and dry them in the sun."[20]

Again the men assembled and danced the flying-fox while *Malumerinita* called the totemic places of the flying fox at Muranapi (p. 56), interspersed with calls of "*Wia*" from his companions. *Pulanimbuwi* still wandered.

(ii) *The crocodile songs*

"You cannot cross the river because it is full of crocodiles."

"Beware, the crocodiles are in the mangroves waiting to catch us when we cross the river."

These songs were accompanied by the spirited crocodile dance (Pl. 30g),
[535] while *Malumerinita* called the names of the totemic places of the crocodile, *Jirakupai*, on south-west Bathurst Island.

(iii) *The shark and the stingray song*

"Do not spear the shark, it is chasing a stingray."

To this song several men performed the exhausting shark dance (Pl. 30o).

(iv) *The flag songs*

"The wind blows and the flag moves."

[177] "The Government Administrator gets his flag from the Queen."
535 To these songs, the man danced with their hands, as a flag, moving above
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[20] This song suggests that the Melville Islanders stored or traded the cooked and dried bodies of these creatures.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

their heads. During these songs, the husband sat quietly at one end of the *milimika*, with his head in his hands (Pl. 23B). 765 [535]

The *ilania* concluded with *Nangrinini* calling *Aluprumani* (a mangrove bird); *Malumerinita* calling *Tjirinini* (the red-backed sea-eagle) and the assembled men, making the honey and mosquito call.

During one of the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, a near relative had his name changed from *Miralipaiwa* to *Tukuwuinganili*.[71] [553]

(3) *The Ilanias of Makapini*

At the same time as the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi* was being performed, an old woman, *Makapini*, was baptized at Bathurst Island by the priest, just as she was dying, and, although she had never accepted Christianity, was buried, against the wishes of her relatives, in the mission cemetery. 797

The aborigines of both Bathurst and Melville Island were distressed over this incident because as *Makapini* had always been a "pagan" (as the mission authorities call the unconverted), her spirit could not go to the white man's "heaven", and, as the *pukamuni* ceremonies were prohibited on Bathurst Island, the spirit of *Makapini* was doomed to wander, lonely and unhappy, for ever. To prevent such a calamity (for lonely *mopaditis* are a danger to the living), the aborigines of Melville Island performed a modified *pukamuni*, called the *aramatruni-nipungari*,[72] so that, at its conclusion, the spirit of old *Makapini* would travel happily to her future home. 765 [775]

The pattern of this ceremony differed somewhat from that of *Waniamperi*. At a *milimika* near the camp of the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, the Melville Island aborigines held five *ilanias* over a period of eight days. The final two days of the *pukamuni* were held among the poles.[73] I will describe a typical *ilania* and later the final *pukamuni* rituals.

The *ilania* opened with one of the "workers", who had been in the forest cutting the burial poles, running toward the *milimika*, stick in hand, giving the honey call. One of the *pukamuni* men rushed out to drive him away, but, after a sham fight with throwing sticks, brought him into the *milimika*.

The predominating songs and dances of this and other *ilanias* of *Makapini* were associated with the mythical wild-honey people[74] of Bathurst Island. 765 533 535

[71] Hart (1930, pp. 280–99) describes how the custom of altering the names of near relatives at death causes rapid changes in the language.

[72] This type of *pukamuni* ceremony is also held when aborigines are drowned at sea and their bodies not recovered. [766]

[73] This was a variation of the previous *pukamuni*, probably because the body was not at the place of ceremony.

[74] Although I did not inquire, it is certain from the songs, that the father or mother of the dead woman belonged to one of the honey totems of Bathurst Island.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 533 [535] Many of them referred to "creation times" when *Tulimbini*, of Murupiangu told the honey people of Bathurst Island to be the *pukamuni* men and women at the burial rituals of *Purukupali* (p. 30).

The following is a selection of the honey songs—

[539] "Let all the men who are *mandalini* (a eucalyptus flower, particularly rich in honey) come to this place (Tapararimi) and dance for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*."

"With all your ornaments, start walking (to Tapararimi)."

"Bring all your ceremonial ornaments to our place (Tapararimi) where we will hold a big ceremony."

Another man chanted a lengthy song describing the death of *Purukupali*, and another, which instructed the performers, at the conclusion of the rituals, to take the cane rings, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H) from their arms and leave them on the grave.

The songs and dances about *Purukupali*, the honey people of Bathurst Island, and their doings at the first *pukamuni*, were followed by another series which related specifically to the collecting of wild honey. In all these [535] performances, the men carried out the honey dance with high knee action, their hands held above their heads and their fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30D).

One man sang about a fly that lives in the hives of wild bees and about a large hive in a tree with a long snout (entrance) and much honey. Then, accompanied by several others, he mimed the action of bees flying in and out of a hive; the aborigines locating the hive, climbing the tree, cutting off the limb containing the hive, and eating the honey. These dances were followed by the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, calling out the totemic places of honey, most of them on Bathurst Island. As each name was called, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*".

A young man started to sing about a pearling lugger, but was told by old *Tjamalampua* to stop and use only the *palaneri* songs. The same man then [535] danced the actions of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, to the appropriate song (p. 75), and one relating to the buffalo,[78] to the accompaniment of "*Prr, prr, papringipali*" (go away big eye, prr, prr), then a song of *Aruni*, the poison fish: "*Aruni aruni, drr, drr, drr*", which referred to the sinking of a boat, the *Wanganui*, off south-western Bathurst Island.[79]

[825] [78] The aborigines believe that the buffalo, brought to Fort Dundas in 1824, belong to the *palaneri* (creation) period.

[79] The *aruni* is a spiny poisonous fish (possibly the stone fish), which was supposed to have sunk the *Wanganui* by driving its spines through the ship's bottom. The *drr, drr*, of the song represents the sounds of the spines as they were driven into the ship.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The two forms of fire-jumping (described earlier, p. 73) were also used in these rituals. 765

The *ilania* closed with the performance of the rite of *pumuti*, then the usual honey and mosquito calls.

5. THE FINAL PUKAMUNI RITUALS

(1) *The Pukamuni of Waniamperi*

For the sake of simplicity I will describe, under this heading, the rituals carried out during the last two days of the closing phases of the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*. These rituals took place about three months after burial and about a month after the performance of the first *ilania* and the receiving of the message stick (Fig. 5F, G, H) from the Bathurst Island aborigines. [202]

During these final ceremonies, the aborigines divided themselves into two groups; the Melville Island men and women, under the leadership of *Wurarbuti*, and the Bathurst Island men and women, with a few of the Melville Island aborigines linked with them totemically, under their leader, *Jibunglialumi*. [616]

The "workers" had cleared two dancing grounds: one, Fig. 4A, about fifty yards south of *Waniamperi's* grave, belonging to the Melville Island aborigines, and the other, Fig. 4B, about thirty yards east, to the people from Bathurst Island.

There were seven decorated burial poles on *milimika*, A, and three on B (Fig. 4). The three poles, although cut and painted by the local men, had been given, with their permission, to the Bathurst Island group who were responsible for the payment of them. [432]

The final rituals extended over two days. After both groups had performed *ilanias* in the middle of the first morning, they spent about six hours decorating each other with elaborate facial and body designs, one of which, that of *Wurarbuti*, is illustrated on the frontispiece. Other facial designs are illustrated on Pl. 28. In the late afternoon all the participants, men and women, moved to the two *milimikas* near the grave (Fig. 4A, B), where they performed a series of dances until dark. The aborigines camped nearby, most of them within a hundred yards of the grave. The next morning the final rituals started. [302]

These *pukamuni* rituals can be divided into five distinct phases—

(*a*) The opening rituals.

(*b*) The songs and dances.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

●765 (c) The payment of the "workers".
(d) The erecting of the poles.
(e) The final mourning rituals.

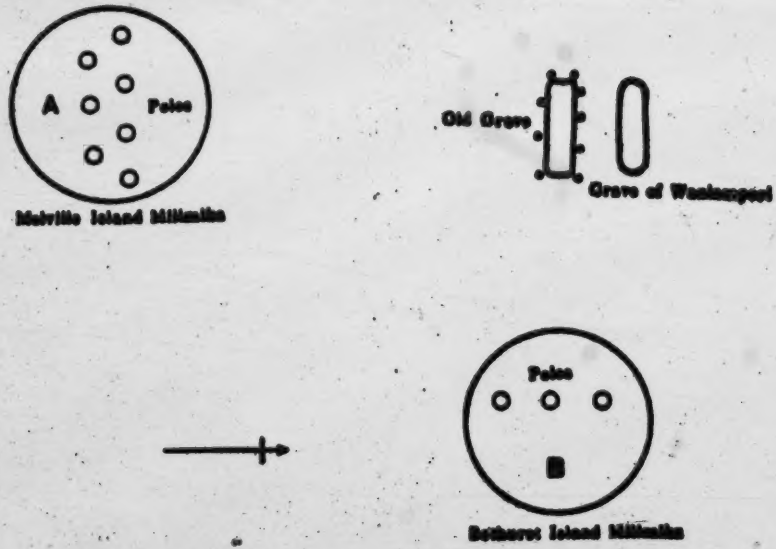

FIG. 4. *Ceremonial Ground, Wanlampori's Pukamuni*

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

Early on the first morning, the men, women and children left the main camp and travelled to a temporary ceremonial ground, in the forest, about three hundred yards east of the grave.

The Melville Island group, under *Wurarkuti*, assembled straightaway and performed a small *ilania*, in which some of the men, after the usual honey and mosquito calls, started to chant the rain song of *Tomituka*, whilst others [533] either lit a fire and crouched over it, or sheltered under pandanus trees, shivering as if wet and cold.

As the song changed to the *impok, impok*, of the frog-woman, several men and the woman, *Prupadau*, hopped around the *milimika* in imitation of a [535] frog (Pl. 29D).

When the Melville Islanders dispersed to paint themselves, the Bathurst Island men, under *Jibunglialumi*, performed another *ilania* on the same spot.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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The leader started a song describing a fight in which the dead man, *Waniamperi*, had taken part. To this refrain, the performers mimed the action [539] of men struggling together, beating each other with throwing sticks, or [535] casting spears.

In the middle of this performance, *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, rushed into the forest beating himself with a throwing stick, followed by his step-mother, *Dominao*, who forcibly disarmed him. At the conclusion of the dance, and when quiet was restored, *Nilituma* carried out the same jabiru [535] dance we had seen at the Bathurst Island *ilania* a few days previously (Pl. 29A). At the conclusion of the jabiru dance the Bathurst Islanders retired to paint themselves for the final rituals. In general, the "workers" painted the leading *pukamuni* men, some husbands painted their wives, their children and themselves.

In the late afternoon, the assembled men, women and children, their faces [302] and bodies painted with the most elaborate designs, and decorated with colourful *pukamuni* ornaments (frontispiece), made their way along the road, calling continuously in the high-pitched mosquito call until within a hundred yards of the grave. At that point the two groups separated. Each group lit a fire and carried out, first the rite of *wandiatapinda*, followed by a basket dance (later to be performed at the grave side (Pl. 26C), then went to their respective *milimikas* (Fig. 4A, B).

Pausing only to assemble at those places, both groups of people rushed across the open space and threw themselves on the bushes covering the grave, wailing heart-brokenly. *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, who fell on the belongings of his father at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tried to cut his head with a knife, but was restrained, as before, by his step-mother, *Dominao*, who led him back to the Bathurst Island *milimika*. This was a signal for everyone to return to their respective *milimikas* and perform the first of a series of dances.

In the Bathurst Island circle, *Nangrinini* danced a canoe dance, padd- [535] ling and bailing a miniature bark canoe as he pushed it along the ground.

As the Melville Island group were chanting their songs, five men sneaked up to the grave, one of their number peered among the bushes, crawled back to his crouching companions and whispered something to them. At this they all called out loudly, ran back into their *milimika* and carried out a vigorous, [535] almost hysterical dance.

The same performance was repeated, but on the second occasion *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, ran to the grave, speared it in several places,

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 then, with the group, returned quietly to their companions among the poles."

(*b*) *The Songs and Dances*[78]

On the return to *milimika* A (Fig. 4), *Wurarbuti* and his wife mimed, to the accompaniment of appropriate songs, paddling a canoe, with their hands around one of the poles. This was followed by a man and his wife, who acted, with considerable detail, the making of a bark canoe; stripping the bark from [396] the tree; holding the bark over a fire to make it flexible; folding the bark and sewing the ends together, and the final launching.

By the time this act was over, it was dark. The aborigines from both *milimikas* retired to the nearby forest, lit their fires and cooked their food. There were no ceremonies during the evening, except, occasionally, some woman left her camp and wailed among the deserted *pukamuni* poles.

533 About 8 o'clock on the morning of the last day, the *pukamuni* men opened 539 the ceremonies with the honey and mosquito calls. These calls were followed 765 by a number of songs, chanted by *Wurarbuti* and some of his companions, which referred to the mythical boobook owl-man, *Purutjikini*, and the instructions he gave to his fellow performers at the first *kulama* ceremony (p. 123). They were:

"Make the *milimika* large and clean for many people and when it is ready, sing first, then dance round the ring."

"You will paint yourself beside the *milimika*."

"When you decorate yourself for the *kulama*, put white on one side of your face, yellow on the other, and red down the middle of your hair. And as you dance, your wives will help you, as my wife, *Pintoma*, the owl-woman, once did for me."

"You sing, *Mikinatrina*[79] (a *kulama* initiate), and we will follow."

"When you sing in a *kulama*, put the cockatoo feathers, *primitiki*, in your hair, and the wind will shake them."

While those songs were being chanted, other men mimed the appropriate action.

[77] Although the aborigines did not explain the ritual, it is likely that the first man looked for and thought he saw the *mopaditi* of *Waniamperi*. On the second occasion, *Marawani*, a near relative, hunted the dead man's spirit away. This ritual, in a modified [114] form, took place at the two other *pukamunis* we witnessed. Spencer (1928, p. 648) mentions the same ritual.

[78] The songs and dances in this series were neither traditional nor totemic. They were composed usually by a number of performers, especially for the occasion, and quite an amount of thought went into their production.

[79] During the initiation of the *Mikinatrina* at the *kulama* ceremony, he performs his first dance amid general applause.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

During this performance an old man, *Nalauri*, *Waniamperi's* brother, reprimanded, in the native tongue, a group of young aborigines for not taking a more active part in the *pukamuni* rituals. 765 626

"Don't hang around there like a mob of whites," he said. "If you're standing while there's a dance, beat your buttocks, or if you're sitting, either clap your hands or beat the ground with a stick."

At the conclusion of the Melville Island performance, the Bathurst Islanders continued the songs and dances in their own *milimika* (Fig. 42), about *Purutjikini* and the first *kulama*. 533 539 765

The leader, *Jibunglialumi*, chanted how, at the first *kulama*, *Purutjikini* said to his companions, "I'll give you the songs, then you'll dance about the things around you." As he did so, *Nangrinini* performed the dance of the turtle. "Then as the next song was being chanted," *Purutjikini* said, "you will cook the *kulama*." Another man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, and, calling "*brr*, *brr*, *brr*" (as they do in the *kulama* ceremonies), emptied the supposed contents on the ground in imitation of pouring out the *kulama* yams preparatory to putting them in the earth oven (p. 137). *Jibunglialumi* then followed with the dance of the owl man, *Purutjikini*, with his hands held around his eyes (Pl. 298), ending his dance with "*Ah*, *oo*, *ah*, *oo*", the call of the present-day boobook owl.

The Melville and Bathurst Island groups then moved from the distant to the grave side of their burial poles (Fig. 4) and performed the *pumuti* rituals. On this occasion, however, only husbands and wives beat each other.

The *pumuti* was followed by *Urumatjina* from Melville Island, chanting a song he had composed for the occasion which described how the dead man, *Waniamperi* had become involved in a fight at a *pukamuni* ceremony.[80]

Some men, listening intently to *Urumatjina*, joined in as soon as they had learned the song, while others performed the dance miming the action of men fighting.

Another part of the same song told how a woman, *Purpurangmio* (since dead) loudly abused the men because so many of them attacked her husband at one time. To add reality to the performance, *Urumatjina* pounded the side of a *pukamuni* basket with a stick to indicate the noise made by the angry woman (Pl. 260).

The theme of the songs then returned to the *kulama* ceremony. As some men chanted, others laid sheets of paper-bark on the ground, and to the *kulama* thunder-call they imitated the actions of rubbing the *kulama* yam on 765

[80] This is the same fight as the one enacted in the Bathurst Island *ilania* on the previous day (p. 83).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 their bodies (p. 138). Again, a man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, symbolised the pouring out of the cooked *kulama* yam on a sheet of bark and patted it to the *kulama* call of "*Brr, brr, brr*". This action completed the dance.

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

431 While other dances, which I did not see, were being performed in the two
765 *milimikas*, the *pukamuni* men and their wives unpacked the gifts for the "workers", and spread them out on the ground (Pl. 26B). There was much good-natured discussion about their equitable distribution before the presents were finally separated into lots and placed one on the top of each pole.

177 *Wurarbuti*, resplendent in his body paint and coloured *pukamuni* orna-
533 ments, mounted one of the larger poles and chanted songs telling how he
765 became possessed of the great wealth which enabled him to buy the presents
[302] for the "workers".

[539] "I am a big Government man," he boasted, "so I was able to get plenty of money."

"I stole the money from the Government to pay for the presents and the police locked me up."

[535] While *Wurarbuti* chanted this song, *Marawani* and the women danced with their hands crossed as if in handcuffs.

As the song continued, *Marawani* ran after *Pulanimbuwi*, dragged him into the *milimika*, and struggled with him in imitation of a policeman making an arrest.

Other songs were chanted ridiculing a Government clerk at Darwin, while one of them "wrote" out an order, passed the "money" to a *pukamuni* man through a window (an opening in a pole) and then demanded, in a loud domineering voice, his thumb-print on a scrap of paper as a receipt.

177 *Wurarbuti*, still seated on the top of a pole, started to distribute the
431 presents, imitating, as he did so, the actions and broken English which the
765 same clerk used when dealing with aborigines.

"You a worker," said *Wurarbuti*. "Have you a wife? How many children? You work for me, make proper good pole, I pay you."

The "worker" on accepting his payment, put his thumb-print on a scrap of paper (initialled—with a twig—by another *pukamuni* man), and walked away satisfied[81] with his square of printed calico, pipes and tobacco. As each "worker" received his gift the *pukamuni* men performed a dance.

[81] This is not always so. Sometimes a "worker" becomes so annoyed over inadequate payment that he will not allow his pole to be carried to the grave, preferring to let it rot in the forest. On several occasions we saw a pole which had been left in the forest because its maker was dissatisfied with the payment.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

When all the "workers" had been paid, *Wurarbuti* called my name and presented me with a number of *pukamuni* arm and chest ornaments (Pl. 31), which normally would have been left on the grave. 431 765 123

These ornaments, *Wurarbuti* explained, were a gift from the dead man, *Waniampuri*, because I had assisted in making his *pukamuni* a success.[88]

In the Bathurst Island *milimika* the three "workers" were also receiving their payments. 765

Jibunglialumi, although he did not have as good a story to tell as *Wurarbuti*, danced around the poles with some of the presents in his hand, singing, "Here I come in an expensive motor-car, with lots of money to pay the 'workers' for cutting such beautiful poles."[89] [535] [539] [177]

(d) *Erecting the Poles around the Graves*

The distribution of the last of the presents was a signal for the "workers" to carry the poles from the respective *milimikas* to the grave. 765

Some of the poles were both large and heavy; in particular that illustrated on Pl. 34D, which was eighteen feet long, and so heavy that it took seven "workers" to carry it from the *milimika* and up-end it in the hole prepared for it at the grave (Pl. 26A).

As the poles were carried past the Bathurst Island ceremonial ground, *Jibunglialumi* threw short sticks over them to commemorate the time when the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, took part in a spear-throwing contest at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* (p. 33).

While the "workers" nonchalantly carried the poles to the grave, the women, with tears running down their cheeks, beat themselves with sticks (until someone restrained them), and the close male relatives, mourning loudly, hysterically cut their heads with steel knives. 765 785

Katopi, the son of the dead man, had washed the painted decorations from his body, and was about to cut his head when he was stopped by his stepmother, *Dominao*. On seeing this, *Marawani*, one of the chief *pukamuni* men, took the knife from the woman and gave it to *Katopi*, who gashed his head two or three times, and, with blood pouring down his face, threw himself on the ground in a paroxysm of grief.

[88] To help them in their payments I had given the *pukamuni* men some printed calico.

[89] Although these stories about great wealth to pay the "workers" are much Europeanized, they are probably following a traditional pattern, when, instead of referring to money and the goods of the white man, the ceremonial leaders exaggerated the number of spears, ornaments, and other goods they had collected to pay the "workers".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(*e*) *The Final Mourning Rituals*

●765 As soon as the poles were in place the "workers" pulled away the bushes covering the grave. This was a signal for the closing phases of the final rituals. Everyone, men and women, from both Melville and Bathurst Islands, rushed forward and threw themselves on top of one another at the base of the burial poles, until the ground, and even the grave itself, was covered with a mass of human beings, each mourning heartbrokenly.

After a period of mourning, *Jibunglialumi* and *Wurarkuti* rose to their [302] feet, cut off the beards they had grown for the occasion,[84] and washed the painted decorations from their bodies, while the mourners, assembling close [535] to the poles, impersonated, in almost hysterical dance and song, the shark, the rain-woman, the jabiru, and many other mythical heroes of creation times.

Nangrinini, assisted by his wife, first performed the basket dance (Pl. 26c),[85] then once more the dance of the bark canoe. *Pulanimbuwi*, who danced beside him, acted the part of *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), the sea-eagle, swooping down on its prey.

The return of the ceremonial leaders to the grave was the signal for another exhibition of mass hysteria. Weeping women, beating themselves with sticks, threw themselves on the top of the grave, while men, leaning over the burial poles, mourned continuously in high-pitched wails.

Gradually the sounds of lamentation became less. One by one the mourners left, until there remained only the crouching body of *Waniamperi's* widow, painted entirely in black, a little wizened woman, whose span of life was almost spent.

(2) *The Final Pukamuni of Makapini*

(*a*) *The Opening Rituals*

A little before sunset, the Melville Island men and women assembled to [302] decorate themselves for the final rituals, while *Kitapipatu* (Pl. 27A), a sister of the dead woman, *Makapini*, carrying a long stick, and painted entirely in white, wandered among the *pukamuni* people, crying the *amburu* song.

The body decorations finished, which neither took as long, nor were as [184] elaborate as at the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*, the performers assembled about twenty yards from the three burial poles (Pl. 34A, B, F), which the "workers" had hidden from view by a screen of boughs.

[84] Before the days of the white man, the Tiwi men did not cut their beards at the final [177] *pukamuni*, but plucked them out in handfuls. Spencer, 1928, p. 673, Fig. 467, both illustrates and records having seen this curious ritual in the *kulama* ceremony.

[85] Mountford, 1956, p. 434.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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PLATE 39. *Totemic Dances*

A, Jabiru, Tjalati; B, Owl, Pintoma; C, Lizard, Kilpuruni; D, Frog, Kwouk-kwouk.

[p. 88 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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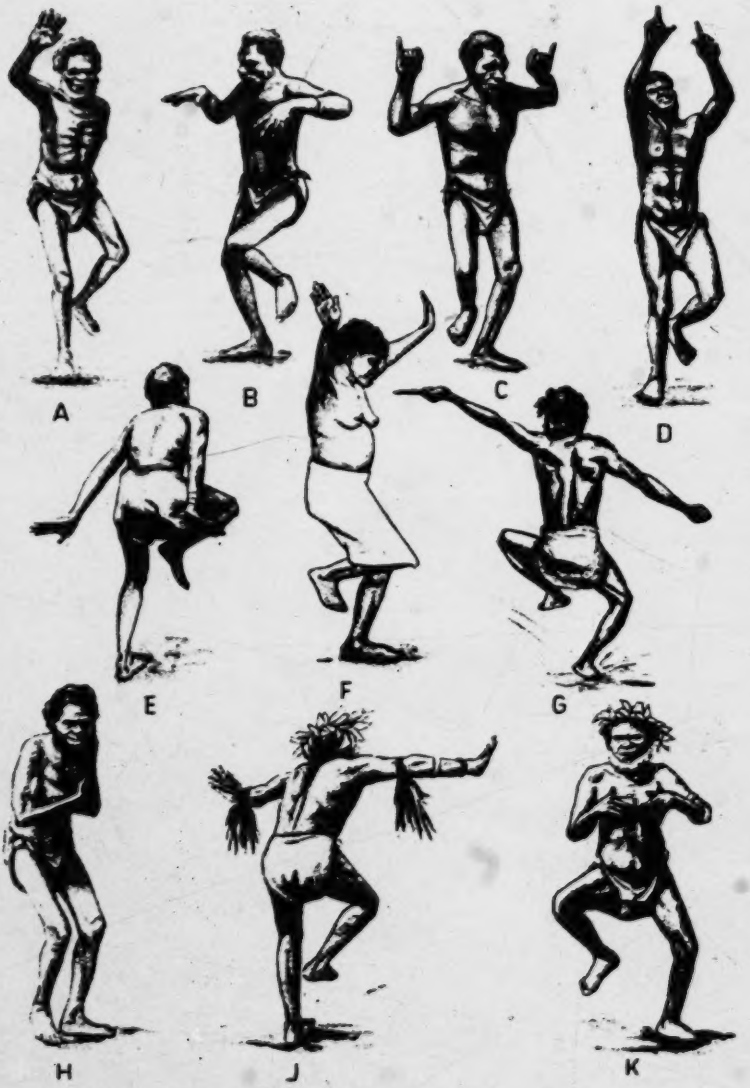

PLATE 30. *Totemic Dances*
A, Moon; B, Rain; C, Flying Fox; D, Wild Honey; E, Crocodile; F, Amburu; G, Shark; H, Skinny Fish; J, Sea-eagle; K, Ningaui.

[p. 88 B]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

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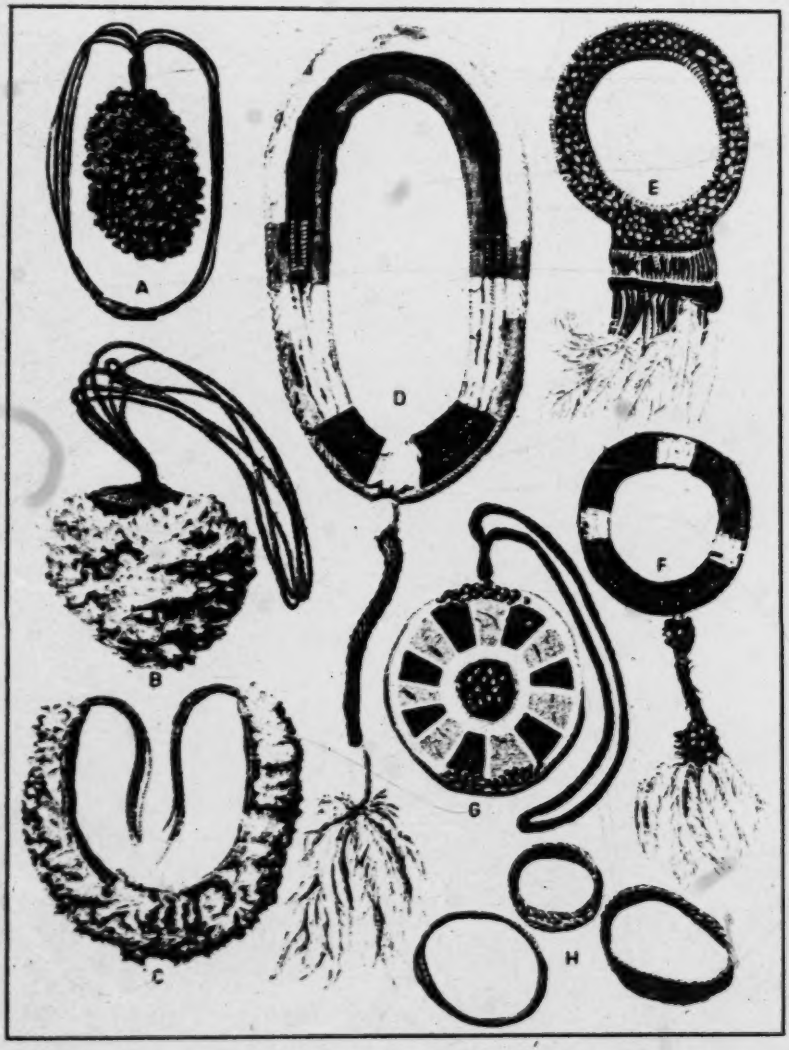

PLATE 31. *Ceremonial Decorations*
A, D, G, Chest Ornaments, Pukabinda; B, Goose-feather Ball, Tokwianga; C, False Beard, Baludi; E, F, Arm Ornaments, Palmatjinas; H, Cane Arm Bands, Jairinis.

[p. 88 C]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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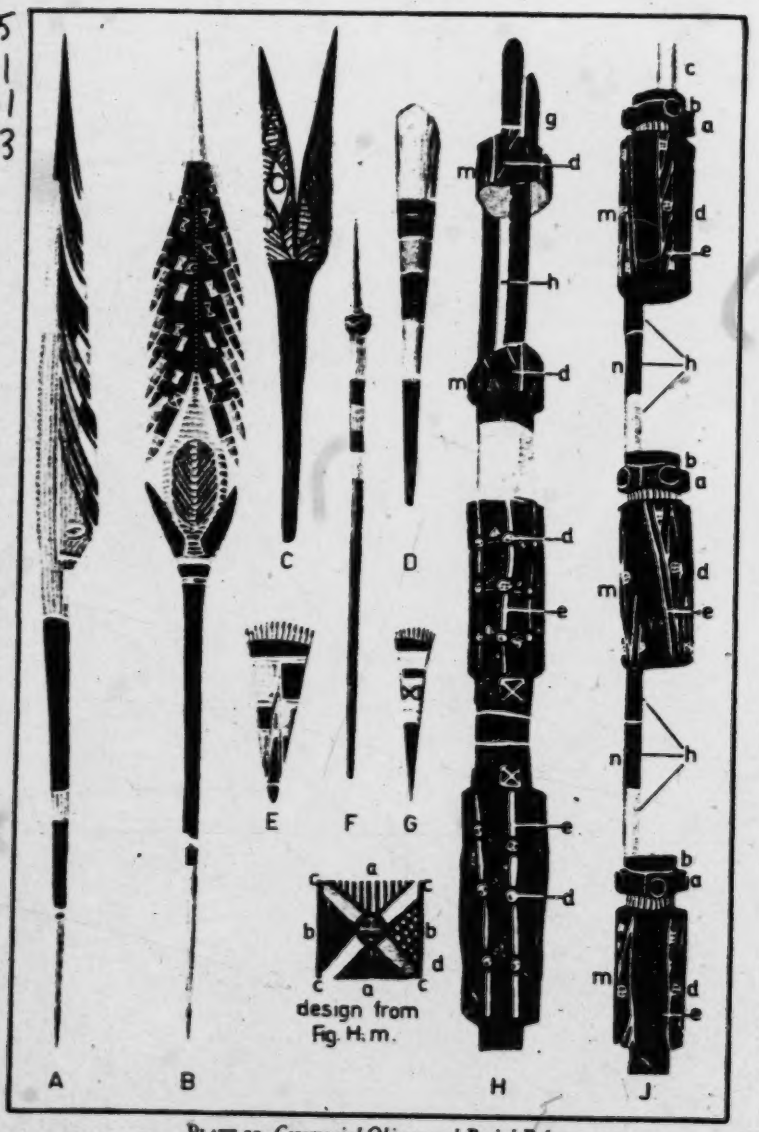

PLATE 32. *Ceremonial Objects and Burial Poles*
A, Male Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaringa; B, Female Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaguni; C, Forked Throwing Stick, Miluanta; D, Plain Throwing Stick, Muruguna; E, G, Tool, Porta, for Body Painting; F, Scratching Stick, Murubunga; H, J, Pukamuni Burial Poles.

[p. 88 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The ceremony opened with the honey call, then, as the men stepped across a fire lit in the centre of the *milimika* (Pl. 24B), a long sustained mosquito call. Following this, the men formed a circle around the fire, and chanted a song which described the bombing of a ship off the coast of Bathurst Island. 765 [533] [177]

Close female relatives, standing in a line facing the poles, sang the *amburu*, while three men, painted white, each carrying a spear, rushed toward the screen of boughs, peered through them, then returned to the *milimika*. Three other men were given spears, one of whom, with a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball) in his mouth, took a stand as if to throw a spear at the poles, remarking to his companions as he did so, that he was about to spear a *mopaditi*.

As soon as the "workers" removed the boughs which shielded the poles from view, an old woman, *Jibandaui*, ran forward and beat the ground near the poles, while the six men, with spears poised ready, followed and stabbed around the base of the poles. These rituals, the signal for all the participants to rush to the grave poles and (Pl. 27B) mourn, were carried out to frighten the *mopaditis* from the vicinity of the grave.

A young man with his head and shoulders through an opening in one of the poles, and his arm around an old woman, sobbed bitterly (Pl. 27C) while others stood around either crying or singing the *amburu*.

As the sounds of grief became less, a young man, miming a killing which had taken place some time ago, sneaked up with great stealth, and "speared" *Tjamalampua* who was lying on the ground in the *milimika*.[88] Shortly afterwards the ceremony closed with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

(*b*) *Songs and Dances*

The next morning about 10 a.m., the ceremonies started afresh. On this occasion, all of the songs and dances dealt with secular incidents; a crocodile creeping upon a man to kill him, an aboriginal sailing a European racing boat, another paddling a bark canoe, still another spearing an enemy, and so on. 177 765 [533]

Several of the aborigines created much laughter by miming the actions of our physical anthropologist, Dr. Carleton Coon, who had just completed a series of body measurements and observations on the Melville Islanders. [123] [535]

One man, using a short stick, measured the arms, legs and body of old *Tjamalampua* as he lay stretched out full length on the ground; he then danced around the *milimika* with his hands round his head, in imitation of the head callipers; another mimed Dr. Coon weighing an aboriginal, cutting his hair and looking at his teeth.

[88] Spencer, 1928, p. 651, describes a similar episode. No doubt the spearing of Tjamalampua had a much deeper symbolism than appeared at the time.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 533 *Wurarbuti* described, in song and dance, how some aborigines from the northern end of the island had tried to kill his father, but the father, being forewarned, had run into the mangrove swamp for shelter. A spear, however, thrown by his enemies, hit him in the side but did not kill him.

[535] [177] Then followed a long series of songs and dances, made up by *Wurarbuti*, describing how the mechanics from Darwin erected a large steel tank at the nearby settlement. To the chanting of songs and beating of buttocks, the actors "rolled" the tank (actually a small log) along the ground, tilted it on one end, rigged blocks and tackle and lifted the "tank" in place. These dances lasted about a half an hour.

Toward the end of this performance, which finished about mid-day, a woman, *Narlaui*, painted entirely in white, and carrying a throwing stick, called upon the dead woman to fight her because, at one time she, *Narlaui*, had reprimanded her for running after men. The aborigines applauded her when she had finished her song. Emboldened by this, *Narlaui* stood in front of one of the poles and challenged the dead woman to a fight.

[535] [177] The ceremony finished[97] with an aeroplane dance, the men posturing in a similar manner to that of the *Jirakati* dance (Pl. 30j).

About sunset, the rituals started afresh with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

Pulanimbuwi and *Muramajua*, acting the part of little children, struggled with each other in the dust of the *milimika* while one of them sang,

[539] "You can't drink from the same breast as I can because we have different mothers."

Old *Malumerinita*, taking up the same refrain, pushed the two "children" aside as he sang,

[539] "I'm a big man, so I'll drink the milk."

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

765 It was after dark before the three "workers", who had cut and painted the burial poles, received their payment (Pl. 27D). As each *pukamuni* man passed the goods, loin cloths, and tobacco to the "worker", he cut his head with a knife, and started a dance in which even a number of little girls took part [535] (Pl. 25A). They had been told by some of the older women what to do, so [868] that the youngsters would be conversant with the woman's place in the rituals.

[97] This ceremony would have probably, like that of *Wonlampori*, finished at mid-day had not the Superintendent of the settlement insisted on sending the chief woman mourner to a distant locality from which she had been unable to return on time.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(d) The Final Mourning Rituals

By this time the chief woman mourner, painted entirely in red, had arrived. 765
On reaching the ceremonial ground, she charged against a pole, then leaned [302]
over it, crying heartbrokenly. Another woman, *Dominao*, in paroxysms of grief, threw herself on the ground at the base of another pole, while still another woman, dancing the *ambaru* before the third pole, told the *mopaditi* [533]
of the dead woman, in a song "to keep away from me". [775]

The ceremony finished, like that of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*, with concerted wailing around the poles.

(3) The Pukamuni of Inbidjarmeri's Infant

This simplified *pukamuni* was held for a premature child of *Inbidjarmeri*. 766
The child died, about a month previously, at the Darwin hospital. The complete rituals, though curtailed, having occupied only two hours, followed the normal pattern with two exceptions. The *pukamuni* group did not employ any "workers" to cut the burial poles, and, as the body had not been brought to Melville Island, the ceremonies were held at the grave of a young child, of the same parents, who had died about two years previously.

A distant relative, appointed by the father of a "worker" had burnt the grass, cleared a space adjacent to the grave as a dancing ground and draped a turtle rope around the old poles in which had been twisted the wing feathers of geese.[88] For these duties he was given two loin cloths.

There were no dances at the first *ilania* which took place about three hundred yards from the burial site, only prolonged honey and mosquito calls.

The *pukamuni* group then moved to within a hundred yards of the grave where, after more honey and mosquito calls, they lit the *wandiatapinda* fire, and walked through its smoke and flames.

At the commencement of the final rituals, most of the group halted behind a rope, stretched between two trees, over which the "worker" had hung bagging and blankets;[89] but others rushed forward, spears in hand, and, as in the two previous *pukamunis*, stabbed at the base of the poles surrounding the grave to drive away the *mopaditis*.

After this, everyone moved to the grave-side of the screen, the men carry- 535
ing out a series of dances while the women, beating themselves with sticks, 765
leaned on the *pukamuni* poles and mourned. 533

While some of the *pukamuni* men chanted a song about the red-fruited *eugenia*, *binamia*, *Muramajua*, walking around the *milimika*, imitated a

[88] I did not find out the significance of this custom.
[89] This took the place of the screen of boughs used in the normal rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Unidentified

The designs on Pl. 28T are the same as those painted on the face of the chief mourner, *Kasapi*, at *Waniamperi's* final *pukamuni*. I did not ask about their meanings. 302 778

Although I did not learn the meanings of the facial designs on the remaining faces on Pl. 28, it is reasonable to suppose they all referred to some mythological story, probably associated with the totem of the aboriginal who wore them.

7. THE PUKAMUNI DANCES

A number of the dances we saw at the *ilanias* and final *pukamuni* rituals belonged exclusively to certain Tiwi totemic groups. They were so constant in form that, in no time, we could recognize the dance and the totem to which it belonged. [794] 765 535

Many of these dances are more strenuous than any belonging to the mainland; some of them, indeed, so strenuous, i.e., the crocodile (Pl. 30E), the shark (Pl. 30G), or the sea-eagle (Pl. 30J), that they seldom lasted more than a minute. [171]

Although I recorded only fourteen of these totemic dances (illustrated on Pls. 29 and 30), I feel sure that these represent but a small proportion of those performed by the Tiwi. For instance, none of the totemic dances belonging to the dead person would have been performed at the burial rituals we witnessed.

Pl. 29A is the dance of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, which was performed with such skill and abandon by *Nilituna* at the Bathurst Island *ilania* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* ceremony.

Pl. 29B is the dance of the boobook owl, *Purutjikini*, who with his wife, the barn-owl, *Pintoma*, organized the second *kulama* ceremony on Turiturina Island, western Bathurst Island. The dancer is indicating the large eyes of the boobook owl.

Pl. 29C is the dance of the blanket-lizard, *Kilpuruni*, who was punished by *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, because the former seduced *Jurumu's* wife. The dancer walked around the ceremonial ground with an awkward gait, in imitation of the blanket-lizard's curious method of locomotion.

Pl. 29D pictures the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, who is the mother of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, the woman of the monsoon rain, *Tominuka*, and the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. The frog dance was performed many times at the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi*, the frog being the totem of his father.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Pl. 30A is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, who fought with *Purukupali* during the creation period. The bent, upraised arm of the dancer symbolizes the crescent moon.

Pl. 30B is the dance of the rain-woman, *Tomituka*, who lives at Wailu with her brother, sister and her mother, the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*. The fingers pointing downward symbolize the falling rain.

Pl. 30C illustrates the dance of the flying-fox, *Murungimpili*, whose totemic place is at Kaialili lagoon, southern Melville Island. This dance was frequently performed at the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, her father being a flying-fox man. The dancer, with high steps, moved his arms alternately up and down, with the little fingers pointing upward.

Pl. 30D is the dance of wild honey. In this dance the performer, dancing vigorously around the ceremonial ground, pointed upward, as if to indicate the position of a hive of wild bees.

Pl. 30E is the spirited dance of the crocodile, *Jirakupai*, who, during creation times, transformed himself into a crocodile to escape his enemies. This was not often performed in the burial ceremonies we witnessed.

Pl. 30F is the *amburu*, the women's dance of mourning. When the men are performing in the ceremonial circle, the women come in from the left-hand side performing the *amburu*. I did not collect any specific myth about this dance, except that it has been performed by the women ever since the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*.

Pl. 30G is the dance of the shark, *Tudawala*, probably the most strenuous dance in aboriginal Australia. It is performed only by young men, women and children, the older men claiming that its performance requires too much effort.

Pl. 30H illustrates the dance of the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, who injured his spine while taking part in a spear-throwing contest held during the final *pukamuni* rituals of *Purukupali*. The dancer is miming the pain that *Pipinjawari* suffered on account of his injury.

Pl. 30J is an attractive and graceful dance symbolizing the sea-eagle, *Jirakai*, swooping down on its prey, with its wings outspread. This dance was performed many times at the *ilanias* of the woman, *Nulatini*.

Pl. 30K, the *Ningaui* dance, symbolizes the awkward gait and curious actions of these dwarf spirit people who live in the swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. This dance was performed with considerable skill and artistry by the leader of the Bathurst Island group, *Jibunglialuni*, at one of the *ilanias* of *Waniampari*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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8. THE CEREMONIAL OBJECTS OF THE TIWI

The ceremonial objects of the *pukamuni* ceremony, like the carved and painted burial poles and elaborate facial and body decorations already described, are totally unlike those used by the mainland aborigines. 301 778 765 [171]

A series of objects obtained on the 1954 expedition is illustrated on Pls. 31, 32.[94]

On Pl. 31, A, D, and G, are chest ornaments called *pukabinda*, which are suspended around the neck with a loop of human hair string. Fig. A is an oval ball of the soft wax of the native bee, into which has been pressed a large number of the red and black seeds of a jungle vine. Fig. D, made of several ovals of lawyer vine, is bound together with strips of the same material. The pendant is made of human hair and white cockatoo feathers. The oval opening is too small to pass over the head, therefore this ornament, and similar examples which I saw, were suspended around the neck with string. Fig. G is a flat disc like Fig. D, with lengths of lawyer vine bound together. This disc was coated with wax, and further decorated with red and black jungle seeds. [237]

Pl. 31E and F are ornaments, *palmatjinas*, decorated with red and black seeds, which are pushed up the arm over the elbow.[95] Both have been made in the same manner as Fig. D, G.

Pl. 31B is a goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, worn around the neck or tied around the upper arm. *Wurarbuti* (frontispiece) is wearing a *tokwianga*.

These ornaments are made by embedding ends of the downy feathers of the pied goose in a ball of wax. So much work was entailed in making a *tokwianga* that the aborigines were loth to part with them. The *tokwianga* is worn on all ceremonial occasions. [237]

Pl. 31C is a false beard, *baludi*, which was worn at the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni* (see frontispiece), and the *kulama* rituals. The *baludi* may be pure decoration, or it may replace the beard, which up until comparatively recently was plucked out at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals. [302]

Fig. H illustrates three cane arm rings, *jairinis*, made from plaited lawyer vine. These were worn on the upper and lower arms of the *pukamuni* men and women, and occasionally by other performers, as decoration. At the end of the burial ceremony the performers take these rings from their arms and leave them on the grave as a present for the spirit of the dead.

[94] Spencer, 1928, Pl. XII, Figs. 450–4, illustrates a number of *pukamuni* ornaments he collected in 1911.

[95] Several of the men illustrated on Pl. 26B, are wearing these arm ornaments.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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765 778 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals.

[411] [531] Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear, *tunkagumi*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

[114] [322] [412] At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *mituanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *murugunu*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

[302] [413] Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[96]

[515] [413] Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 765 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkina*, are used by the Tiwi for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkinas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

[301] [302] As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, his chest ornaments,

[96] The lines of dots on *Wurarkuti* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

202 *palmatjinis*, and cane armlets, *jairinis*. Then, taking a female *pukamuni* spear,
765 *tunkaguni*, in his hand he seated himself within sight of the camp.

[301] The local aborigines went out to welcome him, but on seeing the message
[302] stick and hearing the news, they mourned hysterically, cutting their heads
[785] and beating themselves with sticks.

When the mourning died down, the aborigines gave the messenger a meal,
[574] after which he returned to his own camp.

Although the general distribution of the totemic *purunkitas* has been dis-
[126] continued in recent years, the aborigines who knew them well, made nine
[184] examples for me. It would seem that each totemic place had its own particular
[794] design, for when I showed the *purunkita* (Fig. 7D) to old *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, neither of whom had seen it previously, they recognized it immediately as a message stick which would have been sent to the *Mudungkala* totemic group of Buchanan Island, at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. However, other *purunkitas*, i.e. (Fig. 5C; Fig. 5F, G, H; and Fig. 6A, E) are still being used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

During the early days of our stay, when the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were about to start, three men, two of them, *Marawani* and *Uramatjina*, being the chief mourners, made a journey to the Bathurst Island people for the purpose of giving them a *purunkita* and telling them the news.

A few days later a Bathurst Island man returned with the message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H, and verbal instructions relating to the forthcoming burial rituals.

Although I did not see the message stick which *Marawani* and his com-
[126] panions carried to Bathurst Island, I was able to make a rubbing of another (Fig. 7C), which was sent to the same locality on the death of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife.

Later, old *Tjamalampua* sent another message stick (Fig. 7A, B), to the men of the *Mudungkala* totem of Buchanan Island, asking for European goods and food to pay the "workers" at the final rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*.

Notification of Death

202 The designs on message stick, Fig. 7C, which an aboriginal carried to the
211 Bathurst Island people, together with the news of the death of *Nulatini*, did
×532 not, in any way, refer to the message that accompanied it, but to topographical details along the motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point on Apsley Straits.

The upper section, *d*, is the aboriginal camp at Snake Bay, and the indentations, *a*, *a*, are the rocks on its shores. The cross-hatched rectangle in the

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tobacco, *b*, matches, *c*, a pipe, *d*, a calico loin cloth, *e*, a pair of short trousers, *f*, a shirt, *g*, sugar, *h*, tea, and *j*, flour. 202 211 439

Secular

Fig. 60 is a carved stick whose designs were thought out by the artist as he walked along the sandy beach near our camp. Although not a message stick, the illustration is included in the section as an example of how an aboriginal expresses his mental images through the medium of simple wood carving. 532x

The horizontal lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the waves breaking on the beach, and the groups of short lines, a pattern of shallow gutters which had been formed on the sandy shore by the fresh water seeping from a nearby lagoon.

10. THE BURIAL POLES

The painted and decorated poles of Melville and Bathurst Islands attracted the attention of all the early visitors. Sir Gordon Bremer in 1824, possibly the first European to see the *pukamuni* poles, when writing about a grave he saw on Melville Island, states: "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilised people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed around with trees, 7 feet to 8 feet high, some of which were carved with stone or shell and further ornamented by rings of wood. On the tops of these were placed the waddies (throwing sticks) of the deceased. The grave was raised above the level of the earth, but the raised part was not more than 3 feet long. At the head was placed a piece of a canoe (probably a bark basket) and a spear and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and earth were cleared away from the sides and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."[88] 765 211 [322] [413]

I have quoted Sir Gordon Bremer's description in full because it shows that, even after a hundred and thirty years, the aborigines of Melville Island, 211 178 765

[88] Bremer, 1843. From this description it would appear that Bremer chanced to see a grave not long after the aborigines had completed the final rituals. Had any time elapsed the whole area would have been covered with grass and leaves, for, after the *pukamuni* ceremonies, nobody is interested in either the grave or the poles.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[178] where they have not suffered from ecclesiastic prohibitions, are still using a similar form of grave and posts.

Major Campbell (1834, p. 158), writing of a grave he saw on Melville Island in 1826, states: "It (the grave) is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberts, 14–15 feet high, and between these the spears and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground."

Brown (1905, p. 28) found a grave on Luxmore Head, in Apsley Straits surrounded . . . "by wooden slabs, portions of which had been burnt. Aboriginal markings were faintly discernible in places on the wood, some of the posts had the wood cut away from the outside toward the centre, leaving a short spike standing up in the middle of the post."

Klaatsch (1907, p. 257), in referring to the same burial poles at Luxmore Head, writes: "In some examples the slab was so carved that the upper part was only connected with the lower by two thin pillars or, on others, the top was mushroom-shaped.

"It is easy to see that the aborigines used fire for this work of sculpture, scratching the burnt part away with shell."

Basedow,[99] in 1911, came across a grave of an infant, on Bathurst Island, surrounded by five simply decorated posts, which had "been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk."

Basedow persuaded the aborigines to renovate the designs, which did not vary greatly from those in use at the present day.

[114] Spencer,[100] in 1911, made sketches of many of the burial poles, and arranged for the aborigines to redecorate a group which was later displayed in the National Museum, Melbourne. He states (1928, p. 682) that: "It (the pole) [177] was slowly and laboriously cut with an iron tomahawk, but formerly with a sharp shell, until it has the form decided upon by the artificer."

Dr. Kenneth Fry, who visited Melville Island in 1913, was the first investigator to ascertain the meanings of a number of poles. These, with his permission, are illustrated on Fig. 8. All of these shapes, but two, are those still most commonly used among the hundred or more which I saw on Melville Island.

[115] An old aboriginal, *Tjamalampua*, told me that in *palaneri* times, i.e., a long while ago, before there were any steel axes, the aborigines used stone axes to fell the hollow trees for *pukamuni* poles. Although there were just as many poles around the grave as there are today, they were neither as

[99] Basedow (1913), p. 314, Fig. 4, Pls. 13, 14, 16, 17, 18.
[100] Spencer (1928), p. 682, Figs. 475–7, Pl. X.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

elaborately shaped nor decorated, often being covered with no more than a series of dots.[1] 211 765

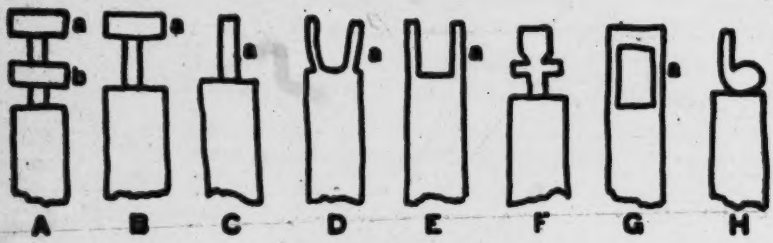

FIG. 8. *The Burial Poles*

Origin of the Pukamuni Poles

At present we have no evidence to show whether the custom of erecting burial poles around the grave in such numbers, not as a memorial, but as a gift to the dead, is confined entirely to the Tiwi tribe, or whether it is used in any other part of the world, and has reached the Tiwi by diffusion. There certainly are no similar burial poles on the Australian continent. 171 765 211 [769]

In north-eastern Arnhem Land, some of the decorated log coffins are as high as seven feet.[2] But the function of those coffins bears no relationship to that of the burial poles of Melville Island, the former being no more than coffins to hold the bones, and the latter, gifts to please the spirit of the dead.

It is possible that, during the long period of isolation from the mainland cultures, the Melville Islanders may have changed coffins of north-eastern Arnhem Land into the burial poles of the Tiwi.

The only examples of burial posts outside of Australia known to me, that are in any way comparable in function to those on Melville Island, are the *malanggan* burial ornaments of New Ireland described by Kramer.[3]

Methods of Manufacture

Although, at the conclusion of the *pukamuni* rituals, the grave is totally neglected and the poles allowed to decay, the "workers", using steel axes[4] 765

[1] Although *Tjamalampua* is not fully correct (see Bremer's and Campbell's statement in the early nineteenth century, pp. 107, 108), it indicates that both the poles and their painted decorations have, with the passing of the years, and the acquisition of steel tools, become more complex.

[2] Mountford, 1956, p. 317. [3] Kramer, 1925.

[4] The evidence of Bremer, Spencer and the aborigines, suggests that before the advent of metal the only cutting tools owned by the aborigines would have been crude stone axes, and the shells of cockles. It is likely that, under these conditions, the poles would 412 174 322

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 and the hardest and most durable timber available, spared no pains to make the best poles they could.[6]

532 765 When the "workers" had finished shaping the poles they notified the leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, who then gave the order for the poles to be scorched over a fire of blazing leaves to make a black ground on which to paint the design (Mountford, 1956, p. 427). Then, setting up the poles in a double row near the grave (Mountford, 1956, p. 426), the men began their task of decoration (Pl. 33B, D). At the same time, the ceremonial leader sent message sticks (p. 98) to notify the outlying groups that the final rituals were about to start.

386 The materials used for decoration were: red and yellow ochres from Imilu, Cape Van Diemen, a white ochre from a beach nearby, crushed charcoal for black, one of three types of fixatives, i.e., the white of turtle eggs, wild honey and beeswax mixed together, and the particularly gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids.

The ochres were crushed, mixed with water and one or more of the fixatives, and applied to the poles with brushes made from chewed strips of bark or vines (Fig. 2).

517 532 As I watched these primitive artists at work, I was impressed with the care they took in the arranging of their simple patterns, and with the obvious pleasure they experienced in their work. A quiet air of contentment pervaded the outdoor studio as each of the ten artists made his own pole as beautiful as possible.

Each artist appeared to be certain as to the designs he would use; there was no evidence of copying; in fact, *Pulanimbuwi* showed me the rough draft of the designs of his pole (Pl. 35A, B, Fig. 9), scratched on the back of a cigarette tin, days before he had even felled the tree.

532 765 A puzzling aspect of the *pukamuni* poles is the wide variety of the painted designs used, and the almost total absence in those designs of any reference to the myths and totemic localities.[6]

At first sight it would appear that the pole shapes, collected by both Fry and myself, were inventions of the moment. An analysis of the poles

174 412 322 have simpler shapes than at the present time, although Campbell (1834, p. 158) speaks about "poles with tops like lances and halberts". The aborigines may have used fire to assist in the shaping of the poles, in fact, this is suggested by Klaatsch (1907, p. 387).

[6] Not far from our camp was the deserted grave of the father of *Muramujua* (Pl. 38D), who died when his son was an infant. *Muramujua* was then over forty years old, yet the poles, although somewhat eroded and disarranged by the elements, are still in a fair state of preservation.

[177] [6] This and old *Tjamalampua's* statement, p. 109, could indicate that the poles and their designs are a recent cultural trait that is not yet fully absorbed into the culture.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

recorded on the expedition, however, indicates that this may not be so, i.e., 532x 765

Forks or limbs of trees	26 per cent
Breasts of women	9 per cent
Rocks on sea-coast	18 per cent
Windows and doors (openings in poles)	15 per cent

That is, four shapes make up 68 per cent and the remaining eleven shapes, 32 per cent.

This would suggest that certain shapes have a traditional meaning, and that these shapes predominate. In fact, an examination of the accounts of the early travellers, Bremer, Campbell, Klaatsch, and Spencer, suggests that, except for those poles in the form of human figures, the *pukamuni* poles have not changed in shape to any extent during the last fifty years or more. [114] [178]

Description of the Burial Poles

(a) *The Pukamuni of Waniamperi*

The ten *tudinis* which the "workers" cut and painted for *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were looked upon as a family, a man, his two wives, and their children.

Pl. 32J, a middle-aged man, had two wives; Pl. 34E, a very fat, but young woman, and Pl. 35A, B, her much older sister.

The young wife, Pl. 34E, had three children; Pl. 36A, B, a small boy about ten, Pl. 36D, a girl of twelve, and Pl. 37D, a young married woman without a family.

The older wife, Pl. 35A, B, had four children; Pl. 36F, a boy of five, Pl. 36C, a girl about twelve, Pl. 32H, a young unmarried man, and Pl. 37D, an unmarried woman.

Plate 32J, eighteen feet in height, was by far the tallest pole in the group.

Because the actual shapes of the poles seldom had any relationship to the designs painted on them, the pole shapes and the painted designs will be described separately.

The pole shapes of Pl. 32J are: the projection, *c*, on the top, represents the branch of a tree, the bosses, *a*, *a*, *a*, are the breasts of women, the three cylindrical sections, *m*, *m*, *m*, large rocks on the sea-coast, and the narrow uprights, *n*, *n*, joining them, the limbs of eucalyptus trees.

In the painted designs, *a*, *a*, *a*, are, as before, the breasts of women, and the short vertical lines, *b*, *b*, etc., the teeth of a comb. The painted white projection, *c*, on the top of the pole, is a shovel-nosed shark; the crossed circles, *d*, *d*, are the noses of crocodiles, and the diagonal bands, *e*, *e*, *e*, the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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mangrove creeks in which the crocodiles live. The red, yellow and white bands, *h*, *h*, etc., are boulders of various colours on the beach, and the dotted diamond shapes, on *m*, *m*, *m*, the pattern which the turtle-woman, *Garagalani*, painted on her bark basket at *Purukupali's* ceremony, and which, when she changed herself into a turtle, became the shell design on her carapace (p. 39).

The pole shapes of Pl. 34B are: the projections, *f*, the fork of a tree, the bosses, *a*, *a*, breasts of women and the three cylindrical sections, rocks on the sea-coast.

The painted designs at *a*, *a*, are, as before, women's breasts, and the radiating designs and central dot on the bosses, the eyes of women. The vertical bands, such as *d*, etc., on the two upper cylindrical sections, and the horizontal bands, *e*, etc., on the lower section, are women's trade belts, the discs on the upper and lower sections, silver coins, and the dots on the background, stars in the sky.

The pole shapes of Pl. 35A, B, are: the two forked projections, *a*, *a*, the throwing sticks used by the moon-man, *Tjapara*, in his fight against *Purukupali*; the rectangular opening immediately below, is a window, and the lower section, a large boulder.

The painted decorations on the pole (Pl. 35A, B), are, by far, the most elaborate and best executed I have examined. On the upper section, the diagonal and transverse red and white lines, *b*, symbolise the native roads near Imilu, north-western Melville Island, the source of the red ochre so valued by the Melville Islanders; the cone-shaped figures, *d*, outcrops of red and white rocks, and the bands, *c*, *c*, grass on the top of the cliffs at Imilu.

The many designs on the lower section illustrate, in detail, the topography at Imilu. On Fig. 9, the key to Pl. 35A, B, these designs are arranged in topographical levels.[1]

Level 1, pictures the highlands; 2, the jungle at the top of the cliffs; 3, an aboriginal road; 4, the trees on the sea-coast; 5, the surface of the sea; 6, the creatures in the sea, and 7, the waves breaking on the sea-shore.

On level 1, *g*, *g*, *g*, represent the eucalypts of the highlands and on level 2, *j*, *j*, etc., the jungle trees which grow along the edge of the cliff. At *y*, is a

[133]

[1] Brown (1905, p. 28), writing about the appearance of these cliffs, when viewed from the sea, states, ". . . they often appear thus: four parallel lines—top of timber, top of cliff, top of beach, edge of water; the first, green, the second, red, the third, white, greyish-blue water in front and blue sky above." Brown and *Pulaimbuwi*, the artist of the pole, were both impressed with the same parallel lines of colour, which extend for miles along the shore of Cape Van Diemen.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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winding track leading from the beach, up the cliffs, to Imilu. Another road, at level 3, along the top of the cliff, is indicated by the horizontal barred design, *k*, *k*.

Level 4 pictures the sea beach, *h*, *h*, etc., being casuarina trees, and, *z*, an especially large eucalypt.

FIG. 9. *Carved and Painted Burial Pole*

There is a billabong at *b*, with trees (radiating designs) on its banks, and the pit, *v*, at Imilu, surrounded by trees, from which the aborigines dig their ochres.[8]

On the surface of the water (level 5), *c*, *c*, are canoes, and *e*, *e*, turtles.

A series of panels, 8–15, on level 6, picture the creatures that live in the deep water. The designs *h*, *h*, etc., indicate large sponges on the rocks; *a*, *a*,

[8] This ochre, yellow when dug out of the ground, changes to red when heated in the camp fire.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

X532
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etc., old and young crocodiles; *e*, *e*, etc., turtles; *f*, *f*, etc., octopi, and *d*, *d*, etc., crabs. Panel 17 is a creek in the mangrove swamps, in which the aborigines anchor their canoes, *c*, *c*, etc. In this creek are octopi, *f*, *f*, etc.

Panels 16–26 illustrate the sea-shore and the waves. The series of vertical parallel lines in each panel are the incoming lines of waves; the ovals, such as *k*, are the shells on the sandy bottom, and the curving panels, similar to *m*, the waves breaking on the beach.

The pole shapes of Pl. 37F, which the aborigines looked upon as a young woman, are: *a*, her hat; *b*, her neck, and *s*, her ribs. Sections *c*, *c*, *c*, are large rocks on the sea-shore.

The meaning of the designs painted on the same pole are: the chevrons on the top of the pole at *a* are spider webs in the jungle; the bands, *b*, rocks of different colours on the beach; diamonds on *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, the check designs on the printed calico of the young woman's skirt; *d*, *d*, *d*, her belts of different colours, and *e*, is the coloured cloth she used as a head band.

[291]

In general, the pole shapes of Pl. 32H, represent a tree. The projections, *g*, are the branches; the two upper cylindrical sections, *m*, *m*, the boles; the opening, *h*, is a hollow and the lower sections, the trunk.

The painted designs in the rectangles covering the pole each have similar meanings. The intersecting diagonal lines (see inset), *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, symbolize the pattern on the back, and the groups of vertical parallel lines, *a*, *a*, those on the side of a reef fish, called *pranaia*. The long white lines, *e*, *e*, are stripes, and *d*, *d*, *d*, *d*, dots on the bodies of the *Maludaianini* caterpillars which later were transformed into the men of the Milky Way. The dotted triangles, *b*, *b*, represent the shell pattern on the back of the hawkbill turtle, *Garagalani*.

In the pole shapes of Pl. 36C, the upper projection, *a*, is a cycad palm; *c*, *c*, are the breasts of women, and *e*, *e*, *e*, edible yams.

The painted rectangles on sections *d* and *f* refer, almost exclusively, to different kinds of food, although some common objects, such as throwing sticks, baskets and spears are represented. I did not find out the meanings of the designs on the lowest section.

The pole shapes, illustrated on Pl. 36A, B, are: *a*, the bow of a wooden canoe, and the oval designs at *c*, the paint on its sides.

On section *b*, of Pl. 36A, the painted diamond pattern *g*, is the body of a goanna, the triangle, *h*, its tail, and the dots are its eggs.

The intersecting lines on the other side of the same section (Pl. 36B), symbolize the ribs of a goanna, and the cross-hatched diamonds, the marks on its skin.

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The designs on sections *d* and *f* also relate to the goanna. The small white discs on *d* are goanna holes; the cross-hatched diamonds, its skin patterns, and the dots, its eggs. The triangles on *f* are the ribs, and the dots, the fat of the same creature. White and red bands on *e*, symbolize waves breaking on the beach. 532x 765

The shapes of Pl. 36D are: *a* is white cloud; the rectangular opening *e*, a door, and the thinner section *f*, a post of a house. Section *d* is a large boulder, and *g*, *h*, the trunks of a fan palm.

The painted, cross-hatched bands, *b*, on section *e*, indicate goanna fat; the alternate bands, *c*, *c*, etc., are rocks on the shore, and the central white disc on *d* is the light from an electric torch. The vertical lines radiating from this disc are aboriginal paths; the horizontal bands are adjacent mangrove creeks, and the cross-hatched rectangles, discarded fish-bones on its banks.

The circles at *g* are rocks in the sea, and the white lines represent rope used for catching turtles. The dots on the background symbolize turtle eggs in the sand. The vertical bands on *h* are mangrove creeks, and the cross-hatched areas, body scars on the backs and arms of old men and women.[9]

The two projections at *a* on Pl. 36F, are the front flippers of a turtle, the opening, *c*, is a window, and *d*, a door. The lower section is a European house.

The cross-hatching at *e*, *e*, represents the marks on the handles of throwing sticks (Pl. 32D); the transverse bands, *f*, and the vertical bands, *g*, *g*, aboriginal tracks in the forest, and the dots, stars in the sky.

The upper projections at *a* (Pl. 37D), are the branches of trees, the rectangular opening below is a doorway, the two cylindrical sections, *h*, *h*, are rocks on the coast, and the design, *j*, is a stingray.

The painted designs refer almost exclusively to the decorations used at a *pukamuni* ceremony. The chevron bands at *b* and *c* on the upper projections, *a*, are coloured cane, and plain, feathered *pukamuni* arm ornaments respectively (Pl. 31E, F). Painted designs at *f*, *f*, are arm ornaments similar to those at *b*, *c*. The plain band, *g*, however, represents chest ornaments (Pl. 31D, G). The circles at *d*, *d*, are *pukamuni* cane armlets, and the cross-hatched rectangles and panels *h*, *h*, *h*, the chevron body scars of the performers. [301]

(*b*) *The Pukamuni of Makapini*

As in the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*, the poles of *Makapini* were looked upon as a family; Pl. 34B, the mother; Pl. 34A, an adolescent daughter,

[9] Until recently, both men and women were decorated with elaborate series of chevron scars on the arms, legs and back (Pl. 29A). This practice has been discontinued. [304]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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and Pl. 34F, a small son. As before, the shape of the pole had one set of meanings, and the designs painted on them another.

The two projections, *a*, on Pl. 34B, represent the fork, and the central white section, *d*, is the bole of a eucalyptus tree. The sections above and below *d*, are large rocks on the beach.

The central transverse painted bands, *b*, *b*, are women's leather trade belts, the vertical panels, *c*, etc., in the upper section, crocodile's intestines, and the cross-hatched panels, *g*, etc., crocodile's backbone. On the lower section, *f*, etc., are turtle intestines, and the cross-hatched panels, *e*, etc., chevron body scars.

The significance of the shapes of Pl. 34A, reading from the top are: the white top, *k*, a European hat; *s*, its rim; the openings, *c*, *c*, windows, and *p*, *r*, tree trunks.

The white vertical panels, *a*, indicate a turtle's vertebrae, and the adjacent cross-hatched panels, *b*, its intestines. White bands, *e*, *e*, are *pukamuni* cane arm ornaments (*jairinis*, Pl. 31H), and cross-hatched bands, *d*, *d*, chevron body scars.

Transverse band *f*, is a leather belt; panels, *h*, are turtle's intestines; cross-
[291] hatched areas, *g*, etc., body scars. On *r*, the lowest section, band *m*, is a leather trade belt; the vertical panels, *o*, are turtle intestines, and the cross-hatched panels, *n*, body scars.

The four projections, *a* (Pl. 34F), are branches of trees; *g*, is a hill; *h*, an edible yam, and *j*, a large rock on the coast.

The long white rectangles, *b*, etc., are small freshwater creeks, and the diagonal marks on *c*, body scars; yellow band *d*, is a male *Maratji* (p. 154). The chevron panels, *e*, etc., are female *Maratjis*, and the white rectangles, *f*, etc., thunderclouds associated with this dangerous mythical creature.

The meanings of the painted designs on 37C are: sections *a*, *a*, arm ornaments, *palmatjinas* (Pl. 31E, F), and *b*, the false beard, *baludi*, made of goose feathers (Pl. 31C), both of which are worn at the *pukamuni* ceremonies. Designs *c* and *d*, symbolize a stingray, *paluwadju*, and *e*, its body markings.

(*c*) *Miscellaneous*

Pl. 34C, D, pictures the crocodile-man, *Jirakupai*, who once lived in a lagoon near Cape Fourcroy (myth, p. 27).

The forearms of the crocodile are at *a*, the V-shaped design, *b*, representing its lower jaw. The head is at *c*, the chest at *d*, the neck at *e*, the nose (crossed lines) at *f*, the spinal crest at *g*, and the scale pattern on its back at *h*, *h*.

On Pl. 37E the upper projections *a*, *a*, symbolize the limbs of a tree. The

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

diagonal lines, *b*, indicate the sandbanks in the bay at the front of our camp, and the dots, *c*, on the triangles, the oysters on the rocks. 532 × 765

The opening, *e*, is a window; *d*, *d*, are the legs of an aboriginal man, and the bosses, *f*, *f*, etc., breasts of women. Diagonal coloured lines, such as *g*, etc., are the vines of an edible yam, and the dotted diamond shapes, *h*, etc., the spider webs on their leaves.

The shapes and painted designs on Pl. 37B all refer to the topography near the expedition camp.

The projection, *a*, represents the trunk of a eucalyptus tree, the bosses, *b*, *c*, *c*, and *c*, *c*, symbolize boulders on the sea-beach; the horizontal lines, *c*, *c*, etc., the sandbars in the bay; the long vertical panels, *g*, *g*, etc., the open beach; the bands of short vertical lines at *d*, *d*, *d*, the lines of waves breaking on that beach, and the cross-hatched rectangles, such as *f*, *f*, etc., the seaweed floating on the surface of the water.

The painted projections, *a*, *a*, on Pl. 37A again represent the fork of a tree, and the opening, *h*, is a window. The bosses, *b*, *b*, are the breasts of women, the painted circle *c*, with the intersecting lines, symbolizing the nipple.

The central line, *d*, is a freshwater creek which ran into the sea about 200 yards from our camp, while the parallel chevrons, *e*, etc., indicate the lines made by the water of a nearby lagoon as it seeps through the sand and runs down the beach into the sea (see carved stick, Fig. 6D).

The boss, *f*, is an adjacent rocky point, the grooved arms, *g*, *g*, refer to Karslake Island, and the painted design, *m*, to the sandy beach on that island. Diagonal lines, *j*, are the roots of a jungle tree, *pintoma*, and the crossed circles, *k*, its fruit.

The symbolism on the pole, Pl. 36E, deals with the sea and the swamps at a mangrove creek, Tungaduna, which was about two miles north-west of our camp.

The dark-coloured designs, *a*, indicate the open sea, and the white spaces, *d*, the salt water in the mangrove creek. The symbols, *b*, *b*, etc., show the tide marks on the banks of the mangrove creek; *c*, *c*, the sand, and *e*, the mud on its bottom. The dots on semi-circle *f*, are coloured mud crabs; the lines *g*, sandbars in Snake Bay, and the triangles, at *k*, as well as *h*, and *j*, the tide lines on the sandy beach. At *s*, is a black stingray which lives among the rocks; *m* is another stingray (unidentified) which frequents the shallow water, and the cone-shaped design, *q*, is a flat-head fish.

The larger circles, *n*, etc., on the lower section are the cockles, the shells of which the aborigines use as cutting tools; the smaller circles, *o*, mussels, *wurdiñ*, and the dots, *p*, the soldier crabs on the beach.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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×532 Dr. Kenneth Fry, when visiting the islands during 1913, made sketches of
●765 the pole shapes of eight *tudinis* and found out the meanings of five of them.
[114] These are reproduced on Fig. 8.

Fig. 8A represents a man carrying a roll of blankets on his back, *a*, being his hat, and *b*, his blankets. Fig. 8B also represents a man, *a*, as before, indicating his hat. On Fig. 8C, *a*, is the mast of a boat; on Fig. 8D, *a*, is the crutch in the boom of a pearling lugger (usually called branches of trees in the 1954 series); and on Fig. 8O, *a* is a window.

Dr. Fry did not find out the meanings of Fig. 8E, F, and H.

The present-day meaning of design, Fig. 8F, which could have applied to
[177] Dr. Fry's example, is somewhat interesting. The aborigines at the Bathurst
[797] Island mission are warned of the terrors of their future life if they are not buried "under the cross", i.e., in the mission cemetery.

When I asked the aborigines at Melville Island what was the significance of the cross they had carved on the top of several of their *pukamuni* poles, they explained that it was there purely as a "safety measure", just in case there was something in the mission story.

11. THE CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

[171] It has been known, for about twenty years, that aboriginal craftsmen, in widely separated places in Northern Australia, but particularly in north-eastern Arnhem Land, have made carved and painted figures in wood.[10] It was a surprise, however, to find that the Tiwi people, who appear to have been separated from the mainland cultures for a considerable time, were using similar figures in their burial rituals.

Inquiries revealed that, for some years, one or another of the aboriginal craftsmen, skilled in the carving of *pukamuni* poles with steel tools, and, no doubt, experimenting with new shapes, occasionally made a burial pole in the form of a conventionalized human body (Pl. 39), or smaller human figures (Pls. 40, 41), which were placed on the grave.

I gathered information about three old human-headed burial poles as well as adding to the expedition collection, two recently made poles and six smaller figures.

At the burial, about thirty years ago, of the mother of one of my informants, a "worker", called *Kado*, made and erected a human-headed burial pole. In 1941, Mr. W. E. Harney saw a well-carved head on a burial

[10] Mountford, 1956, p. 415, traces the distribution of the carved wooden figures in Northern Australia and their development at Yirrkalla, from simple human-headed burial posts of Malay origin to carved heads and full-length figures of considerable merit.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

pole at Punata on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), while I saw and photographed the third example in the form of a highly conventionalized human figure (Pl. 38A, B, C), which was on an old grave not far from our camp. No doubt there are other examples of these poles on the deserted graves of the Islands. I saw recently, in the Musée Ethnographique et Musée Suisse de Folklore, Bâle, Switzerland, two full-length human figures which had been collected at Bathurst Island by Mr. Karel Kupta in 1956. 532x 765

This evidence indicates that, for thirty years, at least, the men and women of the Tiwi,[11] occasionally carved burial poles in human form; we do not know when the practice of carving the smaller figures[12] began.

At first sight it appeared that these wooden figures might have been a cultural trait borrowed, as in north-eastern Arnhem Land, from the Malay trepangers. Further research, however, did not confirm this hypothesis. [177]

Although now and again some Malay praus, driven off its course by contrary winds, must have touched the shores of either Melville or Bathurst Island, it is certain that the men of the Tiwi, who were notably unfriendly, would have endeavoured to drive them away. This unfriendliness probably explains why the Malays were not able to establish themselves on these Islands as they did in north-eastern Arnhem Land. The old men of the Tiwi do not remember any Malay fishermen visiting their country. This evidence that the Malays did not settle on the land of the Tiwi is further supported by Campbell (1834), who writes (p. 143), "The Malays were never seen near Melville Island", and later (p. 155), ". . . Malay fishermen were forbidden to go near Melville Island . . . alleging that it was infested with pirates. . . ." 174 648 [114]

This evidence suggests that the Tiwi practice of carving human figures in wood was not, like that of the aborigines of Arnhem Land, borrowed from a Malayan source, but is a recent local development, probably stimulated by the acquisition of steel tools and the other possessions of the white man. For instance, it would be easy to imagine a skilled aboriginal trying to make his pole resemble the tall bodies of the white man's saints in the mission church. From these larger would develop the smaller figures. 532x 765 177

It is unlikely that any elaborately carved burial pole, much less one in the form of a human figure, would be more than fifty years old. Before that time, except those stolen from the short-lived Fort Dundas settlement, the Tiwi would have owned few, if any steel tools. 532x 765 773

Although the Tiwi have no specific myth about the larger burial poles,

[11] A woman may cut a burial pole instead of her husband, should he be absent.

[12] There is a difference, however, between the two; the *nulini* poles, in human form, are cut from the hardest and most durable eucalypt; the smaller figures from the soft wood of the beach kapok, a wood which is quickly destroyed by insects.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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773 they do have one which explains, to their satisfaction, the origin of the small
×732 figures.[18]

●765 On the occasion of the first *pukamuni* at Tapararimi, a man, *Piamasilidjara*, who later become the tawny frogmouth (*Podagus strigoides*), made and painted a small figure, similar to Pl. 40c, *v*. This he placed on the grave to impersonate *Purukupali*, whose body was not buried there, he having walked into the sea and drowned himself.

×532 At present these human figures, both large and small, are made, either at
765 the request of the chief mourner, or by the "worker" himself. This happens if the man cutting the pole, holding the dead person in especial esteem, wishes to please his spirit. The smaller figures may represent either a son of the dead or mythical men and women of creation times.

When the burial poles are being erected, one of them, in human form, or a smaller figure, is occasionally placed at the head of the grave.[14] The *mopaditi*,
[775] on leaving its body, sees the wooden figure, and thinking it is either its son, or one of its old companions, stays at the grave and talks to it about old times. These wooden figures have no *imunka* (life essence), nevertheless the *mopaditi*, who is believed to be stupid and easily misled, thinks it is talking to a living person.

I collected two burial poles (Pl. 39) in the form of highly conventionalized
[126] human beings, and six smaller, full-length figures (Pl. 40, 41). I also photographed a pole, in human form, on an old grave (Pl. 38A, B, C).

Pl. 39A, B, C, is a *pukamuni* pole representing a performer, ready to take part in the final burial rituals. The projection *m* (39B), is his hair; *n*, *n*, are his ears, and *o*, *o*, his arms; *p* is a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball), and *s*, (39A), his backbone.

The cross-hatched squares, *a*, *a*, *a* (39A), represent patches of grass on the floor of the jungle; the designs, *e*, *e*, *e*, jungle trees, and *b*, *b*, *b*, spider webs in the branches.

The waves of the sea are indicated by the bands of short vertical lines, *c*, *c*, *c*; a boulder on the sea-shore by oval *f* (39A); oysters on the rocks by the squares with diagonal lines, *d*, *d*, and paper-bark trees by the groups of intersecting lines at *e*, *e*.

The designs on the face and head (39C) are: *k*, edible fruit, *h*, grass in

[174] [18] This myth does not necessarily indicate great age because those of non-literate people tend to keep up-to-date. Mountford, 1956, p. 98, and Worsley, 1955, p. 856, both give examples of how the Groote Eylandt aborigines have incorporated foreign elements in their creation stories.

[14] This is only one of many safeguards used by the Tiwi to keep the *mopaditi* away from the camp of its old companions, particularly during the first few days after death.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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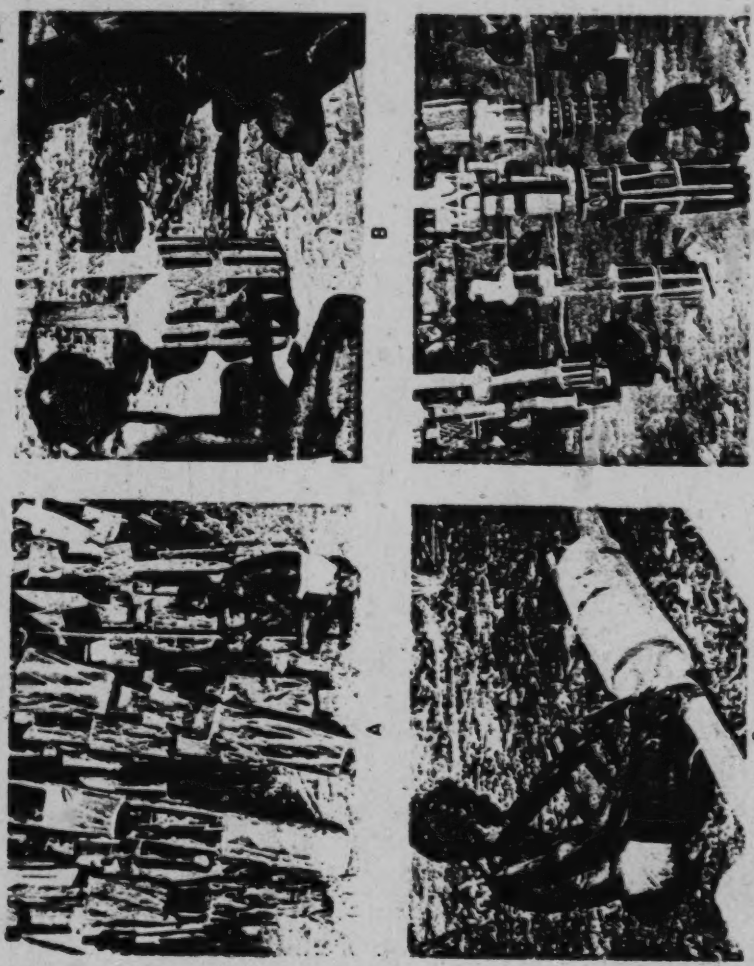

PLATE 33. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*
A, Poles at Old Grave; B, D, Painting Burial Poles; C, Cutting Burial Pole.

[p. 120 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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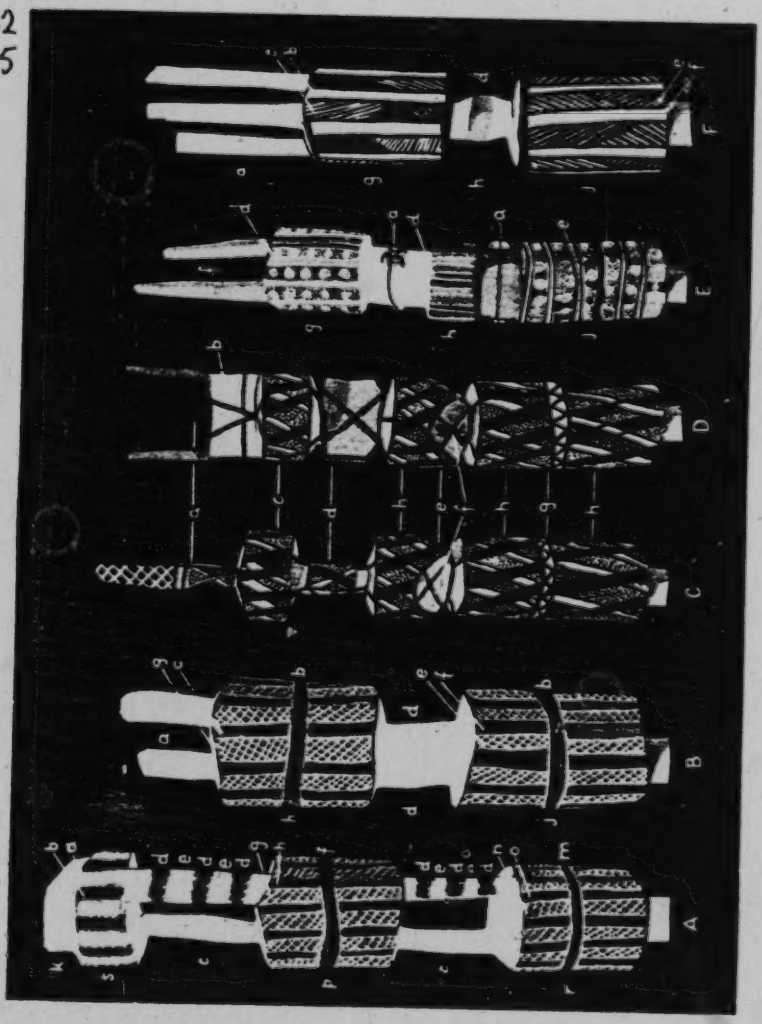

PLATE 34. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

[p. 120 B]

Z: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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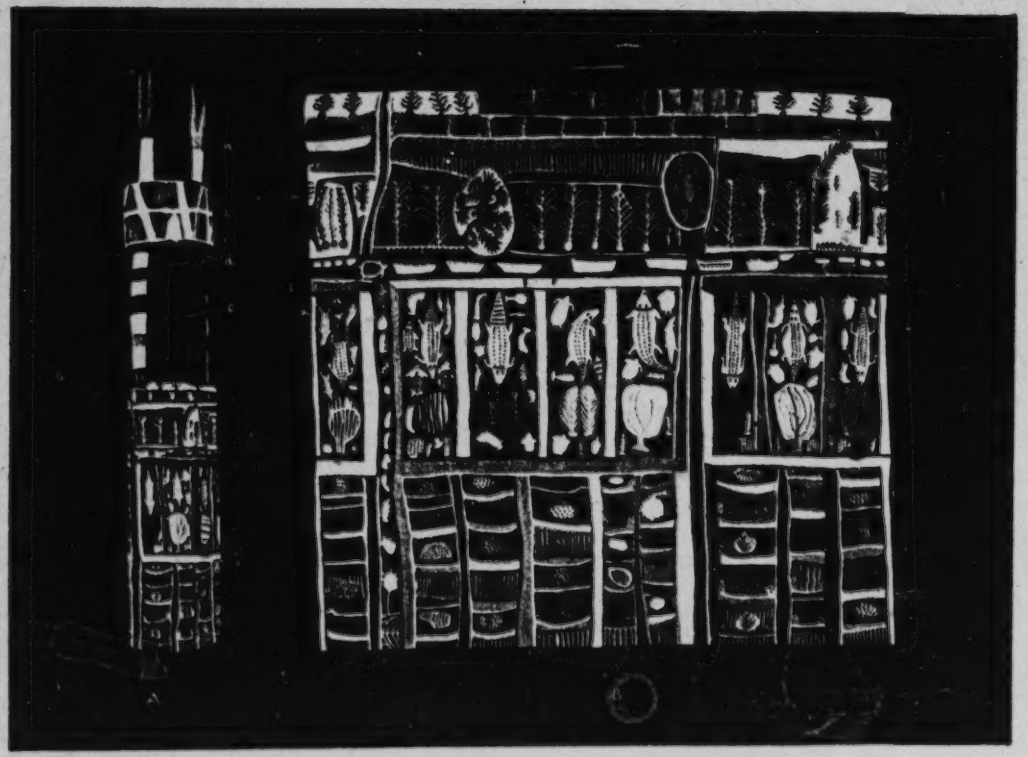

PLATE 55. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles* See also Fig. 9

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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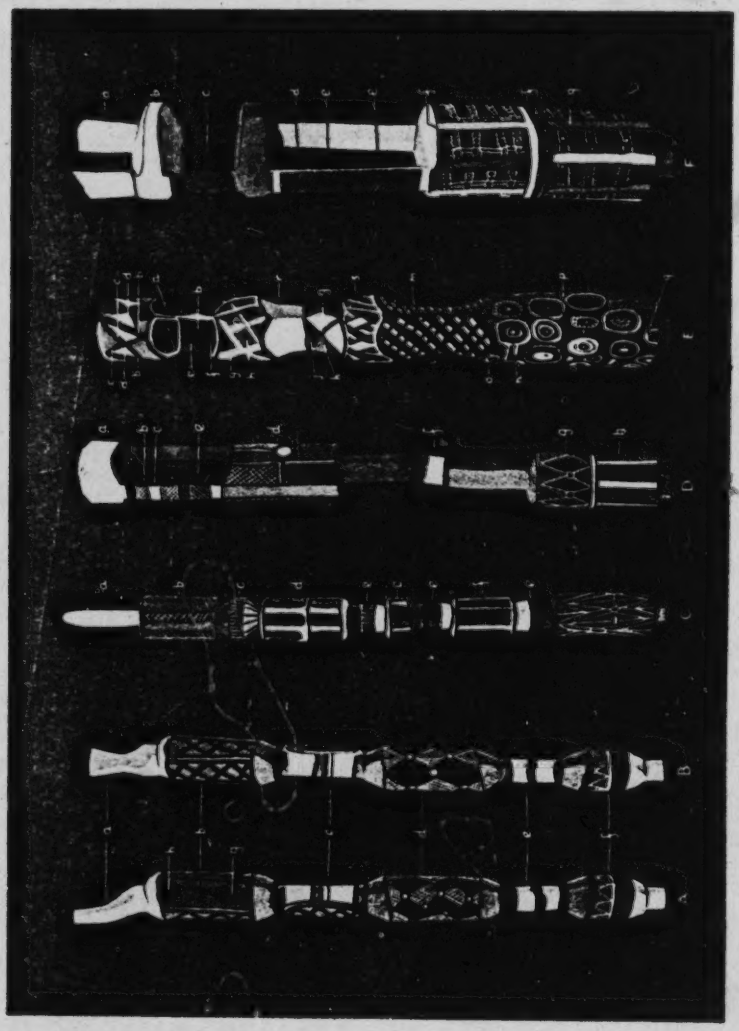

PLATE 36. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

[p. 120 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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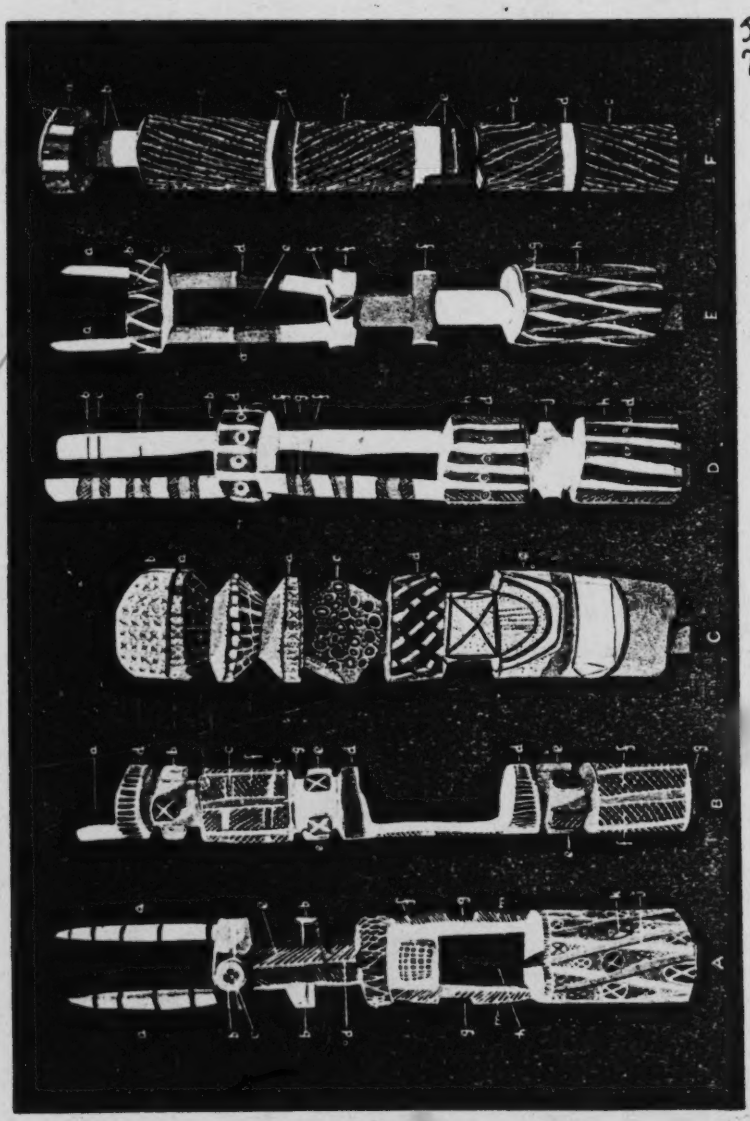

PLATE 37. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

[p. 120 E]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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A

B

C

[291]
[142]
[302]
[516]

D

PLATE 38. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*
A, B, C, Carved and Painted Pole on Old Grave; D, Poles on Old Grave.

[p. 120 F]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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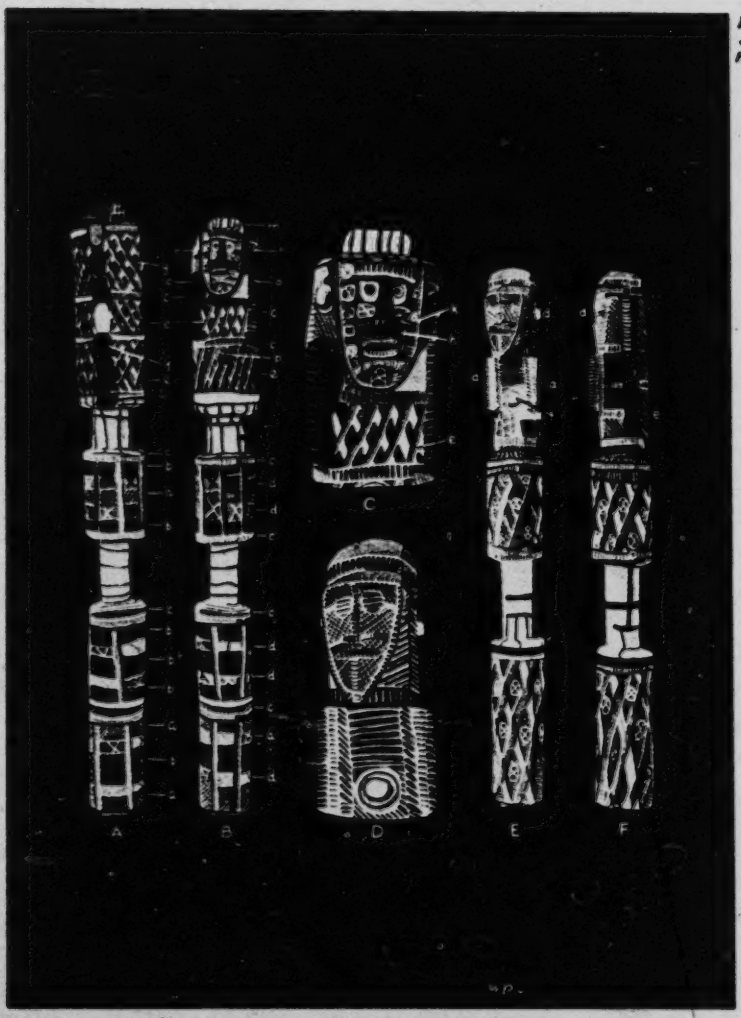

PLATE 39. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

[p. 120 G]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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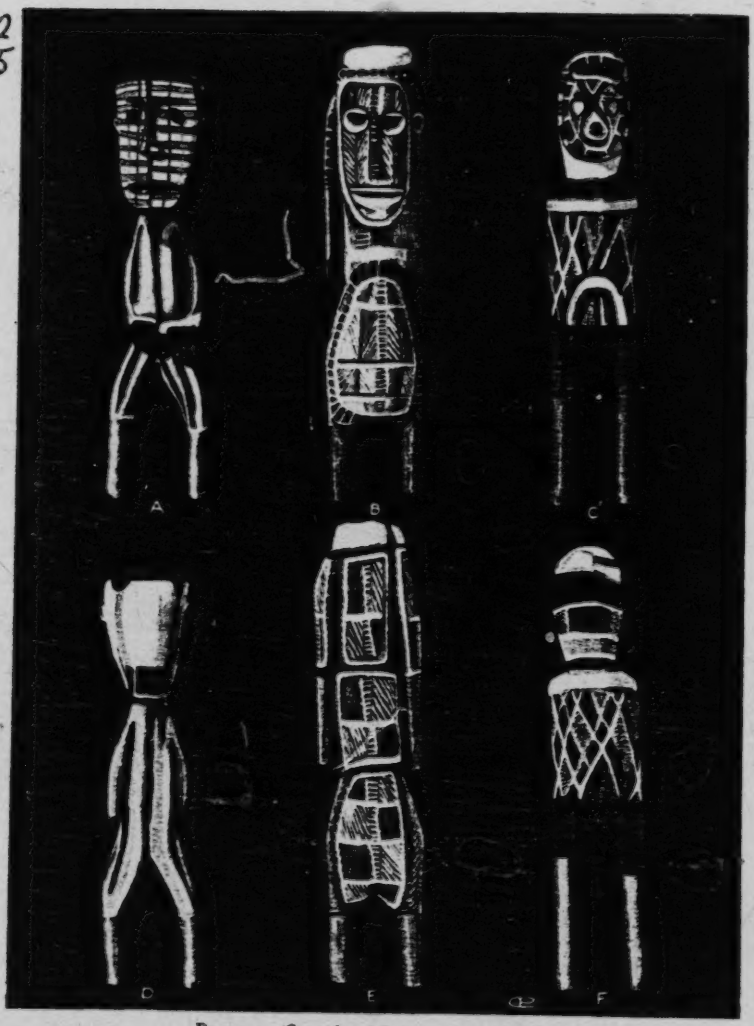

PLATE 40. *Carved and Painted Burial Figures*

[p. 120 H]

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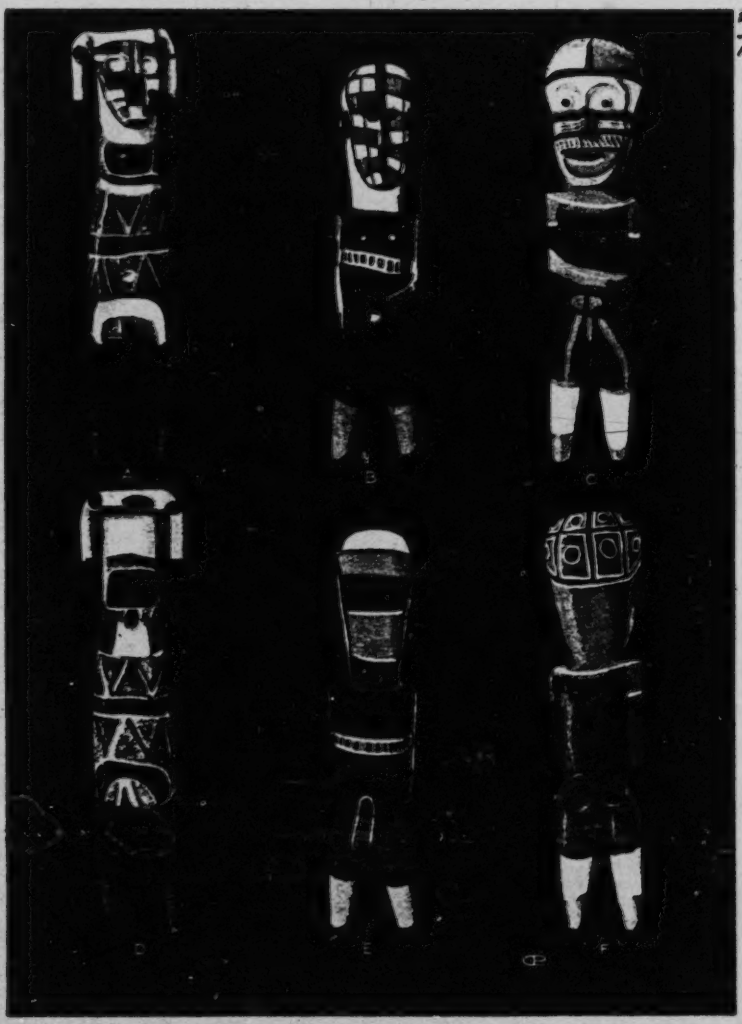

PLATE 41. *Carved and Painted Burial Figures*

[p. 120 I]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the forest, and the circles with crossed lines, the scarlet flowers of a eucalyptus tree lying on the ground. 532 x 765

The pole (Pl. 39D, E, F), also represents a man ready to take part in the final *pukamuni* rituals. The few scanty notes that I made at the time state that *a*, *a* (39E) are his arms, and *d*, *d*, his ears. At *f*, is his goose-feather ball, and *e* (39F) his backbone. The facial *pukamuni* decorations are shown on 39D.

Pl. 38A, B, C, are photographs of the pole on an old grave. The pole represents, in a simple way, an aboriginal wearing a hat. The ears are shown as bosses on either side of the face, and the arms, as projections, on either side of the body. The painted eyes and nose, which were not carved into the wood, such as on those illustrated on Pl. 39, can still be faintly seen on Pl. 38B.

Pl. 40A, D, and B, E, are two small full-length figures carved to represent the children of a dead man. To keep him company, these would be placed on the top of his burial poles.

Pl. 40C, F, is supposed to be a duplicate of the wooden figure carved by *Pionatilidjara*, at *Purukupali's* ceremony. The designs on the figure are those which the mythical man painted on his own body.

Pl. 41B, E, is *Purukupali's* son, *Djinini*, who died from the neglect of his mother, *Bima*, and was carried into the sea by his father (myth, p. 30).

Pl. 41C, F, pictures *Purukupali*, his face and body covered with *pukamuni* decorations, carrying his dead son (the transverse band across his abdomen) into the sea.

Pl. 41A, D, represents *Bima*, the wife of *Purukupali*. The designs are those which *Bima* painted on her body when she took part in the *pukamuni* of her husband.

533 (e) "The salt water (sea), brings plenty of drift-wood up on the beach for
539 our fires."
881 (f) "The *tudwali* (shark) killed a stingray."
(g) "The boat sails fast and the waves are beating its sides."

At approximately 8.30 p.m. the chanting ceased and the aborigines retired to their camps.

(6) *The Lighting of the Ceremonial Fire*

About 6.30 the next morning, the *Mikinatrinings* women collected pieces
[137] of termite mound and put them on the top of the sticks for the fire which had been piled over the oven, the *tumarapi*. This fire could be lit by any man above the grade of *Mikinatrina*. Whilst the fire was burning down, the *Mikingulas* walked around it, and sang a few *kulama* songs, only one of which was recorded.

(i) "When I see the shining iron of the new schoolhouse, I think how my
[177] children will go to school and wear boots."[81]

By 9.30 a.m. after everyone had had a meal, most of the aborigines, includ-
881 ing several children, painted themselves in red and made their way to the swamp to take part in the ritual of bringing the *kulama* yams from the water, to the *milimika*.

On reaching the swamp, the leader took the yams from the pad of grass under the water, placed them carefully in the basket, with a bundle of rushes plucked from a nearby swamp on top, then, putting the basket on his shoulder, carried it to the *milimika* and stood it beside the fire "to warm up the yams".

881 The *Mikingulas*, walking anti-clockwise as before, chanted another series
533 of songs.
539 (a) "I went to Native Affairs (Darwin), drew out £10 (with which to
[177] gamble) and bought a pack of playing cards."[82]

Striding around the ring with two spears in one hand and a throwing stick in the other, the same man sang.

(b) "I have many spears. If the white people were not here, I would kill you all."

881 At the end of the song, the performer called out the name of his dead
● 765 father, striking himself on the head with his throwing stick to indicate his sorrow. The people on the outside of the ring cried in sympathy.

[185] [81] A parent's hope in a changing society that his children will live at a higher social level that the one which he himself occupies.

[82] A number of the younger Melville Islanders work for extended terms in Darwin, periodically returning to their homeland to take part in the ceremonies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the previous singer's dead father. 881 765

(e) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[25] when I think of you, my uncle." [533] Some of the women cried when the song was finished. [539]

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants. 252 881

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate it (Pl. 44B), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, goodbye",[26] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purujikini*, did at the first *kulama*. 881 [533] [539]

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women. 535 881

(a) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird). [534]

(b) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 30E), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(c) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*tokwiangu*) in his mouth to symbolize the prey of the crocodile.

(d) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(e) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(f) The buffalo,

(g) The shark (Pl. 30G).

[25] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *imunka* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions. [826] [774]

[26] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the *waringadua* tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten. [824]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

CONCLUSION

105 171 THIS study of the Tiwi tribe of Melville and Bathurst Islands, made through the medium of their art, their myths, and their ceremonies, reveals wide differences between many phases of their cultural life and that of the aborigines who live on the adjacent mainland. These differences are probably the result of isolation caused by the dangerous tideways which have separated the two peoples from each other for an unknown, but probably lengthy, period.

Though both are of aboriginal stock, and from the same cultural back-
[174] ground (as indicated by basically similar creation stories), this isolation has allowed the two groups to develop independently. It may well be that the beliefs of the Tiwi represent those of one of the aboriginal migrations to Australia, and has remained somewhat constant, while the mainland people, enriched by occasional waves of new ideas, have developed a much more varied philosophical and cultural life.

The main differences between the two cultures can be summarized as follows:

171 532 (a) The art forms of the Melville and Bathurst Islands are so highly formalized that they seldom resemble the objects they represent. In contrast, the art of their neighbours on the mainland, the Arnhem Land aborigines, is not only entirely representational, but is probably a more vital and colourful art than exists in any other part of the continent.

171 765 (b) Compared with the rest of Australia, too, the ceremonies of the Tiwi are particularly limited, there being only two in the whole culture. The major ceremony, that of burial, is by far the more elaborate. It extends over several months, involves the co-operation of many people, and provides the tribe with a complete outlet for their grief, their music, their dancing, and their art. This ceremony is without parallel in Australia, and, so far as we know, elsewhere in the world.

171 881 The other ceremony, the Kulama, is a blending of several rituals: the initiation of men and women into the social grades of the tribe; the cere-
mony of preparing a poisonous yam for food,[88] which ceremony the participants believe prolongs the wet season; and the airing of grievances

[114] [88] Spencer, 1928, p. 661, speaks of the Kulama as a food increase ritual. It is probable that Spencer was only expressing an opinion, having previously carried out research in Central Australia where increase rituals are both numerous and important. I did not obtain any evidence which indicated that food increase rituals were carried out by the Tiwi.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

551 render his name tabu. This is the case among the Tiwi. All the names of a dead man become strictly *pukimani* (=tabu) immediately upon his death. Anyone in the tribe who uses a name of a dead person at any time for years after his death but especially in the period—usually about five to six months—that always elapses between the death and the funeral corroboree, violates one of the strictest social sanctions the tribe possesses.
192 And this prohibition extends to all words in the ordinary language—
551 though curiously enough not in the sacred language—which bear any
765 resemblance in sound to any one of the names of the dead man. It applies equally to English names in use by the tribe with resemblances to native or English words and to native words which resemble either English or native words. Thus a boy named *Tipuki* having died "tobacco," "baccy," *Tiparkitimiri* all equally became *pukimani*. Similarly when *Mulankina*, one of the Mandeimbula horde died, *mulikina*, one of the commonest words in the language, meaning "plenty," "full," "enough," was dropped completely from the language.

551 Nor does the *pukimani* stop here. Not only is the use of any of the
553 names of the dead man prohibited, but there is an equally strong rule against the use of any of the personal names he has bestowed upon other people, be they his own children or the children of others. A young child may only have one name, that given him by his father, but should his father die he must become nameless until he gets a new name from somewhere. This aspect of the *pukimani* does not extend to similar words in either the ordinary or the sacred language. For instance although
[192 765] *Tambu*, a proper name bestowed by an old man became *pukimani* on the latter's death, the ordinary word *tamu* (imperative form of verb 'to sit down') was not affected.

582 On account chiefly of the extreme form of polygyny practised by the
595 Tiwi whereby most of the girls and young women belong to a comparatively few old men, the father of a family is almost invariably much older than his wife. While a woman goes to live with her husband at about the age of 13, a man is lucky to get his first wife under the age of 35. It follows that in the great majority of cases the father of children dies
587 long before the mother. Therefore as a woman without a husband is unknown amongst the Tiwi, a woman passes through the possession of quite a number of different men during her lifetime and does not remain in an unmarried state for more than a day or two. A widow

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

BEFORE the advent of the buffalo-hunters, few white men had visited the islands since the 648
early days of the naval settlement at Fort Dundas, established by Sir Gordon [175]
Bremer in 1824, but abandoned four years later. Malays and Japanese pearlers have been in the habit of taking in water from either of the islands and have frequently come into disastrous conflict with the natives. It is perhaps also on 164
account of their isolation from civilization that I found the blacks comparatively free from any serious disease. Apart from the various minor ailments such as traumatic lesions and their after-effects, cataracts and keratitis, a few congenital deformities and such like, only a few cases of tertiary syphilis came under my notice.

A young gin was suffering from a disease of the hip, apparently chronic, but she was too timid to permit me to make an examination. They are on the whole 142
a healthy, sturdy people of moderate stature, with a good muscular development and a square, big thorax. The characteristics are Australoid and yet they present [144]
certain insular peculiarities.

The Head.

The forehead is low, with a marked supraorbital development; the face somewhat depressed and the lower jaw strong. The eyes are sunken and the nose is small. The wavy black hair of some of the males was worked up into numerous [362]
small, cylindrical, pendant masses with clay and ochre.[1] This, so far as I could [765]
ascertain, designated mourning. Others had besmeared their hair with ochre. The hairs on the upper lip are pulled out. The growth of the beard of the men varies, but is, on an average, good.

The natives of either island do not practise the knocking out of one or two 304
incisors as they do on the mainland. Major Campbell,[2] however, reports having 171
observed the custom on Melville Island.

The face is painted symmetrically with differently coloured ochres, charcoal, 302
and pipeclay, in various degrees of complexity (Fig. 1). A few of the simpler designs might be described briefly:—*Case* (1): The whole surface of the face blackened with charcoal. *Case* (2): The nose red and the rest of the face charcoal-black. *Case* (3): Face (including the shaven upper lip and upper part of chin) charcoal-

[1] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* London, 1852, vol. ii, p. 13: "The characteristic mode of dressing the hair among the Torres Strait Islanders is to have it twisted up into long pipe-like ringlets, and wigs in imitation of this are also worn"; and again, "at Cape York I have at times for a week together seen all the men and lads with the hair twisted into little strands well daubed over with red ochre and turtle fat."

Also P. P. King, *Survey of the Intertropical Coasts of Australia*, 1837, vol. i, p. 114: "The [184]
men were more muscular and better formed than any we have before seen, they were daubed over with a yellow pigment which was the colour of the neighbouring cliff (Luxmore Head on Melville Island); their hair was long and curly and appeared to be clotted with a whitish paint."

[2] *Journ. Geogr. Society*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 153. *Cf.* also H. Klaatsch: *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 501.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

A record of something of the kind having existed on the mainland is contained in MacGillivray's narrative (1852). In referring to the burial-ceremonies of natives of the Cobourg Peninsula, this author[1] states that "when decomposition has gone on sufficiently far, the bones are carefully removed, painted red, wrapped up in bark, and carried about with the tribe for some time; after which they are finally deposited, either in a hollow tree or a shallow grave, over which a low mound of earth and stones is raised, occasionally ornamented with posts at the corners." 171 765

This same author refers to similar burial ceremonies which he observed of the "Kowraregas," natives inhabiting the Prince of Wales group of islands, situate near Cape York in Torres Strait. He writes[2] of a grave he saw at Port Lihou, some time after Bete Jukes' visit: "When the head of a family dies at Muralug, the body is laid out upon a framework[3] of sticks raised a foot from the ground and is there allowed to rot . . . until the head of the corpse becomes nearly detached by the process of putrefaction, when it is removed and handed over to the custody of the eldest wife. . . . The body, or rather the headless skeleton, is then interred in a shallow grave, over which a mound is raised, ornamented by wooden posts at the corners painted red, with sometimes shells or other decorations attached to them. . . ." 171 764

Perhaps it would not be out of place to make a passing reference to the native burial-place discovered by Captain Sturt[4] near Lake Buddah, off the Macquarie River, in New South Wales (latitude 32° 5′, longitude 148° 10′). "It consists of an oblong mound, with three semicircular seats. A walk encompassed the whole from which three others branched off, for a few yards only, into the forest. Several cypresses, overhanging the grave, were fancifully carved on the inner side, and on one the shape of a heart was deeply engraved." A similarity of method will be apparent. Instead of having separate carved posts surrounding the grave, the natives of Macquarie River carved the trees surrounding it. The walk encompassing the mound might be regarded as the equivalent of the cleared space characteristic of the island graves.

Mr. P. Foelsche and I have described painted and ornamented poles that are erected close to the graves of deceased members of the Larrekiya tribe in the Port Darwin district.[5]

During our geological explorations of the north-west coast of the Northern 764

E. Clement, *Publication of Royal Ethnological Museum at Leiden*, series ii, No. 6 (Catalogue by J. D. E. Schmeltz), vol. xvi, Plate V, Fig. 8; H. Basedow, *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxviii, 1904, pp. 22 and 28, Plate III, Fig. 4; H. Klaatsch, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1906, pp. 792, and 1907, p. 654.

[1] J. MacGillivray, *Narrative of the Voyage of H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* 1852, vol. i, p. 149.

[2] *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 32.

[3] *Vide* references given by me in *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 6.

[4] *Vide* Charles Sturt: *Two Expeditions into the Interior of Southern Australia*, London, 1834, vol. i, p. 14, and frontispiece.

[5] *Vide Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. v, 1882, p. 5, and *op. cit.*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 7.

7:Fry D-5 (1913) 1949 O120 Tiwi O120

A Bathurst Island Mourning Rite.

Sir:

121 Late in February, 1913, word came to Darwin that a fatal epidemic was prevalent in Bathurst and Melville Islands, and I was instructed to visit the islands and do anything possible to help.

122 I arrived at the Roman Catholic Mission Station at the southern end of Apsley Strait on Bathurst Island on March 2nd, and four days later, with the kindly assistance of Father Coudreau, set off up the Strait in a ten-foot sailing dinghy with a Malay, Matthew Gar, who had a smattering of the native language, two adult islanders, Mari and Dulin, a small native boy, Olinyarra, and stores. On the fourth day at Marinlampi, about two miles from Point Brace, at the northern end of the strait, a native camp was found. There were about thirty natives in the group, variously painted. 765 An old man, later found to be named Kerbo, was sitting chanting beside a small heap of red stones in the centre of a cleared circle about twelve feet in diameter. A pile of cooked yams was beside him and he was [177] scraping them with a mission-given knife. The time of my arrival was about ten in the morning. A small boy squatted beside the old man at times but otherwise the natives lounged about outside the circle indifferently coming and going. It appeared that a death ceremony was in progress. A woman sitting with her three boys under a pandanus palm nearby was pointed out as the mother of the dead man. When all the yams had been peeled the old man walked about in [598] the circle chanting and clacking two sticks together. There was an intermission until about 2 p.m., when the old man resumed his chanting. About 4 p.m. he returned again and proceeded to cut up the yams, placing

[p 79-A]

765 the pieces in a bark bag, with intervals of walking and chanting. The crowd had now invaded his circle and his walking was confined to a small sector of the circle. Once he washed his hands, head and beard with water and retired to eat. When he had finished, the small boy brought a bark bag of water, which he emptied into the bag containing the cut-up yams. After dark, about 7.30, the old man began to chant again [535] within the circle. He was joined by a number of men, and they shuffled around chanting, slapping their buttocks, and dragging one foot. Finally they shouted and then moved off in single file to a small water channel in the grass nearby. The grass was trodden down and the old man tipped the yams into the water, while the chorus beat their buttocks and cried "Broop." A shout was given and they then dispersed.

During the night the old man chanted at intervals. At sunrise he was seen standing beneath a palm rubbing himself with ochre, and the small boy attending him. He chanted and others joined him. They filed down to the creek, where a shout like "R-r-r-r-p" was given. The old man started to eat the yams and others followed. They then returned to the circle and cleared it by scraping outwards with their feet, tufts of grass and pieces of bark being thrown away. The stones from the central pile were placed round the edge of the circle. The old man took three small stones from the centre and threw them a few feet into the air, with the shout of "R-r-r-r-p." The ceremony was finished.

The language difficulty was formidable, but I learned that I had broken in on the third day of the ceremony. On the first day palm nuts (*kwawka*) had been gathered and eaten. On the second day yams had been collected and had been cooked at sunrise on the third day. I was told that

[p 79-B]

I was told that

765 the old man had chanted about the *Tarula*,[1]
533 who had planted magic on the beaches to
the north at the beginning of the wet season.
754 The sun heated the magic, and up it went
[648] like smoke and the wind blew it all about.
The magic works on the blackfellow with a
feeling like a snake crawling up the legs.
It moves up to his stomach, and when it
reaches his heart he eats no more and dies.
He also sang that he was an old man, his
wind was short and soon he would die. Later
he sang of a fight he had had with another
tribe. Later he sang of people who came
and fed him while he was sick. When
standing in the water he was calling on the
others to make the ceremony. When he
threw up the stones he called *wei tua*, i.e
" finish."

754 During the next four weeks I visited
tribes in various parts of the islands and
heard the same story. I was shown a
sample of the magic. It was a tightly
woven string bag about the size of a billiard
ball and stuffed with kapok. This was said
to have been " sung " before it was buried.

124 Statistics of the mortality of the epidemic
presented a problem. The only words for
802 numbers which I could obtain with certainty

[1] The *tarula* were mainland blacks in the employ of local white men. They were called *tarula* (" lightning ") after the guns carried by their employers.

[p 80-A]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
0120 Tiwi 0120

To avoid constant use of the awkward phrase "mourning ceremony," we refer to it as the funeral though it took place some considerable time after the burial of the body. How long a time elapsed between the burial and the funeral depended upon the importance of the dead person. The more important the deceased, the longer it took after his or her burial to prepare for the funeral, both ceremonially and practically. Babies frequently had no funeral ceremonies at all, especially if they died very young and unnamed. Children were given small funerals, held within a month or so after the death, and the people present were merely the members of the local households. Young adult men and all adult women had funerals of medium size, and old men had the biggest funerals of all. Big funerals were rarely held in the wet season because of the height of the grass and bush and the consequent difficulty of travel. The season after the end of the rains (April-May-June) was a favorite time for funerals since by then people were moving again and there was then an accumulated backlog of funerals to be held for people who had died late in the previous dry season or during the wet. The mourning ceremonies of two or more people were sometimes held together; this obviously required that they be buried close together, although they need not have died at the same time. Seeking as usual to increase his importance in the public eye, a man might hold the medium-sized funeral of one of his children at the same time and place as the big funeral of an important elder—provided their graves were close together—even though two or three months had separated the two deaths.

The actual burial of the body immediately after death was usually a small affair attended only by whatever people happened to be in the vicinity. But some Tiwi ancients were on their last legs for months before they finally expired, and it was typical of Tiwi psychology that people should maneuver to be present when a death occurred. Until the anthropologist understood that even death had its political aspects, he could not understand why the Tiwi were always so anxious to hang around the camp of an old man who was taking an awfully long time to die. Since so very little happened at the actual time of death, this desire to be on the spot seemed merely morbid curiosity.[8] But it was not. A death immediately divided the whole tribe into two groups: a small group of relatives who automatically became mourners and therefore in a state of strict taboo, and the rest who were not sufficiently close to the deceased to have to assume a state of *pukimani*. The mourners, being *pukimani*, could do scarcely anything except weep and wail and gash their heads with stone axes. They could not touch the body or wrap it in bark; nor could they dig the grave, nor put the body in, nor fill in the hole. They had to ask non-mourners to carry out these tasks and thus became obligated to those non-

[8] How else was one to interpret the reluctance of Hart's party to move on, after spending three weeks waiting for old Tamboo to die, and the old man still lingered on? "Let's wait another day; maybe he'll die tomorrow" was the invariable response to suggestions that we move. "And if he does die, what will happen?" "Nothing; we'll move on then." But this was early in the fieldwork period, before Hart realized the all-pervasive character of Tiwi opportunism.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

their heads. During these songs, the husband sat quietly at one end of the *milimika*, with his head in his hands (Pl. 23B). 765 [535]

The *ilania* concluded with *Nangrinini* calling *Aluprumani* (a mangrove bird); *Malumerinita* calling *Tjirinini* (the red-backed sea-eagle) and the assembled men, making the honey and mosquito call.

During one of the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, a near relative had his name changed from *Miralipaiwa* to *Tukuwuinganili*.[71] [553]

(3) *The Ilanias of Makapini*

At the same time as the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi* was being performed, an old woman, *Makapini*, was baptized at Bathurst Island by the priest, just as she was dying, and, although she had never accepted Christianity, was buried, against the wishes of her relatives, in the mission cemetery. 797

The aborigines of both Bathurst and Melville Island were distressed over this incident because as *Makapini* had always been a "pagan" (as the mission authorities call the unconverted), her spirit could not go to the white man's "heaven", and, as the *pukamuni* ceremonies were prohibited on Bathurst Island, the spirit of *Makapini* was doomed to wander, lonely and unhappy, for ever. To prevent such a calamity (for lonely *mopaditis* are a danger to the living), the aborigines of Melville Island performed a modified *pukamuni*, called the *aramatruni-nipungari*,[72] so that, at its conclusion, the spirit of old *Makapini* would travel happily to her future home. 765 [775]

The pattern of this ceremony differed somewhat from that of *Waniamperi*. At a *milimika* near the camp of the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, the Melville Island aborigines held five *ilanias* over a period of eight days. The final two days of the *pukamuni* were held among the poles.[73] I will describe a typical *ilania* and later the final *pukamuni* rituals.

The *ilania* opened with one of the "workers", who had been in the forest cutting the burial poles, running toward the *milimika*, stick in hand, giving the honey call. One of the *pukamuni* men rushed out to drive him away, but, after a sham fight with throwing sticks, brought him into the *milimika*.

The predominating songs and dances of this and other *ilanias* of *Makapini* were associated with the mythical wild-honey people[74] of Bathurst Island. 765 533 535

[71] Hart (1930, pp. 280–99) describes how the custom of altering the names of near relatives at death causes rapid changes in the language.

[72] This type of *pukamuni* ceremony is also held when aborigines are drowned at sea and their bodies not recovered. [766]

[73] This was a variation of the previous *pukamuni*, probably because the body was not at the place of ceremony.

[74] Although I did not inquire, it is certain from the songs, that the father or mother of the dead woman belonged to one of the honey totems of Bathurst Island.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(d) The Final Mourning Rituals

By this time the chief woman mourner, painted entirely in red, had arrived. 765
On reaching the ceremonial ground, she charged against a pole, then leaned [302]
over it, crying heartbrokenly. Another woman, *Dominao*, in paroxysms of grief, threw herself on the ground at the base of another pole, while still another woman, dancing the *amburu* before the third pole, told the *mopaditi* [533] of the dead woman, in a song "to keep away from me". [775]

The ceremony finished, like that of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*, with concerted wailing around the poles.

(3) *The Pukamuni of Inbidjarmeri's Infant*

This simplified *pukamuni* was held for a premature child of *Inbidjarmeri*. 766
The child died, about a month previously, at the Darwin hospital. The complete rituals, though curtailed, having occupied only two hours, followed the normal pattern with two exceptions. The *pukamuni* group did not employ any "workers" to cut the burial poles, and, as the body had not been brought to Melville Island, the ceremonies were held at the grave of a young child, of the same parents, who had died about two years previously.

A distant relative, appointed by the father of a "worker" had burnt the grass, cleared a space adjacent to the grave as a dancing ground and draped a turtle rope around the old poles in which had been twisted the wing feathers of geese.[68] For these duties he was given two loin cloths.

There were no dances at the first *ilania* which took place about three hundred yards from the burial site, only prolonged honey and mosquito calls.

The *pukamuni* group then moved to within a hundred yards of the grave where, after more honey and mosquito calls, they lit the *wandiatapinda* fire, and walked through its smoke and flames.

At the commencement of the final rituals, most of the group halted behind a rope, stretched between two trees, over which the "worker" had hung bagging and blankets;[69] but others rushed forward, spears in hand, and, as in the two previous *pukamunis*, stabbed at the base of the poles surrounding the grave to drive away the *mopaditis*.

After this, everyone moved to the grave-side of the screen, the men carry- 535
ing out a series of dances while the women, beating themselves with sticks, 765
leaned on the *pukamuni* poles and mourned. 533

While some of the *pukamuni* men chanted a song about the red-fruited eugenia, *kinamia*, *Muramajua*, walking around the *milimika*, imitated a

[68] I did not find out the significance of this custom.
[69] This took the place of the screen of boughs used in the normal rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending
535 over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milinika* to the
766 rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first
[177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[90]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten-
[114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and
[775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[91] the fundamental idea
[517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the
[775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[92]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon
[126] drawings[93] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[90] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.

[832] [91] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women were attracted to them.

[92] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.

[93] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 of *Pulaninkuwi's* wife, *Nulatini*, which I saw, the general pattern was similar. I shall, however, describe both burials, that of *Nulatini* being the more detailed.

(1) *The Burial of Waniamperi*

On the day that *Waniamperi* died, *Murawani*, one of his near relatives, who wanted the dead man buried near his mother, paid a young "worker"[88] a sum of money and two loin cloths to dig the grave.

When the corpse was brought to the burial ground, a number of relatives had a last look at the dead man before he was laid on a series of logs, placed transversely across the bottom of the grave.

This act was a signal for concerted mourning, the women beating themselves with sticks and the men cutting their heads. For personal safety it is [753] imperative that each man and woman show excessive grief, real or feigned, [626] otherwise the *mopaditi*, annoyed at the lack of grief, will make the offending person ill.

After the mourning died down, the "workers" placed boughs on the body and filled in the grave, leaving a small mound on top (Pl. 24c).

[533] While this work was being carried out, the relatives stood on one side of the grave, either singing the *amburu*, the mourning song, or the rain song of Wailu, the totem of *Tiparawilimiri*, *Waniamperi's* father. To the chanting [535] of this song, the men acted the rain dance (Pl. 30B). The aborigines did not stage the totemic dances or chant the songs belonging to the fire totem of Wuriupi (*Waniamperi's* own totem), because, to have done so, would have especially attracted the attention of his *mopaditi*.

The "workers" laid *Waniamperi's* personal belongings at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tied his loin cloth and tobacco to the top of a thin sapling which had been driven into the ground at the head of the grave, made a large fire, and left a container of water.

The aborigines believe that the *mopaditi*, seeing his belongings near at [775] hand, water to drink and fire to warm himself and cook the food he gathers in the surrounding forest, will stay near the grave until the time comes for him to leave the locality.

While the "workers" were engaged on those tasks, the rest of the burial party quietly left, not looking behind, lest the *mopaditi* follow them to their camp.

[88] These "workers" or *wanaras*, being distant relatives of the dead, are in little danger [767] from the *mopaditis*. Therefore, it is safe for them to clean the site, dig the grave, handle the body, and carry out other tasks associated with burial. They are paid for their work by the chief mourners at the final *pukamani* rituals.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

right of her clansmen and more specifically her sons (in consultation with her own wishes) to arrange her remarriage became restored as a sort of residual or reanimated right. Moreover, as we shall see, it was in line with their own political interests for the sons to insist on exercising such a right. 584 587 614

Naming Rules

Such a way of integrating the two forms of marriage is supported by the Tiwi rules for naming children, which are very relevant to the issue. We mentioned earlier that the right to bestow a daughter was vested, strictly speaking, not in the actual father, but in the man who named her. Personal names were important in the Tiwi value system[8] and were given to every child a few weeks after its birth by its father or the man currently married to its mother. But whenever a husband died and the widows remarried, all the personal names given to their children by the dead man became strictly taboo, and the new husbands of the widows had the duty (or right) of providing all the children with new names. Since most women were widowed several times in their lives, most children were thus renamed several times in *their* lives, and the names given them by the earlier husbands of their mother dropped completely out of use.[9] Logically under this system nobody would get a permanent name until his or her mother was dead, since as long as she were alive she would remarry and her new husband would rename all her children, no matter how aged they might be. The Tiwi insisted that logically this was how the naming system was supposed to work, and, in fact, the personal names of even prominent senior men did become taboo whenever their mothers' current husbands died. But convenience proved stronger than logic and the personal names of most men and women became well established in their early adulthood as people became used to them. While such names did become taboo when the man who had given them died, the taboo in such cases was temporary rather than permanent, and after a decent interval the name would creep back into use replacing some new and unfamiliar one which might be bestowed by the widow's new husband. In general, the name which thus became permanently or irrevocably attached to a person was the name which a person held when he or she first emerged into tribal prominence or first began to get talked about. For a male, this was most usually the name he was bearing in his late twenties and early thirties; for a female, the name she was known by in her early adolescence when she first left her father's household to take up residence with her earliest husband. 553 768 587 [183] [551]

That convenience thus overbore logic in the Tiwi naming system by

[8] See Hart 1931.

[9] It can easily be seen what headaches this naming system created for an anthropologist trying to collect genealogies. Individuals would occur in one genealogy under one name and in another under another name, making the task of cross-indexing and cross-checking enormously difficult. [124]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

553 attaching some one semipermanent name to a person despite the rules of
●768 name taboo should not cause us to overlook the importance of these rules.
587 In theory, at least, every new husband renamed all his wives' children by all their previous marriages—thus, at least symbolically, canceling out the signs of title of all the previous "fatherhoods" in those children and asserting his own fatherhood right as a new and exclusive one. A widow's new husband was the new household head for all her children, and he took over this position by renaming them all, thus becoming their legal father. If we can stop thinking of "father" as a biological or kin relationship, and think of the word as meaning only "head of the household," the Tiwi concept will become understandable. We will also realize that there is no contradiction or illogic involved in the Tiwi beliefs that male parents were not necessary for conception, but that every child born must be born to a woman with a husband. All they meant was that every child must be born into a household with a male at its head who belonged to a different clan from its mother—in other words, a "father," in Tiwi context.

584 The renaming of the children by the new household head was not, of
592 course, sufficient to wipe out the commitments made by previous titleholders.
768 Although the new father could and did change his step-daughters' names, he could not change their bestowals. The men upon whom the daughters had been bestowed by the previous father made sure of this. The new father was compelled to carry out the marriage arrangements for the daughters made by his predecessors in the fatherhood role, and there was sure to be a terrific row if he tried to alter them. Nevertheless, he acquired some power over the future of the daughters. The man to whom one of them had been promised by the previous father might die, thus making redisposal of the girl possible for him, or some new deal might be arrangeable in which he could use his new assets—for these new step-daughters were assets, regardless of the fact that their immediate matrimonial future was already settled. The new father could delay his decision as to whether they were yet old enough to join their betrothed husband or even drop a few hints that he did not think the betrothed husband's right to them was quite as certain as was generally believed. Such actions, of course, were liable to lead to violent reprisals by the betrothed husband, but there was always a chance that he would be open to a deal; for example, by giving an option on one of the women in whom he had an interest, he would seek to hasten the appearance of the girl in his own household or seek to clear whatever shadow upon his title to her the step-father sought to cast. Even the last husband of an elderly widow who had already passed through the hands of six or eight husbands and all of whose daughters were grown up and married two or three times already, gained some shadowy rights in the future remarriages of those daughters by marrying their ancient mother. And the validation of these shadowy rights was the fact that as their mother's new husband he had renamed the daughters and he who named them could bestow them. The only catch was, that while he could wipe out all the names bestowed by his predecessors, he could not equally readily wipe out their commitments. All he could do was maneuver within the network created by their

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

commitments so as to try and advantage himself as much as possible by a skillful use of whatever shadowy right in the daughters he had obtained by becoming their current "father." 584 592 768

It is within such a context that the apparent swapping of mothers by Dominico and Antonio must be viewed. By marrying Bongdadu in her dotage, Dominico had acquired some rights in the future remarriages of her daughters, the sisters of Antonio, but since his marriage to her had been, partly at least, arranged by Antonio and her other sons, he would have to share with them his disposal rights to their sisters. Similarly, the marriage of Dominico's ancient mother to Antonio (part, so to speak, of the same "package deal") meant that Antonio as current father had some say in the future disposal of Dominico's sisters when they became widowed, since he had the power of renaming them. 587 584

What in effect occurred in this, as in many other cases, was that men of different clans and of about the same age formed a partnership or close alliance wherein "sons" and "husbands" cooperated in arranging the remarriages of their "mothers" and "sisters" by acting as quasi-fathers and treating their mothers and sisters as "quasi-daughters." The partnership or "firm" of Dominico (of the Crane clan) and Antonio, Mariano, and their brothers (of the Red Paint clan) had already arranged the remarriages of Bongdadu (Red Paint clan) and of Dominico's mother (Crane clan), and stood ready to take care of all future remarriages of any of Bongdadu's daughters (Red Paint) or Dominico's sisters (Crane) whenever any of these women became widowed. Each member of the firm was trying to maximize his own self-interest in this and all the other alliances he had a share in, but operations had to be carried out in this partnership form because the marriage of any woman had to be arranged by her "father," and the father, in the Tiwi rules, had to be a nonclansman of the woman whose marriage he arranged. Hence the Red Paint men needed Dominico, a Crane, as a front man to arrange the remarriages of their sisters, and he in turn used Antonio, a Red Paint man, to arrange the remarriages of his sisters. When clansmen made decisions about the remarriages of their sisters, they could only do it by using agreeable nonclansmen as nominal "fathers" and cooperating with them—and the agreeable nonclansmen would of course only come in on the deal if there was something in it for them, as there was for the obscure and unimportant Dominico in the present case. In return for acting as a front for the Red Paint brothers, he got himself a second wife, an excellent food provider though no longer beautiful; he became the ally, even if junior, of some men with assured futures; and he acquired some shadowy residual rights in the future remarriages of several potential widows. Dominico did himself a lot of good by marrying Bongdadu; if he hadn't married her, he would never have attracted much tribal notice and hence would not have warranted mention in these pages. 571 584 587 614

We find that the whole complex situation makes most theoretical sense if we see it as essentially an institutional struggle between clan rights and the father's rights in women. Tiwi fathers, as suggested above, had taken away from the clan the right to make marriage decisions for newly born female members of the clan. As mechanisms validating this success of father's rights 584 592 614

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of bands as part of any political or legal system; they were members of households as part of a domestic system. What held the unit together was the central position and dominance of the father or husband, and hence the life of a household was only as long as his lifetime. When he died, the household broke up and the surviving members joined other households, perhaps in the same district, perhaps in some other band territory. Such change of household was carried out by the individuals concerned, not quite at will, but certainly not with sufficient uniformity for any political or legal label to be put upon it.

Uniformity was derived from the fact that every Tiwi had to live in a household. The universal prohibition on unmarried females was obviously one expression of that requirement. For men, the requirement was less firm, and if a young man wanted to live entirely alone he was free to try—although there is no record of any man having tried it for more than a few weeks at a time. Even if his mother were dead and his father or step-father did not welcome him, he attached himself to some household since, apart from any question of loneliness, this was the only way by which he could eat regularly. For Tiwi households were primarily autonomous food-producing and food-consumption units. A household made its own decisions, camped where it saw fit to camp, moved on when the food quest made it advantageous or necessary to move on. A large household, such as that of Ki-in-kumi or any other big man, was a complete community in itself, with the old man as executive director. He laid down the daily, weekly, and monthly work and travel schedules for the women, the young men, and the children. Most of the time the work went automatically because all the adults and the older children knew their jobs.

Daily Activities

By shortly after dawn each day, the household was up, and after a light breakfast, usually of leftovers from the previous night, everybody left camp to go to work. The women and children (except perhaps the five- to ten-year-old boys, who were rather useless at that age) scattered in every direction from the camp with baskets and/or babies on their backs, to spend the day gathering food, chiefly vegetable foods, grubs, worms, and anything else edible. Since they had spent their lives doing it, the old women knew all about gathering and preparing vegetable foods, and they supervised the younger women. This was one important reason for men marrying widows, and even a man with many young wives was quite likely to remarry an elderly widow or two nonetheless. A husband with only young wives might have a satisfactory sex life, but he still needed a household manager if he wished to eat well. The supervision of the female members of the household was left to the old women and, provided the returns were good, the husband did not attempt to interfere nor to give orders concerning the details of women's work.

After the women had scattered out in a wide circuit from the camp, the husband might hunt, but only if he were not too old. In hunting kanga-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

3

The Prestige and Influence System

To become a really big man, or even a minor figure among the elders, a Tiwi had to devote all his adult life to that goal. Careers were built up and influential positions gained not by executing spectacular coups at any one time, but by slow, devious maneuvering and dealing in influence throughout adulthood. Men in their early thirties invested their very small assets in the hope of large returns twenty years later, and if the anthropologist witnessed the initial investment he was not around to witness the final return; or if he witnessed the return he found it difficult to reconstruct all the relevant details of the initial investment. A man in 1928 bestowed his daughter in a certain direction because of some deal back in 1900, arranged by men many of whom were now dead. And the bestowal in 1928 was done in such a way as to bind the hands of men negotiating in 1960, some of whom were infants in 1928.[1] 557

The Tiwi influence and career patterns can best be compared to a sort of nonstop bridge game wherein the scores were never totaled up nor a new game ever started on a clean slate.[2] Whenever an observer came in, he always

[1] A typical illustration of this situation arose during the writing of this book. In 1928-29 Hart had observed Padimo beginning to acquire a number of bestowed wives. Being interested in the status of Padimo twenty-five years later, he included Padimo in a list of inquiries to Pilling. Pilling's reply: "Re Padimo. I am almost certain that he was the 'Paddy' who died leaving several widows, in February, 1953, about three months before I got to the Islands. The natives did not like to talk much about him while I was there (because of the taboo on dead men's names) and his widows were still being fought over. The fights over his widows did not end until the week I left (if they really did then)." Thus the deals which Hart saw in 1928-29 were having delayed repercussions when Pilling was there in 1953-54. 124 768 551 578

[2] We use bridge rather than poker as our analogy because nobody ever "went broke" in Tiwi influence competition and nobody ever "won the pot," because there was no pot to win. The scoring was always, so to speak, on a comparative basis and everybody, even the most unsuccessful man, had some score relative to his competitors.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 Some years later, when Boya had reached a reasonable age like 30,
593 Ki-in-kumi had arranged for him to marry a very ancient and childless widow
(*palimaringa*) more than twenty years older than himself. This was all that
[587] Ki-in-kumi considered he needed to do for his step-son, and in Tiwi terms
it was almost a gesture of contempt and an open indication that Ki-in-kumi, by
providing him with an old woman who was childless but could cook, was not
interested in helping Boya toward a career. Since the joining up of Boya to
[768] the crone took place shortly after the death of Boya's mother, who had lived
with her sons in Ki-in-kumi's household, Ki-in-kumi by producing the old
widow for Boya was telling him in effect to get out and start his own household
now that his mother was dead.

159 In 1928 we found Boya aged about 42 married to the crone of 65.
584 But he, she, and Boya's younger brother of 24 were still living in Ki-in-kumi's
household. Ki-in-kumi's detestation of him was notorious and yet Boya had by
593 now no less than four young bestowed child-wives growing up elsewhere. No
[592] one of these bestowals had come from Malau but were bestowals from different
fathers of baby girls in other bands. At first sight this presented a curious
situation. Within his own band Boya appeared a complete failure, suffering
[554] so severely from Ki-in-kumi's hostility that he had received no bestowals and
at age 42 did not even have a separate household of his own. But how could
this judgement be squared with the four bestowals from elders of other bands?
Clearly none of the causes of success so far analyzed fitted the case of Boya.

159 Further research into who lived with whom as distinct from who was
591 married to whom revealed that not only was "the household" of Boya, his
elderly wife, and his younger brother an integral part of the Ki-in-kumi
592 "establishment," but also that Padimo with his "household" was part of that
establishment. Padimo, like Boya, had one elderly wife but he also had five
bestowed wives, all daughters of Ki-in-kumi. We said above that the two eldest
of these five girls being now aged 20 and 17 respectively were in residence
with their husband, while the three youngest, not having reached puberty,
were still "with their father." Actual observation showed that this was an
academic distinction, since the households of Padimo, the son-in-law, and Ki-in-
kumi, the father-in-law, were parts of the same establishment. When one of
Ki-in-kumi's daughters bestowed on Padimo became old enough to "leave her
father and join her husband," she did not have to move her residence or even
change her daily work routines. She merely sat at night around the campfire
of her older sisters (Padimo's wives) instead of around the campfire of her
younger sisters (Ki-in-kumi's daughters). She remained part of the same es-
tablishment.

Padimo, it will be remembered, was the young man whom Ki-in-kumi
had attracted from Rangu to Malau by liberally bestowing him with child-
wives. Padimo had thus moved into the northern band and by 1928 had
moved right into Ki-in-kumi's camp, where he functioned as a sort of executive
officer and heir apparent to the old man. In the same camp, though in a very
different capacity, was Boya, the 42-year-old despised step-son. Many roads thus
592 led to Ki-in-kumi's household, but before discussing the large establishment

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

557 would become involved or make any soundings among the widows unless there
587 was something in it for them. Hence the client had to find out whether a promise of general goodwill and friendship was all that Boya (or Padimo) would ask in return for his services or whether the price would be much
[584] higher—perhaps as high as the bestowal of the client's next baby daughter. It was in such ways that widow-remarriage arrangements and infant bestowals were intertwined; a much-delayed bestowal to an apparently unrelated individual would be the ultimate pay-off to the broker or agent who had engineered a widow remarriage for the bestower years before.

[561] This role of agent in the disposal of a dead man's widows was a type of operation best suited to men in the first stages of their own married lives —that is, to men in their middle thirties or very early forties who had perhaps married their first or second widows and who had as yet no young wives of their own in residence. Having no young wives to guard, they were able to get around easily on diplomatic missions and they had their own listening posts inside the world of women in the person of their own mothers (if still alive) and in the elderly widows whom they themselves had married. The ambitious young brokers were tipped off by their mothers and elderly wives as to how the young wives wished to be distributed and what the competing young brokers were trying to arrange. Thus when a wealthy old man like Ki-in-kumi died, the redistribution of his wives through remarriage was a matter that had been decided beforehand by an extraordinary complex tangle of semisecret arrangements and deals and promises, but the people most influential in arranging the redistribution were the young brokers who usually got few, if any, of the young widows for themselves but who collected their rewards in reputation, influence, alliances, and future bestowals from the men for whom they had acted as agents.

[768] Thus the death of Ki-in-kumi or of any other old man with many wives tended to disperse the wives all over the tribe, with only one or two, or at most three, going to any one new husband. A large estate was almost always fragmented by the death of the old man who had built it up, and any one of his contemporaries was able to take over only a very small fraction of it at best. The levirate and sororate principles, though present, worked very feebly. The men who benefited most—not immediately, but eventually—were the young operators.[1] In such a manner Padimo and Boya were sure to be the long-term beneficiaries of Ki-in-kumi's death though neither of them could remarry any of his widows. The real heirs of the wealthy old men of sixty and over were the young men who happened to be between thirty-two and forty-
554 two when those old men got near to death. The men between forty-five and
557 fifty-five whose brokerage business ten years earlier had not been very skillfully
587

[1] At least some of the so-called "stolen" or disputed wives were widows who had insisted on marrying the younger agent instead of the older client, which put the young broker in the embarrassing position of saying to his client, "I cannot make delivery of the widow I acquired on your account; she insists on marrying me instead." Such an incident did not do his agency business much good but tended rather to frighten off clients.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

from their future sons-in-law and demands which look very much like bride price and bride service developed as a basis for marriage arrangement. A young girl had a relatively "free choice" of her future spouse. But following this selection, her father let it be known to the young man what he expected. The desired payment was often stated in Australian money by the 1950's; some men were asking as much as a hundred pounds for a daughter. (This was a very high sum, since Tiwi males working for the Army received four pounds a week as normal wages.) Other men were asking that their sons-in-law live with them, thus leaving their own parental home, and contribute regularly to the upkeep of the household of the father-in-law. This was, indeed, quite a practical arrangement, for when such a young man went to work in Darwin his wife had to be supervised at home and, further, his employer was supposed to send home to the Mission part of the young man's wages.

Thus, by 1954, the following type of marriage agreement was initiated by the great majority of Tiwi with marriageable daughters, specifically those who centered their activities at Bathurst Island Mission and Garden Point. A young girl chose her future husband from her single, male agemates, sometimes with a suggestion from her father. Her father informed his future son-in-law of the obligations incumbent upon him, which normally included matrilocal postmarital residence and a bride price. An older woman with children, or even one without any offspring, who became a widow, was discouraged from remarrying by her father, if he survived, and by her brother after her father's death. The father or eldest brother of a widow with a daughter reaped the benefits of allowing that daughter to marry the young man whom she desired. The widow herself did not remarry but stayed in the household of her father or brother.

Residence Patterns

By 1953, traditional Tiwi residence patterns had undergone major modifications, some of which have already been mentioned. The old residence areas of the bands had been depopulated; in fact, nearly all the Tiwi were located around one of four European establishments—those at Darwin, Bathurst Island Mission, Garden Point, or Snake Bay. In each of these areas a centralized village pattern had developed. Within the Tiwi communities at Snake Bay, Garden Point, and Bathurst Island Mission there remained a few of the old large households with a polygamous base. But in all these camps the household heads were well past sixty and in most cases past seventy. Polygamous households were dying out by 1953.

But what was replacing them? One might assume that the European pattern of the single family household based upon neolocal residence would have emerged as the new Tiwi system. This was not the case, however. Just as Hart found in 1928-29 that successful Tiwi men were the heads of large establishments, so in 1953-54 the younger male leaders had gathered around

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few uncomfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Carmel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a listing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent. Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing. 768 [428] [783] [825]

(2) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulaninkuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers". 764

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[53] from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *tokwiangu* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs. 302 751 775

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[54] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground 764

[53] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[54] After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 63), all *mopaditis* fear the light. 123 775

For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

period is the prelude to the complete lapsing of the title to the district. 423
The prominent part played in this institution by the father's father and the 628
fact that most of the present districts held on such a title are held from the 613
father's father whereas comparatively few are held through an ancestor 685
(necessarily more remote) who has been forgotten, seems to indicate that *yirt' amini* holdings do not last more than three generations before they lapse for want of sufficient able-bodied men to enforce them.

It must not be imagined that the whole of Melville and Bathurst 423
Islands are divided into such holdings nor indeed that everyone in the tribe 613
belongs to such a group. The main obstacle to this lies in the self- 621
evident fact that if one's father's father dies in the territory of another horde, as must have quite frequently have happened in the days of marauding expeditions between hordes, there can be no such thing as a *yirt' amini* holding of the district wherein he died. Moreover there are numbers of the Tiwi whose fathers and grandfathers died young, and the essence of the system is that the grandfather should have been old enough to have sufficient male children and grandchildren to enforce the claim.

It can easily be seen from the above how it comes about that each horde has a number of names, since each one of the *yirt' amini* group-names 621
is liable to be applied to the whole horde merely by adding *-ila* or *-ula* to 101
the name of the district they control.

Spencer's list of horde names is at variance with mine, because he 101
did not realize this. Out of six men of the *Tiklawila*, one might easily 114
get six different answers to his question as to their "country," each 103
giving the name of his *yirt' amini* group. It is quite possible that the 621
horde names that are used here—*Tiklawila*, *Mumupula*, etc.—are really *yirt' amini* names that have become extended to include a whole horde either by the identification of a very powerful *yirt' amini* group with a horde in the eyes of the rest of the tribe or by the former horde name becoming tabu and a *yirt' amini* name being substituted. This view is strengthened by the fact that in one or two of the hordes, the horde name is still in use as the name of a district. Thus whereas the whole of the territory of the *Wilraygwila* on the north of Melville is technically *Wilraygu*, the native name for Karslake Island, a small portion of that territory, is *Wilraygu*. Similarly *Malaw* is a creek in the territory of the *Malawila* horde.

A man is born into the horde of his father. Should his father die and 591
his mother be taken by a member of another horde he goes with her, and [611]
WHILE THE WOMAN WILL ALWAYS BE LOOKED UPON 621
AS BELONGING TO HER FORMER HORDE, THE CHILD [768]
CHANGES HIS, TAKING THAT OF HIS STEPFATHER.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

she were dead in fact and for the time being no longer his wife. She 551
is in touch with the spirits and the result will be a child for her husband. 844
Since he is too close to the mystery for comfort they abstain from mentioning it in his presence.

The result of the childbirth is a child and that child was recently a spirit. Therefore the name must come from the sacred language.

Initiation ceremonies also involve a very close contact with the spirit 553
world. Initiation is a sacred rite and sacred names must be taken when 881
passing through its various stages. When *Timalaŋkumi* is seized by men of his sister's husband's totem and yellow grease is smeared on his chest he ceases to be *Timalaŋkumi* and becomes *Maru-kumani*, a person in touch with unseen forces, and he therefore must have a sacred name. His previous name came from the sacred language, but this is a change of status and is expressed by giving him a new name, one that is only used on such occasions.

The fact that death renders sacred all the concepts closely associated 553
with the dead man does no doubt play a large part in causing the tabu 587
on names he has bestowed upon other people. There is I think another 768
factor which is even more important in the causation of this particular 593
tabu. When a man marries a widow he becomes to the tribe not the foster father of her children but the actual father. It cannot be pointed out too often that the Australian blackfellow does not distinguish physiological and social fatherhood. The new husband is married to the widow, he therefore must be the father of her children. Her children change their position in the tribe, and the function of the changing of their names is to show this change and the new social relationships that have been imposed upon them by it. It will be remembered in this connection that the husband changes the names of *all* the woman's children whether of her last husband or not, and also that words in either the sacred or the ordinary language which are similar in sound to the former names of the children do not become tabu. That is, it is a social not a sacred change of name.

It might be argued that the widow changes her status also, yet her 587
name is not changed. But in point of fact she does not alter her status; 768
her new husband is usually of the same clan as her last one, and frequently 553
he is an actual brother of the dead man. In any case her new husband cannot change her name as she is not one of the people he can bestow names upon. Nor does her name mean to the tribe any relation to her

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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551

previous husband; he did not bestow it, therefore there is no necessity for her successor to change it.

In conclusion it seems almost superfluous to point out the necessity in such a society for a large number of personal names for the individual. When such a number of tabu on names exist a man with only one name would be constantly having to live for long periods nameless, but with multiple names it is almost a certainty at any particular time that some of them will be free from any of the prevailing tabu.

C. W. M. HART.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

The southern section of Bathurst

[31 [797] Island (Hart 1930) is inhabited by a subtribe called the Tiklauila. In 1911 a Roman Catholic Mission station was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island, virtually in Tiklauila territory, and at the time of the present writer's field work this was the only white settlement. In the generation before the missionaries arrived the "big man" among the Tiklauila was Turimpi. 159 Because of their complicated marriage and inheritance regulations the average Tiwi old man in the course of his lifetime accumulates an impressive number of wives and Turimpi was no exception to this rule. At the time of his death, which occurred toward the end of the 1890's at an age which was probably something approaching 70, Turimpi counted as his wives then living or pre-deceasing him no less than 25 females. Of these the only one we need to pay any attention to is the woman named Bongdadu. She, while Turimpi's wife, had borne numerous children, of whom three males grew to manhood—Antonio, born in approximately 1883, Mariano born three or four years later, and Louis born around 1893. Sometime between 1895 and 1900 she was widowed by the death of Turimpi, whereupon she married another elderly man, Murikambunga, to whom she bore two more sons—Tipperary, born around 1900, and Bob born about a year later. Bongdadu of course had numerous other children who did not survive childhood.[8] It is her five adult sons who concern us here.

Turimpi, as the number of wives suggests, was an important tribal figure during his lifetime. Importance, prestige, tendency to be spoken of as a "big [554] man" are in Tiwi functions of a number of factors in which age, number of wives, fighting ability, wisdom in council, and "family" in the sense of having relatives who are also "big men," are all compounded. On all these counts Turimpi was important, and his prestige tended to carry on after his death. 554 Since the horde or subtribe is a comparatively small group, ranging in size 62 from 214 for the Tiklauila (the biggest) to 57 for the Mingwila (the smallest), there will seldom be more than two or three "big men" in a subtribe at the same time, and at certain periods there may be none at all since the few old men who have the age qualification may not have the other qualifications. Turimpi's death left the Tiklauila to some extent in this state. There were few other men with comparable seniority and none of them had the qualifications for informal leadership and local prestige that he had possessed. His death left a gap, and [768] a gap that could hardly be filled by his eldest son Antonio, who at the time of his father's death was a youth of about 16 years of age. About thirty years [114] later, in 1928 to 1930, the field work upon which the present paper is based was carried out.

ANTONIO

159 It so happened that the present writer had been with the Tiwi for nearly three months before he met Antonio, although during those three months he had been closely associated with two of his brothers, Mariano and Tipperary. These two gave Antonio a great build-up as one of the most important men around, as a "big man" in every possible Tiwi sense. But when encountered in person he proved most disappointing. The only words that fitted Antonio

797 ten, supervising the lubras' work and ordering stores, which are brought from Darwin by the mission's own lugger *St. Francis*. The pleasant lunch we had at the refectory, where wide windows, open all round, admitted every wandering breeze, was due to their efforts, and later I was to see something of the results of their teaching.

797 School, both for boys and for girls, takes up only two and a half hours each day, but the pupils learn quickly, and the more
871 they are taught the more they can absorb. Reading and writing are mastered without any more difficulty than in the case of white children of the same age, though the pupils were very shy and almost inaudible when exhibiting their prowess. Arithmetic they do not take to so kindly, unless they happen to be interested by some problem that has a definitely practical application to their own lives; but drawing comes natural to the islanders, as it does to the blacks of the mainland, where I had already seen very spirited sketches made by aboriginal children. Of the affection of the children both for the sisters and the mission fathers, there was no doubt. To be as close to them as possible was an honour they were all bent on securing.

797 THE "blackies," as they call the girls, range in age from tiny
562 tots to those who are practically young women. They were all much excited by the novelty of our visit, bubbling over with laughter, whispering and giggling together. The older "blackies" eye a visitor coyly, smiling over their shoulders with a flash of white teeth; and, when the pilot and I came along with one of the sisters to hear them sing the "Magnificat" and "Adeste Fideles," they fled shrieking, only to turn round and giggle again when they thought that they were far enough away.

"No more gammon!" called the sister, and they lined up demurely to sing their hymns right tunefully, with spasms of giggles in the intervals. To hold up a finger is quite sufficient to bring shrieks of delight from these childish, happy creatures. "Georgie," a very little boy with a very big tummy, so young that he was not yet at the boys' school, sang "Georgie Porgie, puddiny pie, kissed the girls and made them cry" with much aplomb and gesture. If Georgie was at the girls' school, he did not forget
[198 that he was a man. He spoke man's language, not woman's
516] talk such as women by custom must use on Bathurst Island, and he sat down like a man with knees wide apart, not together as a woman must.

535 Then, while the older "blackies" formed a circle, chanting in
[562] their own language and clapping their hands in time, little girls, two by two, performed women's dances, which again differ from those of the men. There were buffalo, bullock, and lugger dances, when they imitated the animals with arms widespread or bent slightly at the elbows to represent the horns, or held at angles such as those at which sails are set on a lugger, while, now and then, two little fists beaten together faithfully copied the "put-put" of Diesel engines.

More ambitious and complicated was the dance of the overseas mail 'plane that flies from Singapore to Darwin, when whirling arms represented the propellers and stamping feet the beat of
[198 the engines. There is, by the way, a sacred language used for
533 songs, and it is only in this language that the name of the dead
● 768 can be mentioned. If by chance anyone should mention a dead man's name in the ordinary language, every one within hearing will spit with vigour. If deferential, the maker of such a faux pas will be hit about the head.

[P. 18(B)]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

I. BELIEFS IN THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

The fear of the spirits of the dead and the desire of the living to propitiate them are the bases for the complicated burial rituals, not only of the Tiwi, but of all Australian tribes. 769 765

The Tiwi spirits of the dead, the *mopaditis*, live in self-contained communities at the various totemic places on Melville and Bathurst Islands. The *mopaditis* have the same appearance as the aboriginal folk, except that their bodies no longer have substance, being but nebulous images of their former selves. 775 [778]

No living person has seen these *mopaditis*, for they are invisible by day, white in the moonlight and black in the darkness. Although, normally, the *mopaditis* travel on the surface of the ground in the same manner as the aborigines, they are able, when crossing a river, or an arm of the sea, to walk on the surface of the water.

In the spirit land, the *mopaditis*, who are eternal, retain their totems (*pukwi*), marry spirit women of the correct tribal relationships, and have children who grow to maturity.[47] They eat the same food as the aborigines, going hungry if the hunting is poor,[48] and use the same implements and weapons.[49]

At the death of an aboriginal, the *mopaditi* rises out of the chest of the corpse. If the corpse is that of an infant, or a very small child, its *mopaditi* stays in the immediate neighbourhood, sleeping with the bereaved mother every night, but leaving in the morning before she wakes up. This continues until the woman has recovered from her grief.

After some months, the spirit child, now called a *buda-buda*, re-enters the body of its previous mother through her vulva and starts life again as a human being. [842]

On the other hand, if the person has lived for some time, its *mopaditi* stays around the grave, mourning because it has to leave its old companions. But after three days have elapsed, the *mopaditi* calls out "*Nimbungi*" (good-bye), and sets off, unaccompanied,[50] to the locality where it was born, which, before

[47] The aborigines are not certain whether the children, like their parents, have eternal life.

[48] This is unusual; in most of the aboriginal heavens I have heard of, for example, north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 323), there is ample, easily-gathered food. [171]

[49] These days, the *mopaditis* have even the modern wooden canoes, although, up to fifty years ago, their canoes, like those of the living people, were made from a folded sheet of bark. [177]

[50] Some aborigines believe that the father, or some close relative, comes to the grave and guides the spirit to its birthplace.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

761 [825] [761] wallaby, so that he could see the grave of his victim without being recognised.

On one occasion, when I was travelling with *Pulanimbuwi*, just after the death of his wife, he went to her grave, carefully searched the ground for tracks, then lifting up the sheets of paper-bark, examined the mound. Later, *Pulanimbuwi* announced that a *Marapi* (p. 154) had killed his wife, *Nulatini*, by getting inside of her body. But, although still there when she was buried, the *Marapi* had escaped through the hole *Pulanimbuwi* had seen in the mound.[57]

(2) *The Seclusion of the Grave*

769 The grave of *Waniamperi* was about a hundred yards from the road between our camp and the Snake Bay aboriginal settlement. Although aborigines, who were only distantly related to the dead man, walked backward and forward along this road, all the *pukamuni* people had to take a roundabout path from which it was not possible to see the grave site.

One night, *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, had to pass along the road to our camp. When he was approaching the position from which the grave site could be seen in the day-time, his wife, wrapping his head in a blanket, led him past the spot. This practice was only allowed at night; it was prohibited during the day.[58]

[775] [784] No aboriginal man hunted the creatures, or woman gathered the plant foods adjacent to the grave, so that, should the *mapaditi* of *Waniamperi* return to his burial place for a while he would find ample food.

4. THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONIES, THE ILANIAS

(1) *The Ilanias of Waniamperi*

765 About two months after the burial of *Waniamperi*, *Wurarbui*, the ceremonial leader of the Melville Island people, sent message sticks to Bathurst Island aborigines telling them that the *ilanias* (preliminary rituals) of *Waniamperi* were about to start.

[123] We saw eleven of *Waniamperi's ilanias*. But, as they were more or less the same, I will describe only three.

[57] *Pulanimbuwi's* action was viewed with considerable disfavour. He, as a near relative, [765] should not have gone near the grave until the final rituals. Only the *wanaras* (workers) who cut the poles are allowed to do that.

[58] Under the normal tribal conditions, these precautions would have been unnecessary, because the place of burial would then have been in some distant, unfrequented [183] locality.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

elaborately shaped nor decorated, often being covered with no more than a series of dots.[1] 211 765

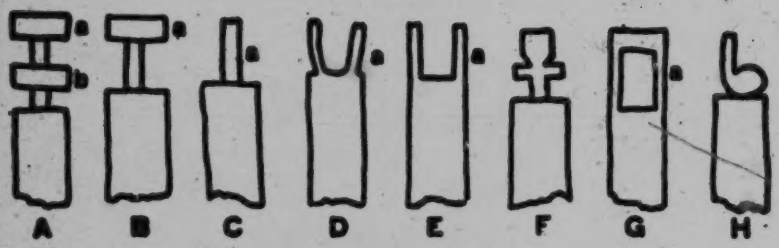

FIG. 8. *The Burial Poles*

Origin of the Pukamuni Poles

At present we have no evidence to show whether the custom of erecting burial poles around the grave in such numbers, not as a memorial, but as a gift to the dead, is confined entirely to the Tiwi tribe, or whether it is used in any other part of the world, and has reached the Tiwi by diffusion. There certainly are no similar burial poles on the Australian continent. 171 765 211 [769]

In north-eastern Arnhem Land, some of the decorated log coffins are as high as seven feet.[2] But the function of those coffins bears no relationship to that of the burial poles of Melville Island, the former being no more than coffins to hold the bones, and the latter, gifts to please the spirit of the dead.

It is possible that, during the long period of isolation from the mainland culture, the Melville Islanders may have changed coffins of north-eastern Arnhem Land into the burial poles of the Tiwi.

The only examples of burial posts outside of Australia known to me, that are in any way comparable in function to those on Melville Island, are the *malanggan* burial ornaments of New Ireland described by Kramer.[3]

Methods of Manufacture

Although, at the conclusion of the *pukamuni* rituals, the grave is totally neglected and the poles allowed to decay, the "workers", using steel axes[4] 765

[1] Although *Tjamalampua* is not fully correct (see Bremer's and Campbell's statement in the early nineteenth century, pp. 107, 108), it indicates that both the poles and their painted decorations have, with the passing of the years, and the acquisition of steel tools, become more complex.

[2] Mountford, 1956, p. 317. [3] Kramer, 1927.

[4] The evidence of Bremer, Spencer and the aborigines, suggests that before the advent of metal the only cutting tools owned by the aborigines would have been crude stone axes, and the shells of cockles. It is likely that, under these conditions, the poles would 412 174 322

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

on whom, but they also brooded long and suspiciously upon who had supported whom and why, either verbally or with spear in hand. In addition, all the incidents of the battle, in minute detail, were relayed to the rest of the tribe who had not been present, and many of these absentees would discover, among the proceedings, things they did not like or suspicious-looking actions on the part of some of their competitors or putative friends. These they would weave into their own strategies and store up for future use. An elder frequently found some basis for a new grievance against somebody in the events of a battle at which he had not even been present.

Finally, through all these disputes and hostile actions between senior men ran their united suspicion of bachelors. The only "battle" in two years between large groups drawn from distinct bands that had a clear-cut and definite final act was one fought in Rangu in late 1928. On that occasion, after disputing and fighting among themselves from early morning until mid-afternoon, all the old men present from both war parties gradually channeled all their anger toward one unfortunate young Mandiimbula bachelor whom they finally accused of going around from band to band creating misunderstandings between various elders. Several elders on both sides testified publicly that their mistrust of each other had started shortly after the bachelor in question had begun hanging around their households; whereupon the senior warriors of the two opposing armies had no difficulty in deciding that most of their suspicions of each other "were all his fault," and with great unanimity ganged up on the bachelor and quickly clubbed him into unconsciousness for being a troublemaker and a suspicion spreader. In the midst of battle the gerontocracy had reasserted its solidarity by finding a bachelor scapegoat upon whom to unload all their mutual suspicions and aggressions.

Religious Activities

If by religious activities we mean those beliefs and practices which pertain to unseen or supernatural forces, including rituals whose performance somehow affects those forces, then Tiwi religion readily crystallized around three focal points. These were: 1) their elaborate system of day-to-day taboos; 2) the elaborate set of beliefs and rituals pertaining to death; and 3) their complicated initiation ceremonies for young men. Add to these their myths and folklore about creation and their tribal past, and the whole of Tiwi religion has been covered. Space permits only brief mention of these three focal points.

TABOO In earlier chapters we have pointed out several aspects of life in which Tiwi culture diverged sharply from what anthropologists have come to regard as Australian mainland norms and we have suggested that these differences from the mainland are most reasonably to be attributed to either Tiwi isolation or favorable food supply, or some combination of both factors. In their religious life this same line of explanation continues to have validity. To those familiar with the cultures of Australian tribes, perhaps

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

once erected on the grave; the names of dead people immediately became *pukimani* on their deaths and could not be used, and the same was true of all the names bestowed by a dead man on the children of his household and all the other words in the language that sounded similar to the name of the dead man.[4] All ceremonials and rituals were *pukimani* as were the main performers and the armlets, neck ornaments, and other ceremonial objects. People in a *pukimani* state had to observe all sorts of avoidances of and abstentions from everyday actions, particularly with regard to food and sex. Close relatives of dead people could not touch food but had to be fed by nonmourners. That pillar of rigid orthodoxy, Tu'untalumi, was virtually never able to feed himself but was in a *pukimani* state almost the whole year round and needed one of his wives to feed him. (Another advantage of a large household.) Certain spots in the bush or on the banks of streams were *pukimani* places; the dimly seen outline of the Australian coast was *pukimani* as was the ocean near Cape Keith where the Tiwi ancestors had first created the Tiwi world; and finally, the violation of a *pukimani* restriction rendered the violator *pukimani*.

Pukimani as thus applied to people, places, things, names, words, restrictions, and avoidances, meant both sacred and taboo, and was clearly one of that widespread class of words and concepts that is almost standard among the simpler societies. The only noteworthy thing about its Tiwi form is that *pukimani* was a state which people did not actively seek to enter but which happened to people regardless of their wishes. Furthermore, when a man found himself in a state of *pukimani*, his behavior was automatically prescribed for him and for the duration of his *pukimani* condition he observed his avoidances and his abstentions just as automatically as he dropped them when his *pukimani* period expired. When he became *pukimani*, he punctiliously fulfilled the requirements because if he did not, he was likely to be unsuccessful in his enterprises. Big men simply did not dare to be casual about the requirements lest their reputations suffer and they lose face and influence. Less successful men were occasionally explained as probably being secret violators. "His wives and daughters all seem to die young; he must have broken some *pukimani* restrictions sometime" was a reason often given for somebody's failure to be as successful as he might have been. It was noticeable in such explanations of nonsuccess that the failure, or in our terms the bad luck, was attributed to the violation of the taboos, never to the active displeasure of the spirits. The spirits simply did not figure in the picture.

Apart from the big ceremonial occasions, a Tiwi did not have much concern with religion in his everyday life except through some aspect of the *pukimani* system. It was only through *pukimani* that the sacred world impinged upon him at all for most of the year. Since *pukimani* was a condition that could not be actively sought but "just happened" to a person every so often by such common events as the death of a relative, his wife giving birth, or his

[4] When a man named Tibuki died in 1928, a crisis occurred at the Mission where the natives were supposed to make their requests in pidgin English. How could they now ask for tobacco, since that word was now *pukimani*?

sister's son being initiated, the attitude of a Tiwi toward the whole *pukimani* state was essentially a passive attitude. *Pukimani* behavior was something one accepted and conformed to when required; it was in no way an active attempt to change nature, people, food, gods, spirits, or anything else in the universe. It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that since their *pukimani* system offered them no handle by which to seek actively to alter the universe in which they lived, the Tiwi found that universe to their liking as it was. Unlike the tribes of central Australia who lavished a lot of thought upon magical methods of improving the food supply or the rainfall, the Tiwi believed and acted on the belief that as long as they observed their *pukimani* taboos, the food would continue to be as abundant and the rains as regular as they had always been. The central Australians, by seeking to coerce nature through magic, suggest that they found nature unsatisfactory; the Tiwi, by relying upon passive taboo-observance alone, suggest rather that their relationship to nature was an acceptable equilibrium that they wanted to preserve, not change. And if everybody observed his *pukimani* taboos when required, that equilibrium would remain undisturbed. Hence the antisocial man in Tiwi was not the maker of individual magic (he was unknown, anyway) but the nonobserver of taboo. By his nonobservance he threatened to upset the normally satisfactory equilibrium between man and nature. For a senior Tiwi male to be charged publicly with breaking *pukimani* rules was a disgrace and a blow to his prestige and his position in public opinion. His behavior was possibly a sin against the spirits but it was certainly a shame in the eyes of his fellows. *Pukimani* observance was thus a matter of respectability to a much greater degree than it was a matter of pleasing the spirits.

DEATH As was mentioned above, death is the natural phenomenon around which the Tiwi had woven their most elaborate web of ritual. The most frequent and most important Tiwi ceremonies were the mourning ceremonies, and they came in three sizes—small, medium, and large—depending on the age, sex, and importance of the dead person. The mourning ceremonies which drew the crowds were not held until some time after the death and burial. All bodies of dead persons were buried within twenty-four hours of their death by digging a hole near the camp where the death had occurred and placing the body, wrapped in bark, in it. Near most well-used camping spots there was already a graveyard marked by old graveposts, and the latest corpse was buried there or near there. Seldom was the body carried any distance for burial. If a person died even less than a mile from an old burial ground, there was little inclination to carry the body that far. He would be buried, instead, within perhaps a hundred yards of where he died. This had certain awkward repercussions for social organization, since occasionally a person died while away from his home district and, being buried where he died, his ceremonies were held and his posts erected in a district in which his immediate family did not live. Young men often used this to validate a change of residence, giving as their reason for living in a band territory in which they had not grown up, the location there of their father's graveposts.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER II

The Creation Period

WHATEVER differences may exist between the Melville Island cultures and those of the mainland, and, in some aspects, those differences are considerable, the creation stories indicate that the two cultures sprang from the same source.[1] 174 773

At the close of the creation period, both on Melville Island and the mainland, the original creators, men and women, were transformed, or transformed themselves, into various creatures, plants, natural forces or heavenly bodies. 771 773 82

Although I would not claim that the list of totems is complete, I feel certain that the aboriginal artists pictured, on the bark paintings, most of the areas created by their mythical forbears. More detailed research may reveal additional totemic places. 532x 771 82

The list of the thirty-four totemic ancestors illustrated on the bark paintings is curiously unbalanced in its distribution. More than a third of these are trees, almost all eucalypts. The remaining four groups are: the natural forces, creatures of the air, the sea, and one inanimate totem, i.e. red ochre. Neither land animals nor reptiles are referred to in the bark paintings of the totemic places, although they appear in the myths.

These facts contrast strongly with the Central Australian beliefs regarding their totemic creatures (Mountford, 1948, p. 23; Spencer and Gillen, 1899, p. 387), where almost every living thing, particularly the creatures, took some part in the creation of the topography; plant totems are uncommon in Central Australia. 171 771 773 82

The same Central Australian characteristics are also evident in the myths of Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 21), although in the adjacent Arnhem Land, the great creators, i.e., the *Wawalik* Sisters (Warner, 1937, p. 250), and the *Djunkgao* Sisters (Berndt, 1952; Mountford, 1956, p. 267; Warner, 1937, p. 336), made the bulk of the topography, plants and creatures.

Although the Groote Eylandt pantheon, like that of Melville Island, originated as men and women, they were, almost without exception, changed to non-human totems, whereas the great creators of Arnhem Land, the *Wawalik* and the *Djunkgao* Sisters, have always remained human.

[1] Little research has been carried out on the creation stories of the Australian aborigines; Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 387) giving the most detailed account. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

natural features. At *v*, *v*, etc. (right), are her piles of yellow ochre; at *g* (left), her baskets of red ochre, and at *aa*, *aa* (upper right), the cockle shells in which she mixed the colours. These deposits of ochres are still used by aborigines to decorate themselves. 532× 778 [302]

Other natural features created by *Kudjatumpi* are: *u* (lower right), Bonkaitji Creek, on the banks of which she placed many trees as homes for the opossums; *ff* (centre) a reef under the water, made from the stones which the mythical woman threw away whilst digging for yams, and the dots on the background, the forests of trees growing on the highlands at Bonkaitji. A hill, *dd* (upper right), is the place where the March-fly woman stood when she created the watercourses, Bailai-intara, *cc*, and Pimaltji, *bb*. The latter is a tributary of Bonkaidji creek.

Pl. 18c, one side of a female *pukamuni* basket (indicated by the square openings), pictures the totemic place of the March-fly woman, at the Kudjatumpi lagoon.

The line of rectangles, *b*, *b*, and *d*, *d*, *d*, represents the water in the lagoon; *a*, *a*, *a*, the patches of sand on the bottom; and *c*, *c*, etc., are white cliffs on the adjacent sea-coast. The vertical lines, *f*, and the horizontal lines, *e*, indicate the water running from the Kudjatumpi lagoon over the beach, into the sea.

DISCUSSION

Although this research on the creation period and its related phases must be regarded as incomplete, the data gathered does provide a general picture of the beliefs of the Tiwi in their totemic heroes, and the relationship of those beliefs to the topography of their land. Not being able to visit any of the totemic places, their position on the map (Fig. 1), must also be regarded as approximate. 771 123

It is to be hoped that, before the Tiwi lose their culture, some ethnologist, with ample time, will both fully investigate their remarkable culture and visit each of their totemic localities to collect, in detail, the mythical story of the area and its associated natural features. 000

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

591 621 while the woman will always be looked upon as belonging to her former horde, the child changes his, taking that of his step-father. Very often [882] when a boy is aged about 14 or 15 he is taken by his mother's brother of another horde to live with that horde for some years. Often he is initiated there and not quite so often he will spend the rest of his life there. It is no uncommon occurrence for a man to have spent his adolescent years in two or three different hordes in addition to the one into which he was born, always under the supervision of one or other of his classificatory mother's brothers. Two cases at least occurred in the last few years of young unmarried men who had been reared and initiated in one horde leaving that horde of their own free will and going to live permanently in another because they considered they had there more chance of obtaining a wife.[9]

On the other hand, a woman will usually be looked upon as belonging to the same horde all her life, even though she marries young and goes to live with another horde. To the tribe at large such a woman is for example a *Tiklauila*, though she has lived with the *Yeimpi* ever since her marriage, and her *Tiklauila* origin will never be forgotten.

As a result of these conflicting customs it is difficult to lay down any definite rule in regard to membership of the horde. The best generalization is perhaps to say that a woman retains all her life a connection with the horde into which she is born no matter where patrilocal marriage may lead her, while a man on the other hand belongs to whatever horde he is living with at the moment, this being normally but not at all invariably his father's horde.

TOTEMISM

614 The Tiwi have a system of matrilineal totemic clans. Each clan has a special relation to one or sometimes to two and in two instances to three species of natural objects. The members of the clan have a solidarity of their own, helping each other in tribal fights, speaking of each other as "brother" despite the variation in their actual blood relationship, and not marrying women of their own totem. There are, 101 614 however, few of the distinctive features of Australian totemism as known 771 from other parts of the continent. They eat their totem without any

[9] It was hardly a logical proceeding as one left the *Tiklauila* for the *Munupula* and the other (quite independently) left the *Munupula* for the *Tiklauila*.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

 177 101

restriction; they have no ceremonies for the increase of the totem species. 614 771

Since the totem of a child is that of its mother it follows that the members of one totemic clan are found in different hordes, and inversely each horde contains persons of several totemic clans. Nevertheless each totem is associated in the minds of the natives with a particular locality or district. This association appears in the myths, there being a number of stories which connect particular natural species with particular localities. Thus each clan may be said to have its ancestral home or centre, but there is little or nothing of any feeling of reverence or ritual attachment to the home of one's totem. Taking it all in all Tiwi totemism does not amount to very much compared with the elaborate forms of totemism found in other parts of Australia. 614 [621] 778 [101]

The word for totem and totemic clan is *pukui*. But the same word means also "sun" and in addition "breath." The connection between these three concepts denoted by one word is not at all apparent. 192

The totems are grouped into three phratries. The term phratry is here used in the sense of an exogamous group containing a number of clans and not being a moiety. The phratries are unnamed. Should a man want to mention a phratry he will call it by the name of one of the totemic clans composing it. He will generally use the name of his own totem clan if his own phratry is in question, or that of the clan that is powerful in the phratry. Thus the phratry that I am calling Phratry 1, will more often be called *Tjilarui* than anything else because at the present time the *Tjilarui* clan is very numerous and many of them are the kind of people who are usually much in the public eye. For a similar reason Phratry 2 is more often called *Timiririyui* than anything else, and Phratry 3 is usually *Tokwombui*. There is a much stronger feeling of solidarity with one's clan than with one's phratry, which will perhaps explain that while the clan name is very important there seems no need, or much less need, for any specific name for the phratry. 615

A complete list of the clans and their totems is given below. Each clan name has three forms, masculine singular, feminine singular, and plural, and these are given in the list in this order. 614 [193]

Clan Name	Totems
Phratry 1.	
(*a*) *Tjilati, Tjilariya, Tjilarui*	jaberoo
(*b*) *Ariri, Aruwidina, Arwudui*	wallet

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

sacred and the ordinary language, with the result that his list of Tiwi clans and their totems is confused and inaccurate.[4]

The Tiwi do not seem to associate very closely the totemic clan and the object that is the totem of the clan. For instance a man of the *Udunui* considers himself as *Udunini*, not as a crocodile, which he normally thinks of as *irungrabai*. The bond of solidarity is between one member of the clan and another rather than between a member of the clan and his totem.

So much is this the case that it is occasionally difficult to ascertain what is the natural object which gives the clan its name, *i.e.*, what is the totem of the clan. The *Ariŋgwila* are a case in point. In order to find what natural object was the emblem of this clan recourse had to be had to a few old men of the clan who were apparently the only people in the tribe who knew what natural object was the emblem of the *Ariŋgwila*. Everyone knew that a number of men, women and children were *Ariŋgwila*, thought of them and referred to them as *Ariŋgwila*, but very few members of the community connected them in any way with stones—" any kind of stones"—which according to these old men, are the *Ariŋgwila* totemic emblem.

With regard to the origin of the totemic clans and their names the natives say that the system of *puknì* was instituted by the old men a very long time ago. One old man said at some time in the distant past " *Udunui nia puknì kapi Primandua*—Udunui is my totem at Primandua," and so everyone knew his totem was *udunui*. Knowing their legends everyone knew the connection between *Udunui* and *Primandua* since it is at this place, a district in Bathurst Island, that *Mmutuni*, the father of all crocodiles, still has his home. Another old man decided upon *mandubani* as his *puknì* because his favourite camping ground was at *Pripanyimili* which has a mythological association with *mandubuka* (the sand fly), such association being founded no doubt on the fact that sand flies breed in great numbers in the mangrove swamps of that region.

The *Ariŋgwila* (the stone totem) are closely associated with a famous rock in *Miŋgu* called *Wurukwompi* which, due no doubt to a hollow interior, gives forth a roll like thunder when beaten with a stick and hence is a sacred object to the natives. The former home of the *Ariŋgwila* is in the

[4] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, page 200.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

corrobboree of the Melville Islanders, but it appears that he regarded the [147] demonstration as hostile. He writes that "the dance consisted chiefly of the per- 527 formers leaping two or three times successively out of the sea, and then violently 535 moving their legs so as to agitate the water into a foam for some distance around them, all the time shouting loudly and laughing immoderately; then they would run through the water for eight or ten yards and perform again; and this was repeated over and over as long as the dance lasted."

During none of these ceremonies, or indeed anywhere on the island, did I see [171] anything of totemism in the scientific sense of the word. This fact is in accordance [114] with my observations in Central and North Australia, and my negative evidence is amply borne out by the researches of Drs. W. E. Roth and H. Klaatsch and others.

Pastimes.

The sham-fights of youths with small arrow-shaped spears have already been 524 mentioned. Children were observed upon the beach competing in running and long jump. A favourite amusement of the younger folk on a breezy day is to collect the light globular seed-heads of the "spring rolling grass" (*Spinifex hirsutis*), that grow on every sand-hill near the coast, and take them to the beach and there release them on the hardened sand. Driven along by the wind, these seeds travel over the surface at no mean pace. Allowing them to gain a fair start, the children bolt after them and endeavour to overtake them and pick them up from the ground while dashing past them at full speed in "cow-boy" fashion.

Another game is that of hand-ball. The seeds of the zamia (*Cycas media*) take the place of a small ball. Two lads stand facing one another and hit the seed to and fro with the palms of their hands, after the style of a modern game of tennis.

Despite their keenness of sight and quickness of hand, they are, nevertheless, [147] very backward in catching with their hands an object which is thrown at them.

Burial Method.

The aborigines of Bathurst and Melville Islands have a unique and elaborate 764 method of burial; graves have been found on both islands. It appears that the favourite places for burying the dead are there, where a jungle or mangrove-thicket breaks to the ordinary eucalypt-woodland, usually near to the sea-coast or to a native water.

Historically we have to note several observations in this connection.

Sir Gordon Bremer[1] mentions having discovered a grave on Bathurst Island in 1824. "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it

[1] *Imperial Parliamentary Paper*, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, London, March 27th, 1843; also in *The Genesis of Queensland*, by H. S. Russell, Sydney, 1888, p. 34.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER VII

The Astronomy of the Tiwi

171 THE Tiwi's knowledge of the night sky does not appear to be as extensive as
773 that of the aborigines of the adjoining Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, Part 6).

821 Although myths relating to the sun, the moon, the Milky Way, the stars and Orion and the Pleiades were often told, I was unable to find any relating to the Southern Cross, Scorpio, the Magellan Clouds and other constellations well-known to the aborigines of Arnhem Land.

The Universe

821 The Tiwi believe that the earth is flat, and so limited in area that, if they travel far from the shores of their tribal country, they would fall over the edge. As evidence of this they point out that, in the morning they can see *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman, rise above the eastern rim and, at the end of the day, disappear beneath the western rim of the world.

The earth, too, is of limited thickness, the aborigines believing that, if they dug a hole sufficiently deep they would reach the lower world, *Ilara*.[56]

772 The aboriginal universe of the Tiwi consists of four levels, (*a*) a subterranean world, Ilara, (*b*) the earth on which the aborigines live, (*c*), the sky-land, Juwuku, and (*d*) an upper world, Tuniruna.

On Ilara where it is always dark, there are two high stony ranges with a
772 valley between. It is along this valley that the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,
776 and according to some informants, the moon-man, *Tjapata*, guided only by
821 the light of their glowing torch of bark, travel each day from the western horizon to their homes in the east. As there are no plants or animals on Ilara, the celestial travellers cannot gather any food during their underground journey, although they can quench their thirst at a stream which flows from the top of one of the high mountains.

During the wet season, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms; *Tomituka*, the woman of the monsoon rains; *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, with her husband and her many children, make their home on the sky-land,

[171] [56] I did not find a belief among the Melville Islanders, like that of the aborigines of Groote Eylandt, that the earth was a thin crust resting on the top of the water. (Mountford, 1956, p. 67.)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Juwuku; while the sun-woman, the men of the Milky Way, the star women and the moon-man (except for a short period each month) travel daily across its surface. 772 776 821

Above the sky is another world, Tuniruna. This is the day-time home of numberless star women, the *Tapalinga*, and the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaiaini*. During the dry season, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*, with her family leave the sky-world, Juwuku, and make their homes in Tuniruna.

Unlike the Ilara, the lowest world, Tuniruna resembles the earth except that there is no sea, although there are many freshwater streams and swamps. All the creatures and plants that live on Melville Island, with the exception of the saltwater fish, are also at Tuniruna.

Every morning the inhabitants of the upper world leave their camps, the women to gather the plant foods of the forest, the men to hunt and capture the creatures, such as freshwater fish and the geese, ducks, pelicans and jabirus, that live in the extensive swamps. Also, many fruits grow at Tuniruna, some of which were specifically named, i.e., *rakarina*, the wild plum; *sauraruina*, the white-fruited eugenia; *kinamia*, the red-fruited eugenia; *putatabuna*, a small egg-shaped fruit about three-eighths of an inch long; *kwerka*, cycad fruit, and the various yams.

By the time the sun-woman has sunk below the western horizon and extinguished her torch, the inhabitants of Tuniruna, the upper world, have returned from their foodgathering and are lighting their camp-fires to cook the food they have brought in. The light from these fires illuminates the upper world as brightly during the night-time as the sun-woman, with her blazing torch, illuminates the earth during the day-time.

About November, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali* leave Tuniruna and travel from place to place in the sky-world, shedding rain on the parched earth. During this time, the aborigines claim that those with good hearing can distinguish a low "Sh . . . sh . . .", the pleasure call of the thirsty trees as their roots drink the moisture from the sodden ground. It is then that the trees and plants of the upper world, using the raindrops as a vehicle, send their spirits (analogous to the human *Pitipituis*) (p. 146), to the ground beneath, where they grow into plants similar to their progenitors in the upper world.[97] That is, all the plants and trees in the land of the Tiwi were once, as tiny spirits, dropped from the upper world, Tuniruna. 776 821 [824]

[97] I did not specifically inquire whether the creatures in the upper world also sent down their spirits in the same manner as the plants. However, as both plants and human beings have a spirit origin, it is reasonable to assume that the creatures originate in a similar manner. Further research on this subject will be of considerable interest. [124]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

824 This belief probably accounts for the fact that I did not hear any songs chanted, or witness any ceremonies (with the possible exception of the *kulama*) that would bring about a plentiful supply of food. Nor did I hear [171] of any increase centres such as I saw on Groote Eylandt, (Mountford, 1956, pp. 84, 91), and were seen by Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 166), and myself (1948, p. 145) in Central Australia.

The Sky and the Upper World

×532 821 ●772 Pl. 63D is a bark painting of the sky and the upper world, Tuniruna. The central series of concentric circles represent an unidentified planet, one of the wives of *Tjapara*, the moon-man; the designs, *d, d, d, d*, are some of the stars, *Tapalinga*; *f, f*, are the plum trees (already mentioned), which grow in the upper world. The radiating lines are the limbs of the plum trees.

The inner square, *b*, is the upper world, Tuniruna, the chevron patterns are the clouds in the sky, and the outer square the surface of the earth.

The groups of dots, throughout the painting, are the spirit fruits of the many trees at Tuniruna, which (as mentioned earlier), fall from the upper world to the earth beneath.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala

773 776 A myth, belonging to the early creation period, tells of how *Wuriupranala*, one of the first women, was given the task of keeping alight a torch of blazing bark. When, after the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, the men and women changed themselves into creatures and plants, *Wuriupranala* became the sun-woman, who travels daily across the sky, her torch of blazing bark providing the world with light and heat.

776 821 However, before *Wuriupranala* sets out from the eastern horizon, she powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which flying into the air, reddens the clouds of early morning.

When she reaches the western horizon, *Wuriupranala* again powders her body (this accounts for the brilliant sunsets), extinguishes her torch and rests for a while beside a celestial lagoon, Kumpinulu, before returning to the east along a path through the subterranean world, Ilara. On this journey, she is guided only by the light from the glowing end of her smouldering torch.[58]

×532 773 776 821 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60A, B, Pl. 61A, B, and Pl. 63A, B, deal with the myth of the sun-woman.

The designs on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 61A, B, picture the sun, moon and stars.

[58] See pp. 35, 40 for more details of the sun-woman.

2: Mountford

773, 778, 776, 821

OI20 Tiwi OI20

[Materials pertaining to these categories will also be found in category 532.]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER II

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At the close of the creation period, both on Melville Island and the mainland, the original creators, men and women, were transformed, or transformed themselves, into various creatures, plants, natural forces or heavenly bodies.

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Z: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

1. THE CREATION OF THE LAND OF THE TIWI

773 In the beginning there was no light, the earth was flat and featureless; no hills or valleys broke its monotonous surface, no trees covered its nakedness, no call of birds disturbed its quietness. It was a dead, silent world.

Then, at some period in those dim and far-off times, known to the Melville Islanders as the *pakuneri*, an old blind woman, *Mudungkala*, rose miraculously out of the ground at Murupianga, south-eastern Melville Island, carrying in her arms three infants, two girls, *Wurinpunala* and *Murupiangkala*, and a boy, *Purukupali*.[10] No one knows from where she came, nor after she had finished the creation of the land of the Tiwis, where she went.

Clasping her children to her breast and crawling on her knees, *Mudungkala* travelled slowly northward, the fresh water, that bubbled up in the track she made, becoming the swift tideway of Dundas Strait now separating Melville Island from the Coburg Peninsula on the mainland (Fig. 1).

Mudungkala then turned westward, and, as she formed the northern shores of Melville Island as far as Cape Van Diemen, she made occasional journeys inland, creating the Johnson and Lethbridge Bays, Curtis Haven, the Tjipripu River, Shark Bay, and the northern entrance of Apsley Strait.

Mudungkala, still carrying her children, crawled along the west coast of Bathurst Island until she reached Cape Fourcroy, creating Port Hurd on the way. On Turiturina Island in Port Hurd, the mythical bird-men and women, and later, the *Ningaui* spirit people, performed the first *kulama* ceremonies.

At Cape Fourcroy, the old woman turned toward her starting place, Murupianga. One side of the wide channel she created became the southern shores of Bathurst Island, where, at Maundu, the dreaded *Marapiji* made their home.

But when *Mudungkala* reached the present Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island), she thought she was making the island too large. So, remembering the deep inlet near Cape Van Diemen, she crawled northward, her track becoming the winding Apsley Straits that now separate Melville from Bathurst Island.[11] She then turned back, felt her way to Jurubulinai[12] at the southern end of

[115] [10] Not all the informants mentioned *Purukupali*, although, in the creation period, it was *Purukupali* who brought the spirit children, the *Pinipinai*, to their mothers.

[11] At this point in the creation story, some informants interpolated a myth that describes how *Mudungkala*, under a different name, was opened by *Purui* (sea eagle) and *Jirakuti* (sea-eagle). This myth, described on page 26, is obviously an accretion.

[12] In the last phase of creation, this island was the totem place of a woman of a similar name, *Mudungkala*, one of the wives of *Tukimbini*. At present we do not know the correct relationship between these two women; further research no doubt will clarify the situation.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Apsley Strait, continuing her journey eastward until she reached her starting point at Murupiangа. On that last journey, *Mudungkala* created the Clarence Strait, thus completely separating the land of the Tiwis from the rest of Australia. 773

Before *Mudungkala* crawled southward, out of all knowledge of the Tiwi, she decreed that the bare land should be clothed with vegetation and inhabited with creatures, so that her children, whom she left behind at Murupiangа, should have food.

2. THE FIRST INHABITANTS

The two daughters of *Mudungkala*, *Wuriuprenala* and *Murupiangkala*, with their brother, *Purukupali*, established themselves in the new land.

The accounts of this period are vague and indefinite, the most consistent being that *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pisipinis*, brought some back, and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriuprenala* and *Murupiangkala*, so that they could become mothers.[18] Thus the family at Murupiangа multiplied, and, although many of the genealogies are confused and unreliable, those of the main personalities appear to be consistent.

Murupiangkala, whose husband the aborigines did not remember, had one daughter, *Tukumbuna*, who, in turn, married *Wilindu*.

Tukumbuna had two daughters, *Wilinduela* and *Numanirakala*, and a son, *Tukinkini*. *Tukinkini's* wife, *Waia*, gave birth to one daughter, *Bima*, who became the wife of *Purukupali*. It was the death of their son, *Djinini*, that brought the creation period to a close.

Wuriuprenala, whose husband was *Andjalui*, had one son, *Wuriuprinili*. The aborigines did not know who were the parents of *Tjapara*, who later quarrelled with *Purukupali*.

In those early days there was neither light nor heat, so the descendants of old *Mudungkala* had to grope around in the darkness to find their food, and having found it were forced to eat it raw.

Once two men, *Jurunu* (later the wedge-tailed eagle), and *Mudati* (the fork-tailed kite), whose parents the aborigines did not know, were rubbing two sticks together, when they noticed a speck of light where the heat, caused by the friction between the two sticks, had ignited the powdered wood-dust. [372]

[18] The aborigines, who almost certainly do not understand physical paternity, believe that the *Pisipinis* have always existed although they could not explain their origin. In the later period of creation, it was one of the duties of *Purukupali* to bring the spirit children to his wife, *Bima*, who gave them to the women. Before he died, however, *Purukupali* told the *Pisipinis* to seek their mothers through the medium of their fathers. [842]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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773 Puzzled over this new phenomenon, *Jurumu* placed the smouldering wood-
[372] dust into the pith of a dead pandanus palm and blew upon it. To the surprise of both men the speck became larger and larger, finally bursting into a flame. This frightened the men so badly that they rushed to *Purukupali* and asked him to destroy the strange thing they had made. But when *Purukupali* saw the blazing wood and felt its heat he realized that *Jurumu* and *Mudati* had inadvertently discovered something that would give the aborigines not only light to dispel the darkness, but heat to cook their food and to keep them warm.[14]

Calling his sister, *Wuriupranala*, he gave her a torch of bark lit from the blazing log and told her that it was her duty to keep it alight always. *Tjapara*,
[821] who later became the moon, was given a smaller torch.

With the coming of light and heat, the descendants of *Mudungkala* spread over the island, hunting and camping in places which, at the close of the creation period, became their totemic country.

About that time, two men, *Puruti* and *Jirakati*, were spearing fish in Tiaupu, a freshwater swamp at Piper Head, near the northern entrance to Apsley Straits, when they noticed, by the movements of the stems of the water-lilies, some large creature moving about under the water.

Not knowing it was his mother, *Tipuru-undunga*, *Puruti* speared her in the
[823] neck. Screaming with pain and urinating in her fright, *Tipuru-undunga* rushed into the sea, which in those days was fresh water, polluting it so much with her blood and urine that it became as salt as the sea of today.

The wounded *Tipuru-undunga* changed herself into the tall, stately bird,
[825] the jabiru (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) which now lives on the edge of the fresh-water lagoons; while the fishermen, *Puruti* and *Jirakati* became the sea-osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and the graceful white-headed sea-eagle (*Haliaetus leucogaster*).[15]

During those early *palaneri* times, a man, *Jirakupai*, lived beside a fresh-water lagoon, *Jirininga*, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. He had married two sisters, *Kuraruna* and *Jaknia*.

Jirakupai was an expert in the making of both the large many-barbed, male
[411] spears, *tunkaringa*, which have a row of barbs on one side (Pl. 32A), and the female spears, *tunkaguni*, with their double row of barbs (Pl. 32B). Both forms are now used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

[14] The aborigines distinguish between light (*milajiuka*) from the sun or burning wood, and heat (*ikwani*) from glowing coals.

[15] The large hawk-like birds, *Jirakati*, the sea-eagle, *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite, appear as men in a number of the myths. In each one they transformed themselves from men into birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Jirakupai had just made a number of these weapons, when a party of men from eastern Melville Island rushed into his camp and speared him in the back many times. But, as they struck, *Jirakupai* plucked the spears out and cast them at his opponents. Then howling loudly with pain and picking up the spears he had just made, *Jirakupai* dived into the water to escape further injury. 773

His wives, to avoid capture, changed themselves into birds, *Kuraruna* becoming the night-heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) and *Jaknia*, the brown heron that frequents the mangrove swamps (possibly *Butorides striata*). 773 825

The next morning his enemies saw *Jirakupai* floating in the water, no longer as a man, but as a crocodile. The spear wounds in his back had healed and grown into a spinal crest, his mouth, through shouting so much in his pain, had grown longer and larger, while his bundle of spears had been transformed into his tail, on the extreme end of which was a male, *tunkaringa*, spear, with barbs only at one side.

The totem place of the crocodile (*Crocodilus porosus*) is pictured on the bark painting, Pl. 16a. 532 x

In this painting the central disc is the totemic lagoon, *Jirininga*, near which six crocodiles are resting on the mud. The light-coloured vertical panels are the nests of the crocodiles and the short transverse bars, their eggs.

On the mainland, south of Wulrungku (Karslake Island), three men, *Mudati*, his younger brother, *Pilibiliningi*, and *Jurunu* lived in the same camp as an unmarried woman, *Parabruma*. 773

Mudati and *Parabruma* were fond of each other, a fact which infuriated *Jurunu*, who wanted *Parabruma* for a wife.

One day, when *Jurunu* was out hunting, he saw a bandicoot[16] *tipapu*, run from his grass nest into a hollow tree for shelter. This suggested an idea to *Jurunu* as to how he could injure, or, perhaps, incapacitate his rival. Making a number of short, sharp sticks, he buried them, point upward, in the ground, rearranging the grass nest over them so that it would not show signs of having been disturbed. Then going to *Mudati* he suggested that they should hunt together.

Of course, *Jurunu* led his rival to the faked bandicoot nest where, gesticulating excitedly, he told his companion to jump on the nest before the bandicoot escaped. But *Mudati* demurred, saying that if he waited until the bandicoot showed itself, he could kill it with his throwing stick.

But *Jurunu* was so insistent that his was the better way that *Mudati*, not suspecting treachery, obeyed his instructions and jumped on the faked nest. [825]

[16] These bandicoots build flimsy grass shelters under which they hide.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 As the sharpened sticks pierced his feet, *Mudasi* fell to the ground calling
825 *girik-girik* (his call today), then changing himself into the fork-tailed kite (*Milvus migrans*), rose into the air and flew away.[17]

Quickly *Jurumu* sought out the woman, *Parabruma*, and proposed marriage, but she, knowing of his treachery, angrily refused him. Incensed and disappointed, *Jurumu* struck *Parabruma* on either side of the head with his throwing stick, cutting her head so badly that long pieces of bleeding skin hung down on each side.

Screaming with pain (her present-day call), *Parabruma* changed herself into the masked plover (*Lobibyx miles*). One can still see those red flaps of skin hanging on either side of her face. Intent on revenge, *Mudasi's* brother, *Pilibilinga*, crept up behind *Jurumu* and speared him in the back. Shouting "*gutli-gutli*" (his call), *Jurumu* changed himself into the wedge-tailed eagle (*Oroaetus audax*). When *Pilibilinga* saw this he became a small brown hawk (unidentified).

Jurumu appears in another early creation myth when he, his wife *Narina*,
773 and her brother, *Kilpuruni*, lived in the same camp. One day, when the woman was out in the forest collecting food for her husband, *Kilpuruni* came up and asked for some. *Narina* offered him an opossum, but he said he was not fond of that meat. After refusing wild honey and several other foods, *Kilpuruni* admitted that he really wanted *Narina* to go in the bush with him. *Narina* refused, saying they could not do so, because they were brother and sister. However, *Kilpuruni*, by persistence and cajolery, finally had his way.

On returning to camp, *Narina* confessed her misdeeds to *Jurumu*, who, although he was angry and punished his wife, did not mention the matter to his brother-in-law. Biding his time, he invited *Kilpuruni* to go with him to look for hives of wild bees.

They had both climbed a high eucalyptus tree, when *Jurumu* showed his brother-in-law a hive at the end of a long projecting branch. Waiting until *Kilpuruni* had climbed out to investigate the hive, *Jurumu* cut the limb, which crashed to the ground on the top of the unfortunate victim.

Kilpuruni, all flattened out, changed himself into the present-day blanket
[825] lizard (*Chamydasaurus kingii*); *Narina*, who, in spite of his misdeeds, was fond of *Kilpuruni*, became the black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksi*) and still mourns for her unfortunate brother, while *Jurumu*, now the wedge-tailed eagle, is always on the look-out to kill and eat his wife's seducer.

[171] [17] A myth, with many points of resemblance, except that the main actors were crows and a wedge-tailed eagle, was collected by the author from the Adnyamatana tribe of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia. (Mountford, 1937, field notes.)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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3. THE DEATH OF PURUKUPALI

While many of the people of the early creation period were spreading over the island, the original family, *Wuriupranala*, *Murupiangkala* and *Purukupali*, and their descendants, had established themselves on south-eastern Melville Island; *Murupiangkala*, with her daughter *Tukumbuna* and her grandchildren, *Tukimbini*, *Wilinduela* and *Numanirakala*, at Murupianga; *Wuriupranala* with her son *Wuriuprinili*, at Wuriupi; and *Purukupali*, his wife *Bima* and their infant son, *Djinini*, at Impanali (Fig. 1). 773

Purukupali was strongly attached to *Djinini*. Every morning, when *Bima* went out food-gathering, she would take *Djinini* with her, bringing him back to *Purukupali* at the end of the day, together with the food she had collected.

In the same camp lived an unmarried man, *Tjapara*, who used to persuade *Bima* to leave her child asleep under the shade of a tree and sneak into the forest with him. This intrigue had been going on for some time when, on one very hot day, *Bima* stayed away from her child too long, for, when she returned, the shade had moved and *Djinini* was lying dead in the hot sun. Distraught with grief, *Bima* chanted her song of remorse—

Bili wangia tingatia
(Evil woman am I to have caused the death of my son.)

When *Purukupali* heard of the death of *Djinini*, his anger knew no bounds.[18] Striking his wife on her head with a throwing stick, and hunting her into the forest, he decreed that death should come to the whole world. As his son had died, said *Purukupali*, so the whole of creation would die, and once dead, never again would come to life. There was no death before that time.

Tjapara remonstrated with *Purukupali*, and pleaded for the dead body of *Djinini*, promising to restore him to life in three days.[19] But *Purukupali* was so adamant that the two men quarrelled about this matter until *Purukupali*, losing his temper, threw a *muruguna* (Pl. 32D) at *Tjapara* who replied with the forked throwing stick, *miluanta* (Pl. 32C) known today as *Tjapara's muruguna*. Soon the two men were locked in a deadly struggle, each wounding the other severely in the face and body.

[18] My informant stated that it was not the intrigues of *Tjapara* and *Bima* that enraged *Purukupali*, but that, by their selfishness, they had caused the death of his son.

[19] This is a reversal of ideas. In the mainland myths it is the moon that brings death to mankind (Mountford, 1956, p. 503), but among the Tiwi, it is the moon who endeavours to prevent death coming to the world. This is one of the many factors that suggest that the Tiwi must have been separated from the effects of the mainland cultures for a considerable period. [171] [174]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 Still railing, *Purukupali* picked up the dead body of his son, which *Bima* had wrapped in a sheet of paper-bark, and walking backward into the sea, called out loudly as the waters closed over his head,

Mauliantanili awangtini tangini mu mu.

(You must all follow me; as I die, so must you all die.)

[823] The place where *Purukupali* died, adjacent to Impanali, on the east coast of Melville Island, became a whirlpool so strong that any aboriginal who approached it in a canoe would be drowned. When *Tjapara* saw what had 773 happened, he changed himself into the moon. But he did not entirely escape 824 the decree of *Purukupali*, for, even though *Tjapara* is eternally reincarnated, he has to die for three days. On any clear night, one can see on the face of the moon-man the wounds which he received in his fight with *Purukupali* so long ago.

× 532 One bark painting, Pl. 22, c, deals with the death of *Purukupali* and his son *Djinini*. At *a*, is the whirlpool off Impanali Point, eastern Melville 773 Island, where *Purukupali*, *b*, carrying his dead son, disappeared beneath the surface of the water.

The foot-marks of *Purukupali*, as he walked backward into the water, are the white dots at *c*; his arms, the two white bars, at *d*; and the dead child he carried is at *e*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, at *f*, is asking for the body of the dead child to restore him to life.

The moon in the sky is shown at *g*; the forked throwing stick, *mikuata* at *h*; and at *j* are the plain throwing sticks, *muruguna*, which when thrown by *Purukupali*, caused the wounds on the face of *Tjapara*.

At *l*, *l*, are the goose-feather balls, *tokwianga* (Pl. 31B), of *Purukupali*; *n*, *n*, his cane armlets, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H); *s* (upper left) is his cockatoo-feather head ornament, *primitiki*; *k*, *k*, are his bark baskets, *wanatuna*; *u*, his firesticks; *o*, is his camp fire; and *r*, his water-hole.

Tjapara's fireplace, an unlocalized spot, *Oulini*, in the sky, is at *q*; his camp-fire is at *p*, and his firestick at *t*.

4. THE PUKAMUNI OF PURUKUPALI

773 When *Tukimbini*, who was living at Murupianga, heard of the death of *Purukupali*, he sent a message stick to *Talinini* of the honey-people of central Bathurst Island, appointing him the ceremonial leader (*alawia*) of the burial rituals.

At the same time, because they were near at hand, he told the people who lived at Murupianga, Wuriupi and Waihu, that as they were the appointed

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

"workers" (*wanarai*), it would be their duty to cut the burial poles, *tudinis*, make and paint the large ceremonial baskets, *wanaruna*, and the elaborate *pukamuni* spears, *tunkeringa*, as well as to clear the burial ground at Tapararimi, which was east of Impanali, the place where *Purukupali* died. As *Purukupali* had entered the sea and was drowned, there was no grave to cover and keep clean, as there would be at a usual *pukamuni*. 773

The "working party", who cut the poles with stone axes, consisted of the men, *Andjahi* (fresh water), *Wuriuprinili* (fire), *Tukimbini* (honey-eater), *Jidani* (saw-fish), *Timalana* (mosquito), *Taduwala* (shark) and *Pulajerapi* (mullet). Two turtle women, *Garagalani* and *Ringa* made some of the large *pukamuni* baskets, and a honey woman, *Latungkala*, who was not one of the "workers", another basket, which was decorated by the honey-men, *Putuki* and *Kafiapini*.

While the "working party" were busy at their tasks, *Talinini*, the honey-man of Bathurst Island, sent specially carved message sticks, *purunkita* (Fig. 5F, G, H) to the various groups of men and women on Bathurst and Melville Islands, instructing them to assemble at certain places, then move eastward to Tapararimi, performing the *ilania* ceremonies[20] on the way. [211] [532]*

A bark painting, Pl. 3A, B, deals with the assembling of the people for *Purukupali's pukamuni*. 532* 773

The black disc, *d*, at the bottom of the painting, is Bia-wururu, central Bathurst Island, where the leader, the honey-man, *Talinini*, with *Mauwini* and *Taparalili* performed the first *ilania* ceremony. Pintamu, *g*, is the home of *Talinini* and Putawini, *h*, that of *Mauwini*.

The second *ilania* was performed at Rarukumpili, *e* (western Bathurst Island). A fish-man, *Pulangaraui*, a participant of this ceremony, lived on an adjacent point of land, *f*. The "workers" from the east coast also performed *ilanias* at Ininu, *j*, central Melville Island,[21] as well as at three localities on the east coast, i.e., Wuriupi, *l*, Murupiangu, *m*, and Tapararimi, *n*.

The central disc, *k*, is Tapararimi, where the creation people, from all parts of the Islands, assembled to perform the final *pukamuni* rituals of *Purukupali*.

The many lines, *a*, *a*, at the top and bottom of the painting, symbolize the routes of the ancestral men as they walked to Tapararimi, and *b*, *b*, paths taken by the women, who always travel to a *pukamuni* ceremony by a different route from that of the men.

[20] The *ilanias* are performed every evening for some weeks before the final *pukamuni* rituals (p. 68).
[21] Another account places this *ilania* at Puntubu.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 Circles *a*, *a*, are places where the women stood at *Purukupali's* ceremony,
[532] and lines *c*, *c*, the paths they made as they danced toward the central dancing ground, the *milimika*.

According to other informants, the honey-men from Bathurst Island and
[184] other groups from western Melville Island assembled and performed an *ilania* at Tuju, while the people from south and south-western Melville Island performed yet another *ilania* at Puntubu (Fig. 1).

At the conclusion of these *ilanias* the mythical people from the west met
[532] at Rulijunga, where *Mantinuria*, one of the eucalyptus-tree women (Pl. 18A) had prepared a ceremonial ground for them. Here the assembled people performed another *ilania*, after which they moved off as a body to Timbaranapi, where the "workers", having cut the poles and prepared the *pukamuni* spears, baskets and other paraphernalia, had already assembled for the final *ilania*.

After a ceremonial fight[22] and the performance of the *ilania* ceremony, the men and women travelled to Tapararimi by different paths to carry out the final rituals.

532 A simple bark painting, Pl. 2A, pictures the *pukamuni* ground of *Purukupali*
773 at Tapararimi.

The lower black space is the ceremonial ground (*milimika*) on which the participants performed their dances, and the white area on the top, the several honey-men, one of whom, *Talinini*, was in charge of the rituals.

The five upright vertical panels are the *tudinis* (*pukamuni* poles); the lower line of black horizontal rectangles represents the red ochre, and the upper line of rectangles, black paint, with which the performers decorated themselves.

The dots represent paint on the bodies of the caterpillar men, the *Mahdaianini*,
[821] who, at the close of the ceremony, transformed themselves into the Milky Way.

The *pukamuni* rituals and those who mourned beside the poles at Tapararimi are illustrated on a bark painting, Pl. 2D, E.

The central black oval, *c*, is the swift whirlpool off Impanili, where *Purukupali*, walking along the track, *f*, *f*, with his dead son in his arms, drowned himself.

[764] [22] In the ceremonies of the present day, the "workers" when they return from cutting the poles, which are adjacent to the grave, are looked upon as *mapadiis* (spirits of the dead). Before the *ilania* can proceed, the *pukamuni* men and the "workers" take part in a ceremonial fight (Pl. 25D), in which the "workers" (as *mapadiis*) are vanquished. During creation times, a similar fight took place at Timbaranapi, when the *pukamuni* people from the west coast met the "workers" from the east.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

The *pukamuni* poles, *tudinis*, *a*, *a*, etc., and *b*, *b*, etc., are now parallel reefs of stone[20] on the sea-coast at Impanali; circle *d*, is a ring of white sand encircling the death place of *Purukupali*; and *c*, a large boulder at Tapararimi, once a stone axe, which the "workers" had used to cut the *pukamuni* poles. 532 × 773 ● [823]

The remainder of the designs on the painting symbolize the people of creation times mourning for *Purukupali*. The dots *j*, *j*, on the ground of the painting, represent the coloured ochres on the body of the ceremonial leader, *Talinini*; the black rectangle, *g*, *Waia*, the mother-in-law of *Purukupali*; and *h*, *h*, two bird-women, *Pungatili* and *Matungdili*.

At *k* (left) is a honey-woman, *Imbara*, the sister of *Talinini*; *l* (upper left), her mother, *Latungkala*, who made a bark basket, and *m*, another honey-woman, *Irama*. *Mauwini* is at *n*, he, with *Talinini* and *Taparalili*, performed the first *ilanis* at Biawururu, on central Bathurst Island. *Taparalili* is at *q*, and other honey-men, *Tupiringini* and *Maipuringa* are at *p* and *s*.

On Pl. 3C, the artist tried to show some of the decorations used in a *pukamuni* ceremony. The series of cross-hatched, more or less rectangular panels, at the top, represent the painted bark baskets which are left on the grave; the vertical panels at the bottom, lines of colour in the hair of the performers, and the groups of chevron designs, the scars on the bodies of the men and women. The horizontal band across the centre of the painting represents the hair belts of the men.

Pl. 3D and 3E are designs which, the artists told me, would be similar to those painted on the burial poles of *Purukupali*.

The artist of Pl. 3D did not give me the meaning of his design, but on Pl. 3E, the four barred panels, *a*, *a*, etc., represent native roads; the plain bands, *b*, *b*, etc., on either side, horizontal lines of clouds, the diagonal bands, in the upper and lower panels, native fig trees, and the cross-hatched diamond-shaped panels, spider webs on the trees.

Before the rituals at Tapararimi began, the fish-men engaged in a contest to prove who could throw their spears the furthest. *Pipinjawari* was the most skilled of them all, for, even though he stood behind the others, his spears still travelled the greatest distance. Wherever the spears landed, there are now large eucalyptus trees, the largest of them, called *Warukumbi*, being once the spear of *Pipinjawari*. But in winning the contest, the fish-man strained his spine so badly that parts of the vertebrae were forced through the skin. 773 [824]

At the conclusion of the rituals, it was the duty of *Pipinjawari* to pay the "workers" for the labour of cutting and painting the poles, and for making

[20] Other informants state they are large trees. Probably both informants are correct.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 the ceremonial baskets. But he did not fulfil his obligations. This breach of faith so infuriated the other fish-men that they chased him through the trees to spear him. Thinking to escape punishment, *Pipinjawari* jumped into the sea, and transformed himself into the queen fish. But the other men, also [825] transforming themselves into fish, continued the chase. Even now, on calm days, the aborigines often see *Pipinjawari*, with his broken back-bone now a dorsal fin, jumping out of the water to escape his pursuers.[24]

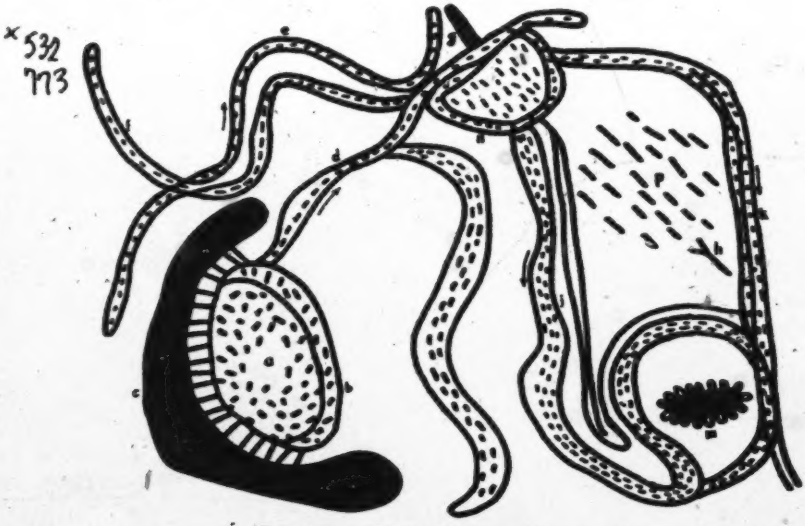

FIG. 3. *Spear-throwing Contest of Pipinjawari*

Fig. 3 is a crayon drawing of *Purukupali's pukamani* and the spear-throwing contest of the fish-people.

On the lower left is Timbaranapi, where all the mythical people assembled to perform the last *ilania* before carrying out the final burial rituals.

At Timbaranapi, the men danced in the *milimiku*, *a*, and the women on the outskirts at *b*. The radiating lines on the edge of the *milimiku* are many baskets filled with food for the "workers" (Pl. 25B), and crescent *c*, the ground cleared by the "workers". The men travelled by path, *e*, and the

[171] [24] This is the same fish as the *Tiwimbu* of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford 1956, p. 349).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

women by *d*, to a place, *n*, where they painted one another for the final *pukamani* rituals. 532x 773

Whilst there, the fish-men engaged in the spear-throwing contest mentioned in the myth.[86] Their footmarks are in circle, *n*, and the places where the spears fell at *p*. *Pipinjawari*, who stood behind the others at *g*, threw his spear the furthest, a large eucalyptus tree, *h*, being the transformed spear. The spears of the other fish-men at *p* are smaller eucalyptus trees.

When everyone had finished decorating themselves, both men and women moved to *m*, where the burial poles had been erected around the grave, the women again reaching their destination by a different path, *k*. It was at the completion of these rituals that the fish-men quarrelled with *Pipinjawari* because he refused to give the "workers" presents for their duties.

5. THE CLOSE OF THE CREATION PERIOD

The escape of *Pipinjawari*, which brought the *palaneri* (creation period) to a close, was the signal for the mythical people to return to their camps and to transform themselves into the various birds, fish, reptiles, heavenly bodies and inanimate objects of today. 773

Tjapara, the moon-man, rose into the sky, his face and body deeply scarred with the wounds he had received in his quarrel with *Purukupali*. [821]
Bima, his lover, and the mother of the dead child, *Djinini*, still bearing the mark on her head where *Purukupali* had struck her with his throwing stick, [825]
became the curlew (*Numenius cyanopus*) which still roams the forest at night, wailing in remorse for her misdeeds and for the child she lost.

Wuriupranala, one of the daughters of the original creator, *Mudungkala*, changed herself into the sun-woman, who travels across the sky carrying the [821]
torch of blazing bark given to her by *Purukupali*. The *Maludaianini* men, with the ceremonial paint still on their bodies, became that sparkling galaxy, the Milky Way.

Tukinkini, the grandson of *Murupiangkala*, instructed the mythical people (many of whom were his wives and relatives), to establish a totemic place at their old camps on Melville and Bathurst Islands to create the aboriginal foods belonging to each place, and then to change themselves into the particular bird, reptile, fish or inanimate object with which that locality is now associated.

[86] At a *pukamani* ceremony we witnessed at Melville Island, one of the Bathurst Islanders, *Jikungkaluni*, impersonating *Pipinjawari*, threw sticks, as spears, over the men carrying the poles to the grave, chanting "*Kuniprok wanikali kurinari*", meaning "We throw spears to find out who goes farthest." [796]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 However, before all these changes took place, *Tukimbini* assembled the mythical people who had attended *Purukupali's* ceremony, and taught them the rules of behaviour, and the laws of marriage and tribal relationship they must always obey. *Tukimbini* also laid down the periods of light and darkness that still determine the daily cycle of aboriginal life.

512 821 [825] When the first light appears in the morning sky it is the melodious call of *Tukimbini*, now the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) that wakens the aborigines from their sleep.

The sun-woman, rising above the eastern horizon with her blazing torch, is a signal for the aboriginal men, with spears and wooden clubs, to go hunting, and for the women, with bark baskets hanging from the sticks over their shoulders, to gather their food from the forest and the swamp-lands.

About mid-day, the sun-woman, cooking the food she has gathered, makes the heat of the day unbearable. The aborigines then retire to the shade of the trees until the late afternoon when they continue their food gathering, returning to camp to cook their evening meal just as the sun-woman sinks below the western horizon.

Soon, darkness creeps across the sky, the stars, *tapalinga*, show themselves and the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, span the heavens. It is then that the dried perspiration which the *Maludaianini* rub from their bodies, [512] falls on the eyelids of the aborigines, making them so heavy that they cannot keep awake. Next morning, at dawn, *Tukimbini* wakes the aborigines to a new day.

776 778 The following is the list of the totemic places of Melville and Bathurst Islands, illustrated by bark paintings, the names of the totemic people and their relationships to each other.

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
Murupianga	Tukimbini (bird)	Great-grandson of *Mudungkala*
Wuriupi	Garagalani (turtle)	Not known
	Wuriupranala (sun)	Daughter of *Mudungkala*
Panindu	Paninduela (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Wailu	Andjalui (fresh water)	Husband of *Wuriupranala*
	Kwouk-kwouk (frog)	Not known

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Circle *y*, pictures the totem place of *Tukimbini* at Murupianga; *w*, a man-grove swamp not far from the coastline; circle *t*, a cliff with sand at its base (probably on the sea shore); and circles *f*, *j*, and *r* are the open sea. Circle *g* pictures a submerged reef at Murupianga; *d*, *d*, are two sandbanks off the shore, and *h*, *k*, patches of jungle on the land. At *c*, *e*, etc., are the sandy shores; at *b*, *b*, etc., the lines of driftwood and debris cast upon them, while the cross-hatched background represents the tracks made in the soft sand by the hermit crabs. 532x 778

Pl. 7A deals with *Tukimbini* and his many wives at Murupianga during the *pakuseri* (creation) period.

The central figure is *Tukimbini*, the circles on either side of his face indicating the yellow ornaments he wore while he was a man. When later, he transformed himself into the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) he still retained those decorations. *Tukimbini's* penis is at *b*. The white oval, *c*, is his paper-bark shelter, the black oval, *e*, being the bough shed he built over the shelter to make it cooler. His camp fires, on either side of him, are at *d*, *d*, etc., and those of three of his wives at *n*, *n*, *n*.

The eight circles, *g*, *g*, etc., represent some of the wives of *Tukimbini*. Within the white circle, the dots, *c*, indicate *Tukimbini's* grass bed, and those over the remainder of the painting, the beds of his wives. The outer white circle, *m*, symbolizes the high ground at Murupianga.

The Hawk-bill Turtle-woman, Garagalani, at Wuriupi

The hawk-bill turtle-woman, *Garagalani*, and her husband, *Marakuni*, in company with the crocodile-man, *Jirakupai*, the wild honey-man, *Mauwini*, and many others, took part in the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*. It was the duty of *Garagalani* and the other turtle-women, to make the large folded bark baskets, and for their husbands to decorate them. 773

At the close of the creation period, when *Garagalani* and the other turtle-women were transformed into sea creatures, the baskets became their carapaces, and the painted designs on the baskets, the shell pattern on their backs.

Pl. 8A, B, two sides of a *pukamuni* basket, refers to the turtle-woman, *Garagalani*. On B, the circular designs symbolize turtle eggs; the vertical bands, lengths of turtle rope, made from fibrous bark, and the cross-hatched areas, patches of sea-grass, the food of the turtles. 532x 773

On the opposite side of the basket, Pl. 8A, the bands refer to the turtle rope, while the cross-hatching is the sea-grass.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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532 Although, in the interpretation of the paintings on this basket, gathered
773 in the early days of the expedition, the designs were not given topographical
[124] meanings, there is little doubt that fuller inquiries would have shown that the designs and the topography were linked.

On Pl. 8c, D, *e*, pictures the body of the turtle-woman, *a*, *a*, being the front flippers, *d*, *d*, the hind flippers, *b*, the carapace, *g*, the head, and *c*, *c*, *c*, etc., the bones of the creature; the dotted background, *f*, represents the marks on the tortoise-shell of the carapace.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala, at Wuriupi

821 Every morning, the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,[80] climbs a high mountain in
773 the east, and, carrying her blazing torch of bark, travels across the sky, parallel to the earth. Sometimes, the sun-woman, to please her husband, powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which, flying into the sky, reddens the early morning clouds.

On reaching the western horizon the sun-woman extinguishes her bark torch, and, by the light from its glowing end, finds her way back to the east through the underground world, Ilara.[80] But, before setting out on that journey, *Wuriupranala* again decorates herself with powdered ochres thereby colouring both the western sky and the clouds.

532 Nine bark paintings, i.e. Pls. 5A, B, C, D, 6A, B, 7B, C, D, illustrate the sun-
773 woman, *Wuriupranala*, and the topography of Wuriupi. The remainder of the paintings dealing with the sun are described under Astronomy, Chapter 7.

Pl. 5A is a painting on a small bark basket, which deals with the myth of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

The circle in the centre of each disc, of which there are sixteen, symbolises the sun-woman, the radiating lines being the rays of light at sunrise and sunset. The three wide vertical bands represent the track of the sun-woman as she moves across the sky, and the lines, linking the discs, the path in the underground world, Ilara, along which *Wuriupranala* returns to the east. The cross-hatched areas are rain, the dots, stars (*tapalingu*), and the short parallel lines, top and bottom, rain falling from the clouds.

The central dot on Pl. 5B, is the "eye" of the sun-woman seated in her paper-bark hut (the inner circle). The five radiating lines within the circle are the posts of her hut, the cross-hatching is her hair, and the five outer concentric circles are her hair-string belts.

[80] In one bark painting, Pl. 6OA, B, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala* alternately travel across the sky. This is the only time that *Murupiangkala* was referred to as a sun-woman.
[80] The moon returns to the east by a similar road.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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The vertical lines at the bottom of the painting symbolize the rays of the sun-woman as she rises in the east, and the groups of dots throughout the design, the stars, *napalinga*, in the night sky. 532x 773

On Pl. 5C, D, the two concentric circles, *d*, indicate the surface, while *a*, is the *inunka*,[81] or life centre of the sun.

The painting shows a number of different clouds; a thin misty cloud at *b*, heavy rain clouds which temporarily obscure the sun at *h*, *h*, *h*, etc., a mackerel sky at *c* (indicated by the short radiating lines), and cumulus clouds at *j*, *j*.

The colours of sunrise and sunset are indicated by the horizontal bands, *g*, *g*; while the lines of light, which sometimes radiate from the sunset, are at *e*, *e*, etc., and those from the sunrise at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 6A, B, is a bark painting of Wuriupi, the totem place of *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman. Her body, now a patch of jungle, is at *a*; her head at *n*, and her abdomen at *k*. Her arms are at *b*, *b*; her legs at *c*, *c*; her breasts at *j*, *j*; her ears at *m*, *m*; the chevron scars on her arms and back at *e*, *e*, etc. 532x 778

The windbreak of her camp, *d*, is a sandy beach at Wuriupi, and the shelter, under which she rested, is a large yam, whose leaves, vine and blossoms, are indicated by symbols, *h*, *h*; *l*, *l*; *v*, *v*, etc. Tracks made by the sun-woman are shown at *x*, *x*; *x*, *x*; red rocks on the beach at *g*, *g*; and black rocks at *f*, *f*.

Pl. 7B, a painting on one side of a *pukamani* basket, also refers to the sun-woman. 532x 821

The sun is represented by the black circle in the lower section of the design, while the disc in the centre of the circle is the torch of blazing bark which the sun-woman carries across the sky to provide the world with light and heat. The white, upper disc represents the large thunderclouds which, at the beginning of the wet season, often obscure the sun.[82] The surrounding concentric circles and the parallel lines across the middle of the design symbolize the colours on the edge of the clouds at sunrise or sunset.

The lighter coloured diagonal lines refer to groups of cirrus clouds, and the darker, to monsoon clouds of the rainy season. The dots are the stars of the night sky.

The vertical black line in the middle of Pl. 7D, is the track across the sky of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*. The black disc across the bottom is the sun in the morning; the one immediately above, the sun at midday; the next,

[81] The *inunka* is a universal life essence which permeates all living things, the plants, the creatures and man. It is situated in the solar-plexus of man. This is the same life essence as that of the Pitjandjara tribe of the western deserts of Central Australia (Mountford, 1948, p. 111). [774] [171]

[82] When a thundercloud obscures the sun, the aborigines believe that *Andjahui* (fresh water) has taken his wife, *Wuriupranala*, to his camp.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532 821 the sun at mid-afternoon, and the disc on the upper edge, *Wuriupranala* at sunset.

The lighter coloured radiating bands are the lines of light from the blazing bark torch, carried by the sun-woman; the dark-coloured ovals between, a number of *tukimbinis* (yellow-eared honey-eaters), and the lighter coloured ovals, a number of *wuriuprinilis* (mistletoe birds).

In the centre of Pl. 7C, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, seated in her bark hut at Wuriupi, The central dark mark on her abdomen indicates body paint; the white lines, *a*, *a*, are her legs, *b*, *b*, her feet and *e*, *e*, her arms.

The dark-coloured oval, *g*, is the sun-woman's paper-bark hut; the light-coloured outer circle, *d*, is a bough shed built over the hut to keep it cool, and the short radiating lines between the two circles, the posts supporting the roof.

The Eucalyptus-tree Woman, Paninduela, at Panindu

773 The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Paninduela*, created the totemic country of Panindu, north-eastern Melville Island, the streams, fish, turtles, geese and other creatures, as well as water-lilies, spike-rushes and other plants that grow in the freshwater swamps.

778 Panindu is on the upper reaches of an unnamed river in north-eastern Melville Island; Wailu, the totemic place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at the mouth of the same stream.

×532 778 On Pl. 9A, B, *a*, *a*, are the Panindu waterholes; *b*, *b*, waterfalls which flow from upper to lower pools; and *c*, *c*, are lines of foam caused by the falling water. At *t*, *t*, etc., are *pubiaka*, and *u*, *u*, etc., paper-bark trees on the banks of the stream, and at *h*, *h*, and *j*, *j*, dead *pubiaka* and paper-bark trees lying in the water.

Two lagoons, or backwaters, are indicated at *e*, *e*; two sedge-covered swamps at *f*, *g*. Water-grass on the bottom of the swamp is shown by the cross-hatched areas, *s*, *s*.

The Freshwater-man, Andjalui

778 776 The totem place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island. At Wailu there also lived the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*,[28] her son, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms, and her two daughters, *Tominuka*, the woman of the monsoon rains, and *Bumerali*, the woman of the lightning.

[28] Some aborigines thought, but were not sure, that *Andjalui* was the husband of both *Kwouk-kwouk*, and the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

a, *o* (the black areas), indicate stony hills near her camp in the upper world; and the dots on the background, the stars, *tapalingas*, which live in the upper world with the lightning woman. 532x 821 776

The Cat-fish Woman, Piriloukala at Pirilou

Pirilou, on the upper Goose Creek swamps, is the totemic place of a mythical cat-fish woman, *Piriloukala*. She was sent by *Tukimbini* to create both the totemic country and the food necessary for the natives to live on it, i.e., geese, brolgas, ducks, freshwater goannas, turtles, waterlily bulbs, red and white fruited *Eugenia* trees, and the various kinds of yams that prefer the damp soil. 778 776 [862]

On Pl. 10C, the darker crossed circles are the black, and the lighter, the white rocks at Pirilou. Panels, such as *a*, symbolize the trunks of the paper-bark trees growing in the swamp; *b*, the many waterlilies on its surface, and the white vertical lines on the background, streams of fresh water in the swamp-lands. 532x 778

The Fish-woman, Wuringa, at Arangu

Tukimbini sent the fish-woman, *Wuringa*, to establish a camp at Arangu, in Curtis Haven, northern Melville Island. Later, *Wuringa's* camp was transformed into a group of flat rocks which are uncovered only at low tide. 773 [778]

Wuringa created the aboriginal foods of the area, turtles, crabs, fish of all kinds, yams, cabbage palms and hives of wild honey.

Two bark paintings illustrate Arangu and its surroundings, Pl. 11C and Pl. 11D. 532x 778

On Pl. 11C, *a*, is a long submerged reef at Arangu; *d*, *d*, *d*, smaller submerged rocks; *b*, *c*, long sand-bars, while at *e*, *e*, are jelly fish. The remainder of the ovals are oysters on the rocks at Arangu.

On Pl. 11D, *a*, is the totemic place, Arangu; *b*, represents the soft friable boulders near by; *c*, a large rock on the coast; *d*, wave breaking over it; *h*, white sand on the beach, and *j*, the sand and gravel on the sea bottom.

Symbol *e*, indicates black trepang; *f*, *f*, white trepang; *r*, an especially large trepang; *n*, a jelly fish, and *m*, a bed of oysters. At *k*, are many pearl shells, and at *s*, *s*, conch shells. A deep channel in Curtis Haven is indicated at *p*, a yellow rock under the water, at *o*, and the seaweed growing on the rocks at Arangu, by the lighter-coloured dots on the background.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Logger-head Turtle-woman, Ringa, at Jutapinta

773 At the *pukamani* of *Purukupali*, *Ringa*, the logger-head turtle, with *Garagalani*, the hawk-bill turtle, were responsible for making the large bark ceremonial baskets.[87] When, at the close of the creation period, the men and women changed themselves into creatures or plants, the turtle-women, including *Ringa*, became the sea-going turtles.

×532 778 Pl. 12C deals with the totemic place of the logger-head turtle, a submerged reef, called Jutapinta, some miles north of Karslake Island. The central figure is the reef, the totemic body of the woman, *Ringa*, and the encircling dark-coloured area, *a*, the white sand on the sea bottom. At *b*, is the sea-water, and *c*, *c*, etc., are black rocks under the water, which today are frequented by the logger-head turtles. The yellow bands, *d*, *d*, etc., indicate the seaweed, and the white dotted areas, *e*, *e*, etc., the oysters that live on the reef. The dots, surrounding the central figure, symbolize the eggs inside the body of the logger-head turtle. Unlike the green or hawkbill turtles, the logger-heads do not lay their eggs on the sandy shore.

The Crocodile-woman, Wilinduela, at Wilindu

773 Toward the close of the creation period, the woman, *Wilinduela*, and her sister, *Numanirakala*, were sent out by their brother, *Tukimbini*, to establish totemic centres on northern Melville Island. When they reached Shark Bay, *Wilinduela* stayed on the high ground, i.e., Wilindu Island, while she sent her younger sister to Numanira, a reef uncovered only at low water. Before the two sisters separated, however, they camped together on the mainland at Mundinju (Pl. 10A).

×532 778 The black centre of Pl. 11A, is the totem place of the crocodile-woman on Wilindu Island, the surrounding white circle indicating the jungle around the totemic place. The small black discs are dark-coloured rocks on the cliffs, and the ligher-coloured, rocks on the sea beach. The outer circle is the sea.

On Pl. 11B the central disc is Wilindu Island, while the four circles on its circumference are freshwater springs.

The lower panel *a*, indicates black and *b*, yellow rocks on the coast; *c*, and *e*, *e*, etc., are areas of jungle; *f*, is a rock projecting from the sea, and *h*, the shores of Shark Bay. Poisonous yams, *kuku*, are indicated at *d*, and edible yams at *g*. The many circular discs are oysters on the rocks at Wilindu.

[462] [764] [87] At the conclusion of the present-day burial rites, these baskets, made by the women and painted by the men, are placed on the top of the burial poles as presents to the dead.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Pl. 10A pictures Mundinju, the place where the two sisters, *Wilindusla* and *Numanirakala* camped before the former made her home at Wilindu, and the latter at Numanira. 532x 778

The central black disc is Mundinju; the smaller black discs, throughout the painting, are holes in the cliffs from which seep streams of fresh water. The long, radiating panels are bands of red and yellow ochres in the cliffs, the groups of parallel lines, gutters formed in the cliffs, where *Wilindusla* urinated; and the groups of chevron designs, ferns growing among the rocks.

The Red-ochre Woman, Numanirakala, at Numanira

Numanira, created by *Numanirakala*, is a partly submerged reef a short distance from Wulrungku (Karslake Island), north-western Melville Island. 778

At low tide, the aborigines collect one of the best ochres in the country from this locality, even better than that from Imilu (Fig. 1), for, although Imilu ochres are brightest when used dry, those from Numanira are best when mixed with water. [317]

The central design on Pl. 12B indicates the flat rocks of the submerged totemic place at Numanira, while similar designs, above and below, are other rocks near by. The darker-coloured segments in these three designs indicate the red ochre, and the lighter segments the mud on the sea bottom. The white circles represent sea-weed, the darker, small rocks under the water, and the dots, the corals growing on those rocks. 532x 778

The central black disc of Pl. 12D is Numanira; the surrounding white circle, the sand on the sea floor, and the narrow darker line on the periphery, the red ochre, for which the island is noted.

The radiating black panels symbolize clams, the lighter panels, oysters, both of which are plentiful on the rocks of the island. The outer circle is the mud, and the dots are bunches of weed on the sea-bottom.

The Spider-woman, Baraka, at Rungani

During *palaneri* times, the spider-woman, *Baraka*, who lived at Rungani, made a bark basket for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*. She first stripped a sheet of bark from a eucalyptus tree, heated it over the fire to make it flexible, then, bending it double, sewed the edges together with split lawyer vine. From that day until now, the women of Melville and Bathurst Islands have made their baskets in the same manner. After the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* instructed his wife, *Baraka*, to establish a totemic place at Rungani, northern Melville Island. 773 285 [462] 773

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Timarai-inga, at Mandumpi

Pl. 12A pictures the totem place of a eucalyptus-tree woman, *Timarai-inga*, a small rocky island, near the coast at Mandumpi, north-western Melville Island. 532x 778

The black diamond shapes indicate bands of yellow ochre, and the light-coloured designs, *a*, *a*, etc., white ochres in the cliff face at Mandumpi. The barred panels, *b*, *b*, symbolize a freshwater stream which flows into the sea. The chevrons throughout the design picture ferns growing among the rocks.

Although I did not gather specific details of the totemic story, it is safe to assume that *Timarai-inga* was the creator of this totemic place. [114]

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Pungulu, at Patuapuru

The totemic place of the eucalyptus-tree woman, *Pungulu*, is at Patuapuru (Deception Point), northern Bathurst Island.

The horizontal lines *b*, *b*, on Pl. 14C, D, symbolize the open sea at Patuapuru, and *a*, *a*, etc., on the top of the painting, high light-coloured cliffs. At *c*, is another cliff of reddish colour, and *d*, *d*, etc., are the many rocks on the beach which are covered at high tide.

The long panel *f*, *f*, on the left-hand side of the painting, is the open beach at Patuapuru, and the vertical panels *e*, *e*, etc., are parallel lines of sand-ridges behind the beach.

In the centre line of the painting, at *h*, and *n*, are two casuarina trees, and at *k*, is a freshwater lagoon on the banks of which are many unidentified jungle trees. A high sandhill is indicated at *m* (upper right), and the marine grass on the sea-shore, by the cross-hatching on the background.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Aragoutourina,[39] *at Putawini*

The first camp of *Aragoutourina* was at Puntubu, at the headwaters of the Tjipripu River, central Melville Island, where she stayed for a while. She then travelled south-west over the watershed to Kuruwu River which empties its water into the Apsley Straits. After making this water-course, *Aragoutourina* walked to Putawini Point, western Bathurst Island,[40] where she created the topography and natural history of the surrounding country. 773

A jungle near Putawini is represented on Pl. 14A, B, by the central white 532x 778

[39] A red-flowering eucalypt locally known as the bloodwood.
[40] Called Marloo Point on the official maps.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

border, the muddy floor. The other black rectangles, *p*, *p*, etc., indicate rocks in the sea, and their lighter-coloured borders, the waves breaking over them. 532x 778

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Matingalia, at Putawini

A eucalyptus-tree woman *Matingalia* created a rocky island of the same name at the mouth of Putawini Creek, western Bathurst Island. I was not able to gather further details of the mythical story. 773

The central vertical panel *a*, of Pl. 16A, is the open sea, and the outer surrounding white rectangle, *h*, *h*, the dry land of the island. Small hills are at *k*, *k* (top), a large hill is at *o* (top); and deposits of red ochre, *m*, *m*, etc., also form part of the island. 532x 778

A small branch of the Putawini Creek is indicated by the white band at *b*; another branch, Piriki, at *c*; another near Pintamu, at *d*; and still another (unnamed) at *f*, *f*. Timinindu and Dunkunaru Creeks (unidentified) are at *g*, *g*, and *e*, respectively. The eggs of a crocodile, *lukupianga*, similar to those of *Jirakupai*, the dangerous, sea-going *Crocodilus porosus*, are indicated by the white discs, *n*, *n*, etc. [825]

The Bush-fire woman, Puruliangkala, at Turiturina Island

The totemic place of the woman of the bush-fires, *Puruliangkala*, is on Turiturina Island, in Port Hurd, western Bathurst Island, where the mythical bird-man and later the *Ningauis* performed the first *kulama* ceremonies (p. 123). 778 [773]

The central white circle on Pl. 16D, is Turiturina Island: the smaller circles, *a*, *a*, are low rocks in the sea, once the camp-fires of *Puruliangkala*; and *b*, *b*, freshwater springs that provided her with water. The black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., are deposits of red ochre, and *d*, *d*, *d*, etc., deposits of white ochre, used by both the mythical woman and the *Ningauis* to decorate themselves for their ceremonies during *palaneri* times. 532x 778

At *e*, *e*, etc., are many milkwood trees, the sap of which, like the ochre deposits, was also utilized by both *Puruliangkala* and the *Ningauis* for body decorations. This sap is still used in the opening rituals of the *kulama* (p. 131). The dots are white fruits, *mandikama*, which *Puruliangkala* created for food. [824] [386]

The Sand-fly woman, Mandubuka, at Murninini

Mandubuka, the sand-fly woman, established the totemic place of Murninini, south-western Bathurst Island. 773 778

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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The White-Cockatoo woman, Milapukala, at Milapuru

A white-cockatoo woman, *Milapukala*, made a large freshwater lagoon at Milapuru, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. At the same time she created opossums, wallabies, carpet snakes, many kinds of lizards, hives of wild honey and many other foods so that she, and later the aborigines, would have plenty to eat. 773 ●

The central black oval on Pl. 16c, is the lagoon, the totem place of the white cockatoo-woman, the short radiating lines between this and the white oval being groups of rushes on the edge of the water. 532 × 778

The large white oval represents the backwaters of Milapuru, and the outer black oval, the red soil of the surrounding uplands. The radiating lines between these ovals are pandanus trees growing along the shores.

The Pandanus-tree woman, Miatrina, at Primadua

At the command of *Tukimbini*, the *Miatrina* women and their children travelled to Primadua, southern Bathurst Island to establish a totemic centre. [773]

On Pl. 18a, the bark hut of the *Miatrina* women is shown as a black oval in the centre of the painting. This hut is now a submerged rock, called Purupatimu. The dark-coloured band, *a*, *a*, a red sandbar encircling Purupatimu, was once the grass and leaves which the mythical women pushed back when they were cleaning the ground for their camp.

The small white discs (the breasts of the *Miatrina* woman), are now black, submerged rocks; the series of vertical panels (once the children), sandbars in the shallow water; and the two meandering lines, *b*, *b*, (where the children played), salt-water creeks at Primadua. Mungunu, an adjacent locality, is associated with both the *Miatrina* woman and a white cockatoo-woman, *Inkuka*.

The Yam people, Tililindigia and Ubuna, at Primadua

This simple painting, Pl. 18b, about which I gathered but little information, deals with the totem place of two poisonous yams,[42] *Tililindigia* and *Ubuna* at Primadua.

The white oval, the totem place of the yam people, is now a hill at Primadua; the diagonals, outlined in white, are the large *ubuna* yams, and the dark-coloured diagonals, the smaller *tililindigia* yams. The dots represent trees of the Taulama jungle at the base of which trees the aborigines find these yams.

[42] In their raw state these yams are highly poisonous. If, however, they are husked, pounded out flat and soaked in water for several days, the yams are edible. [252]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mudungkala,[48] *at Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island)*

●773 After the burial of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* sent his wife, *Mudungkala*, to Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island) to establish a totemic place and create the local foods.

Pl. 19c, D, illustrates, with considerable detail, the topography of the
*532 island and the home of the little spirit children, *Pitipituis*.
778 The central design, *a*, is Jurubulinai; circle *b*, (lower left) depicts a small island nearby on which there is a freshwater spring where *Mudungkala* once urinated; and circle *c* (lower right) is a bed of cockles, one of the local foods created by the mythical woman.

On the lower left, a crescent, *d*, symbolizes a small salt-water creek in a mangrove swamp where *Mudungkala* quenched her thirst. At *f*, there is a large rock in the deeper water, a favourite haunt of the turtles. Here the mythical woman once collected white ochre to decorate herself.

Boulders, at one time the stone axes, *mungwanis*, of *Mudungkala* are at *e* (bottom); a stony point of land, the transformed bark basket, is at *g*; a pile of red rocks (her camp fire), at *h*; a sandbar (the cycad palm under which *Mudungkala* sheltered), at *j*; and a salt-water swamp (where she ground her stone axe), at *k*, *k*. The passage between Jurubulinai and Bathurst Island is indicated by the horizontal bands, *ll*, *ll*.

The white crescent, *m*, at the top of the painting, a large sand-bar, Unakumba, on the south of the island, is one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*. The aborigines claim that, when some distance from
[776] Unakumba, they often see the spirit children, but, as they come closer, the little people disappear.

When the tide is out, the *Pitipituis* play on a sandbar, *p*, but when it is covered, the spirit children go to their camps at *o*, under the sand, where everything is dry and warm.

Should one of the spirit children wish to visit an aboriginal man in a
[787] dream, to ask for a mother, it walks along the road, *q*, and, if unsuccessful in
[842] its quest, returns by road, *r*. At *s*, on the left-hand side, is the waterhole from which the *Pitipituis* obtain their drinking water, and at *t*, is their diminutive bark canoe, less than a yard long, which, like the spirit children themselves, can be seen at a distance, but disappears when the aborigines come closer.

Red stones, *ee*, and yellow stones, *dd* (right), were once body paint used by the mythical eucalyptus-tree woman. Her nautilus-shell ornament is at *v*;

[48] Locally known as the ironwood tree.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

her camp, now a bed of oysters at *y*; her bark hut, a large boulder projecting from a sandbank, at *ee*; and her paper-bark water-carrier, now a large tree, at *r* (left). 532x 778

The body and head of a carpet snake cooked and eaten by *Mudungkala* are boulders, *x*, *w*, on the coast of Jurubulinai. One of the spots at Cockle Point, in Apsley Straits, where *Mudungkala* camped when returning from *Purukupali's pukamuni*, is now a large rock, *bb* (lower left); a spring of fresh water, where she cooked her shell-fish, is at *ff*; while at *l* (centre), there is a patch of submarine grass, the favourite food of the turtles.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mantinuria, at Rulijunga

The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Mantinuria*, created a totemic place, Rulijunga, on the headwaters of the Tjipripu River. 773 778

At Rulijunga there is a large flat plain (central black design, Pl. 18A), which *Mantinuria* cleared so that the mythical people, travelling from Bathurst and western Melville Island, to attend the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, could perform an *ilania* (p. 32). 532x 773

The circles on the periphery of the central black disc, are the roots, and the eight long ovals, the trunks and leaves of cabbage palms which the *Mantinuria* woman created to provide food for herself and the participants of the *ilania* ceremony.

The outer dark-coloured oval, at *a*, *a*, is the level plain surrounding the ceremonial ground, the inner black line symbolizing the red clouds at sunset and the white outer line, the cumulus clouds of the day-time. The dots represent small shrubs and tufts of grass at Rulijunga.

The Fork-tailed Kite-man, Mudati, and his wife, the Dingo-woman, Kirijuna, at Arunumpi

During *palaneri* times, *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite-man and his wife, *Kirijuna*, a dingo-woman, were travelling together near Arunumpi, southern Melville Island, when *Mudati* saw his wife's brother, *Jurumu*, the eagle-man, coming towards them. *Mudati* warned his wife, for her own safety, not to speak or even look at her brother, but the woman, who had not seen her brother for many years, took a quick glance just to see how much he had grown. Instantly, she dropped dead at her husband's feet. But even as he watched he saw her change into a dingo, rise to her feet and slink away. 773 825 593

Since then, the dingo, ashamed of her actions in those early times, keeps

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

825 out of sight, while, following the command of *Mudati*, aboriginal brothers
[593] and sisters, once they become adult, never look at each other, nor converse, except through a third person.

Pl. 20A, B, describes the natural features at Arunumpi. A large rock, at *a*,
×532 was once *Mudati's* camp; a boulder, *d*, his fire; and a path, *c*, made by the
778 mythical man as he walked to and from his camp at *a*. Another path, *b*, was made by a mangrove bird-man, *Ulubingini*, whose camp is at *j*. *Mudati* is at *m*; his wife, *Kirijuna*, at *k*, and *Jurumu*, at *f* (lower left).

Nearby, at *e*, there is a deposit of yellow ochre, and another at *g*, of white, both of which *Mudati* used when he was a *wadjeniati* initiate at the first *kulama* ceremony held at Turiturina (p. 123). *Mudati's kulama* initiation ornaments, now unspecified natural features are: his cockatoo feather head-dress, *primititi*, at *w*, *w*; arm ornaments, *palmatjinas*, at *x*, *x*, *x*; and cane arm ornaments, *jairinis*, at *v*. A *kulama* ground, *u*, where a ceremony was once held, is now a flat rocky surface, a half a mile in diameter, and the shelter, *t*, behind which the initiates rested during the ceremony, a large boulder.

At *h*, is a patch of jungle where *Kirijuna*, *Mudati's* wife, once collected yams. She left her palm leaf, *tulini*, basket at *l* (upper right); her small bark basket at *o*; and her larger bark basket at *s*. These are now outcropping rocks at the totemic site.

A turtle, once speared by *Mudati*, is now a submerged boulder at *m*; the sand-bank, on which he stood, is a high red cliff at *n*, and the large stream, in which he often caught fish, is indicated by the crescent-shape at *r*.

The Flying-fox man, Murungimpili, and Bamboo-woman, Kaialili, at the Kaialili lagoon

778 At the Kaialili lagoon, near the head of the De Vere creek at Muranapi, southern Melville Island, there are two totemic places, one belonging to *Murungimpili*, the flying-fox man, and the other to *Kaialili*,[44] the bamboo-
● [773] woman. Together, these mythical people created many trees, plants, cat-fish, crabs and other sea creatures.

Pl. 20C, D, deals with the topography of the area. At *m*, is the Kaialili
×532 lagoon, the totem place of the bamboo-woman, at *p*, the Buliati (De Vere)
778 Creek; at *c*, *c*, are other small watercourses, and *e*, *e*, etc., springs, all of which run into the Kaialili lagoon. The cross-hatching at *o*, *o*, is a swamp, at the source of Buliati Creek, and the cross-hatched area, *f*, *f*, the grass on its

[44] I did not find out the relationships between *Murungimpili* and *Kaialili*; it is likely that they were man and wife.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

bottom. Symbols, *d* (right) and *g* (top), indicate the red cliffs of the Kaialili lagoon. The rocky banks of the Buliati Creek are indicated at *j*, and holes in the ground (once the camps of the man, *Murungimpill*) at *h*. 532 x 778

The open space on the bottom of the painting is the sea, circles, *b*, *b*, etc., being stones on the sandy bottom. Mangrove swamps *w*, *w*, are on the sea-shore; the dotted areas are jungle trees, *pintabinga*, and two species of eucalyptus trees, *simingarina* and *ukitangira*. At *a*, *a*, etc., are places where the aborigines dig for ochre, which is similar to that at Imilu. Clouds as seen through the trees, are indicated by triangles, *k*, *k*, and eucalyptus trees by the dots at *n* (top).

The Blow-fly Woman, Mandubuka,[46] *at Muranapi*

Mandubuka, the blow-fly woman, established totemic places first in the mangrove swamps at Muranapi, then on Waitbak (N.W. Vernon) Island. [773] The lower part of the design on Pl. 19A, B, pictures the natural features at Muranapi, and the upper, those at Waitbak.

The horizontal white band, *c*, *c*, symbolizes the swift tide-way between Muranapi and Waitbak Islands, while the central circle, *a*, the camp of *Mandubuka*, is a rock in the mangrove swamps.

Salt-water creeks, *b*, *b*, flow first into the small lagoons, *x*, *x*, then into the sea at *d*.

Mandubuka brought her drinking water from a spring, *f*, in palm-leaf (*ulini*) baskets. These baskets were later transformed into white boulders in the mangrove swamps.

The two freshwater swamps at *g*, and *h*, filled with bamboos, belong to *Kaialili* (the bamboo-woman of upper Muranapi, Pl. 20C, D). In swamp, *g*, grow the thick-walled species which the aborigines do not use, and in *h*, much smaller bamboos. At the present time, the mainlanders use these smaller bamboos as the shafts of their hunting spears.

Two groups of red stones, *j*, *j*, were once the cooking hearths, while the white boulders, *k*, *k*, are the transformed stone axes of *Mandubuka*.

After the mythical woman created the natural features on the coast of Muranapi, she continued her work on Waitbak Island. Setting out from her camp at *a*, she travelled along the right-hand path, *y*, only to find that the way was blocked by deep water. So she returned to her starting place and, by using the left-hand track, *l*, succeeded in reaching her destination. These tracks have since been transformed into long sand-bars in the sea. 773

[46] This is also the name of the sand-fly on Bathurst Island. There is possibly a link between the two totemic places, or they may be the same totemic being.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

At *m*, is Waitbak Island, where *Mandubuka* established her second camp; *v* and *w*, being springs where she obtained her drinking water, and *p*, a place where she left one of her yam sticks. The larger stick is now a small island off the coast of Waitbak, and two smaller sticks, *r*, *r*, are rocks on the shore.

Mandubuka sheltered from the rain under a large pandanus palm, *t*, and at *u*, cut a branch from a mangrove tree to make her digging sticks. This locality is now a large mangrove swamp.

The dots, on the upper panel, symbolize tufts of grass and small plants at Waitbak; and on the lower, the tall annual grass of the high land at Muranapi.

The March-fly Woman, Kudjatumpi, at Bonkaitji

[773] The totemic place created by the March-fly woman, *Kudjatumpi*, is a low rocky island, Kudjatumpi, about three miles from the coast at Bonkaitji, southern Melville Island.

The central black dot, *a*, on Pl. 21A, B, is the totem place of *Kudjatumpi*, and the surrounding white area, *b*, a bar of sand exposed at low tide. In the salt-water creek, Bonkaitji, *c* (upper left), which flows into the Clarence Strait, is a small rock, *d*. A fish, with stinging spines, called *pururidji* (probably the stone fish) is at *e* (upper left); and, an edible fish, since transformed into low rocks, on the edge of the waters, is at *j*.

Other natural features made by *Kudjatumpi* are: a small freshwater creek, Biriki, *f*, which flows into Bonkaitji; a lagoon, *h*, created by the mythical woman so that the freshwater turtles would have a place in which to live; a flat rock, *k*, in the deep water, where the present sea-going turtles gather their food; and a lagoon, *l*, which was once *Kudjatumpi's* permanent camp.

A hill, *i* (left) is her transformed bush shelter; a lagoon, *jj* (upper left), her temporary camp; a low rounded boulder, *q*, her fireplace; and a flat rock, *r*, a sheet of stringy-bark which she used as a roof. Long narrow stones at *p*, were once sticks that supported her bark shelter, and piles of stones, *s*, *s* (lower panel), places where she cooked her food.

Kudjatumpi's personal belongings, her paper-bark water carriers, *jurululu*, *w*, her crooked sticks, *m* (lower left), and *n* (centre), used to carry those baskets, her throwing sticks, *x* (right), and her stone axes, *o* (bottom), are now scattered piles of boulders on the uplands of Bonkaitji. Her head ornament of feathers, *hh* (upper left), on the other hand, has been transformed into a group of submerged rocks in the sea.

When the mythical woman painted her body, she created still more

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

All the facial designs, about which I was able to find out the meanings (except Pl. 28B), dealt with some totemic creature, or myth. This was in direct contrast to the designs painted on the *nulini* burial poles, where few, if any, were associated with the myths or the totemic places. 302 778 [531]

A Wadjeniati Initiate

Pl. 28A is the facial design of a *Wadjeniati* initiate in the *kulama* ceremony (p. 130). The white dots represent a white edible plum, *murumbatana*, the red dots, a small red fruit, *kupalitju*, and the lines, the limbs of the trees on which the fruit grew. The white around the eyes and on the forehead is symbolical of *Purujiitini*, the boobook owl-man (*Ninox novae-zealandiae*), the leader of the second *kulama* ceremony. [881]

The Poisonous Water Snake, Tuluma

Pl. 28B, a facial *pukamuni* design, symbolizes the markings on the skin of a poisonous water snake, *tuluma*. Although I neglected to ask the aborigines whether there was any myth associated with this facial decoration, it is likely that the design refers to an incident in creation times.

The Shark, Tudawala

At *Purukupali's pukamuni*, the shark-man, *Tudawala*, represented on Pl. 28C, painted his face so that he would appear as ferocious as possible. The radiating lines round his eyes were supposed to have added greatly to his savage appearance. After the *pukamuni*, *Tudawala* fought with *Kumuninu*, the salmon man, because the latter, although he had a large number of hair-belts, refused to give any to *Tudawala*. [773]

Although the shark-man escaped injury in that encounter, he wounded the fish-man a number of times with his throwing sticks, wounds which can still be seen, as parallel lines, on the head of the salmon (see Pl. 28F).

The Fish, Mungumini

Pl. 28D is a facial design, called *Mungumini*, worn at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* by a fish of the same name. The markings on the face are supposed to be similar to those on the head of the present-day fish.

The Thunder-man, Pakadringa

Pl. 28E, a *pukamuni* facial design, refers to the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, and the dangerous *Maratji* (p. 154), both of whom are closely associated in the myths.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

pole at Punata on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), while I saw and photographed the third example in the form of a highly conventionalised human figure (Pl. 38A, B, C), which was on an old grave not far from our camp. No doubt there are other examples of these poles on the deserted graves of the Islands. I saw recently, in the Musée Ethnographique et Musée Suisse de Folklore, Bâle, Switzerland, two full-length human figures which had been collected at Bathurst Island by Mr. Karel Kupta in 1956. 532x 765

This evidence indicates that, for thirty years, at least, the men and women of the Tiwi,[11] occasionally carved burial poles in human form; we do not know when the practice of carving the smaller figures[12] began.

At first sight it appeared that these wooden figures might have been a cultural trait borrowed, as in north-eastern Arnhem Land, from the Malay trepangers. Further research, however, did not confirm this hypothesis. [177]

Although now and again some Malay prau, driven off its course by contrary winds, must have touched the shores of either Melville or Bathurst Island, it is certain that the men of the Tiwi, who were notably unfriendly, would have endeavoured to drive them away. This unfriendliness probably explains why the Malays were not able to establish themselves on these Islands as they did in north-eastern Arnhem Land. The old men of the Tiwi do not remember any Malay fishermen visiting their country. This evidence that the Malays did not settle on the land of the Tiwi is further supported by Campbell (1834), who writes (p. 143), "The Malays were never seen near Melville Island", and later (p. 155), ". . . Malay fishermen were forbidden to go near Melville Island . . . alleging that it was infested with pirates. . . ." 174 648 [114]

This evidence suggests that the Tiwi practice of carving human figures in wood was not, like that of the aborigines of Arnhem Land, borrowed from a Malayan source, but is a recent local development, probably stimulated by the acquisition of steel tools and the other possessions of the white man. For instance, it would be easy to imagine a skilled aboriginal trying to make his pole resemble the tall bodies of the white man's saints in the mission church. From these larger would develop the smaller figures. 532x 765 177

It is unlikely that any elaborately carved burial pole, much less one in the form of a human figure, would be more than fifty years old. Before that time, except those stolen from the short-lived Fort Dundas settlement, the Tiwi would have owned few, if any steel tools. 532x 765

Although the Tiwi have no specific myth about the larger burial poles, 773

[11] A woman may cut a burial pole instead of her husband, should he be absent.

[12] There is a difference, however, between the two; the *mulini* poles, in human form, are cut from the hardest and most durable eucalypt; the smaller figures from the soft wood of the beach kapok, a wood which is quickly destroyed by insects.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 they do have one which explains, to their satisfaction, the origin of the small
×732 figures.[18]
765 On the occasion of the first *pukamuni* at Tapararimi, a man, *Piamasilidjara*, who later become the tawny frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*), made and painted a small figure, similar to Pl. 40c, F. This he placed on the grave to impersonate *Purukupali*, whose body was not buried there, he having walked into the sea and drowned himself.

×532 At present these human figures, both large and small, are made, either at
765 the request of the chief mourner, or by the "worker" himself. This happens if the man cutting the pole, holding the dead person in especial esteem, wishes to please his spirit. The smaller figures may represent either a son of the dead or mythical men and women of creation times.

When the burial poles are being erected, one of them, in human form, or a smaller figure, is occasionally placed at the head of the grave.[14] The *mopaditi*,
[775] on leaving its body, sees the wooden figure, and thinking it is either its son, or one of its old companions, stays at the grave and talks to it about old times. These wooden figures have no *imunka* (life essence), nevertheless the *mopaditi*, who is believed to be stupid and easily misled, thinks it is talking to a living person.

I collected two burial poles (Pl. 39) in the form of highly conventionalized
[126] human beings, and six smaller, full-length figures (Pl. 40, 41). I also photographed a pole, in human form, on an old grave (Pl. 38A, B, C).

Pl. 39A, B, C, is a *pukamuni* pole representing a performer, ready to take part in the final burial rituals. The projection *m* (39B), is his hair; *n*, *n*, are his ears, and *o*, *o*, his arms; *p* is a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball), and *s*, (39A), his backbone.

The cross-hatched squares, *a*, *a*, *a* (39A), represent patches of grass on the floor of the jungle; the designs, *e*, *e*, *e*, jungle trees, and *b*, *b*, *b*, spider webs in the branches.

The waves of the sea are indicated by the bands of short vertical lines, *c*, *c*, *c*; a boulder on the sea-shore by oval *f* (39A); oysters on the rocks by the squares with diagonal lines, *d*, *d*, and paper-bark trees by the groups of intersecting lines at *e*, *e*.

The designs on the face and head (39C) are: *k*, edible fruit, *h*, grass in

[174] [18] This myth does not necessarily indicate great age because those of non-literate people tend to keep up-to-date. Mountford, 1956, p. 98, and Worsley, 1955, p. 856, both give examples of how the Groote Eylandt aborigines have incorporated foreign elements in their creation stories.

[14] This is only one of many safeguards used by the Tiwi to keep the *mopaditi* away from the camp of its old companions, particularly during the first few days after death.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

on sheets of paper to illustrate the body markings used at each stage of initiation. 115 881

To give a complete account of the full *kulama* which included initiation as well as the preparation of the yam for food, I have included both groups of rituals, as they would have been performed in the original *kulama* ceremony. However, it must be borne in mind that we witnessed only the rituals belonging to the *kulama* yam. As stated before, the details of initiation were obtained from the fully initiated men. 128 881 123

I. THE MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGIN

(1) *The first Kulama Ceremony*

During *palaneri* (creation) times, not long before the death of *Purukupali*, when all the animals and birds were still men and women, *Purujikini*, a boobook owl-man, and his wife, *Pinsoma*, a barn owl-woman, decided to perform the first *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina, in Port Hurd, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1). They invited *Jirakati*, later the white-headed sea-eagle, and *Tupatupini*, the small owl, to be present, planning to make them the first initiates. Many other people assisted in the ceremony, the *Ningauis*, a small spirit people who still live in the mangrove swamps nearby; *Inwati*, *Maunini* and *Taparalili*, three groups of the honey people; *Jirakupai*, the sea-going crocodile; *Narina*, the black cockatoo, and *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle. 773 881

Tutimbini, *Wuriuprinili* and a number of ancestral people from the eastern end of Melville Island, being opposed to the holding of the *kulama* ceremony, did not attend.

At the ceremony, the white-headed eagle, *Jirakati*, was the first *Wadjeniati* initiate (he still wears the ceremonial paint), and the owl, *Tupatupini*, the first *Miltinstrina*. There is no mention in the creation myths of the other grades of initiation.

When the first *kulama* ceremony was finished[18] the participants returned to their homes until the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, which was performed at the end of the *palaneri* (creation period). It was then that *Purujikini*, the leader

[18] Some informants referred to a fight which took place at the first *kulama* in which *Purujikini* was attacked because he did not wait for some late-comers. Others described another quarrel which started when one of the *kulama* men followed a woman of the Kaimaruniri group into the mangrove swamps and raped her so badly that she died.

The Kaimaruniri people attacked the performers of the *kulama*, killing some and driving others into the mangrove swamps where they live today as the *Ningauis*. The more elderly informants, *Tjomokuapua* and *Mokumirinita*, however, said that there were no quarrels at the first *kulama*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 of the *kulama* ceremony, became the boobook owl, his wife, *Pinuma*, the
881 barn owl, *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, *Jirakasi*, the white-headed sea-eagle, *Tupatupini*, a small owl, and so on.

(2) *The Second Kulama Ceremony*

After the close of *palaneri* times, the *Ningauis*, a spirit people, who had been present at the first *kulama*, performed a second ceremony on the same island, Turiturina, as was used by *Purutjikini* during the creation period. On the second occasion, the *Ningauis* carried out the complete *kulama*, which included not only the preparation of the poisonous *kulama* yam for food, but also the performance of all the grades of initiation from that of the *Marukumuni* to the *Mikingula*.

At its completion, the *Ningauis* decreed that the form of the ceremony with its proceeding and initiation rituals, should always be the same. The aborigines believe that if this form is altered, a mysterious sickness, called
[753] *saini* will punish them by making everyone ill.

(3) *The Myth of the Ningauis*

After the second *kulama*, the *Ningauis* made their home in the mangrove swamps of a small island, Imaluna, near Cape Helvetius, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1).

The *Ningauis* are somewhat like the present-day aborigines, except that
776 they are small people, about two feet high, with long hair and very short feet, their footmarks resembling those of an oversized dog. The aborigines often see these tracks on the edge of the mangrove swamps of Imaluna (Pl. 22c).

Should an aboriginal, when hunting through the swamps, go too near a home of the *Ningauis*, one of the *Ningauis* by calling, "Eeh", would cause the whole place to be suddenly enveloped in complete darkness. The native could bring the light back again by striking the trunk of a mangrove tree with a stick, but, in the meantime, the *Ningauis*, by taking advantage of the darkness, would have sneaked away. Therefore, no aboriginal has seen a *Ningaui* even though they are often heard in the mangrove swamps calling "Eeh, eeh", to each other.

When the *Ningauis* chant their songs after dark, the mangrove swamps become as brightly lit as in the day-time. There are stories of how aboriginal hunters, lured by the songs and the light, have wandered among the tangled mangroves to see what was going on, but as soon as the *Ningauis* heard the intruders, they finished their song with the word "Eeh",[16] which made the

[533] [16] The *Ningaui* songs chanted by *Jilungkahuni*, at one of the *ilonias* of *Waniampori* (p. 74), all ended with a long drawn-out "Eeh".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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former locality make their camp in a dense jungle, and at the latter, in the forest near the sea-coast. At one time, these *Pitipituis* lived at Juruna, but left after a while and established these camps at Jurilupa and Jampatural. 776

(9) Unakumbi (Buchanan Island). Here, the home of the *Pitipituis* is on a sandbank on the southern side of the island. When the tide is low, the little people play on the sandbank, but when it is high, they go to their underground homes, where it is warm and dry.

During the early creation (*palaneri*) times, *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the *Pitipituis* in a bark canoe, brought back some of the little people and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala* so that they could have children. In a later period, *Purukupali* gave the *Pitipituis* to his wife, *Bima*, who in turn presented them to their future mothers. 773 776

Before *Purukupali* drowned himself, after the death of his son, *Djinini*, he told the *Pitipituis* that they must find their own mothers. Now, should one of these little people wish to become a human being, it travels to a native camp, and giving her name, asks one of the married men (when he is asleep) where its future mother is camping. After the father has indicated the particular wife, the little sprite waits a suitable opportunity to enter her vulva and start life as a human being. 776 842 787

The aborigines believe implicitly in the *Pitipituis* and the mystical origin of their children; several of them gave me details of how their children came to them in dreams.

Old *Tjamalampua* told of the time when, while he was asleep, the *mopaditi* of his dead father brought him a spirit child, and sat it on his knee saying, "This is your daughter." *Tjamalampua* directed the little *Pitipitui* to one of his wives, who later became its mother.

Muramajua described how his three children came to him.

(1) A boy, now dead, came from a Japanese plane[48] and asked for his wife as a mother. Later she felt the movements of the child. [177]

(2) A little girl came to him in a dream and spat at him. His wife conceived soon afterwards.

(3) His last girl hit him on the head whilst he was asleep, and, in his fright, he slapped her face. It was not long afterwards that his wife became pregnant.

Those accounts indicate that although, ideally, the child comes to the father and asks for the mother, in actual practice they visit the father under a number of conditions.

[48] This aboriginal had worked with the Australian Navy during the war; an example of acculturation.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

4. THE SEA-DOGS, THE WANKUIS

●773 A fragment of a myth tells of how, at the close of the creation period, a mythical man, called *Kirinua*, assembled all the dogs and asked them whether they would prefer to live on the land or in the sea. The present-day dingoes, the *Kirijuna*, chose the land, and others, the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, the sandbanks in the sea.

776 The home of one group of the sea-dogs is a long sand-bar on the eastern side of the entrance to Snake Bay, about a mile from the expedition camp, over which, except at the spring tides, the waves break continuously.
[823] The aborigines look on the breaking waves as the wagging tails of the *Wankuis*.

When the tide is out in the day-time and the sandbank exposed and dry, the sea-dogs, to escape being seen go to their camps under the sand.

When it is dark, the *Wankuis* leave their watery home, come on shore and make their camps in low caves at the base of a cliff at Snake Bay (Pl. 472). While there, the *Wankuis* capture the sea-foods of the shallow waters, sting-rays, shell-fish and crabs. The aborigines claim that on the still nights they often hear the *Wankuis* barking.

In the shallow waters of a sandbar near Cape Fourcroy, the aborigines frequently see another kind of *Wankui* which walks on three legs, waving the fourth in the air.

*532 Pl. 470 pictures the *Wankuis* at the sandbar in Snake Bay. In the centre,
776 with many teats, is the mother surrounded by her twelve sons. It is significant that there was no mention of the father.

5. THE RAINBOW, MARATJI

171 A belief in a mythical serpent-like creature, which is associated with, or is,
776 the rainbow, and is dangerous to strangers, but not to the local inhabitants, occupies an important place, not only in the mythology of the Australian
[821] aborigines, but in the mythologies of people in many parts of the world. These mythical creatures are usually highly-coloured (like the rainbow), of huge size and have both mane and beard.

I have traced these mythical creatures, in their various forms, from the River Murray in South Australia, through Central Australia to Arnhem Land. In the western deserts of Central Australia, Mountford, 1948, p. 138, writes, "The snake (*wonambi*) is a huge, many-coloured creature with a
[778] mane and a beard. It is feared . . . because it attacks all strangers who approach

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER VII

The Astronomy of the Tiwi

171 THE Tiwi's knowledge of the night sky does not appear to be as extensive as
773 that of the aborigines of the adjoining Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, Part 6).

821 Although myths relating to the sun, the moon, the Milky Way, the stars and Orion and the Pleiades were often told, I was unable to find any relating to the Southern Cross, Scorpio, the Magellan Clouds and other constellations well-known to the aborigines of Arnhem Land.

The Universe

821 The Tiwi believe that the earth is flat, and so limited in area that, if they travel far from the shores of their tribal country, they would fall over the edge. As evidence of this they point out that, in the morning they can see *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman, rise above the eastern rim and, at the end of the day, disappear beneath the western rim of the world.

The earth, too, is of limited thickness, the aborigines believing that, if they dug a hole sufficiently deep they would reach the lower world, *Ilara*.[68]

772 The aboriginal universe of the Tiwi consists of four levels, (*a*) a subterranean world, Ilara, (*b*) the earth on which the aborigines live, (*c*), the sky-land, Juwuku, and (*d*) an upper world, Tuniruna.

On Ilara where it is always dark, there are two high stony ranges with a
772 valley between. It is along this valley that the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,
776 and according to some informants, the moon-man, *Tjapara*, guided only by
821 the light of their glowing torch of bark, travel each day from the western horizon to their homes in the east. As there are no plants or animals on Ilara, the celestial travellers cannot gather any food during their underground journey, although they can quench their thirst at a stream which flows from the top of one of the high mountains.

During the wet season, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms; *Tomituka*, the woman of the monsoon rains; *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, with her husband and her many children, make their home on the sky-land,

[171] [68] I did not find a belief among the Melville Islanders, like that of the aborigines of Groote Eylandt, that the earth was a thin crust resting on the top of the water. (Mountford, 1956, p. 67.)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

824 This belief probably accounts for the fact that I did not hear any songs chanted, or witness any ceremonies (with the possible exception of the *kulama*) that would bring about a plentiful supply of food. Nor did I hear [171] of any increase centres such as I saw on Groote Eylandt, (Mountford, 1956, pp. 84, 91), and were seen by Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 166), and myself (1948, p. 145) in Central Australia.

The Sky and the Upper World

×532. Pl. 63D is a bark painting of the sky and the upper world, Tuniruna. 821 The central series of concentric circles represent an unidentified planet, one 772 of the wives of *Tjapara*, the moon-man; the designs, *d, d, d, d*, are some of the stars, *Tapalinga*; *f, f*, are the plum trees (already mentioned), which grow in the upper world. The radiating lines are the limbs of the plum trees.

The inner square, *b*, is the upper world, Tuniruna, the chevron patterns are the clouds in the sky, and the outer square the surface of the earth.

The groups of dots, throughout the painting, are the spirit fruits of the many trees at Tuniruna, which (as mentioned earlier), fall from the upper world to the earth beneath.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala

773 A myth, belonging to the early creation period, tells of how *Wuriupranala*, 776 one of the first women, was given the task of keeping alight a torch of blazing bark. When, after the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, the men and women changed themselves into creatures and plants, *Wuriupranala* became the sun-woman, who travels daily across the sky, her torch of blazing bark providing the world with light and heat.

776 However, before *Wuriupranala* sets out from the eastern horizon, she 821 powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which flying into the air, reddens the clouds of early morning.

When she reaches the western horizon, *Wuriupranala* again powders her body (this accounts for the brilliant sunsets), extinguishes her torch and rests for a while beside a celestial lagoon, Kumpinulu, before returning to the east along a path through the subterranean world, Ilara. On this journey, she is guided only by the light from the glowing end of her smouldering torch.[68]

×532 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60A, B, Pl. 61A, B, and Pl. 63A, B, deal with the 773 myth of the sun-woman.

The designs on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 61A, B, picture the sun, 776 moon and stars.

821

[68] See pp. 35, 40 for more details of the sun-woman.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The crescent, *a*, symbolizes the eastern horizon, beneath which both the sun-woman and moon-man have their camps; the transverse panels, *j, j, j*, indicate the western horizon. 532 x 773 776

The disc, *b*, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, while the black dot in the centre is her life essence, *imunka* (p. 137). 821

The sun-woman again is represented by the white disc, *s*, on the upper edge. This time she has several of the blazing torches, *m, n*, which she carries across the sky. Her many camps in the east are at *p, p*, etc. (lower edge).

The white oval, *h* (upper centre), is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, with his torches, shown as a series of radiating lines. Crescent, *g*, is the waxing, *f*, the waning moon, and the three adjacent squares, *e, e, e*, are places in the east where the moon-man made his camps. The cross-hatched areas, *p, k*, etc., indicate the men of the Milky Way, *Maludaienini*, and the groups of dots, such as *t*, the star-women, *Tapalingas*. At *o* (upper right) is an unidentified celestial tree.

Pl. 60A, B, pictures two suns, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*,[60] the moon, *Tjapara* and the stars, *Tapalinga*.

One of the sun-women, *Wuriupranala*, is shown at *f* (upper edge) the circle of radiating lines, *g*, symbolizing the flames of her bark torch. At *h*, on the bottom of the painting, is the other sun-woman, *Murupiangkala* with her bark torch, *j*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, is at *b*, his head at *e*, his shoulders at *c*, and his genitals at *d*.

The oval at *k* (upper right), is a mountain in the east from the top of which *Wuriupranala* or *Murupiangkala* alternately set out on their daily journey across the sky. The white oval at *l* (upper left) indicates the mountain on the western horizon where the sun-women rest for a while before they travel to the Kumpinulu lagoon, and prepare and eat their meal before returning to the east via the underground road, *m* (upper left).

The designs on the lower edge of the painting deal with the journey of the sun-woman, *Murupiangkala*; the white design *o*, is the mountain in the east from which she sets out on her journey across the sky; *p* represents the mountain in the west where she finishes her journey.

At *a, a*, etc., are the wives of *Tjapara*, the planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. Black ovals, *s, s*, are dark-coloured rain clouds, and ovals, *q, q*, clouds reddened by sunrise and sunset light. The dots are the star-women, the *Tapalingas*, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

Pl. 63A, B, deals with the sky journey of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

[60] The artist claimed that two sun-women travelled alternately across the sky. This however, was not the dominant belief. [184]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

At *c*, is the sun-woman with her *imunka* (life essence) (see Pl. 61A, B). Her palm-leaf baskets are at *u* and *r* (left); her hair-string belts at *k*, *v* (bottom); a dingo-skin hair ornament is at *s* (left), and her head at *m* (top left).

The place where the sun woman appears above the eastern horizon is indicated at *f* (bottom) with her mid-day camp at *g*. There she makes a fire, *e* (the four radiating lines being the firewood), and cooks the food she has collected during the morning. Black rain clouds are indicated at *d*, and a thin cloud, which partly obscures the sun, at *h*.

The upper section of the painting deals with the evening camp *o*, of the sun-woman. Her fire and firewood are at *p*, *q*.

At *n*, on the upper left, is the daughter of the sun-woman (an unidentified star), the central dot at *m*, symbolizing her eye.

The Moon-man, Tjapara

At the conclusion of the fight between the moon-man, *Tjapara* and *Purukupali*, during creation times, the moon-man went up to the sky, bearing on his face the wounds he received at the hands of *Purukupali*.[60]

It was then *Purukupali* decreed that the whole of creation once dead, would remain dead for ever. However, *Tjapara*, the moon-man, partly escaped that decree, for, although he dies for three days every month, his life is eternally renewed.

As soon as *Tjapara* comes to life, he eats huge meals of the flesh of the mangrove crabs, which makes him grow fat and round at the end of a fortnight. However, this food makes him so ill that he sickens and dies.

The aborigines look upon the thin crescent of the waning moon as the skeleton of *Tjapara*,[61] and the body of the moon (visible by earth shine) as his spirit, *imunka*.

During his daily journey across the sky, the moon-man follows the same path as the sun-woman. He, however, carries a much smaller torch.

At one time the moon-man used to return to the east by a road just under the southern horizon. But a nest of hornets, which lived along that road, stung him so badly that he changed his path and now returns to his home by a northern route.[62]

The moon has four wives who live in the sky with him. They are the

[60] See p. 29 for details of the fight between *Purukupali* and *Tjapara*.

[61] A larval form of one of the cockroaches which curls up into an almost complete circle, is called *Tjaparalinga*, the son of the moon.

[62] Most informants, however, said that the moon returned to the east through the same underground world as the sun-woman.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. My informants were certain, however, that *Tjapara* had many more wives in his eastern camp. 776 821

When a ring forms around the moon, during moist weather, the aborigines believe the moon-man is taking part in a *kulama* ceremony. The ring is the mound of earth around the ceremonial circle, the *milimika* (p. 134), inside of which a multitude of star people are dancing and singing the *kulama* songs.

Two bark paintings illustrate the myth of the moon, Pl. 61C, D, and Pl. 62D. 532x 821

On Pl. 61C, D, one side of a *pukamani* basket illustrates the moon and the clouds. 776

In the centre, at *b*, is the crescent moon, *Tjapara*, the black oval, *a*, indicating his genitals. The monsoon clouds, *narusapiyina* (cumulus-nimbus) of the wet season are indicated by the six black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., and cumulus clouds, *kumbarusina*, by the three circles on the left-hand side at *e*, *e*, *e*. The older aborigines referred to these clouds as hills in the sky. The intersecting lines, *d*, *d*, etc., are "young" cumulus clouds, which, when they appear in the sky at the beginning of the wet season, remind the natives it is time to search the trees of the forest for the hives of the wild bees. [773]

The surface of the ground is indicated by the long rectangle, *g*, on the lower edge, and the place of the stars, by the groups of dots at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 62D pictures the moon-man, *Tjapara*, and his many wives.

The central circle is the full moon, the lighter coloured crescents and ovals being the white clouds that sometimes obscure the moon at night; the dark-coloured, but similar designs are the clouds made yellow with the sunset light. The white circles are the planets, the wives of the moon man, and the dots, the stars, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

The Moon and the Stars

Pl. 62C is a painting of the night sky. The crescent, *b*, is the new moon, *Tjapara*, and the white vertical panel, the road, along which he travels. 532x 821

The larger circle on the right hand of the painting represents the morning star, probably Venus, and that on the left, the evening star. The many smaller circles are unidentified stars in the night sky. These are the wives of the men of the Milky Way, the *Malukianini*.

The Men of the Milky Way

In creation times, certain men, the *Malukianini*, although each had many wives, were always sneaking off into the jungle with the wives of other men. 773

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

773 This behaviour led to a great deal of trouble, developing later into a fight in which many of the *Maludaianini* men were wounded.

After that fight, the *Maludaianini* men rose into the sky and became the Milky Way; their wives were turned into stars.

776 821 When the sun-woman sinks beneath the western horizon, and the light from the blazing torch leaves the sky, the *Maludaianini* travel in a long line across the firmament (similar to the processional caterpillars at the beginning of the wet season), visiting their wives, the stars, as they go.

Early in the evening the men of the Milky Way rub their hands over their [827] bodies to remove the dried perspiration. This dried perspiration, falling on the eyelids of the aboriginal people, make them heavy with sleep.[65]

x 532 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60D, Pl. 62A, and Pl. 63C, illustrate the myth of the men of the Milky Way.

776 821 The black bars between *c*, *c*, and *c*, *c*, Pl. 60D, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*; the white disc, *a*, being their camp, while similar white designs, *b*, *b*, indicate the camps of their star wives.

The central white panel, *d*, is the Milky Way; the dark squares, *e*, *c*, etc., are the red clouds at sunrise and sunset, the dark-coloured vertical panels on either side of *d*, white cumulus clouds at night, and the six black discs, dark-coloured clouds, in the night sky.

Pl. 62A is another painting of the Milky Way. The circles with the radiating lines are the camp fires of the stars, the background being the shadows cast by those fires. The Coal Sack in which there are no fires, is the camp of the star women.[66]

The lighter panels, leading from the upper left to the lower right, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, the darker panels, from upper right to lower left, indicate the night sky.

Reading from the left on the lower edge, panels one, three and five symbolize cumulus clouds, *Kumbaratina*, of the night sky, and two, four and six, unidentified clouds, called *aratinia*.

The dotted panels on Pl. 63C represent the men of the Milky Way, the barred panels, the "roads", i.e., dark spaces, in the galaxy, and the five horizontal panels, eucalyptus trees in the firmament.

[855] [65] The aboriginal women, to the accompaniment of a lullaby, send their children to sleep by rubbing their fingers together above the face of the child in the same manner as the *Maludaianini* do in the sky.

[66] The Coal Sack is visible at Melville Island only during the hot "wet" season, i.e. from November to March. This had given rise to the belief that the star-women, who make their camp within that heavenly spectacle, do not need fires. The same belief accounts for the fact that, within the Coal Sack there are no stars (the camp-fires of the star-women).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

Orion and the Pleiades

Pl. 62a illustrates the myth of Orion and the Pleiades. In the astronomical myth Orion, *a*, is a pack of dingoes, called *daiimini*, who are for ever chasing the *Pleiades*, *b*, a group of wallabies, *karaka*. 532x 776 821 [773]

The black vertical lines on either side of *a*, and *b*, starless spaces in the Milky Way, *Maludaianini*, are the trunks of celestial bloodwood trees; the short lines at right-angles, their limbs, and the dots on the background, the many spider-webs on their branches.

The large outer ovals, unidentified parts of the Milky Way, are patches of bare and grass-covered land of the sky, and the eight discs on the insides of the ovals, some of the larger stars.

Discussion

There is a wide difference between the astronomical myths of Melville Island and those of the adjacent mainland. Nor do the Melville Islanders have such a detailed knowledge of the night sky as the tribes of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 479). This fact suggests, as do other aspects of the culture, that the natives of Melville Island have been isolated from the mainland cultures for a long time. 171 773 821

The effects of this isolation are most evident in two of the sky myths, i.e., the Milky Way, and the constellations of Orion and the Pleiades.

Throughout Australia, with few exceptions, the Milky Way is looked upon as a celestial river, along which the sky people travel in their canoes, and gather their food (Mountford, 1956, p. 491). No trace of this widespread myth is present on Melville Island, the Milky Way being a multitude of caterpillar men, the *Maludaianini*.

Similarly with Orion and the Pleiades. In the Australian mainland myths, Orion is a man or men, and the Pleiades, a group of women, more often than not, the wives of the men of Orion.

In the place of this widespread myth, the Melville Islanders look upon the stars of Orion as a group of dingoes chasing the Pleiades, a mob of wallabies.

Even in the myth of the moon-man, there is a reversal of the adjacent Arnhem Land beliefs. In Arnhem Land, it was the moon who brought death to the world (Mountford, 1956, p. 495; Warner, 1937, p. 523). On Melville Island, it is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, who tries to stop *Purukupali* from imposing death on all living creatures.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

without quarrels. Again, there is no comparable ceremony on the mainland. 171 [881]

(c) Throughout the mainland of Australia, women occupy a low social status within the tribal framework. They are rigidly excluded from almost all aspects of the ceremonial life, and of initiation; they also are ignorant of most of the creation myths, the procedures of the secret rituals, and even the existence of the sacred objects. 171 562

These restrictions do not apply to the women of the Tiwi. They are initiated, side by side, with the men, and take similar though not identical parts in the ritual. They also participate in all phases of the burial ceremonies, at which they usually perform their own dance, the *Amburu*, but occasionally take part in dances which are performed by the men (Pl. 25c). A woman even has the right to cut and paint a burial pole, if her husband, who has been allotted the task, is unavoidably absent. In short, I was unable to find any aspect of Tiwi ceremonial life in which women could not take their part if they so desired.

(d) Although the creation story of the Tiwi is basically similar to that of the aborigines elsewhere in Australia, it is not as elaborate as, say, the travels of the Wawalik and the Djunkgao Sisters of Arnhem Land, recorded by Warner (1937), nor those of Central Australia, described by Spencer and Gillen (1899). I did not witness, nor did I hear of any specific Tiwi ceremony that commemorated the myths of the creation period. The dances in the *ilanias*, and the final rituals of the burial ceremony, usually referred to the various creatures or the elements, but seldom to an incident in the creation myth. 171 773 [535]

(e) There are also important differences between many of the myths of the Tiwi and those of the mainland people. For instance, in northern Australia, it is the moon man who brings death to mankind; in Melville Island the same moon-man endeavours to prevent death from coming to the world. I have already pointed out other wide differences between the astronomical myths of the mainland and those of the adjacent Melville Island.

On Arnhem Land, in fact, as far as South Australia, the aborigines, almost without exception, believe that their spirits go to a distant land not visible to human eyes, where there is continuous good weather, and an abundance of easily gathered food. 171 775

On the other hand, the Tiwi believe that at the close of the burial rituals the spirits of their dead return to their separate birthplaces, where each one hunts for food in the same manner as its living relatives, suffering, as they do, from exposure if the weather is inclement, and from hunger if the food supplies are limited.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly
412 limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe
[177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of
[415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the
[285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[66]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[66] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female
[114] ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This
[173] information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 O120 Tiwi O120

 179 114 198 614

sacred and the ordinary language, with the result that his list of Tiwi clans and their totems is confused and inaccurate.[4]

The Tiwi do not seem to associate very closely the totemic clan 614 and the object that is the totem of the clan. For instance a man of the 771 *Udunui* considers himself as *Udunini*, not as a crocodile, which he normally thinks of as *irungrabai*. The bond of solidarity is between one member of the clan and another rather than between a member of the clan and his totem.

So much is this the case that it is occasionally difficult to ascertain what is the natural object which gives the clan its name, *i.e.*, what is the totem of the clan. The *Ariŋgwila* are a case in point. In order to find what natural object was the emblem of this clan recourse had to be had to a few old men of the clan who were apparently the only people in the tribe who knew what natural object was the emblem of the *Ariŋgwila*. Everyone knew that a number of men, women and children were *Ariŋgwila*, thought of them and referred to them as *Ariŋgwila*, but very few members of the community connected them in any way with stones—" any kind of stones"—which according to these old men, are the *Ariŋgwila* totemic emblem.

With regard to the origin of the totemic clans and their names the 773 natives say that the system of *pukui* was instituted by the old men a very long time ago. One old man said at some time in the distant past " *Udunui nia pukui kapi Primandua*—Udunui is my totem at Primandua," and so everyone knew his totem was *udunui*. Knowing their legends everyone knew the connection between *Udunui* and *Primandua* since it is at this place, a district in Bathurst Island, that *Munutuni*, the father of all crocodiles, still has his home. Another old man decided upon *mandubaui* as his *pukui* because his favourite camping ground was at *Pripanyimili* which has a mythological association with *mandubuka* (the sand fly), such association being founded no doubt on the fact that sand flies breed in great numbers in the mangrove swamps of that region.

The *Ariŋgwila* (the stone totem) are closely associated with a famous rock in *Miŋgu* called *Wurukwompi* which, due no doubt to a hollow interior, gives forth a roll like thunder when beaten with a stick and hence is a sacred object to the natives. The former home of the *Ariŋgwila* is in the

[4] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, page 200.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 vicinity of this rock, so the legend runs, and they are often called the *Wurukwompila*.

. The *Timiririŋui* are said to have come originally from a small island off the coast of *Wraŋgu* where the *timiririŋa* (woolly-butt tree) is especially prolific due to the fact that it was here that *Prondupu*, the original mythological woolly-butt, settled after the battle at *Taŋio* between the animal-men.

So the story goes on throughout the list of totems. It is not a myth properly so called since mythological figures are in it only incidentally. As told by the Tiwi it is a rationalized explanation on a basis of local geography and the desires of old men generations ago.

162 614 The clans vary greatly in size. The largest clan, *Mierdui*, numbers 132 persons whereas the *Paroliuŋibila* has only six and the *Taparui* only two. The distribution of the population amongst the clans and the hordes will be dealt with in a later paper in which the results of a census of the Tiwi population will be given.

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9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

796 An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch his wives or children, because a deadly sweat called *hilamisi* comes from his body and 827 will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

[88] Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the 764 Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *emukey* of 775 the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yatarahe*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

773 *Culture Heroes.* They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-776 tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumerehe*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orati*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marakarti*.

776 *The Present Day Spirits.* Some spirits vitally affect their present lives. Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain [82] spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

754 *Magic.* Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *hulampere*. It is interesting to compare the Anula belief; if a person is sung with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

123 For a while we all stretched our legs walking up the sandy bank of the river until mangrove roots stopped our progress.

Once back in the canoe, Albert took over my place in the bow [226] and with his fish-spear poised he kept a watchful eye on the deep green waters. Once he spied a barramundi and cautiously directed Big Jack to paddle towards the large fish, but it glided out of reach.

About a half mile up the river we came upon the shaded glen of casuarinas, another camping spot with its fresh-water well, named Anderaningo. Here instead of Black Joe's mob we found the Superintendent, Bill Grimster, his son Billy, and two natives, Billy-Two and Brownie. Black Joe's mob had arrived the afternoon before and had been ferried the ten miles up river to the next camping spot in the motor launch. Bill Grimster, having been told by Black Joe that he had seen our smoke near Piriu, knew that we had camped there, and he came back down river with an invitation for me to join them for a night of crocodile hunting before they returned to Snake Bay.

225 For many people in this area, hunting the large salt-water crocodile is a profession or a sought-after sport. In both cases it is dangerous, for this particular species of crocodile is intimidated by nothing and frequently will attack men or beasts without provocation. The crocodiles, which often measure twenty feet in length, occupy a prominent place in the myths, legends, and art of the [773] Tiwi, and many are the true-life tales of people who have lost their [538] lives in battling these beasts, which are hunted by the natives for their meat and valuable skins. When one considers the size of the animals and the size of the canoes, it is no wonder that Bill had discouraged any requests of mine to accompany them. So this invitation was a most welcome and pleasant surprise.

123 I transferred to the launch for the up-river camp so that I would be in time to leave on the hunt at dusk. For the first six miles the river wound seemingly aimlessly through the deep, dank, and mysterious mangrove swamps. At times the branches almost met across the water, brightly colored birds flitted from branch to branch and a subdued splash indicated a crocodile disturbed from his after- [776] noon slumber on the muddy bank. Adding to this almost evil atmosphere were strange clacking and sucking noises emanating from

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The vertical lines at the bottom of the painting symbolize the rays of the sun-woman as she rises in the east, and the groups of dots throughout the design, the stars, *tapalinga*, in the night sky. 532x 773

On Pl. 5C, D, the two concentric circles, *d*, indicate the surface, while *a*, is the *imunka*,[21] or life centre of the sun.

The painting shows a number of different clouds; a thin misty cloud at *b*, heavy rain clouds which temporarily obscure the sun at *h*, *h*, *h*, etc., a mackerel sky at *c* (indicated by the short radiating lines), and cumulus clouds at *j*, *j*.

The colours of sunrise and sunset are indicated by the horizontal bands, *g*, *g*; while the lines of light, which sometimes radiate from the sunset, are at *e*, *e*, etc., and those from the sunrise at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 6A, B, is a bark painting of Wuriupi, the totem place of *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman. Her body, now a patch of jungle, is at *a*; her head at *n*, and her abdomen at *k*. Her arms are at *b*, *b*; her legs at *c*, *c*; her breasts at *j*, *j*; her ears at *m*, *m*; the chevron scars on her arms and back at *e*, *e*, etc. 532x 778

The windbreak of her camp, *d*, is a sandy beach at Wuriupi, and the shelter, under which she rested, is a large yam, whose leaves, vine and blossoms, are indicated by symbols, *h*, *h*; *l*, *l*; *v*, *v*, etc. Tracks made by the sun-woman are shown at *x*, *x*; *x*, *x*; red rocks on the beach at *g*, *g*; and black rocks at *f*, *f*.

Pl. 7B, a painting on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, also refers to the sun-woman. 532x 821

The sun is represented by the black circle in the lower section of the design, while the disc in the centre of the circle is the torch of blazing bark which the sun-woman carries across the sky to provide the world with light and heat. The white, upper disc represents the large thunderclouds which, at the beginning of the wet season, often obscure the sun.[22] The surrounding concentric circles and the parallel lines across the middle of the design symbolize the colours on the edge of the clouds at sunrise or sunset.

The lighter coloured diagonal lines refer to groups of cirrus clouds, and the darker, to monsoon clouds of the rainy season. The dots are the stars of the night sky.

The vertical black line in the middle of Pl. 7D, is the track across the sky of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*. The black disc across the bottom is the sun in the morning; the one immediately above, the sun at midday; the next,

[21] The *imunka* is a universal life essence which permeates all living things, the plants, the creatures and man. It is situated in the solar-plexus of man. This is the same life essence as that of the Pitjendadjara tribe of the western deserts of Central Australia (Mountford, 1948, p. 111). [774] [171]

[22] When a thundercloud obscures the sun, the aborigines believe that *Andjahi* (fresh water) has taken his wife, *Wuriupranala*, to his camp.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the previous singer's dead father. 881 765

(e) "My stomach goes hot like fire,[55] when I think of you, my uncle." [533] Some of the women cried when the song was finished. [539]

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *inkini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *inkini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *saini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants. 252 881

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate it (Pl. 442), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, goodbye",[56] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purujikini*, did at the first *kulama*. 881 [533] [539]

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women. 535 881

(a) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird). [534]

(b) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 302), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(c) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*tokwiangu*) in his mouth to symbolize the prey of the crocodile.

(d) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(e) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(f) The buffalo,

(g) The shark (Pl. 300).

[55] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *imunka* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions. [826] [774]

[56] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the swingalata tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten. [824]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Mikinguks to enter the *milinika* and chant his first song, known as the *Ai-ipa*, which he had been practising for some time.[60] The female initiates, the *Mikinastrinings* assisted the *Mikinastrinas* by beating the time on the outside of the *milinika* in the same way as *Pinsona*, the owl-woman, assisted her husband, *Purujikini*, at the first *kulama* ceremony during creation times. 533 881

One *Mikinguk* told me that when he was passing through the *Mikinastrina* grade of initiation, he chanted three songs; one was about a fish, one about a rifle and a third about a crocodile.

When the *Mikinastrina* initiates had finished their songs, the men of the higher initiation grades, the *Mikinstaras*, *Mikiasterimas* and the fully initiated *Mikinguks*, entered the ring, one by one, and walking anti-clockwise chanted the following songs:[60]

(*a*) "A big ship brings many things to Darwin." 177

(*b*) "A Japanese plane was flying low over Melville Island. The men on the ground said 'stand-by' and shot it down with a cannon." 533 539

(*c*) "In Darwin, I saw a kite, on a long string, which flew into the sky." 881

(*d*) "The Government plane flew me to Brisbane to see the Queen. It flew through the clouds. I went into the pilot's room in the front of the plane and the wireless told them Brisbane was only seven miles away."

(11) *The Kararijui Songs*

About nine o'clock, the character of the songs changed and all but one dealt with the spirit, *imunka*, of their children.[61] These songs are called *kararijui imunka*. 533 539 881

(*a*) "The spirits of my children have gone to Karslake Island (Wulrungku), and are playing there." [774]

[60] At the conclusion of the *kulama* ceremony, both the male and female *Mikinastrina* initiates wear their ornaments and keep themselves decorated for a month, and every evening when seated in the camp, they chant the same *Ai-ipa* songs as they did at the *kulama* ceremony.

At the end of a month, the initiates wash the paint from their bodies, discard their ceremonial ornaments, and resume a normal life until the next *kulama*.

Two years later, the *Mikinastrina* becomes a *Mikinstara* retaining that grade for another year, when he enters the grade of a *Mikiasterima*. On the following year, the initiate reaches the full status of a *Mikinguk*.

During the last two stages, i.e., *Mikinstara* and *Mikiasterima*, the initiates are not subject to any special restrictions nor do they have to pass through any special rituals. Their body decorations too, are similar to those of the fully initiated men.

[60] The men did not carry their throwing stick in the same manner as they did in the afternoon performance (Pl. 44A).

[61] The Melville Islanders in common with most aboriginal tribes, believe that their spirit (*imunka*) leaves the body during sleep and wanders around. The songs refer to the spirits of their children, who, during the hours of sleeping, play in the forest and on the sea-shore.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Tiwi Marriage

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Cultural Isolation

PEOPLE WHO LIVE in the congested cities and towns of the modern world have difficulty in realizing how different life can be at the hunting and gathering level of human existence. The basic fact about the life of hunters and gatherers is the thinly spread-out manner in which they live and the isolation of families and households from each other. In the case of the Tiwi, these conditions of isolation and dispersal were accentuated by their island habitat. Melville and Bathurst Islands lie off the northern coast of Australia some fifty to eighty miles from Darwin, which is the administrative capital of the empty north. They are separated from the mainland by about twenty-five miles of open sea at the narrowest part. This distance is slightly greater than the distance that separates England from France at the Straits of Dover, and just as the dim outline of coastal France can be seen from England on clear days, so the dim outline of the Australian mainland can be seen from the southern edges of the islands. However, Tiwi tradition is firm and certain that before the white man's arrival there was no contact between the islands and the mainland. To them, the dimly seen coastline of Australia was *Tibambinumi,* the home of the dead, to which all Tiwi souls went after death. It follows from this they they regarded the inhabited world as composed of their own two islands, and on those islands they lived a self-contained and exclusive existence. Occasionally outsiders appeared, either castaways from surrounding areas, including presumably the Australian mainland, and in recent centuries, fishing boats and pirates from Indonesia, loosely called "Malays" in the literature. To such visitors from outside, the Tiwi were consistently and implacably hostile. Their own traditions and what little written history there is of "Malay" penetration into the Arafura Sea both tell the same story. Outsiders who landed on the islands were massacred or vigorously resisted. Whether they were classified as *Malai-ui* ("Malays") or *Wona-rui*

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

I. BELIEFS IN THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

The fear of the spirits of the dead and the desire of the living to propitiate them are the bases for the complicated burial rituals, not only of the Tiwi, but of all Australian tribes. 769 765

The Tiwi spirits of the dead, the *mopaditis*, live in self-contained communities at the various totemic places on Melville and Bathurst Islands. The *mopaditis* have the same appearance as the aboriginal folk, except that their bodies no longer have substance, being but nebulous images of their former selves. 775 [778]

No living person has seen these *mopaditis*, for they are invisible by day, white in the moonlight and black in the darkness. Although, normally, the *mopaditis* travel on the surface of the ground in the same manner as the aborigines, they are able, when crossing a river, or an arm of the sea, to walk on the surface of the water.

In the spirit land, the *mopaditis*, who are eternal, retain their totems (*pukwi*), marry spirit women of the correct tribal relationships, and have children who grow to maturity.[47] They eat the same food as the aborigines, going hungry if the hunting is poor,[48] and use the same implements and weapons.[49]

At the death of an aboriginal, the *mopaditi* rises out of the chest of the corpse. If the corpse is that of an infant, or a very small child, its *mopaditi* stays in the immediate neighbourhood, sleeping with the bereaved mother every night, but leaving in the morning before she wakes up. This continues until the woman has recovered from her grief.

After some months, the spirit child, now called a *buda-buda*, re-enters the body of its previous mother through her vulva and starts life again as a human being. [842]

On the other hand, if the person has lived for some time, its *mopaditi* stays around the grave, mourning because it has to leave its old companions. But after three days have elapsed, the *mopaditi* calls out "*Nimbungi*" (good-bye), and sets off, unaccompanied,[50] to the locality where it was born, which, before

[47] The aborigines are not certain whether the children, like their parents, have eternal life.

[48] This is unusual; in most of the aboriginal heavens I have heard of, for example, north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 323), there is ample, easily-gathered food. [171]

[49] These days, the *mopaditis* have even the modern wooden canoes, although, up to fifty years ago, their canoes, like those of the living people, were made from a folded sheet of bark. [177]

[50] Some aborigines believe that the father, or some close relative, comes to the grave and guides the spirit to its birthplace.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

775 the white man came, would have been its totemic place. As the *mopaditi* travels, flocks of screeching black cockatoos fly overhead to tell the spirits [825] as its birthplace, that a new *mopaditi* is coming to live with them. The local spirits, on its arrival, rush out to welcome the *mopaditi*, beating themselves over the head and shoulders[61] with throwing sticks to indicate their pleasure. At its new home, no matter what its previous state, the spirit is transformed into a young person of good health and equable temperament, for, in the land of the spirits, everyone must be healthy, happy and at peace with each other.

Making its camp with the other *mopaditis*, many of whom were old companions, the new spirit goes out hunting and foodgathering with them until the beginning of its own burial ceremonies. Then, with all of its dead relatives, the new *mopaditi* returns to watch the living people perform the dances and chant the songs of its *ilania* and *pukamuni* ceremonies.

As the *mopaditis* are invisible to mortal eyes, the performers at the burial rituals do not see them, although they know the *mopaditis* are in the surrounding forest, watching all that is going on.

When the rituals of the day are over, and all the people have gone to sleep, the *mopaditis* themselves enter the ceremonial ground, carrying out the same dances, and chanting the same songs as those of the living. This happens at all ceremonies, whether they are the *ilaniqs*, the final *pukamuni*, or the *kulama* rituals.

At the conclusion of its final *pukamuni*, the new *mopaditi* returns to its birthplace. There it is treated as a youth, and has again to pass through all stages of the *kulama* initiation, progressing at the same rate as when it was a living person.

Occasionally parties of *mopaditis*, especially if not long dead, will return to have a look at their living friends and relatives. But, although the aborigines regard these *mopaditis* as well-mannered and kindly, they still fear them.

Sometimes, particularly at night, a *mopaditi* will follow an aboriginal too [781] closely, making his skin clammy and his hair rise on end. To protect himself, [789] the affrighted person calls out loudly to scare away the spirit. If this is not successful, he will kindle a fire or carry a torch of flaming bark, knowing that the *mopaditis* fear the light. For that reason, the aborigines are safe from the attacks of the spirits of their dead so long as they keep their camp-fires burning.

[576] [61] This is the custom of the living when they meet someone they have not seen for a long while.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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A *mopaditi* has been known to hit an aboriginal on the head with a throwing stick, causing him to foam at the mouth and become stiff and rigid. The natives cure this *mopaditi* sickness by heating pads of paper-bark and pressing them against the sides of the face or over the sick man's ears until his muscles relax. 775 753 757

Once, when a young woman went hunting in the forest by herself, a male *mopaditi* took her away, fed her on a special bush food until she became, like the *mopaditis* themselves, invisible to human eyes. One evening, after many weeks, the *mopaditi* brought the girl back to a place near the camp, stood her against a tree, gave a loud whistle and left.

When relatives found her, she was demented and deaf, with cold, clammy skin and staring eyes. Quickly they lit a fire, heated her hands, and held them, palms inwards, against the sides of her face. When her body became a little warmer, her relatives pressed heated pads of paper-bark against the sides of her face and over her ears, until she went to sleep. After several days of such treatment, the girl recovered and was able to tell what had happened.

The old men warned her never again to go walking in the forest by herself because should the *mopaditis* recapture her, it might not be possible to bring her back to health.

The aborigines also told me about the time when some *mopaditis* stole an old woman, *Incampuna*, took her into the jungle and covered her with boughs. When her relatives found her, sick and unconscious, they brought her back to camp, shouting loudly to stop the *mopaditis* from following. As before, they applied heated pads of paper-bark to "open up" her head until she became well again.

Plate 47A, B, pictures the grave of the wife of the artist, *Muramajua*. At *a*, is the face of the spirit of the wife, the horse-shoe design, *b*, representing her hair. The oval *c*, is a small stringy-bark tree, *o*, a large stringy-bark tree, and *p*, are bloodwood trees near the grave. 532 x

At *k*, is a stony hill near the burial place, *l*, *n*, are areas of jungle near by, and *m*, is the forested uplands.

A long fighting-stick, *tumutukamuta*, *g*, and a throwing stick, *muruguna*, *j*, are used by the *mopaditis* to strike their human victims on the head, and make them insensible.

2. DEATH AND BURIAL

Although there were minor differences between the burial of the man, *Waniamperi*, the details of which I gathered from informants, and the burial 764

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 of *Pulanimkuwi's* wife, *Nulatini*, which I saw, the general pattern was similar. I shall, however, describe both burials, that of *Nulatini* being the more detailed.

(1) *The Burial of Waniamperi*

On the day that *Waniamperi* died, *Mirawani*, one of his near relatives, who wanted the dead man buried near his mother, paid a young "worker"[18] a sum of money and two loin cloths to dig the grave.

When the corpse was brought to the burial ground, a number of relatives had a last look at the dead man before he was laid on a series of logs, placed transversely across the bottom of the grave.

This act was a signal for concerted mourning, the women beating themselves with sticks and the men cutting their heads. For personal safety it is [753] imperative that each man and woman show excessive grief, real or feigned, [626] otherwise the *mopaditi*, annoyed at the lack of grief, will make the offending person ill.

After the mourning died down, the "workers" placed boughs on the body and filled in the grave, leaving a small mound on top (Pl. 24c).

[533] While this work was being carried out, the relatives stood on one side of the grave, either singing the *amburu*, the mourning song, or the rain song of Wailu, the totem of *Tiparawiliniri*, *Waniamperi's* father. To the chanting [535] of this song, the men acted the rain dance (Pl. 30B). The aborigines did not stage the totemic dances or chant the songs belonging to the fire totem of Wuriupi (*Waniamperi's* own totem), because, to have done so, would have especially attracted the attention of his *mopaditi*.

The "workers" laid *Waniamperi's* personal belongings at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tied his loin cloth and tobacco to the top of a thin sapling which had been driven into the ground at the head of the grave, made a large fire, and left a container of water.

The aborigines believe that the *mopaditi*, seeing his belongings near at [775] hand, water to drink and fire to warm himself and cook the food he gathers in the surrounding forest, will stay near the grave until the time comes for him to leave the locality.

While the "workers" were engaged on those tasks, the rest of the burial party quietly left, not looking behind, lest the *mopaditi* follow them to their camp.

[767] [18] These "workers" or *wanaras*, being distant relatives of the dead, are in little danger from the *mopaditis*. Therefore, it is safe for them to clean the site, dig the grave, handle the body, and carry out other tasks associated with burial. They are paid for their work by the chief mourners at the final *pukamani* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing. 768 [428] [183] [825]

(2) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulanimbuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers". 764

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[53] from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *tokwiangu* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs. 302 751 775

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[54] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground 764

[53] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[54] After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditis* fear the light. 123 775

For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 and dug the grave, which was about six feet long and five feet six inches deep. But when, in the middle of the afternoon, four men appeared, carrying the body, in a fully extended position, and placed it beside the unfinished grave, a number of women, painted all over in white, sat beside the corpse and cried heart-brokenly until the grave was finished. There was a chorus of wailing [302] from both men and women when one of the "workers" painted *Pulanimbuwi's* [751] body entirely in white (Pl. 23A), as additional camouflage to confuse his wife's *mopaditi*.

The ceremonials associated with the burial started when first the husband, then a near relative, dancing astride the corpse, called out loudly, "*Yook, yook*". This ritual, called *wuramu*, was first introduced by the pelican-man at *Purukupali's* ceremony. At the present time it is performed by close relatives [775] of the dead, its object being to scare the *mopaditi* into the grave where it will not be a menace to the living.

After this ritual, two other men entered the grave and, standing, one either end, took the dead body from those above. Amid the sounds of wailing women and the clapping of men's hands on their buttocks, the corpse was gently laid on a bed of transverse logs on the bottom. Other "workers" cut green branches and placed them across the top of the grave.

The husband, carrying a lighted firestick, then entered the grave, burnt the hair on his legs and left immediately. The aborigines believe that the [775] *mopaditi*, smelling the burnt hair of her husband, and thinking he was beside her, stayed quietly in the grave.

The bushes were thrown into the grave, logs, about five feet long,[55] laid on top, and the hole was filled in, leaving a small mound which was covered with sheets of paper-bark (Pl. 24C). Short sticks were driven into the ground at the head and foot of the grave, on one of which the husband hung the meagre belongings of his wife.

764 Both men and women then performed a series of dances, the men danced 535 the flying fox, shark and crocodile, while both the elder and younger women moved in a line toward the grave, holding large green leaves in their hands, palm upward, symbolizing the dead woman when a small child, being carried by her mother.

A woman, holding her breasts, impersonated *Nulatini's* mother feeding her, while a near male relative mimed the mother carrying *Nulatini* as an infant.

764 At the conclusion, *Pulanimbuwi* seated himself at the head of the grave,

[825] [55] The aborigines explained that the logs kept the dogs from unearthing the body, but as, at the present time, the body is over five feet underground, this does not appear to be the reason. It may be that, when tools were more primitive and graves not so deep, these precautions were necessary.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint 764
from his body (Pl. 23E).

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly, while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial, [304]
and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real. [785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn, everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual, originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's pukamuni*, was supposed [775]
so to confuse the *mopaditi* of *Nulatini* that, should she leave the grave, she would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey, then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over.

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopaditi* to warm herself and to cook her [775]
food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanimbuwi*, who should have departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23 D).

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the 765
death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark, was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as instructed by *Jibunglialumi* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp could not see it.

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the 761
dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines, believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being, not the result of natural causes.

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby [825]
looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, [754]
having been responsible for the death,[86] had changed himself into a

[86] This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the meteor-man, *Papinjuwari*, to an enemy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

761 wallaby, so that he could see the grave of his victim without being
[825] recognized.
[761]

On one occasion, when I was travelling with *Pulaninkuwi*, just after the death of his wife, he went to her grave, carefully searched the ground for tracks, then lifting up the sheets of paper-bark, examined the mound. Later, *Pulaninkuwi* announced that a *Marauji* (p. 154) had killed his wife, *Nulatini*, by getting inside of her body. But, although still there when she was buried, the *Marauji* had escaped through the hole *Pulaninkuwi* had seen in the mound.[57]

(2) *The Seclusion of the Grave*

769 The grave of *Waniamperi* was about a hundred yards from the road between our camp and the Snake Bay aboriginal settlement. Although aborigines, who were only distantly related to the dead man, walked backward and forward along this road, all the *pukamuni* people had to take a roundabout path from which it was not possible to see the grave site.

One night, *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, had to pass along the road to our camp. When he was approaching the position from which the grave site could be seen in the day-time, his wife, wrapping his head in a blanket, led him past the spot. This practice was only allowed at night; it was prohibited during the day.[58]

[775] No aboriginal man hunted the creatures, or woman gathered the plant
[784] foods adjacent to the grave, so that, should the *mopadini* of *Waniamperi* return to his burial place for a while he would find ample food.

4. THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONIES, THE ILANIAS

(1) *The Ilanias of Waniamperi*

765 About two months after the burial of *Waniamperi*, *Wurarkui*, the ceremonial leader of the Melville Island people, sent message sticks to Bathurst Island aborigines telling them that the *ilanias* (preliminary rituals) of *Waniamperi* were about to start.

[123] We saw eleven of *Waniamperi's ilanias*. But, as they were more or less the same, I will describe only three.

[765] [57] *Pulaninkuwi's* action was viewed with considerable disfavour. He, as a near relative, should not have gone near the grave until the final rituals. Only the *wanaras* (workers) who cut the poles are allowed to do that.

[183] [58] Under the normal tribal conditions, these precautions would have been unnecessary, because the place of burial would then have been in some distant, unfrequented locality.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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(i) The ceremonial fight between the *pukamuni* men and the "workers" returning from cutting the poles which are near the grave.
(ii) The feeding of the "workers" by the *pukamuni* men and women.
(iii) The totemic songs and dances.
(iv) The *punati*, in which married men and women beat the relatives of their spouses with boughs.
(v) The rite of fire-jumping (*wandatapinda*).

(i) *The Ceremonial Fight.* When, late in the afternoon, the "workers" were returning to the *milimika* from the grave site, where they have been cutting the burial poles, they announced their coming with the honey and mosquito calls.

The *alouwia*, who had assembled the *pukamuni* men in the *milimika* in readiness for this ritual, answered with the honey call.

The "workers" emerged from the forest in a body and, running toward the men in the *milimika*, cast short sticks, as spears, at the *pukamuni* men, who replied vigorously with throwing sticks, neither group of contestants, however, trying to hit the other.

The "workers" having exhausted their spears, rushed into the *milimika*, where, to the accompaniment of much laughter and good-humour, they wrestled with the *pukamuni* men (Pl. 25D), until they (the "workers") were pushed out of the *milimika*.[63]

(ii) *The Feeding of the Workers.* It is the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the "workers" while they are cutting and painting the poles.

On the edge of the *milimika* were two baskets, both painted red, one made by a woman of the rain and freshwater totem of Wailu, and the other by a woman of the fire totem of Wuriupi, the totemic place of the dead man, *Waniamperi*. Food caught or gathered by the *pukamuni* men and women was cooked and placed in those baskets for the "workers" only, it being taboo to all members of the *pukamuni* group.

After the "workers" had been "vanquished" in the ceremonial fight, the *pukamuni* men carried the baskets[64] into the centre of the *milimika* and there stood guard while the "workers" had their meal (Pl. 25B).

[184] [175] [189]

[63] There is no clear-cut belief behind this ritual. Some informants said that the "workers", having been adjacent to the grave for many hours, were inhabited by *mapaditis* who must be driven out before the "workers" are "safe" to associate with the *pukamuni* group; others said that the *mapaditis*, following close on the heels of the "workers" had to be frightened away by what, to them, appeared to be a real fight, before the *ilanias* could start.

[64] These baskets, though they always stood on the edge of the *milimika*, were not often used in the *ilanias* we witnessed, as the participants were able to get most of the food they required from the settlement. If, however, the burial ceremony had been held at some remote place, the *pukamuni* men and women would have had to spend the day in hunting in order to provide food for the "workers".

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 (2) *The Ilanias of Nulatini*

[123] We were able to see the opening mourning rituals, *iramparini*[66] of *Nulatini* and six of her *ilanias*.

[128] Rather than deal with all of these ceremonies in detail, I will describe the *iramparini* rituals and a typical *ilania*, in which the aborigines carried out all phases of the rituals, with the exception of the appointment of the "workers". Although the rite of *pumuti*, *wandiatapinda*, or feeding the "workers", did not take place at every *ilania*, they will be included in this description.

(a) *The Opening Mourning Ritual, Iramparini of Nulatini*

Ten days after the burial of *Nulatini*, the aborigines of Melville Island performed the ritual of *iramparini*. The function of that ceremony was to express [775] grief over *Nulatini's* death, and to tell her spirit that, as she did not now belong to the same realm as themselves, she must leave her grave and return to her totemic country.

The ceremony was held about thirty yards from the camp of the dead woman. Most of the aborigines were present, but two men, *Pulanimbuwi*, the husband, and *Tupiatira*, *Nulatini's* nearest relative, took the leading parts.

The rituals opened in the late afternoon with *Pulanimbuwi*, painted in [302] white, elaborately decorated and carrying a long stick, walking slowly to- [533] ward the assembled people, singing the *amburu*, the women's song of mourning (Pl. 23A).

Every now and again, the husband stopped, leaned on his stick and looked round (apparently for his wife's *mopaditi*), before continuing on his way to the place of ceremony.

Coming out of the forest in an almost opposite direction was *Tupiatira*, also painted in white, waving green branches in his hands. About fifty yards from the old camp of *Nulatini*, *Tupiatira* called her name loudly, and, after listening for a while, announced that, as she had not answered, she must be dead.

As *Tupiatira* walked forward he continued to call, while *Pulanimbuwi*, now accompanied by his sister, *Kundi*, came in from the opposite direction, both singing the *amburu*. When the men were only a few yards apart the aborigines formed themselves into two lines, facing each other.

At a signal and a loud "*Book, book*" from *Pulanimbuwi*, an old man, [535] *Malumerinisa*, accompanied by six to eight of the men, danced between the

[66] The *iramparini* of *W'aniamperi* was performed before our arrival.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

their heads. During these songs, the husband sat quietly at one end of the *milimika*, with his head in his hands (Pl. 23B). 765 [535]

The *ilania* concluded with *Nangrinini* calling *Aluprumani* (a mangrove bird); *Malumerinita* calling *Tjirinini* (the red-backed sea-eagle) and the assembled men, making the honey and mosquito call.

During one of the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, a near relative had his name changed from *Miradipaiwa* to *Tukuwuinganili*.[71] [533]

(3) *The Ilanias of Makapini*

At the same time as the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi* was being performed, an old woman, *Makapini*, was baptized at Bathurst Island by the priest, just as she was dying, and, although she had never accepted Christianity, was buried, against the wishes of her relatives, in the mission cemetery. 797

The aborigines of both Bathurst and Melville Island were distressed over this incident because as *Makapini* had always been a "pagan" (as the mission authorities call the unconverted), her spirit could not go to the white man's "heaven", and, as the *pukamuni* ceremonies were prohibited on Bathurst Island, the spirit of *Makapini* was doomed to wander, lonely and unhappy, for ever. To prevent such a calamity (for lonely *mopaditis* are a danger to the living), the aborigines of Melville Island performed a modified *pukamuni*, called the *aramatruni-nipungari*,[72] so that, at its conclusion, the spirit of old *Makapini* would travel happily to her future home. 765 [775]

The pattern of this ceremony differed somewhat from that of *Waniamperi*. At a *milimika* near the camp of the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, the Melville Island aborigines held five *ilanias* over a period of eight days. The final two days of the *pukamuni* were held among the poles.[73] I will describe a typical *ilania* and later the final *pukamuni* rituals.

The *ilania* opened with one of the "workers", who had been in the forest cutting the burial poles, running toward the *milimika*, stick in hand, giving the honey call. One of the *pukamuni* men rushed out to drive him away, but, after a sham fight with throwing sticks, brought him into the *milimika*.

The predominating songs and dances of this and other *ilanias* of *Makapini* were associated with the mythical wild-honey people[74] of Bathurst Island. 765 533 535

[71] Hart (1930, pp. 280–99) describes how the custom of altering the names of near relatives at death causes rapid changes in the language.

[72] This type of *pukamuni* ceremony is also held when aborigines are drowned at sea and their bodies not recovered. [766]

[73] This was a variation of the previous *pukamuni*, probably because the body was not at the place of ceremony.

[74] Although I did not inquire, it is certain from the songs, that the father or mother of the dead woman belonged to one of the honey totems of Bathurst Island.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

(d) The Final Mourning Rituals

By this time the chief woman mourner, painted entirely in red, had arrived. 765
On reaching the ceremonial ground, she charged against a pole, then leaned [302]
over it, crying heartbrokenly. Another woman, *Dominao*, in paroxysms of grief, threw herself on the ground at the base of another pole, while still another woman, dancing the *amburu* before the third pole, told the *mopaditi* [533] of the dead woman, in a song "to keep away from me". [775]

The ceremony finished, like that of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*, with concerted wailing around the poles.

(3) *The Pukamuni of Inbidjarmeri's Infant*

This simplified *pukamuni* was held for a premature child of *Inbidjarmeri*. 766
The child died, about a month previously, at the Darwin hospital. The complete rituals, though curtailed, having occupied only two hours, followed the normal pattern with two exceptions. The *pukamuni* group did not employ any "workers" to cut the burial poles, and, as the body had not been brought to Melville Island, the ceremonies were held at the grave of a young child, of the same parents, who had died about two years previously.

A distant relative, appointed by the father of a "worker" had burnt the grass, cleared a space adjacent to the grave as a dancing ground and draped a turtle rope around the old poles in which had been twisted the wing feathers of geese.[88] For these duties he was given two loin cloths.

There were no dances at the first *ilania* which took place about three hundred yards from the burial site, only prolonged honey and mosquito calls.

The *pukamuni* group then moved to within a hundred yards of the grave where, after more honey and mosquito calls, they lit the *wandiatapinda* fire, and walked through its smoke and flames.

At the commencement of the final rituals, most of the group halted behind a rope, stretched between two trees, over which the "worker" had hung bagging and blankets;[89] but others rushed forward, spears in hand, and, as in the two previous *pukamunis*, stabbed at the base of the poles surrounding the grave to drive away the *mopaditis*.

After this, everyone moved to the grave-side of the screen, the men carrying out a series of dances while the women, beating themselves with sticks, 535 765
leaned on the *pukamuni* poles and mourned. 533

While some of the *pukamuni* men chanted a song about the red-fruited eugenia, *binamia*, *Muramajua*, walking around the *milimika*, imitated a

[88] I did not find out the significance of this custom.
[89] This took the place of the screen of boughs used in the normal rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 535 766 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milimika* to the rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first [177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[80]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten- [114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and [775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[81] the fundamental idea [517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the [775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[82]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon [126] drawings[83] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[80] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.

[832] [81] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women were attracted to them.

[82] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.

[83] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 they do have one which explains, to their satisfaction, the origin of the small
×732 figures.[18]
765 On the occasion of the first *pukamuni* at Tapararimi, a man, *Piamatilid-jara*, who later become the tawny frogmouth (*Podagus strigoides*), made and painted a small figure, similar to Pl. 40c, F. This he placed on the grave to impersonate *Purukupali*, whose body was not buried there, he having walked into the sea and drowned himself.

×532 At present these human figures, both large and small, are made, either at
765 the request of the chief mourner, or by the "worker" himself. This happens if the man cutting the pole, holding the dead person in especial esteem, wishes to please his spirit. The smaller figures may represent either a son of the dead or mythical men and women of creation times.

When the burial poles are being erected, one of them, in human form, or a smaller figure, is occasionally placed at the head of the grave.[14] The *mopaditi*,
●[775] on leaving its body, sees the wooden figure, and thinking it is either its son, or one of its old companions, stays at the grave and talks to it about old times. These wooden figures have no *imunka* (life essence), nevertheless the *mopaditi*, who is believed to be stupid and easily misled, thinks it is talking to a living person.

I collected two burial poles (Pl. 39) in the form of highly conventionalized
[126] human beings, and six smaller, full-length figures (Pl. 40, 41). I also photographed a pole, in human form, on an old grave (Pl. 38A, B, C).

Pl. 39A, B, C, is a *pukamuni* pole representing a performer, ready to take part in the final burial rituals. The projection *m* (39B), is his hair; *n*, *n*, are his ears, and *o*, *o*, his arms; *p* is a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball), and *s*, (39A), his backbone.

The cross-hatched squares, *a*, *a*, *a* (39A), represent patches of grass on the floor of the jungle; the designs, *c*, *c*, *c*, jungle trees, and *b*, *b*, *b*, spider webs in the branches.

The waves of the sea are indicated by the bands of short vertical lines, *c*, *c*, *c*; a boulder on the sea-shore by oval *f* (39A); oysters on the rocks by the squares with diagonal lines, *d*, *d*, and paper-bark trees by the groups of intersecting lines at *e*, *e*.

The designs on the face and head (39C) are: *k*, edible fruit, *h*, grass in

[174] [18] This myth does not necessarily indicate great age because those of non-literate people tend to keep up-to-date. Mountford, 1956, p. 98, and Worsley, 1955, p. 856, both give examples of how the Groote Eylandt aborigines have incorporated foreign elements in their creation stories.

[14] This is only one of many safeguards used by the Tiwi to keep the *mopaditi* away from the camp of its old companions, particularly during the first few days after death.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, 881
dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp, and prepared them for cooking.

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42E).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place 302
where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42E), 881
and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh", threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[83] It is [821]
believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunderstorms and so prolonging the wet season.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikingulas*, the *Mikiatarimas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts, 881
went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* [386]
sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a [824]
line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[84]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the [775]
portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always [824]
present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the *kulama* people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates then sat down to a meal of the edible yams.

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a *pukamuni* man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any [753]
part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them [626]
ill.

[83] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[84] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 463, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated men.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER V

The Spirit People of the Tiwi

776 THE Tiwi believe that a number of spirit people live on the land, in the swamps, the sea and the sky of their tribal country. They are: the *mopaditis* (p. 61), the spirits of the dead whose homes are in the various totemic localities; the *Ningauis* (p. 124) of the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island; the *Maratjis*, or rainbow people, living in the swamps; the *Pitipitis*, or spirit children, who later become aboriginal children; the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, of the shallow sandbars of the sea; the *Papinjuwaris*, the meteor-men, who live in a place in the sky, far away to the west, and the *Paramanuas*, who often befriend the aborigines.

Although the aborigines are afraid of the *Papinjuwaris*, the *Maratjis* and, to some extent, the *Mopaditis*, they do not particularly fear the other spirit people.

000 The aborigines of Oenpelli, western Arnhem Land, however, believe that their countryside is inhabited with a multitude of spirit people (Mountford, 1956, p. 181), some dangerous and some harmless. This is unusual in aboriginal Australia, most tribes fearing only the spirits of the dead.

1. THE METEOR-MEN, THE PAPINJUWARIS

776 The *Papinjuwaris* live, with their wives and children, in a large paper-bark hut at Wangidji, a place far away to the west, where the sky ends.

The men, large and heavily built, have only one eye as bright as a star. The aborigines often see a *Papinjuwari* streaking across the sky, a blazing firestick in one hand and a fighting club in the other.

The *Papinjuwaris* are ghoulish people, who, although their food consists of bandicoots and large centipedes (Fig. 12), are always craving for the bodies of the dead and the blood of the sick to satisfy their degraded appetites.

[821] One evening, the aborigines pointed out a brilliant meteor which they said was a *Papinjuwari*; he was taking the body of *Waniamperi*, whose grave was not far from our camp, back to his companions at Wangidji.

753 When a *Papinjuwari* hunts for blood, he locates a sick person (by smell),
776 and standing some distance away (they can make themselves invisible) sucks

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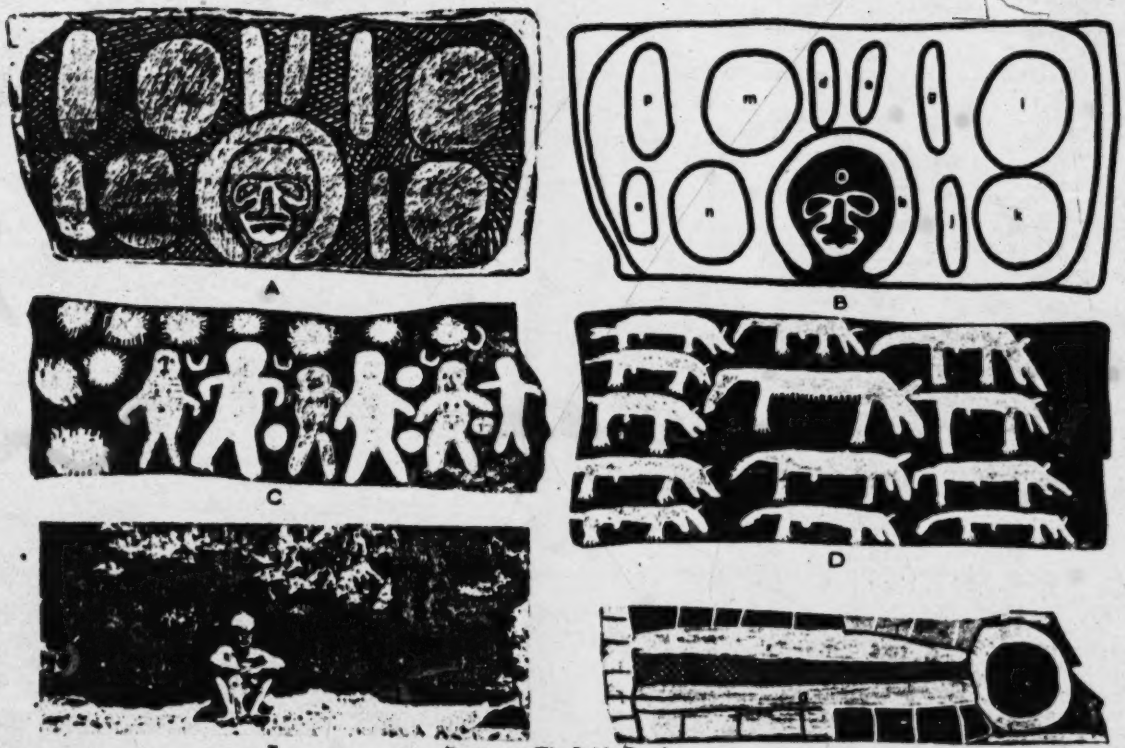

PLATE 47. *The Spirit People*
A, B, Spirits of the Dead, Mopaditis; C, F, Meteor-men, Papinjuwaris; D, Sea-dogs, Wankuis; E, Caves, Homes of Wankuis.

Cp. 154 A]

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

without quarrels. Again, there is no comparable ceremony on the mainland. 171 [281]

(c) Throughout the mainland of Australia, women occupy a low social status within the tribal framework. They are rigidly excluded from almost all aspects of the ceremonial life, and of initiation; they also are ignorant of most of the creation myths, the procedures of the secret rituals, and even the existence of the sacred objects. 171 562

These restrictions do not apply to the women of the Tiwi. They are initiated, side by side, with the men, and take similar though not identical parts in the ritual. They also participate in all phases of the burial ceremonies, at which they usually perform their own dance, the *Amburu*, but occasionally take part in dances which are performed by the men (Pl. 25c). A woman even has the right to cut and paint a burial pole, if her husband, who has been allotted the task, is unavoidably absent. In short, I was unable to find any aspect of Tiwi ceremonial life in which women could not take their part if they so desired.

(d) Although the creation story of the Tiwi is basically similar to that of the aborigines elsewhere in Australia, it is not as elaborate as, say, the travels of the Wawalik and the Djunkgao Sisters of Arnhem Land, recorded by Warner (1937), nor those of Central Australia, described by Spencer and Gillen (1899). I did not witness, nor did I hear of any specific Tiwi ceremony that commemorated the myths of the creation period. The dances in the *ilanias*, and the final rituals of the burial ceremony, usually referred to the various creatures or the elements, but seldom to an incident in the creation myth. 171 773 [535]

(e) There are also important differences between many of the myths of the Tiwi and those of the mainland people. For instance, in northern Australia, it is the moon man who brings death to mankind; in Melville Island the same moon-man endeavours to prevent death from coming to the world. I have already pointed out other wide differences between the astronomical myths of the mainland and those of the adjacent Melville Island.

On Arnhem Land, in fact, as far as South Australia, the aborigines, almost without exception, believe that their spirits go to a distant land not visible to human eyes, where there is continuous good weather, and an abundance of easily gathered food. 171 775

On the other hand, the Tiwi believe that at the close of the burial rituals the spirits of their dead return to their separate birthplaces, where each one hunts for food in the same manner as its living relatives, suffering, as they do, from exposure if the weather is inclement, and from hunger if the food supplies are limited.

184 they speak one language and they regard a certain defined area of land as
619 belonging to them.

[171] The Australian tribe is a collection of persons who speak a common
619 language, or what they themselves regard as such, practise the same
101 customs, and normally have a name by which they distinguish themselves and their language. The inhabitants of Melville and Bathurst Islands are therefore to be regarded as a single tribe, but it is difficult to find a true tribal name. The Uwaidja of Port Essington call the Melville Islanders, *Wuyuk*, as Spencer notes, but the Melville Islanders scarcely
186 regard it as necessary to call themselves anything. The local group of
648 which a man is conscious of being a member is the horde, and until the
101 advent of the white man, the Melville Islander was not aware that any other people existed except themselves. It was impossible and also quite unnecessary for them to visit the mainland in their bark canoes more especially as the coast around Cape Don and Cape Hotham, dimly seen
[172] on clear days, was regarded as the abode of departed souls, *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead. It was apparently just as impossible or unnecessary, or perhaps danger was the chief deterrent, for the Uwaidja or the Larakia to visit Melville Island.

The result was that the people, with no contact with people not of their own tribe, did not really need a tribal name, and very seldom used the word *Tiwi*, which is the only one that can be regarded as the name of the tribe.

101 Tiwi is a word that is known and but seldom used. Some of the younger men were in fact surprised and interested when they heard the old men using it in response to my enquiries. There is no question of secrecy or tabu about it. In common everyday use are the words *tini*, meaning a man of one of the Melville or Bathurst Island hordes, *i.e.*, a male member of the Tiwi, and *tiṇa* meaning a female member of the tribe. *Tiwi* is the plural form of *tini* and *tiṇa*. It is often said by informants that *tini* means a man, and *tiṇa* a woman, irrespective of colour or race, but in point of fact these words are only used as applying to members of the *Tiwi*, and some other word would be used in referring to a white man, or a Larakia or Uwaidja.

101 Objection may be made to the adoption as the tribal name of these
619 people of a word that theoretically at any rate seems simply "men" in the ordinary language. But in point of fact the word is never used except

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 To sum up then the main points in the customs of the Tiwi connected with personal names, the outstanding features are these :—

(1) Multiplicity of personal names.
(2) Death renders tabu the names of the dead man.
(3) Death renders tabu similar words in the language.
(4) Death renders tabu names bestowed upon others by the dead man.
(5) Method of coining names.
(6) Tabu on names at certain times (*e.g.*, childbirth, initiation).

551 424 775 198 It is fairly evident from the facts cited in this paper that among the Tiwi at any rate a personal name is the absolute property of the person possessing it. Further than that, it is so identified with his personality that even the use of it by anyone else in resented by the owner. There is no space here to describe the theology of the Tiwi, but it must be pointed out that after the death of a man his spirit does not go with his body to the region of the dead, but wanders about the world in a form both invisible and malignant. Just as an individual when alive would resent the use of his name so too will his spirit and will be much more dangerous an enemy on account of his supernatural form. Spirits are not only malignant, they are also unreasonable, and whereas a live man would not quarrel with you for using an ordinary word resembling his name, his ghost is quite likely not to appreciate the difference. Hence the prohibition against similar words. While in touch with the unseen world it pays to be careful. But in dealing with the unseen world the Tiwi have a special language. This body of words has a sacredness of its own, it is a part of the spirit world itself. Therefore you may incur the enmity of a spirit by using his mundane name or some similar mundane word, but the use of a similar word in the sacred language cannot do any harm ; the spirit will not get annoyed with you for using a spirit word, especially as you can only use it in any case on sacred occasions. Hence there is no tabu on similar words in the sacred language.

551 844 This principle of the sacred language for use when in touch with supernatural situations also helps us to understand several other things. The birth of a child is, to a native, a most mysterious affair and the woman is regarded as being intimately in touch with the spirit world. Hence her name as part of herself is invested with a ghostly character and this is expressed by the tribe in treating her husband as if she did not exist, as if

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 Tip, and every white man who came in contact with him immediately shortened his name to the obvious diminutive form, was a person whose whole life was devoted to laughter. No English word fits him so well as the word "gay." This gaiety was not clownishness or buffoonery nor did it contain any element of malice or desire to hurt others; it was simply an enormous sense of fun. The other four brothers were in their different ways rather taut and tense personalities, or at least three were and Antonio was when away from home. Tip alone of the five brothers was always completely relaxed and unself-conscious. He was always looking on the bright side, always trying to banish tension and worry with a quip or a wisecrack, always making a joke. His favorite sentence opening was "perhaps." On one occasion a camp I was in was badly scared by a ghost appearing in the middle of the night in the midst of the camp fires. Everybody, anthropologist included, huddled around their fires, not daring to look and yet unable to abstain from furtive peeps. Finally the apparition seemed to have gone and there were low whispers from various firesides of, "Has it gone?—I think it's gone—it doesn't seem to be there now." "Perhaps it's gone to Port Darwin to see a movie," said Tip, loudly, and immediately the tension was broken and the whole camp shouted with laughter. On another occasion a group of natives who were escorting an elderly and venerable French priest through the bush, were chased by a herd of wild buffalo[4] and forced to take refuge in the nearby trees. The buffalo pawed and snorted under the trees and a discussion took place as to how to frighten them away. Shouting, swearing and throwing sticks failed to frighten them off. "Perhaps, Father," said Tip, convulsed with laughter at the whole proceeding and addressing the priest, "perhaps they would go away if you cursed at them in the Church language [i.e., Latin]."

159 522 715

159 522 561 There are several important things to notice about Tip's humor. One is that much of the time he used it as a means of initiating action, as in the ghost incident where he took the lead over several senior men in dissolving the tension, or in the Warner incident,[5] where the initiating suggestion to play a very old and hackneyed joke came from him. In a culture that looked with disfavor on young men speaking out of turn, Tip was always speaking out of turn, but because such speaking was always in a joking form, few if any natives recognized it as being out of turn. From certain points of view we might say that Tip had found, through his gaiety, a tool which he used to make his presence felt without exciting social disapproval because of his lack of age. But that statement makes the whole matter sound far too conscious and deliberate. Again we face a constantly recurring problem—how much of "personality" is status-dictated and how much "natural"? Will increasing years and dignity cause Tip to cease laughing at life and its problems? There seem at least two grounds for strongly doubting it. One is the admittedly subjective but strongly held view that Tip didn't laugh and joke and come out with his incongruous "perhaps" to achieve effect or as a means to the end of social recognition, but because he genuinely and naturally enjoyed his own humor. Too many nights have I dozed off to sleep listening to Tip gurgling with sup-

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9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

614 Each of these *emuya*, sometimes called Pukui (sun),[8] has a number of cult
778 centres and in them resides the "old woman" of the clan; these are also called *emuya*. The sacred site of the Tukambani clan is at Morapeanga, Cape Keith; of the Miatui, Irapulanwa, Buchanan Island in the Apsley Straits; of the Kudjali, Padupi; Sanke Bay, or as the natives say in their quaint pidjin, Djenakaba, which is on the north of Melville Island, an old trepang site.

As far as could be ascertained, no fixed belief is associated with these clan centres. They are not burial caves invested with a ritual significance such as we find in parts of the mainland (Wadaman and other tribes), yet the shade or spirit of the dead does
[775] follow the track made by the natives as they come from the sacred centre to "show it the road." Only some natives know this. It is probably a ritual that has become lost with the advent of new ideas.

614 *Clan Relationship.* To marry within a major clan or phratry, *aramipi*, is taboo,
615 *kimiyari*. A person of one phratry can only marry into the other two major clans.
601 Thus, all Tukambani and their kindred sub-clans are mother, mother's brother, mother's mother, mother's mother's brother, sister's son and daughter, brother and sister. They call people in the other two clans father, father's sister, son, daughter,
[611] wife, wife's brother, wife's mother, wife's mother's brother, wife's mother's mother and wife's mother's brother. In other words, descent is matrilineal.

582 *Marriage Law.* The marriage law is the same as in most tribes: a man marries his mother's mother's brother's daughter's daughter or, as the natives would say, "a man marries his group sister's son's daughter." They have equal exchange in marriage, that is "opposite brothers exchange sisters." An "uncle" (mother's brother) takes his (group) nephew's daughter, and the group nephew receives the
[616] uncle's daughter in exchange (cross-cousin type). There are neither subsections nor sections and indeed, no moieties. A reason may be suggested for this: being isolated on the island, each person knew his or her relationship to the others, and as there was no intertribal exchange, the need for this type of classification never arose. One of the important functions of the section and subsection systems is to facilitate intercourse between tribal groups.

582 The marriage system with relationship terms is explained in the following table:
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		1		2
A	.. *ubunga* m.m.m.m. or, sr.	*UWANI* M.M.M.M.B. or B. (Ego)	*yarbunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.
B	.. *yamoriy* m.m.m.	*YARMURDI* M.M.M.B.	*umbreniwa* w.m.	*YAPINAWINI* W.M.B.
C	.. *imaninga* m.m.	*IMANANI* M.M.B.	*tumaliya* w.m.m.	*TAMALITI* W.M.M.B.
D	.. *inari* m.	*ILAMANI* M.B.	*umarani* w.m.m.m.	*IMERANINGA* W.M.M.M.B.
A	.. *ubunga* sr.	*UWANE* B.	*yabunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.

[8] These natives have numerous names for the same object, the result of the taboo on certain words after a death.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

796 An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch
827 his wives or chikiren, because a deadly sweat called *kilamini* comes from his body and will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

[88] Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected
764 with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *emuke.r* of
775 the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yatarako*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

773 *Culture Heroes.* They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the
776 "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumereka*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orati*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marakarti*.

776 *The Present Day Spirits.* Some spirits vitally affect their present lives. Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain
[82] spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

754 *Magic.* Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *kulumpara*. It is interesting to compare the Anula belief; if a person is sung with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Sickness is cured by beating the ground around the victim to hunt the evil spirit away. Likewise, a song, Upripu, is sung by the wives of the sick man to make him better. The *Kurewa*, a pointed bone, or sometimes a tomahawk is used to stab a person's urine or an article his body has touched (e.g. a bark he has lain upon to sleep) and so cause him to die. Blood thrown into the sea will cause a violent wind and a big tide. The Kulama rite will bring about the same result. No instance has been found of magic being used to entice the spirit from a person's body, yet if a person failed to show sympathy for the dead, the dead person's "shade" would cause that person to die and then run away with his "shade." To mention the name of the newly dead is taboo. If a person accidentally does this he must immediately hit his mouth and spit to cleanse it of the evil.

Names. The names given to the women and men are of three types; the first is the actual name and is given to a person at the Kulama rite; this is an ordinary word such as "honey nest," etc., but it is always in a different language from the ordinary one which is used everyday. The child also receives the name of his father, father's brother or father's sister; this is a traditional name. Then, in the case of a male, come the terms denoting his initiation grade in the Kulama. First stage—*Murukmani*; second stage—*Wadjaneta*; third stage—*Migingartiya*=first song and *Midjintera*=second song; fourth stage—*Mekearterima*=third song; and finally, *Makagala*, which denotes that the man is qualified to conduct a Kulama. Likewise, both sexes have grade names denoting their status in the Pukamane death ritual. Male terms: first stage—*waniati*; second stage—*warunerera*; third stage—*wanercterima*; fourth stage—*wanderara*. With girls and women these names are the same except for the ending denoting the sex.

In the case of women there are terms denoting age or condition. *Kudjine*—child; *alinga*—girl; *miriyaleta*—puberty; *murogarbra*—breasts developed; *piramuruka*—first sign of pregnancy; *paprungala*—pregnant woman; *wanantaka*—woman who has a child dead, and *umparu*—widow. Other terms are *pitukwen*—widower; *mentuygini* and *padrubayga*—boy and girl respectively, whose mother is pregnant; *indjula*—a woman whose breasts have fallen; and as on the mainland, a mother is always called by the sex of the child she carries in her arms: *oriowri* if a boy, *kudjine* if a girl.

Language. The language is peculiar. In many instances, owing to the masculine and feminine endings of the words, the women seem to speak a different language to the men. In addition, another language, or set of words, which is very rarely spoken, seems to obtrude itself. Thus one article will have many names. This is brought about by the strong death-taboo on names; as soon as a native dies, his names and his son's names are taboo and others are substituted. In this way every year new words are coined. Only recently at a Kulama two new ones appeared as a consequence of this taboo. *Purinteriya*, new name for tree, and *alepwa*, new name for coconut. Or a Kulama name may be given as, say, *wilinkurawa*, the meaning of which will be given as honey nest; and yet numerous words for honey are nothing

601 23 *angamani:* father's father; also FaFaBr, MoMoBr. Affinal application: MaMoHu, MoFaSiHu.

24 *imaninga:* mother's mother; also MoMoSi, FaFaSi. Affinal application: MoFaWi, FaMoBrWi.

Unlike *amini* and *ama*, the terms *angamani* and *imaninga* are not indefinitely extended collaterally, the more distant collateral kin being classed as elder siblings, i.e., *iwuni* or *imbunga*.

Terminology in the Second Descending Generation

25 *inimini:* daughter's son (ms); also BrDaSo (ws). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ws), SiDaDaHu (ms), "Si"Hu.

26 *inimunga:* daughter's daughter (ms); also BrDaDa (ws). Affinal application: DaSoWi (ws), SiDaSoWi (ms), "Br"Wi.

27 *intemili:* daughter's child (ws); also SiDaCh (ms). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ms), DaSoWi (ms), BrDaDaHu (ws), BrDaSoWi (ws). This term is used self-reciprocally and is quite often replaced by sibling terms (*iwini* or *imboke*) for distant kin.

Exchange Between Descent Groups

Consideration of symmetrical versus asymmetrical cross-cousin
582 marriage is but one way of looking at the Tiwi marriage system.
Let us now look at marriage as a system of exchange between descent
614 groups and between local groups.

From both the male and female points of view, the preferred marriage is to a member of Ego's father's matrilineal sib. Of all the marriages I recorded in 1954, 66 per cent were to members of the father's matrisib, and there was no significant difference by sex. These figures were substantiated by statements from informants expressing the preference for the exchange of spouses between two sibs. As in some of the kinship terminology, there is no indication here of asymmetry in the system.

Let us examine some of the ethnographic ramifications of sib exchange. Though a girl can be said to marry into her father's sib, it is more correct to view this as a marriage into her mother's father's sib, for it is her actual MoFa who arranges her Type A marriage, and this man is obligated to the men of his sib to help them acquire wives. If Ego's mother has also married correctly, then Ego's father's sib and her mother's father's sib will be the same. However, it is possible that her MoHu may not be a member of the same sib as her MoFa. This might well account for some of the 34 per cent of "incorrect" marriages in my original analysis, which only took account of the father's sib.

From the point of view of a male Ego it is also important, but
614 for different reasons, to marry a woman of his father's sib. A man's
[342] children come to him first in a dream and are then directed by him to their proper mothers. Unborn children (*pitapitui*) already have matrilineal sib affiliations and thus must be born to mothers of the
[775] same sib. Tiwi fathers call this dreaming of children "finding," and, if a man is unable to "find" any children, his deceased father is ex-

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

pected to help him. If a man has married a woman in his father's 614
matrisib, then his father and his children will be in the same sib. 775
Since only a dead father can so help his son, we have here an expression of the unity and mutual support of a sib and its members in the previous life and the afterlife as well as in the present life. It is important, I believe, to add here that the Tiwi do not believe in reincarnation.

It is interesting to speculate, on the basis of the above, what 582
happens if a man marries women of different sibs. If his mother has 614
also married men of different sibs, Ego will have "fathers" in different sibs to help him find children for his various wives.

Thus, as far as sib exchange is concerned, the Tiwi marriage system is a symmetrical one. When we consider the entire social system of the Tiwi, we see a tendency toward atomism. There are 22 matrisibs, grouped today into five exogamous phratries. Sib [615]
membership in phratries is subject to change (Pilling 1957), and the phratries themselves have segmented twice since Hart's visit in 1929. We consequently cannot consider the phratries as stable units in the social organization, and indeed the Tiwi themselves do not. If all marriages were correctly arranged as exchanges between two sibs, we would have eleven independent and symmetrical marriage systems. When this possibility is considered in relation to the data on Tiwi local organization, the potentialities for further symmetry and atomism are quite evident.

Exchange Between Local Groups 621

There are ten major land divisions on Melville and Bathurst 631
Islands, called by the Tiwi *tungarima* or "countries." Rights to the land of the *tungarima* are determined, for both males and females, [591]
by the location of the grave of one's father, and there is a marked preference for patrilocal residence. The *tungarima* are, in themselves, agamous. They are, however, subdivided into smaller districts, each inhabited either by a single large patrilocal extended family or by a group of closely related smaller households. Since incest regulations [582]
dictate that extended families are exogamous, we may consider that in many cases, if not all, the local group will also be exogamous.

Unilateral Type A marriage contracts will therefore involve a 582
minimum of three such households or local groups. But the marriage 614
system might still be symmetrical within the *tungarima* or country organization, and the total effect might be to localize the matrisibs in pairs. Each country could then be considered as comprising an independent marriage system. The *tungarima* do reveal marked political, economic, and ceremonial independence, but at least today the matrisibs are not localized. The mythology on the origin of the sibs (Mountford 1958), however, strongly indicates that they were at one time conceived as being localized, and this would account for the stated existence of local spirit-child centers with sib affiliations

discembarked on the edge of a large expanse of wet, grassy marsh. 123
On the bank a few low trees provided cover for the hunters, who 223
spread out about fifty yards apart. We waited. Then in the distance the first flock of six geese appeared, flying low over the marsh. They were not headed for us, but passed over the line of hunters about a hundred yards upstream. We could not see the hunters, but the same six geese continued safely after passing the firing line. Now another small group of geese seemed to be heading in our direction. Albert slowly took his position, his legs apart, the left stretched in front, the right somewhat bent as his body arched backward. One *milingani* he held near the charred end in his right arm which was so far back over his head that the tip of the stick almost touched the ground. As counter balance, his left hand, holding several spares, was pointed forward toward the geese. Just as the geese were to pass over our heads, they swerved and went instead over the man to the right of us. You could hear the whir of the stick as it was thrown with tremendous force up into the air, turning end over end, and then the 'thwack' as it reached its mark. A goose, its neck hanging loosely, spiralled down, to land with a splash close to the hunter's feet.

Now the flocks were more numerous as the dusk grew thicker. Soon a group flew directly overhead and Albert aimed and threw, but the spiralling stick slid off the wing tip of the lead goose and he continued, somewhat shaken but quite unharmed. Again and again Albert threw at the increasing numbers of honking homeward-bound geese, but when the last stick was thrown and it was quite dark, we still had no geese. When we gathered, it was found that [763 out of ten hunters with perhaps three hundred sticks thrown, only 777] two sticks had found their mark. This was not good. Albert was worried. "Maybe someone bin die, make me bad luck."

Later that evening Black Joe started singing a chant. 223
"*Mobuditi*, plenty goose here; give us some." I asked him 789
whom he was singing to and, although names of the dead are most 775
infrequently mentioned for fear that the ghost of that person, its *mobuditi*, will hear it, this was one occasion where the *mobuditi* could do more good than harm. So the *mobuditi* of Bangri was called upon. Bangri, it was explained, had been a big man, "Plenty wives, maybe hundred. This his country; him grave close up along

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Fig. 15. Weather-worn poles mark the grave of someone long dead but not forgotten

223 bush. He bin die long time ago." This had been his country while
789 alive and it was still his country, for his spirit remains near the
grave and still hunts the wild animals and birds, while the spirits
●775 of his wives collect the wild yams, and his little spirit children play
in the bush. Bangri will share this food with others who come, and
their *mobuditiés*, should they die and be buried in the country, for
as long as his name is remembered, and until his grave-posts rot
with the passing of time.

123 But Bangri was not cooperative. The next day the hunters
found little game in the bush and the women turned to the laborious
[222 job of digging six-foot holes with a stick to obtain the small yams
224] that are to be found at this season. Again the grass was too thick,
the snakes too cheeky, and Albert advised against our going bush.
[152 I decided the more logical explanation was that Albert considered
777] we ourselves had ample food, and besides he was sincerely worried
[223] about his long run of bad luck. But he left with the others that

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

once erected on the grave; the names of dead people immediately became *pukimani* on their deaths and could not be used, and the same was true of all the names bestowed by a dead man on the children of his household and all the other words in the language that sounded similar to the name of the dead man.[4] All ceremonials and rituals were *pukimani* as were the main performers and the armlets, neck ornaments, and other ceremonial objects. People in a *pukimani* state had to observe all sorts of avoidances of and abstentions from everyday actions, particularly with regard to food and sex. Close relatives of dead people could not touch food but had to be fed by nonmourners. That pillar of rigid orthodoxy, Tu'untalumi, was virtually never able to feed himself but was in a *pukimani* state almost the whole year round and needed one of his wives to feed him. (Another advantage of a large household.) Certain spots in the bush or on the banks of streams were *pukimani* places; the dimly seen outline of the Australian coast was *pukimani* as was the ocean near Cape Keith where the Tiwi ancestors had first created the Tiwi world; and finally, the violation of a *pukimani* restriction rendered the violator *pukimani*.

Pukimani as thus applied to people, places, things, names, words, restrictions, and avoidances, meant both sacred and taboo, and was clearly one of that widespread class of words and concepts that is almost standard among the simpler societies. The only noteworthy thing about its Tiwi form is that *pukimani* was a state which people did not actively seek to enter but which happened to people regardless of their wishes. Furthermore, when a man found himself in a state of *pukimani*, his behavior was automatically prescribed for him and for the duration of his *pukimani* condition he observed his avoidances and his abstentions just as automatically as he dropped them when his *pukimani* period expired. When he became *pukimani*, he punctiliously fulfilled the requirements because if he did not, he was likely to be unsuccessful in his enterprises. Big men simply did not dare to be casual about the requirements lest their reputations suffer and they lose face and influence. Less successful men were occasionally explained as probably being secret violators. "His wives and daughters all seem to die young; he must have broken some *pukimani* restrictions sometime" was a reason often given for somebody's failure to be as successful as he might have been. It was noticeable in such explanations of nonsuccess that the failure, or in our terms the bad luck, was attributed to the violation of the taboos, never to the active displeasure of the spirits. The spirits simply did not figure in the picture.

Apart from the big ceremonial occasions, a Tiwi did not have much concern with religion in his everyday life except through some aspect of the *pukimani* system. It was only through *pukimani* that the sacred world impinged upon him at all for most of the year. Since *pukimani* was a condition that could not be actively sought but "just happened" to a person every so often by such common events as the death of a relative, his wife giving birth, or his

[4] When a man named Tibuki died in 1928, a crisis occurred at the Mission where the natives were supposed to make their requests in pidgin English. How could they now ask for tobacco, since that word was now *pukimani*?

2: Mountford
773, 778, 776, 821

OI20 Tiwi OI20

[Materials pertaining to these categories will also be found in category 532.]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 However, before all these changes took place, *Tukimbini* assembled the mythical people who had attended *Purukupali's* ceremony, and taught them the rules of behaviour, and the laws of marriage and tribal relationship they must always obey. *Tukimbini* also laid down the periods of light and darkness that still determine the daily cycle of aboriginal life.

512 821 [825] When the first light appears in the morning sky it is the melodious call of *Tukimbini*, now the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) that wakens the aborigines from their sleep.

The sun-woman, rising above the eastern horizon with her blazing torch, is a signal for the aboriginal men, with spears and wooden clubs, to go hunting, and for the women, with bark baskets hanging from the sticks over their shoulders, to gather their food from the forest and the swamp-lands.

About mid-day, the sun-woman, cooking the food she has gathered, makes the heat of the day unbearable. The aborigines then retire to the shade of the trees until the late afternoon when they continue their food gathering, returning to camp to cook their evening meal just as the sun-woman sinks below the western horizon.

Soon, darkness creeps across the sky, the stars, *tapalinga*, show themselves and the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, span the heavens. It is then that the dried perspiration which the *Maludaianini* rub from their bodies, [512] falls on the eyelids of the aborigines, making them so heavy that they cannot keep awake. Next morning, at dawn, *Tukimbini* wakes the aborigines to a new day.

776 778 The following is the list of the totemic places of Melville and Bathurst Islands, illustrated by bark paintings, the names of the totemic people and their relationships to each other.

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
Murupianga	Tukimbini (bird)	Great-grandson of *Mudungkala*
Wuriupi	Garagalani (turtle)	Not known
	Wuriupranala (sun)	Daughter of *Mudungkala*
Panindu	Paninduela (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Wailu	Andjalui (fresh water)	Husband of *Wuriupranala*
	Kwouk-kwouk (frog)	Not known

2: Mountford E-5 (1954). 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
	Pakadringa (thunderstorms)	Son of *Kwouk-kwouk*
	Tomituka (monsoon rain)	Daughter of *Kwouk-kwouk*
	Bumerali (lightning)	Daughter of *Kwouk-kwouk*
Pirilou	Piriloukala (catfish)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Aranga	Wuringa (fish)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Jutapinca	Ringa (turtle)	Not known
Wilindu	Wilinduela (crocodile)	Sister of *Tukimbini*
Numanira	Numanirakala (red ochre)	Sister of *Tukimbini*
Runguni	Baraka (spider)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Alaparima	Imburai-inga (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Mandumpi	Timarai-inga (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Patuapuru	Pungulu (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Putawini, Puntubu	Aragoutourina (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Matingalia	Matingalia (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Turiturina	Puruliangkala (bush fire)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Murninini, Cape Fourcroy, Taliau	Mandubuka (sand-fly)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Milapuru	Milapukala (cockatoo)	Not known
Primadua	Miatrina (pandanus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Primadua	Tililindigia (yam)	Not known
Primadua	Ubuna (yam)	Not known
Mungunu	Inkaka (cockatoo)	Not known
Jurubulinai	Mudungkala (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Rulijunga	Mantinuria (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Arunumpi	Mudati (kite)	Not known
Muranapi	Murungimpili (flying fox)	Not known
Muranapi	Kailili (bamboo)	Not known[86]
Muranapi	Mandubuka (blow fly)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Kudjatumpi	March-fly (Kudjatumpi)	Wife of *Tukimbini*

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[86] There is little doubt that most, if not all, of the totemic women whose relationships I did not find out, would have been wives or relatives of *Tukimbini*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532 821 the sun at mid-afternoon, and the disc on the upper edge, *Wuriupranala* at sunset.

The lighter coloured radiating bands are the lines of light from the blazing bark torch, carried by the sun-woman; the dark-coloured ovals between, a number of *tukimbinis* (yellow-eared honey-eaters), and the lighter coloured ovals, a number of *wuriuprinilis* (mistletoe birds).

In the centre of Pl. 7C, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, seated in her bark hut at Wuriupi. The central dark mark on her abdomen indicates body paint; the white lines, *a*, *a*, are her legs, *b*, *b*, her feet and *e*, *e*, her arms.

The dark-coloured oval, *g*, is the sun-woman's paper-bark hut; the light-coloured outer circle, *d*, is a bough shed built over the hut to keep it cool, and the short radiating lines between the two circles, the posts supporting the roof.

The Eucalyptus-tree Woman, Paninduela, at Panindu

773 The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Paninduela*, created the totemic country of Panindu, north-eastern Melville Island, the streams, fish, turtles, geese and other creatures, as well as water-lilies, spike-rushes and other plants that grow in the freshwater swamps.

778 Panindu is on the upper reaches of an unnamed river in north-eastern Melville Island; Wailu, the totemic place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at the mouth of the same stream.

×532 778 On Pl. 9A, B, *a*, *a*, are the Panindu waterholes; *b*, *b*, waterfalls which flow from upper to lower pools; and *e*, *e*, are lines of foam caused by the falling water. At *t*, *t*, etc., are *pubiaka*, and *u*, *u*, etc., paper-bark trees on the banks of the stream, and at *h*, *h*, and *j*, *j*, dead *pubiaka* and paper-bark trees lying in the water.

Two lagoons, or backwaters, are indicated at *c*, *c*; two sedge-covered swamps at *f*, *g*. Water-grass on the bottom of the swamp is shown by the cross-hatched areas, *s*, *s*.

The Freshwater-man, Andjalui

778 The totem place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island. At Wailu there also lived the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*,[88] 776 her son, *Pakatringa*, the man of the thunderstorms, and her two daughters, *Tomituka*, the woman of the monsoon rains, and *Bumerali*, the woman of the lightning.

[88] Some aborigines thought, but were not sure, that *Andjalui* was the husband of both *Kwouk-kwouk*, and the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Five bark paintings, Pls. 9C, D, 10B, D, 22A, B, and 58B, deal with Wailu and its inhabitants. 532x 778

On Pl. 9C, D, the totemic lagoon, Wailu, is at *a*, the outer circle, *b*, symbolizing the broken water of the stream, *f* (in circle above) as it runs over the stony bed of a watercourse into Wailu. At *d*, *d*, are the paper-bark and *e*, *e*, *pubiaka* trees which grow on its banks.

At *j*, *j* (below), and *s*, *s*, etc., are living paper-bark, and *m*, *m*, and *p*, *p*, etc., *pubiaka* trees on the bank; *n*, *n*, are dead paper-bark and *o*, *o*, *pubiaka* trees in the swamp. The cross-hatched areas throughout the painting symbolize watergrass on the bottom of the lagoon.

Pl. 58B, which is associated with Wailu, deals with the rainbow-woman, *Maratji*, the thunderstorm-man, *Pakadringa*, and the monsoon rain-woman, *Tomituka*. 532x 776

The four black horizontal bands represent the dark-coloured clouds of *Tomituka* (monsoon rain); the lighter-coloured chevrons indicate large cumulus clouds, the home of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*; and the darker chevrons are the rainbow-women, *Maratjis*, who live at Maundu.

The Frog-Woman, Kwouk-kwouk, at Wailu

The frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, lives with her family, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka*, and *Bumerali*, at Wailu, the totem place of *Andjalui*. 776 778

The three children of *Kwouk-kwouk* always obey their mother, so when, in the wet season, the rain falls and thunderstorms rage, she croaks with joy over their handiwork. No aboriginal would dare to kill a frog; if he were so foolish, her son, *Pakadringa*, and daughter, *Tomituka*, would send down so much rain that everyone would be drowned. 821 825

Pl. 10B deals with the frogs at Wailu. The central black oval is the lagoon at Wailu. At *a*, *a*, are large paper-bark trees which grow in Wailu lagoon, and at *b*, *b*, another species of paper-bark which prefers the drier conditions of the banks. The frogs, which live in the lagoon, are indicated at *c*, *c*, etc.; a water-lily swamp is shown at *d*, *d*, and the white, broken water, running over fallen trees, at *e*, *e*. The groups of dots represent the water-grass, and the faint lines separating them, small streams of running water in an adjacent swamp. 532x 778

Pakadringa, Bumerali and Tomituka at Wailu

During creation times, before *Pakadringa* was transformed into the man of the thunderstorms, he was a hairy giant, huge in size, and repulsive in appear- 776

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

776 ance, with a long black body, short, thick legs and arms, and a pendant abdomen, caused by continuous over-eating.

Pakadringa, with his sister, *Bumerali*, the lightning-woman, her husband, *Kilipatu*, and their many children travel together in the thunderclouds.

776 821 *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, has flaked stone axes, called *rikas*,[84] mounted on long crooked handles, which she carries in either hand. With these, while travelling in the clouds with *Pakadringa*, she strikes the ground beneath, destroying the trees and sometimes the aborigines.[85] *Bumerali* becomes angry when her children jump from cloud to cloud. The sharp crack of the thunder which immediately follows the lightning flash is the voice of *Bumerali*[86] reprimanding her children for their disobedience.

Tomituka, *Pakadringa's* other sister, is the woman of the monsoon rain. At the start of the wet season, the trees and plants become happy when they hear the distant rumblings of *Pakadringa* for they know that *Tomituka* comes with him, bringing rain for their thirsty roots.

x532 Pl. 10D illustrates the mythical *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms.

776 821 The black central oval and the semi-circles at the top and bottom of the painting are the dark-coloured thunderclouds of *Pakadringa*. At *b*, *b*, etc., are white thunderclouds, and *c*, *c*, etc., red-coloured clouds which appear in the sky after a storm has passed. The designs *a*, *a*, etc., indicate the rainbow-women, *Maratji* (p. 154), and the dots on the background, the falling rain.

Pl. 32A, B, deals with the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. Her eyes are indicated at *a*, *a*; her breasts at *d*, *d*; her feet at *f*, *f*; her camps at *k*, *k*; and her nose is at *b*.

The crooked handles of her stone axes are at *c*, *c*, and the "road" of the lightning (the flash) is at *e*.

The upper crescent, *g*, is the thundercloud in which *Bumerali* and her family travel; *h*, a yellow cloud which forms after the storm has passed, *i*, *i*, *i*, are stringy-bark trees, and *n*, *n*, other trees killed by *Bumerali's* axe;

[84] Some of my informants said that the axes of *Bumerali* were made of a white stone which she had picked up at Moonga Hill, north of Turiturina, western Bathurst Island, where, I was told, there is an outcrop of quartz. Others said she made the axes from a white stone found in the upper world, Tuniruna, p. 271.

[85] There is a widespread belief throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and some of the [171] Indonesian Islands, that the prehistoric stone axes, found by the peasant people, were thunderbolts (Mountford, 1955, p. 1). At Oenpelli (Mountford, 1956, p. 208) a lightning man, *Mamaragan*, carries stone axes on his hands and knees. With these axes he strikes the ground. It is of some interest to find the myth of such a widespread belief among the Australian aborigines.

[86] The aborigines distinguish between the sharp crack of thunder (the voice of *Bumerali*) and the rumble of distant thunder, that of *Pakadringa*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

a, *o* (the black areas), indicate stony hills near her camp in the upper world; and the dots on the background, the stars, *tapalingas*, which live in the upper world with the lightning woman. 532 x 821 776

The Cat-fish Woman, Piriloukala at Pirilou

Pirilou, on the upper Goose Creek swamps, is the totemic place of a mythical cat-fish woman, *Piriloukala*. She was sent by *Tukimbini* to create both the totemic country and the food necessary for the natives to live on it, i.e., geese, brolgas, ducks, freshwater goannas, turtles, waterlilly bulbs, red and white fruited *Eugenia* trees, and the various kinds of yams that prefer the damp soil. 778 776 [262]

On Pl. 10c, the darker crossed circles are the black, and the lighter, the white rocks at Pirilou. Panels, such as *a*, symbolize the trunks of the paper-bark trees growing in the swamp; *b*, the many waterlilies on its surface, and the white vertical lines on the background, streams of fresh water in the swamp-lands. 532 x 778

The Fish-woman, Wuringa, at Arangu

Tukimbini sent the fish-woman, *Wuringa*, to establish a camp at Arangu, in Curtis Haven, northern Melville Island. Later, *Wuringa's* camp was transformed into a group of flat rocks which are uncovered only at low tide. 773 [778]

Wuringa created the aboriginal foods of the area, turtles, crabs, fish of all kinds, yams, cabbage palms and hives of wild honey.

Two bark paintings illustrate Arangu and its surroundings, Pl. 11c and Pl. 11D. 532 x 778

On Pl. 11c, *a*, is a long submerged reef at Arangu; *d*, *d*, *d*, smaller submerged rocks; *b*, *c*, long sand-bars, while at *e*, *e*, are jelly fish. The remainder of the ovals are oysters on the rocks at Arangu.

On Pl. 11D, *a*, is the totemic place, Arangu; *b*, represents the soft friable boulders near by; *c*, a large rock on the coast; *d*, wave breaking over it; *h*, white sand on the beach, and *j*, the sand and gravel on the sea bottom.

Symbol *e*, indicates black trepang; *f*, *f*, white trepang; *r*, an especially large trepang; *n*, a jelly fish, and *m*, a bed of oysters. At *k*, are many pearl shells, and at *s*, *s*, conch shells. A deep channel in Curtis Haven is indicated at *p*, a yellow rock under the water, at *o*, and the seaweed growing on the rocks at Arangu, by the lighter-coloured dots on the background.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
QI20 Tiwi OI20

532 776 The black oval in the middle of Pl. 13A is a mark on the spider-woman, whose body is indicated by the central oval.

The irregular oval *a*, is her abdomen, and *b*, *b*, is her thorax. At *c*, *c*, are her legs; *f*, *f*, etc., the hairs on her legs, and *d*, *d*, etc., her many knees and elbows. Semi-circles *h*, *h*, and the dotted sections, are spider eggs, and the cross-hatched areas, spider webs.

532 778 On Pl. 13C, the central black circle, representing an area of dry land at Rungani, was once the body of *Baraka*, and the surrounding lighter-coloured circle, the egg-case of the spider. The central square is the totemic place, Rungani, the radiating lines within the square being the legs of the spider.

The barred horizontal and vertical panels *a*, *a* (once roads made by the spider-woman as she travelled to and from her totemic place in search of food), are now high, red cliffs, and the diagonal panels leading from the central squares, additional tracks made by the spider-woman. These tracks have since been transformed into watercourses. The eight black concentric circles symbolize the daughters of *Baraka* and *Tukimbini*, and the dotted panels the legs of the children. The chevron designs indicate the faeces of both the spider-woman and her daughters.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Imburai-inga, at Alaparima

Pl. 13B, D, pictures the totemic place of a eucalyptus-tree woman, *Imburai-inga*, at Alaparima, north-western Melville Island.

This totemic place, *d*, *d*, is on the sea-beach, with high cliffs, *e*, to the north, and jungle trees, *f*, *f*, near by. At *h*, on the left-hand edge of the painting, is the island, Purapundili (Fig. 1), one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*.

Rocks, near the shore at Piper Head, are indicated at transverse panel, *g*; and a small rocky island, with trees growing along its shore is at *j*. The long design, *k*, at the bottom of the painting, represents the Apsley Straits, which separate Melville and Bathurst Islands.

The oval, *n*, is the aboriginal locality, Punata, in Apsley Straits, which is near the old military settlement of Fort Dundas, *m*.[88] Designs around the edge of this section are trees on the high land, while at *p*, on the bottom of the drawing, are trees on the shore.

The two crescents, *o*, *o*, which practically encircle Punata (*n*), are aboriginal roads; *a*, *a*, etc., are turtles; *b*, *b*, etc., dugongs, and *c*, *c*, etc., dug-out canoes.

[88] Established in 1824, abandoned in 1828.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mudungkala,[48] *at Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island)*

773 After the burial of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* sent his wife, *Mudungkala*, to Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island) to establish a totemic place and create the local foods.

*532 Pl. 19c, D, illustrates, with considerable detail, the topography of the island and the home of the little spirit children, *Pitipituis*.

778 The central design, *a*, is Jurubulinai; circle *b*, (lower left) depicts a small island nearby on which there is a freshwater spring where *Mudungkala* once urinated; and circle *c* (lower right) is a bed of cockles, one of the local foods created by the mythical woman.

On the lower left, a crescent, *d*, symbolizes a small salt-water creek in a mangrove swamp where *Mudungkala* quenched her thirst. At *f*, there is a large rock in the deeper water, a favourite haunt of the turtles. Here the mythical woman once collected white ochre to decorate herself.

Boulders, at one time the stone axes, *mungwanis*, of *Mudungkala* are at *e* (bottom); a stony point of land, the transformed bark basket, is at *g*; a pile of red rocks (her camp fire), at *h*; a sandbar (the cycad palm under which *Mudungkala* sheltered), at *j*; and a salt-water swamp (where she ground her stone axe), at *k*, *k*. The passage between Jurubulinai and Bathurst Island is indicated by the horizontal bands, *gg*, *gg*.

The white crescent, *m*, at the top of the painting, a large sand-bar, Unakumba, on the south of the island, is one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*. The aborigines claim that, when some distance from [776] Unakumba, they often see the spirit children, but, as they come closer, the little people disappear.

When the tide is out, the *Pitipituis* play on a sandbar, *p*, but when it is covered, the spirit children go to their camps at *o*, under the sand, where everything is dry and warm.

[787] Should one of the spirit children wish to visit an aboriginal man in a [842] dream, to ask for a mother, it walks along the road, *q*, and, if unsuccessful in its quest, returns by road, *r*. At *s*, on the left-hand side, is the waterhole from which the *Pitipituis* obtain their drinking water, and at *t*, is their diminutive bark canoe, less than a yard long, which, like the spirit children themselves, can be seen at a distance, but disappears when the aborigines come closer.

Red stones, *ee*, and yellow stones, *dd* (right), were once body paint used by the mythical eucalyptus-tree woman. Her nautilus-shell ornament is at *v*;

[48] Locally known as the ironwood tree.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

773 881 of the *kulama* ceremony, became the boobook owl, his wife, *Pinsama*, the barn owl, *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, *Jirakati*, the white-headed sea-eagle, *Tupatupini*, a small owl, and so on.

(2) *The Second Kulama Ceremony*

After the close of *palaneri* times, the *Ningauis*, a spirit people, who had been present at the first *kulama*, performed a second ceremony on the same island, Turiturina, as was used by *Purutjikini* during the creation period. On the second occasion, the *Ningauis* carried out the complete *kulama*, which included not only the preparation of the poisonous *kulama* yam for food, but also the performance of all the grades of initiation from that of the *Marukumuni* to the *Mikingula*.

At its completion, the *Ningauis* decreed that the form of the ceremony with its proceeding and initiation rituals, should always be the same. The aborigines believe that if this form is altered, a mysterious sickness, called [753] *saini* will punish them by making everyone ill.

(3) *The Myth of the Ningauis*

After the second *kulama*, the *Ningauis* made their home in the mangrove swamps of a small island, Imaluna, near Cape Helvetius, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1).

The *Ningauis* are somewhat like the present-day aborigines, except that ● 776 they are small people, about two feet high, with long hair and very short feet, their footmarks resembling those of an oversized dog. The aborigines often see these tracks on the edge of the mangrove swamps of Imaluna (Pl. 22c).

Should an aboriginal, when hunting through the swamps, go too near a home of the *Ningauis*, one of the *Ningauis* by calling, "Eeh", would cause the whole place to be suddenly enveloped in complete darkness. The native could bring the light back again by striking the trunk of a mangrove tree with a stick, but, in the meantime, the *Ningauis*, by taking advantage of the darkness, would have sneaked away. Therefore, no aboriginal has seen a *Ningaui* even though they are often heard in the mangrove swamps calling "Eeh, eeh", to each other.

When the *Ningauis* chant their songs after dark, the mangrove swamps become as brightly lit as in the day-time. There are stories of how aboriginal hunters, lured by the songs and the light, have wandered among the tangled mangroves to see what was going on, but as soon as the *Ningauis* heard the intruders, they finished their song with the word "Eeh",[16] which made the

[533] [16] The *Ningaui* songs chanted by *Jibungiahuni*, at one of the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi* (p. 74), all ended with a long drawn-out "Eeh".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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FIG. 10. *The Kulama Ceremony*
A Ningmi in a Mangrove Swamp at Imalumu.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

●776 place so dark, and the trees bend together so closely that the hunters lost their way and died. Some informants stated that the *Ningauis* cast a short throwing stick, similar to a *murugumu*, at all trespassing aborigines, rendering them insensible.

According to my informants, the *Ningauis*, who gather their food only at night, do not, at present, know the way to make fire, although they were able to do so at the time of the second *kulama*. Therefore, the crabs, shellfish and toredo worms they collect from the swamps, and the edible plants from the nearby jungles, have to be eaten raw.

X532 Two bark paintings and two crayon drawings deal with the *Ningaui* myth. On Plate 22D, the upper space, *a*, is a muddy flat in the middle of the mangrove island of Imaluna. At *b*, is an adjacent jungle; at *c*, a stream of fresh water nearby, and at *d*, *e*, are large dead eucalyptus trees lying in the water. At *f*, and *g*, are two pandanus trees; at *j*, *j*, salt-water creeks in the mangrove swamps; at *k*, *k*, etc., is the sea-shore at the mouth of those creeks, and cross-hatching at *m*, *m*, etc., the mud at the base of the mangrove trees. The squares, *h*, *h*, *h*, *h*, are the camps of the *Ningaui* people.

Plate 22C illustrates the footprints of the *Ningaui* in the swamps at Imaluna. The horse-shoe shaped designs are marks made in the mud by the front of the feet and toes, while the irregular circles, show the prints of the heels. The toe-marks are usually yellow and the heel-marks red. The dots are mangrove trees in the Imaluna swamps.

Fig. 10 is the copy of an aboriginal crayon drawing of a *Ningaui* on the mangrove island at Imaluna.

The central figure is a *Ningaui* standing on the roots, *a*, of a mangrove tree, which, in turn, is growing from a pile of rocks, *b*, *b*, *b*. On either side of the central figure are conventionalized mangrove trees, *c*, *c*; the designs on the lower portion represent the marks on the trunk, and on the upper portion, the foliage. At *e*, is a branch, and at *d*, a pandanus palm.

X532 Fig. 11 is a copy of another crayon drawing which illustrates the *Ningauis*
881 holding the second *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina. The oven for cooking the *kulama* yam is at *a*, the dots surrounding it representing the upright sticks which keep the firewood in place.[17] The darker circle is the low mound of earth surrounding the ceremonial ground, on the inside of which a number of men are parading and chanting the *kulama* songs. Symbol *b*, indicates the leader of the *kulama* ceremony.

The symbols in circle *c* are the *Marukumuni* and *Mikinatrina* initiates, who do not take part in those particular rituals, and symbols *d*, in the outside

[17] See Pl. 41A.

CHAPTER V

The Spirit People of the Tiwi

776 775 THE Tiwi believe that a number of spirit people live on the land, in the swamps, the sea and the sky of their tribal country. They are: the *mopaditis* (p. 61), the spirits of the dead whose homes are in the various totemic localities; the *Ningauis* (p. 124) of the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island; the *Maratjis*, or rainbow people, living in the swamps; the *Pitipinis*, or spirit children, who later become aboriginal children; the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, of the shallow sandbars of the sea; the *Papinjuwaris*, the meteor-men, who live in a place in the sky, far away to the west, and the *Paramanuas*, who often befriend the aborigines.

Although the aborigines are afraid of the *Papinjuwaris*, the *Maratjis* and, to some extent, the *Mopaditis*, they do not particularly fear the other spirit people.

000 The aborigines of Oenpelli, western Arnhem Land, however, believe that their countryside is inhabited with a multitude of spirit people (Mountford, 1956, p. 181), some dangerous and some harmless. This is unusual in aboriginal Australia, most tribes fearing only the spirits of the dead.

1. THE METEOR-MEN, THE PAPINJUWARIS

776 The *Papinjuwaris* live, with their wives and children, in a large paper-bark hut at Wangidji, a place far away to the west, where the sky ends.

The men, large and heavily built, have only one eye as bright as a star. The aborigines often see a *Papinjuwari* streaking across the sky, a blazing firestick in one hand and a fighting club in the other.

The *Papinjuwaris* are ghoulish people, who, although their food consists of bandicoots and large centipedes (Fig. 12), are always craving for the bodies of the dead and the blood of the sick to satisfy their degraded appetites.

[821] One evening, the aborigines pointed out a brilliant meteor which they said was a *Papinjuwari*; he was taking the body of *Waniamperi*, whose grave was not far from our camp, back to his companions at Wangidji.

753 776 When a *Papinjuwari* hunts for blood, he locates a sick person (by smell), and standing some distance away (they can make themselves invisible) sucks

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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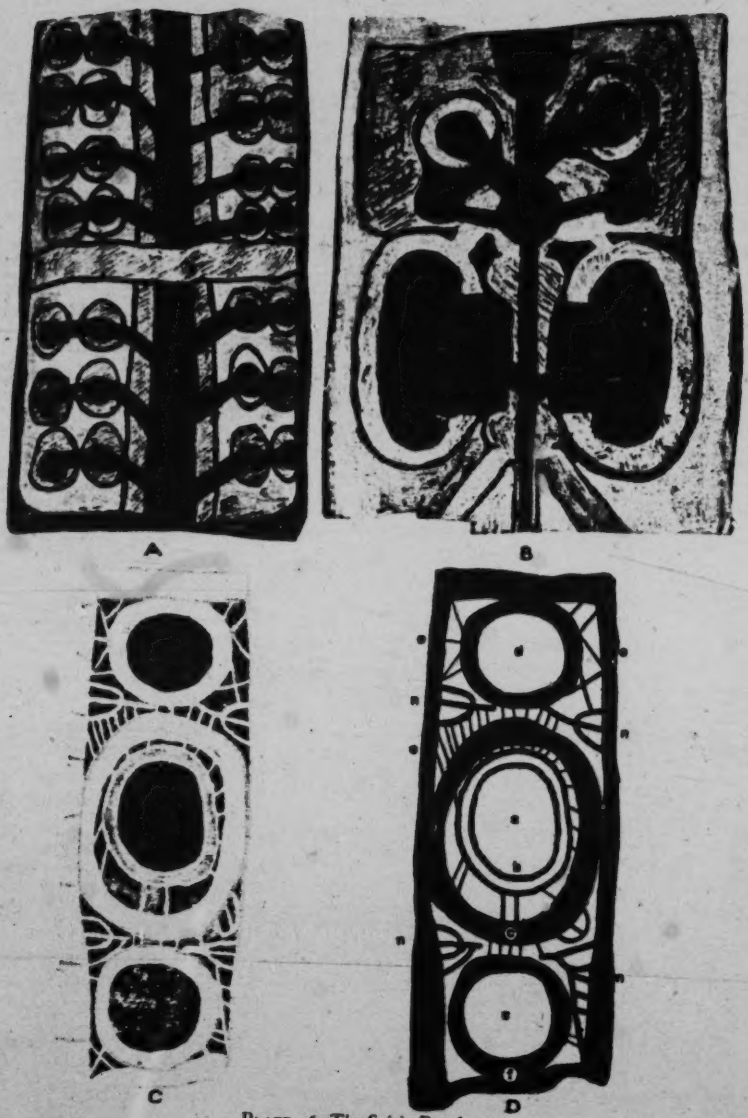

PLATE 46. *The Spirit People*
A, Pitipituis at Wulrungku; B, Pitipituis at Cape Fourcroy; C, D, Pitipituis at Puraqundili and Uwakumbi.

[p. 144 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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blood from the arm of the victim, yet leaves no wound. As the sick person becomes weaker, the *Papinjuwari*, making himself sufficiently small, enters the body through the mouth, and, by drinking up the rest of the blood, kills the victim. 753 776

776 [532x]

FIG. 12. *The Spirit People*
The Meteor-man, Papinjuwari.

On his return to Wangidji, the meteor-man vomits the stolen blood into a bark container. This provides a drink for the assembled *Papinjuwaris*.

The aborigines stated that, as the Tiwi have no medicine men, they are without protection against these dangerous spirit people.[42] [751] [756]

Pl. 47c is a simple bark painting of the *Papinjuwaris*. The white figures are the ghoulish sky-people, the crescents are moons, and the circles, stars. 532x

Fig. 12 is the copy of a crayon drawing showing a *Papinjuwari*, *a*, inside of his paper-bark hut at Wangidji. On either side of him at *b*, *b*, are the large 776

[42] Spencer, 1928, p. 671, refers to a song chanted in a *Kulama* ceremony which is supposed to protect the initiates from an evil spirit, the shooting star, *Makinua* (almost certain to be my *Papinjuwari*); Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 282, who call the meteor man, Papinowari, or Lamparapari, state that, if a piece of dried blood of a person is burnt, the smell will attract the meteor-man. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x 776 centipedes, *pierioa*, and on the lower right at *o* is a bandicoot. These are the main foods of the *Papinjuwaris*. The outer oval is a line of rocks which surround the home of the *Papinjuwari*; *m*, *m*, are piles of boulders, and designs, *d*, *d*, etc., beach kapok trees, *tjingunia*. This *Papinjuwari* is shown with two eyes, although in the mythical story the *Papinjuwaris* have only one.

3. THE SPIRIT CHILDREN, THE PITIPITUIS

776 The *Pitipituis* are small dark-skinned people who have always existed, even in early creation times, although the aborigines cannot explain their origin. The adults are about nine and the children two to three inches high. They live either on outlying islands, in patches of dense jungle near the seashore, or in those of the freshwater swamps. The *Pitipitui* centres are scattered somewhat evenly around the two islands (Fig. 1); they are:

(1) Kaiadju, on the Baxendale reef, a few miles from Murupianga, S.E. Melville Island. In this locality, the *Pitipituis* have made their home among the trees of a mangrove swamp.

(2) Miadibiniadu, near Wailu, N.E. Melville Island, where the *Pitipituis* live among the dense groves of pandanus palms that grow on the edge of the freshwater lagoon. When the aborigines see the pandanus leaves scattered [824] about, they believe that the *Pitipituis*, in their play, have been throwing them at one another.

(3) Pumaduba, near Pirilou, on the Goose Creek swamps, N. Melville Island. In this locality the *Pitipituis* live among the blossoms and leaves of the water-lilies.

(4) Wulrungku (Karslake Island), N.W. Melville Island. Some *Pitipituis* camp in the jungles along the shore of Wulrungku, and others on the bed of the nearby ocean.

(5) Purapundili, a sandy island off Cape Van Diemen, N.W. Melville Island. During the heat of the day they shelter in the jungles of Cape Van Diemen.

(6) Tiatri-inga, a long beach at Murroo Point (south of Mandumbi), N.W. Bathurst Island. Like the *Pitipituis* at Wailu, those at Tiatri-inga live in the thick clumps of pandanus palms. At Mandumbi, near the mouth of Putawini Creek, a group of *Pitipituis* have made their home in a dense jungle.

(7) Jambutu and Juruna, at the head-waters of Port Hurd, S.W. Bathurst Island. Those at Jambutu live among the mangroves and those at Juruna, in the jungle.

(8) Jampaturai and Jurilupa, near Cape Fourcroy. The *Pitipituis* in the

2. Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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former locality make their camp in a dense jungle, and at the latter, in the forest near the sea-coast. At one time, these *Pitipituis* lived at Juruna, but left after a while and established these camps at Jurilupa and Jampaturai. 776

(9) Unakumbi (Buchanan Island). Here, the home of the *Pitipituis* is on a sandbank on the southern side of the island. When the tide is low, the little people play on the sandbank, but when it is high, they go to their underground homes, where it is warm and dry.

During the early creation (*palaneri*) times, *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the *Pitipituis* in a bark canoe, brought back some of the little people and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala* so that they could have children. In a later period, *Purukupali* gave the *Pitipituis* to his wife, *Bima*, who in turn presented them to their future mothers. 773 776

Before *Purukupali* drowned himself, after the death of his son, *Djinini*, he told the *Pitipituis* that they must find their own mothers. Now, should one of these little people wish to become a human being, it travels to a native camp, and giving her name, asks one of the married men (when he is asleep) where its future mother is camping. After the father has indicated the particular wife, the little sprite waits a suitable opportunity to enter her vulva and start life as a human being. 776 842 787

The aborigines believe implicitly in the *Pitipituis* and the mystical origin of their children; several of them gave me details of how their children came to them in dreams.

Old *Tjamalampua* told of the time when, while he was asleep, the *mopaditi* of his dead father brought him a spirit child, and sat it on his knee saying, "This is your daughter." *Tjamalampua* directed the little *Pitipitui* to one of his wives, who later became its mother.

Muramajua described how his three children came to him.

(1) A boy, now dead, came from a Japanese plane[48] and asked for his wife as a mother. Later she felt the movements of the child. [177]

(2) A little girl came to him in a dream and spat at him. His wife conceived soon afterwards.

(3) His last girl hit him on the head whilst he was asleep, and, in his fright, he slapped her face. It was not long afterwards that his wife became pregnant.

Those accounts indicate that although, ideally, the child comes to the father and asks for the mother, in actual practice they visit the father under a number of conditions.

[48] This aboriginal had worked with the Australian Navy during the war; an example of acculturation.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Three bark paintings and a crayon drawing illustrate the beliefs of the Tiwi concerning the *Pitipinuis*.

The upper part of Pl. 46c, D, deals with the *Pitipinuis* at Purapundili, a low sandy island north-west of Cape Van Diemen, N.W. Melville Island, and the lower part with those at Unakumbi, on Buchanan Island.

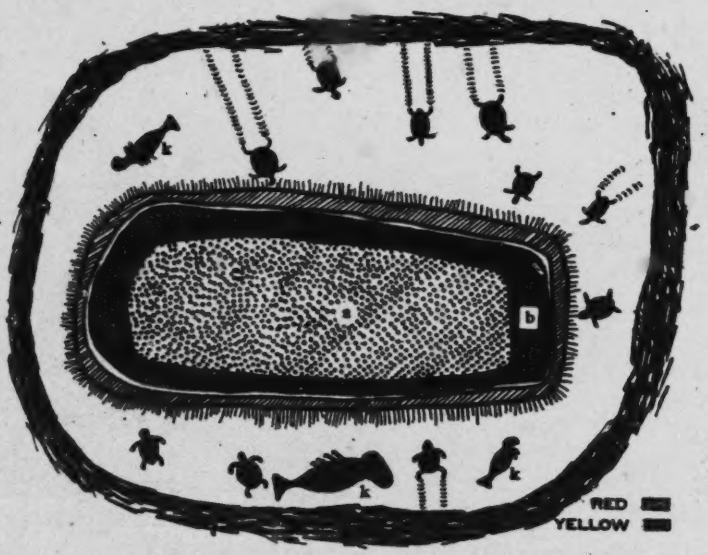

FIG. 13. *The Spirit People*
The Spirit Children, the Pitipinuis at Purapundili.

Purapundili, on which the *Pitipinuis* live, is at *a*; the circle *b* representing the waves breaking on the shores and the black oval, *c*, the surrounding ocean. As there is no shade at Purapundili, the *Pitipinuis* often paddle in their diminutive canoes to Imilu, at Cape Van Diemen, and shelter in the jungle from the heat, returning to Purapundili when the day becomes cooler.

Malumerinita said that when the aborigines visited this island to collect sea-gull eggs, they often saw the *Pitipinuis* at a distance, but if they, the aborigines, approached too closely, the little people disappeared.

Buchanan Island (Jurubulinai), another *Pitipinui* centre, is at *e*, the black circle *f*, indicating the waves breaking on the shore. Pandanus trees on

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Jurubulinai are indicated at *n*, *n*, etc.; the short lines, as at *o*, *o*, etc., throughout the painting are the driftwood logs cast up on the beaches. 532X 776

Fig. 13 is the copy of a crayon drawing again depicting *Pitipituis* on the sandy island of Purapundili.

The central rectangle, *a*, represents the grassy surfaces of the island, which are favourite nesting places of the sea-birds, and the black areas, *b*, the sticks and debris above the high tide mark. The outer shaded rectangle is the sandy shore, while the many short lines on its edge are the little *Pitipituis* of the island.

Dugongs are indicated at *k*, *k*, the other designs being female turtles coming on shore to lay their eggs. The tracks they make in the sand are indicated on six of the turtles. The outer oval symbolizes the open sea.

Pl. 46B pictures the two camps of the *Pitipituis* near Cape Fourcroy, S.W. Bathurst Island. One camp, called Jampatural, is in the forest on the sea coast, and another Jurilupa, in a dense jungle further inland. During the daytime, the *Pitipituis* from both localities hunt together in the forest and the jungle for food, but at night each group sleeps in its own camp.

The lower designs are the camps of the *Pitipituis* in the jungle at Jurilupa, and the upper designs, the camps of those at Jampaturai. The white ovals and the circles, represent the large leaves of the *dioni* yam which provide a shelter for the little people. The roads by which the *Pitipituis* travel from Juruna to their respective camps are indicated, and the open country near their camps is the plain ground.

Pl. 46A pictures the *Pitipituis* at Wulrungku (Karslake Island) and the *Biluwuwi*[44] who live at Milika, a group of rocks on the sea-bottom to the north of Wulrungku.

According to the aborigines, the *Pitipituis*, and the *Biluwuwis* are the same type of people, only some, i.e. the *Biluwuwis*, live under the water, and others, the *Pitipituis*, on the dry land, the jungles, and the pandanus swamps of Wulrungku.

The *Biluwuwis* and *Pitipituis* who often visit each other's camps, hunt the same foods as the aborigines but, having no fire, they must eat their foods raw.

The upper part of Pl. 46A pictures the homes of the *Biluwuwis* under the water, and the lower, the *Pitipituis* on Wulrungku.

The central vertical black panel on the upper section is the main track of the *Biluwuwis* and the branching lines, the paths leading to their many camps. The encircling white rings are the red rocks among which they live;

[44] Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 231, refers to the home of the spirit children as Bilawuwi.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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532 the background is the sea. The white central transverse panel is the beach at Wulrungku.

776 The meaning of the designs on the lower panel are similar, the black central and branching lines representing the tracks made by the *Pitipituis* as they travel to and from their camps (the black discs); the encircling lines represent the sand around those camps, and the painted background, the jungle which shelters the little people.

3. THE PARAMANUAS[48]

776 The *Paramanuas* are short, particularly active, agile men, about three feet high, with thick, powerful limbs, tusk-like teeth, and projecting toe and finger nails.

In general, except for these details, they resemble the aborigines in appearance, eat the same foods and follow a similar way of life.

They live in many places throughout Melville and Bathurst Islands, but no one except those captured by the *Paramanuas*, has seen either them or [753] their homes. As they dislike being talked about, and often make those people [124] ill who do so, I found it somewhat difficult to gather information about the *Paramanuas*.

The homes of the *Paramanuas*, their wives and their children, are spacious underground caves, the entrances to which are openings either in the side of termite mounds, or hollow trees. In these caves, the men store their utensils, [343] weapons and food (Fig. 14). Their cooking fire, like that of the aborigines, is always outside of their camp.

Occasionally a *Paramanua*, wishing to befriend an aboriginal, will watch 776 him for some time. Then one day when the aboriginal is hunting by himself, 787 the *Paramanua* will cast a spear at him. But, before the spear has reached its mark, the *Paramanua* will have caught it and, standing at the back of the aboriginal, will be tickling his ribs. The aboriginal, thoroughly scared, turns to strike his opponent, only to find him again at his back. This game goes on until the aboriginal is exhausted, dizzy and confused. Then hitting him on the side of the head with an open hand, rendering the aboriginal unconscious, the spirit man picks up the prostrate man and carries him to the underground home of the *Paramanuas*.

Awaking to find himself in a dark place, the aboriginal is terrified, but on receiving plenty of food from the *Paramanuas*, and treated with every kindness, the aboriginal loses all fear, and as the weeks go by, all sense of time.

[48] Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to these little people as Barminuar.

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FIG. 14. *The Spirit People*
A Paramanus Man and his Family.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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776 After many weeks, the *Paramanua* takes the aboriginal to a forest close
787 to his old camp and releases him, saying, "You're lucky to have been caught by a *Paramanua*. From now onward, if you don't tell anyone about me, and the things you have seen, I'll be your friend. I'll protect you in a fight; I'll chase game toward you so that you'll be known as a good hunter, and because I can see into the future, I'll make sure that you do not get into serious trouble."

To this, the aboriginal always agrees; but should he divulge the source of his good luck, his *Paramanua* guardian, who is always nearby, will either kill the aboriginal for his breach of faith or withdraw his protection.

532 Fig. 14 and Fig. 15, are copies of two crayon drawings of the *Paramanuas*,
776 one (Fig. 15) being the work of a younger sophisticated aboriginal.

Fig. 14 deals with a *Paramanua* and his family at home in a termite mound. The central figure, *a*, is a conventionalized representation of a *Paramanua*. His face and head are at *b*, the radiating lines within the two circles indicating his hair. His feet are at *c*, and shoulder blades at *h*, *h*. I did not gather the interpretation of symbols *d*, *d*, but they may be his arms. The outer concentric circles are the walls of the termite mound and discs, *e*, *e*, the entrances to the *Paramanua's* home.

The *Paramanua* is shown again at *f*, in a more naturalistic form, the line across the fingers of the left hand indicating his long finger-nails. The interpretation of design *g*, was somewhat confused, some informants saying that it was a *Paramanua* woman, others that it was a turtle caught for food.

In the upper left is the son, *j*, and the daughter, *k*, of the *Paramanuas*. In these drawings the various parts of the body are separated[46] and have no relation to normal position or appearance.

The head of the son is at *p*, the upper radiating lines being his hair; *q*, is his mouth, the upper lines symbolizing the teeth; *r*, *r*, are two goose-feather balls, and *s*, *s*, his feet. The lines *t*, *t*, indicate his ribs.

On the right is the *Paramanua's* daughter. Her eyes are at *n*, *n*; her eyebrows at *m*, *m*; breasts at *l*, *l*, and her feet at *o*. The chevrons on either side of her body indicate her ribs. The cooking hearths of the *Paramanua* are at *v*, *v*, *v*; piles of rocks at *u*, *u*, *u*; and a jungle is at *w*.

In the middle of Fig. 15 is a *Paramanua* with a goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, *b*, around his neck, and on the lower right at *a*, his camp in the middle of a large anthill. Within the camp are many foods and weapons; *c*,

[170] [46] The separation of the parts of the body is not unusual in aboriginal art, Mountford, 1937, Fig. 2, illustrates a crayon drawing of the Ngadadjara tribe of the western Australian deserts, where these characteristics are present.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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is a seagoing turtle; *d*, a snake; *e*, a bandicoot; *f*, a lizard; *s*, a bark basket; *k*, a palm leaf (*tulini*) basket; *l*, a female, and *m*, a male *pukamuni* spear; and *n*, a multi-pronged fish spear. Another fish spear is at *p*, and a female *pukamuni* spear at *o*. At *r*, is a large-leafed climbing vine which provides a shade over the home of the *Paramanus* and *q* is a eucalyptus tree.

FIG. 15. *The Spirit People*
The Paramanus Man and his Camp.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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4. THE SEA-DOGS, THE WANKUIS

773 A fragment of a myth tells of how, at the close of the creation period, a mythical man, called *Kirinua*, assembled all the dogs and asked them whether they would prefer to live on the land or in the sea. The present-day dingoes, the *Kirijunas*, chose the land, and others, the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, the sandbanks in the sea.

●776 The home of one group of the sea-dogs is a long sand-bar on the eastern side of the entrance to Snake Bay, about a mile from the expedition camp, over which, except at the spring tides, the waves break continuously. [823] The aborigines look on the breaking waves as the wagging tails of the *Wankuis*.

When the tide is out in the day-time and the sandbank exposed and dry, the sea-dogs, to escape being seen go to their camps under the sand.

When it is dark, the *Wankuis* leave their watery home, come on shore and make their camps in low caves at the base of a cliff at Snake Bay (Pl. 47E). While there, the *Wankuis* capture the sea-foods of the shallow waters, sting-rays, shell-fish and crabs. The aborigines claim that on the still nights they often hear the *Wankuis* barking.

In the shallow waters of a sandbar near Cape Fourcroy, the aborigines frequently see another kind of *Wankui* which walks on three legs, waving the fourth in the air.

*532 776 Pl. 47D pictures the *Wankuis* at the sandbar in Snake Bay. In the centre, with many teats, is the mother surrounded by her twelve sons. It is significant that there was no mention of the father.

5. THE RAINBOW, MARATJI

171 776 A belief in a mythical serpent-like creature, which is associated with, or is, the rainbow, and is dangerous to strangers, but not to the local inhabitants, occupies an important place, not only in the mythology of the Australian [821] aborigines, but in the mythologies of people in many parts of the world. These mythical creatures are usually highly-coloured (like the rainbow), of huge size and have both mane and beard.

I have traced these mythical creatures, in their various forms, from the River Murray in South Australia, through Central Australia to Arnhem Land. In the western deserts of Central Australia, Mountford, 1948, p. 138, writes, "The snake (*wonambi*) is a huge, many-coloured creature with a [778] mane and a beard. It is feared . . . because it attacks all strangers who approach

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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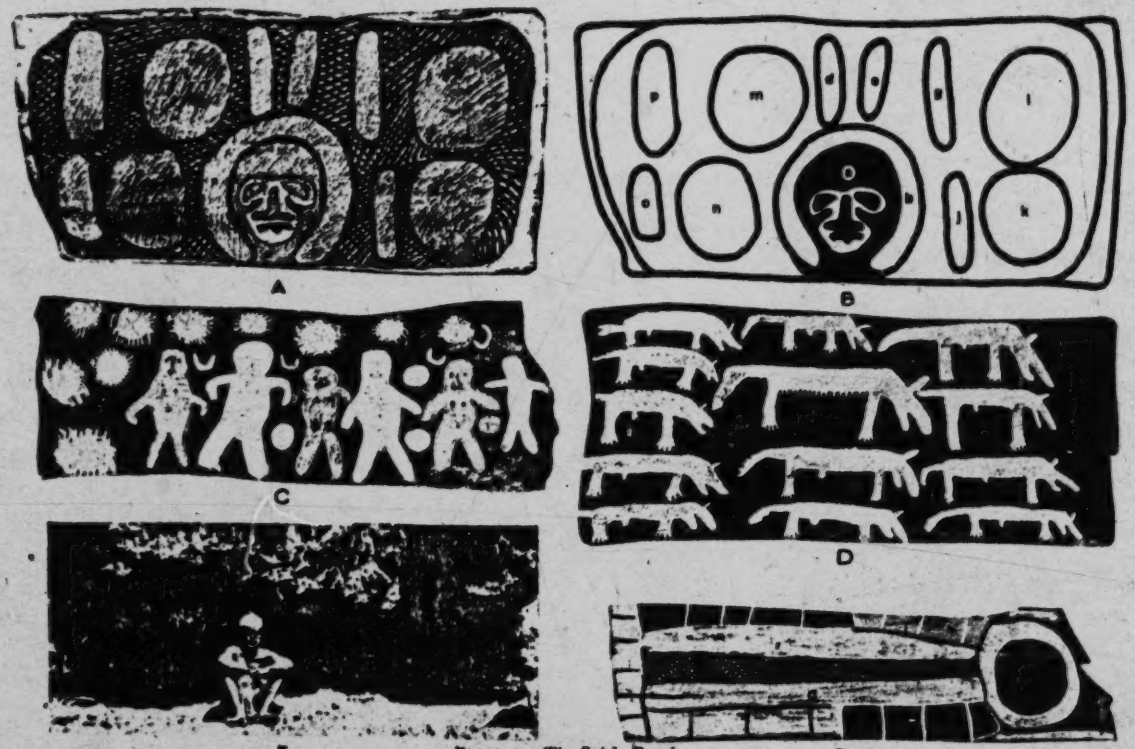

PLATE 47. *The Spirit People*
A, B, Spirits of the Dead, Mopaditis; C, F, Meteor-men, Papinjuwaris; D, Sea-dogs, Wankuis; E, Caves, Homes of Wankuis.

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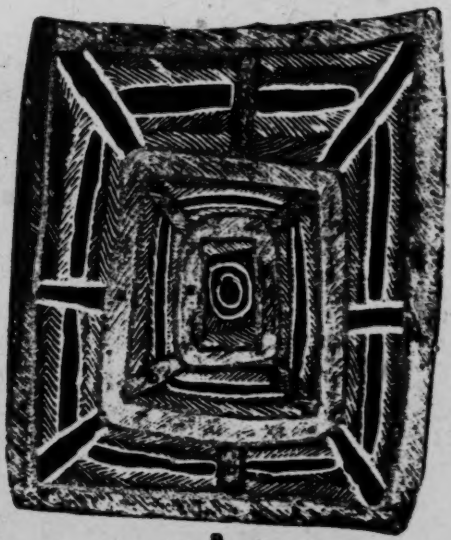

PLATE 48. *The Spirit People*

A, B, The Rainbow-spirit, Maratji, at Kulimbini; C, Maratji at Maundu; D, Maratji, at Goose Creek.

[p. 154 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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the water in which it lives, usually calling with a deep booming note. The rainbow serpent . . . is related . . . to water, rainbow . . ." The rainbow-serpent myth is widespread throughout Arnhem Land. At Oenpelli (Mountford, 1956, p. 210), "mythical serpents live in deep waterholes. . . . The aborigines are . . . afraid of these mythical creatures for should anyone interfere with their . . . home, the serpents, particularly *Ngaloit*, will make their waterholes overflow and drown everyone. The rainbow-serpent woman, *Narama*, of the Liverpool River area . . . destroys all aborigines who approach her home." 171 776 778

In north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 462; Warner, 1937, p. 541) the rainbow-serpents live, in one form or another in most of the important water-holes; they are associated with water, the rainbow, lightning, and thunder. Again these serpents are usually highly coloured (like the rainbow), and have a mane and beard. The aborigines claim that they are dangerous to all strangers who approach their waterholes, and even to local aborigines who do not perform the proper rituals before drinking. On Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 75), however, it is a lizard, the gekko, *Ipilja-ipilja*, which takes the place of the rainbow-serpent. It is highly coloured, about one hundred feet in length, has long hair on its head and whiskers on its lower jaw. It lives in a swamp, called Numarika, on south-western Groote Eylandt. Should anyone drink from this swamp, they will surely die. *Ipilja-ipilja* is associated with thunder, thunderstorms, and rain, but not, as far as I could ascertain, with the rainbow.

The lizard-like *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands[47] have many of the characteristics of the gekko, *Ipilja-ipilja* of Groote Eylandt[48] as well as the rainbow serpents of the Central Australian deserts, and Oenpelli, in Arnhem Land. 776 [171]

The *Maratjis* are highly coloured lizards, the males being up to one hundred yards in length, with horns on their heads instead of hair, and long projecting jaws in the place of beards.

Should any unauthorized person interfere with their waterholes, the *Maratjis* become annoyed. They roar loudly, make the water bubble up (like the Oenpelli serpent, Mountford, 1956, p. 210), and send a waterspout into the air which, falling as torrential rain, floods the countryside. One of the *Maratjis* then changes himself into the rainbow and travels across the land seeking to injure the offender or anyone else in its path. [821]

[47] Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 231, refers to *Maratji* as the rainbow snake.

[48] It is of interest to note that on isolated places, such as Groote Eylandt and Melville Island, these mythical creatures resemble lizards, and on the Australian mainland, and in most other places in the world, they take the form of snakes.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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776 The *Maratjis* belong to the totem of *Andjaki* (fresh water), in common with *Pakadinga* (thunderstorms), *Tomituka* (monsoon rain) and *Bumerali* (lightning). They are mortal creatures who die and disintegrate like everything else (Pl. 48D).

[123] I collected bark paintings and crayon drawings of a number of *Maratjis*, living with their wives and families in three lagoons on Melville and Bathurst Islands, i.e., Maundu, southern Bathurst Island, and Kulimbini, north-western, and Maratjiana, northern Melville Island.

776 778 The *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands are not always of the same temperament. For instance, the *Maratjis* who live at Kulimbini (Pl. 48A) are so dangerous that should any aboriginal dare approach their water, they will steal his *imunka* (spirit), and he will die.

Although the *Maratjis* of Maundu (Pl. 48C) are feared, it is possible, if certain rituals are performed, for even a stranger to drink the water without harm; while those who live in the Maratjiana lagoon at Goose Creek, are looked upon by the aborigines as "properly quiet fellow".[49]

776 821 The rainbow, as a *Maratji*, however, is universally feared, the aborigines believing that the primary bow is the *imunka* (spirit) of a male, and the secondary bow, that of a female *Maratji*.

If a rainbow goes too near an aboriginal camp, the occupants will quickly [789] build up their fire[50] and call out to frighten *Maratji* away, but should he come too close, the people will feel ill and break out into a cold perspiration. If an aboriginal is overtaken by a rainbow,[51] it will kill him by taking his spirit.

Should some aboriginal be so foolish as to throw a spear at a rainbow and injure it, the *Maratjis* would destroy the whole country and the people who live in it.

776 821 648 Two heavy wind-storms, which occurred whilst the expedition was at Melville Island, were supposed to have been caused by angry *Maratjis*. The first was due to some foolish aboriginal who broke a *kulama* ceremony taboo (p. 142) by throwing some of the termite mound from the *kulama* oven into the sea. The second happened when a *pukamuni* pole, taken from a grave by one of the senior officers of the Native Affairs Branch, was being loaded on a boat for transport to Darwin.

The aborigines explained that as these poles are a gift from the living to

[49] Further research will no doubt reveal other waterholes on Melville and Bathurst Islands, inhabited by *Maratjis*.

[171] [50] This would suggest that *Maratji*, like the *Wonambi* of the Central Australian deserts, is afraid of fire (Mountford, 1948, p. 138).

[51] These conditions are, of course, impossible because the rainbow is always several feet from the observer.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

776 821 648

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat and so prevent the theft.

The Maratjis at Maundu

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Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained by the faeces of the *Maratjis*.

751 776

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandubuka* totem are the only people safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from his own armpits, rubs it over his companion.

[827]

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then, walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi* which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of Maundu.

[437] [753] [164]

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon, they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an aboriginal, called *Alungun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this taboo.

[841] [784]

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu.

532 X 778

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained) water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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lighter, the bubbles of water (supposed to be caused by the *Maratjis*), which rise from the bottom of the lagoon. The cross-hatching represents a grass which grows on the shores of Maundu.

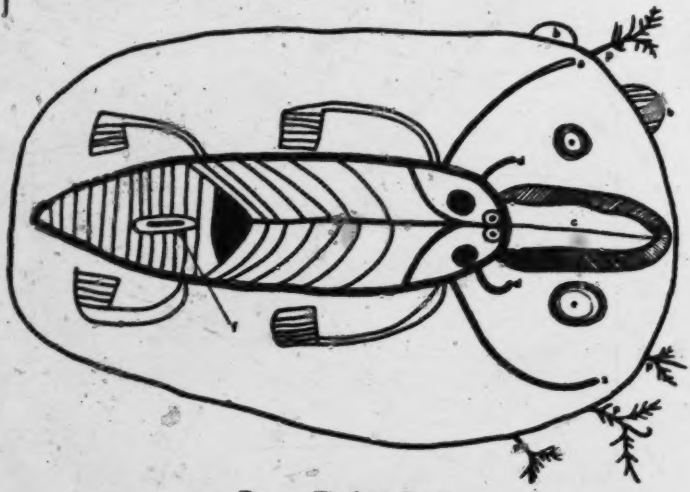

FIG. 16. *The Spirit People*
The Rainbow-spirit, Maratji.

Fig. 16, the copy of a crayon drawing of *Maratji*, was the work of a sophisticated aboriginal who had been employed for some years in Darwin. It shows a young female *Maratji*, a lizard-like creature measuring about fifty feet, with two long horns, *a*, *a*, and two short horns, *d*, *d*, projecting from her head. At *c*, are both her tongue and lower jaw; *f*, is her vulva, and circles *e*, *e*, show the bubbles of water which rise to the surface when she becomes annoyed.

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The outer oval is the shore of Maundu, the designs, *p*, *p*, etc., are trees, and *b*, *b*, piles of rocks on the shore.

The Maratjis at Kulimbini

On Pl. 48A, the long central black rectangle is the body of a female *Maratji* at Kulimbini, north-western Melville Island. The six encircling rectangles are the colours of the *imunka* (spirit) of *Maratji*, i.e., the rainbow, and the dark-coloured spaces at the top and bottom of the design, the falling rain.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Pl. 48B does not deal with the myth, but the natural features of Kulimbini lagoon, in which the *Maratjis* live. The central black dot symbolizes an area of blue water-lilies in the lagoon, and the white circles, the surrounding water. The diagonal lines, *b*, *b*, etc., indicate the Kulimbini creek, and the rectangles, *a*, *a*, *a*, the broken water of the stream as it flows among the stones of its rocky bed. The short black panels and the two black rectangles indicate a grass with an edible bulb (probably the spike rush) that grows in the shallow water. The chevrons on the outer part of the design represent dead leaves lying on the grass, and those within the first and second inner rectangles, *a*, *a*, a red-coloured algae found along the edge of the still water. 532x 778 776

The Maratjis at Maratjiana, Goose Creek

Pl. 54A pictures a large freshwater stream, called Maratjiani, on the northern end of the Goose Creek swamps.

The meandering lines on the right and left hand edge and the central vertical panel are freshwater creeks, and the outer vertical panels, two *Maratjis* who live in them. The short, transverse panels are rocks along the banks of the stream and the dots, dry land covered with grass.

Pl. 48D pictures the skeleton of a *Maratji*, which the artist claimed had died in a swamp to the north-east of Maratjiana. At present there are no remains, they have all disintegrated.

The bulk of the skeleton is at *a*, the backbone at *b*, the ribs are shown by the radiating lines at the top and the vertical panels at the bottom; the jaw is at *c*. The dotted background symbolizes the many-coloured skin of the dead *Maratji*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER VII

The Astronomy of the Tiwi

171 THE Tiwi's knowledge of the night sky does not appear to be as extensive as
773 that of the aborigines of the adjoining Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, Part 6).

821 Although myths relating to the sun, the moon, the Milky Way, the stars and Orion and the Pleiades were often told, I was unable to find any relating to the Southern Cross, Scorpio, the Magellan Clouds and other constellations well-known to the aborigines of Arnhem Land.

The Universe

821 The Tiwi believe that the earth is flat, and so limited in area that, if they travel far from the shores of their tribal country, they would fall over the edge. As evidence of this they point out that, in the morning they can see *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman, rise above the eastern rim and, at the end of the day, disappear beneath the western rim of the world.

The earth, too, is of limited thickness, the aborigines believing that, if they dug a hole sufficiently deep they would reach the lower world, *Ilara*.[66]

772 The aboriginal universe of the Tiwi consists of four levels, (*a*) a subterranean world, Ilara, (*b*) the earth on which the aborigines live, (*c*), the sky-land, Juwuku, and (*d*) an upper world, Tuniruna.

On Ilara where it is always dark, there are two high stony ranges with a
772 valley between. It is along this valley that the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,
● 776 and according to some informants, the moon-man, *Tjapare*, guided only by
821 the light of their glowing torch of bark, travel each day from the western horizon to their homes in the east. As there are no plants or animals on Ilara, the celestial travellers cannot gather any food during their underground journey, although they can quench their thirst at a stream which flows from the top of one of the high mountains.

During the wet season, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms; *Tomituka*, the woman of the monsoon rains; *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, with her husband and her many children, make their home on the sky-land,

[171] [66] I did not find a belief among the Melville Islanders, like that of the aborigines of Groote Eylandt, that the earth was a thin crust resting on the top of the water. (Mountford, 1956, p. 67.)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

Juwuku; while the sun-woman, the men of the Milky Way, the star women and the moon-man (except for a short period each month) travel daily across its surface. 772 776 821

Above the sky is another world, Tuniruna. This is the day-time home of numberless star women, the *Tapalinga*, and the men of the Milky Way, the *Mahdaiwini*. During the dry season, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*, with her family leave the sky-world, Juwuku, and make their homes in Tuniruna.

Unlike the Ilara, the lowest world, Tuniruna resembles the earth except that there is no sea, although there are many freshwater streams and swamps. All the creatures and plants that live on Melville Island, with the exception of the saltwater fish, are also at Tuniruna.

Every morning the inhabitants of the upper world leave their camps, the women to gather the plant foods of the forest, the men to hunt and capture the creatures, such as freshwater fish and the geese, ducks, pelicans and jabirus, that live in the extensive swamps. Also, many fruits grow at Tuniruna, some of which were specifically named, i.e., *rakarina*, the wild plum; *tauraruina*, the white-fruited eugenia; *kinamia*, the red-fruited eugenia; *putatuluma*, a small egg-shaped fruit about three-eighths of an inch long; *kwerka*, cycad fruit, and the various yams.

By the time the sun-woman has sunk below the western horizon and extinguished her torch, the inhabitants of Tuniruna, the upper world, have returned from their foodgathering and are lighting their camp-fires to cook the food they have brought in. The light from these fires illuminates the upper world as brightly during the night-time as the sun-woman, with her blazing torch, illuminates the earth during the day-time.

About November, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali* leave Tuniruna and travel from place to place in the sky-world, shedding rain on the parched earth. During this time, the aborigines claim that those with good hearing can distinguish a low "Sh . . . sh . . .", the pleasure call of the thirsty trees as their roots drink the moisture from the sodden ground. It is then that the trees and plants of the upper world, using the raindrops as a vehicle, send their spirits (analogous to the human *Pitipituis*) (p. 146), to the ground beneath, where they grow into plants similar to their progenitors in the upper world.[27] That is, all the plants and trees in the land of the Tiwi were once, as tiny spirits, dropped from the upper world, Tuniruna. 776 821 [824]

[27] I did not specifically inquire whether the creatures in the upper world also sent down their spirits in the same manner as the plants. However, as both plants and human beings have a spirit origin, it is reasonable to assume that the creatures originate in a similar manner. Further research on this subject will be of considerable interest. [124]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

824 This belief probably accounts for the fact that I did not hear any songs chanted, or witness any ceremonies (with the possible exception of the *kulama*) that would bring about a plentiful supply of food. Nor did I hear [171] of any increase centres such as I saw on Groote Eylandt, (Mountford, 1956, pp. 84, 91), and were seen by Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 166), and myself (1948, p. 145) in Central Australia.

The Sky and the Upper World

×532 821 772 Pl. 63D is a bark painting of the sky and the upper world, Tuniruna. The central series of concentric circles represent an unidentified planet, one of the wives of *Tjapara*, the moon-man; the designs, *d, d, d, d*, are some of the stars, *Tapalinga*; *f, f*, are the plum trees (already mentioned), which grow in the upper world. The radiating lines are the limbs of the plum trees.

The inner square, *b*, is the upper world, Tuniruna, the chevron patterns are the clouds in the sky, and the outer square the surface of the earth.

The groups of dots, throughout the painting, are the spirit fruits of the many trees at Tuniruna, which (as mentioned earlier), fall from the upper world to the earth beneath.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala

773 776 A myth, belonging to the early creation period, tells of how *Wuriupranala*, one of the first women, was given the task of keeping alight a torch of blazing bark. When, after the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, the men and women changed themselves into creatures and plants, *Wuriupranala* became the sun-woman, who travels daily across the sky, her torch of blazing bark providing the world with light and heat.

776 821 However, before *Wuriupranala* sets out from the eastern horizon, she powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which flying into the air, reddens the clouds of early morning.

When she reaches the western horizon, *Wuriupranala* again powders her body (this accounts for the brilliant sunsets), extinguishes her torch and rests for a while beside a celestial lagoon, Kumpinulu, before returning to the east along a path through the subterranean world, Ilara. On this journey, she is guided only by the light from the glowing end of her smouldering torch.[58]

×532 773 776 821 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60A, B, Pl. 61A, B, and Pl. 63A, B, deal with the myth of the sun-woman.

The designs on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 61A, B, picture the sun, moon and stars.

[58] See pp. 35, 40 for more details of the sun-woman.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The crescent, *a*, symbolizes the eastern horizon, beneath which both the sun-woman and moon-man have their camps; the transverse panels, *j, j, j*, indicate the western horizon. 532 x 773 776 821

The disc, *b*, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, while the black dot in the centre is her life essence, *imunka* (p. 137).

The sun-woman again is represented by the white disc, *s*, on the upper edge. This time she has several of the blazing torches, *m, n*, which she carries across the sky. Her many camps in the east are at *p, p*, etc. (lower edge).

The white oval, *h* (upper centre), is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, with his torches, shown as a series of radiating lines. Crescent, *g*, is the waxing, *f*, the waning moon, and the three adjacent squares, *e, e, e*, are places in the east where the moon-man made his camps. The cross-hatched areas, *p, k*, etc., indicate the men of the Milky Way, *Maludaianini*, and the groups of dots, such as *t*, the star-women, *Tapalingas*. At *o* (upper right) is an unidentified celestial tree.

Pl. 60A, B, pictures two suns, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*,[80] the moon, *Tjapara* and the stars, *Tapalinga*.

One of the sun-women, *Wuriupranala*, is shown at *f* (upper edge) the circle of radiating lines, *g*, symbolizing the flames of her bark torch. At *h*, on the bottom of the painting, is the other sun-woman, *Murupiangkala* with her bark torch, *j*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, is at *b*, his head at *e*, his shoulders at *c*, and his genitals at *d*.

The oval at *k* (upper right), is a mountain in the east from the top of which *Wuriupranala* or *Murupiangkala* alternately set out on their daily journey across the sky. The white oval at *l* (upper left) indicates the mountain on the western horizon where the sun-women rest for a while before they travel to the Kumpinulu lagoon, and prepare and eat their meal before returning to the east via the underground road, *m* (upper left).

The designs on the lower edge of the painting deal with the journey of the sun-woman, *Murupiangkala*; the white design *o*, is the mountain in the east from which she sets out on her journey across the sky; *p* represents the mountain in the west where she finishes her journey.

At *a, a*, etc., are the wives of *Tjapara*, the planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. Black ovals, *s, s*, are dark-coloured rain clouds, and ovals, *q, q*, clouds reddened by sunrise and sunset light. The dots are the star-women, the *Tapalingas*, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

Pl. 63A, B, deals with the sky journey of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

[80] The artist claimed that two sun-women travelled alternately across the sky. This however, was not the dominant belief. [184]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

At *c*, is the sun-woman with her *imunka* (life essence) (see Pl. 61A, B). Her palm-leaf baskets are at *u* and *r* (left); her hair-string belts at *k*, *v* (bottom); a dingo-skin hair ornament is at *s* (left), and her head at *m* (top left).

The place where the sun woman appears above the eastern horizon is indicated at *f* (bottom) with her mid-day camp at *g*. There she makes a fire, *e* (the four radiating lines being the firewood), and cooks the food she has collected during the morning. Black rain clouds are indicated at *d*, and a thin cloud, which partly obscures the sun, at *h*.

The upper section of the painting deals with the evening camp *o*, of the sun-woman. Her fire and firewood are at *p*, *q*.

At *n*, on the upper left, is the daughter of the sun-woman (an unidentified star), the central dot at *m*, symbolizing her eye.

The Moon-man, Tjapara

At the conclusion of the fight between the moon-man, *Tjapara* and *Purukupali*, during creation times, the moon-man went up to the sky, bearing on his face the wounds he received at the hands of *Purukupali*.[60]

It was then *Purukupali* decreed that the whole of creation once dead, would remain dead for ever. However, *Tjapara*, the moon-man, partly escaped that decree, for, although he dies for three days every month, his life is eternally renewed.

As soon as *Tjapara* comes to life, he eats huge meals of the flesh of the mangrove crabs, which makes him grow fat and round at the end of a fortnight. However, this food makes him so ill that he sickens and dies.

The aborigines look upon the thin crescent of the waning moon as the skeleton of *Tjapara*,[61] and the body of the moon (visible by earth shine) as his spirit, *imunka*.

During his daily journey across the sky, the moon-man follows the same path as the sun-woman. He, however, carries a much smaller torch.

At one time the moon-man used to return to the east by a road just under the southern horizon. But a nest of hornets, which lived along that road, stung him so badly that he changed his path and now returns to his home by a northern route.[62]

The moon has four wives who live in the sky with him. They are the

[60] See p. 29 for details of the fight between *Purukupali* and *Tjapara*.

[61] A larval form of one of the cockroaches which curls up into an almost complete circle, is called *Tjaparalinga*, the son of the moon.

[62] Most informants, however, said that the moon returned to the east through the same underground world as the sun-woman.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. My informants were certain, however, that *Tjapara* had many more wives in his eastern camp. 776 821

When a ring forms around the moon, during moist weather, the aborigines believe the moon-man is taking part in a *kulama* ceremony. The ring is the mound of earth around the ceremonial circle, the *milimika* (p. 134), inside of which a multitude of star people are dancing and singing the *kulama* songs.

Two bark paintings illustrate the myth of the moon, Pl. 61C, D, and Pl. 62D. 532x 821

On Pl. 61C, D, one side of a *pukamuni* basket illustrates the moon and the clouds. 776 [773]

In the centre, at *b*, is the crescent moon, *Tjapara*, the black oval, *a*, indicating his genitals. The monsoon clouds, *tarusapitjina* (cumulus-nimbus) of the wet season are indicated by the six black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., and cumulus clouds, *kumbarasina*, by the three circles on the left-hand side at *e*, *e*, *e*. The older aborigines referred to these clouds as hills in the sky. The intersecting lines, *d*, *d*, etc., are "young" cumulus clouds, which, when they appear in the sky at the beginning of the wet season, remind the natives it is time to search the trees of the forest for the hives of the wild bees.

The surface of the ground is indicated by the long rectangle, *g*, on the lower edge, and the place of the stars, by the groups of dots at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 62D pictures the moon-man, *Tjapara*, and his many wives.

The central circle is the full moon, the lighter coloured crescents and ovals being the white clouds that sometimes obscure the moon at night; the dark-coloured, but similar designs are the clouds made yellow with the sunset light. The white circles are the planets, the wives of the moon man, and the dots, the stars, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

The Moon and the Stars

Pl. 62C is a painting of the night sky. The crescent, *b*, is the new moon, *Tjapara*, and the white vertical panel, the road, along which he travels. 532x 821

The larger circle on the right hand of the painting represents the morning star, probably Venus, and that on the left, the evening star. The many smaller circles are unidentified stars in the night sky. These are the wives of the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*.

The Men of the Milky Way

In creation times, certain men, the *Maludaianinis*, although each had many wives, were always sneaking off into the jungle with the wives of other men. 773

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 This behaviour led to a great deal of trouble, developing later into a fight in which many of the *Maludaianini* men were wounded.

After that fight, the *Maludaianini* men rose into the sky and became the Milky Way; their wives were turned into stars.

● 776 821 When the sun-woman sinks beneath the western horizon, and the light from the blazing torch leaves the sky, the *Maludaianini* travel in a long line across the firmament (similar to the processional caterpillars at the beginning of the wet season), visiting their wives, the stars, as they go.

Early in the evening the men of the Milky Way rub their hands over their [827] bodies to remove the dried perspiration. This dried perspiration, falling on the eyelids of the aboriginal people, make them heavy with sleep.[65]

x 532 776 821 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60D, Pl. 62A, and Pl. 63C, illustrate the myth of the men of the Milky Way.

The black bars between *c*, *c*, and *c*, *c*, Pl. 60D, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*; the white disc, *a*, being their camp, while similar white designs, *b*, *b*, indicate the camps of their star wives.

The central white panel, *d*, is the Milky Way; the dark squares, *e*, *c*, etc., are the red clouds at sunrise and sunset, the dark-coloured vertical panels on either side of *d*, white cumulus clouds at night, and the six black discs, dark-coloured clouds, in the night sky.

Pl. 62A is another painting of the Milky Way. The circles with the radiating lines are the camp fires of the stars, the background being the shadows cast by those fires. The Coal Sack in which there are no fires, is the camp of the star women.[66]

The lighter panels, leading from the upper left to the lower right, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, the darker panels, from upper right to lower left, indicate the night sky.

Reading from the left on the lower edge, panels one, three and five symbolize cumulus clouds, *Kumbaratina*, of the night sky, and two, four and six, unidentified clouds, called *aratinia*.

The dotted panels on Pl. 63C represent the men of the Milky Way, the barred panels, the "roads", i.e., dark spaces, in the galaxy, and the five horizontal panels, eucalyptus trees in the firmament.

[855] [65] The aboriginal women, to the accompaniment of a lullaby, send their children to sleep by rubbing their fingers together above the face of the child in the same manner as the *Maludaianini* do in the sky.

[66] The Coal Sack is visible at Melville Island only during the hot "wet" season, i.e. from November to March. This had given rise to the belief that the star-women, who make their camp within that heavenly spectacle, do not need fires. The same belief accounts for the fact that, within the Coal Sack there are no stars (the camp-fires of the star-women).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Orion and the Pleiades

Pl. 6a illustrates the myth of Orion and the Pleiades. In the astronomical myth Orion, *a*, is a pack of dingoes, called *daiimini*, who are for ever chasing the *Pleiades*, *b*, a group of wallabies, *karaku*.

The black vertical lines on either side of *a*, and *b*, starless spaces in the Milky Way, *Maludaianini*, are the trunks of celestial bloodwood trees; the short lines at right-angles, their limbs, and the dots on the background, the many spider-webs on their branches.

The large outer ovals, unidentified parts of the Milky Way, are patches of bare and grass-covered land of the sky, and the eight discs on the insides of the ovals, some of the larger stars.

Discussion

There is a wide difference between the astronomical myths of Melville Island and those of the adjacent mainland. Nor do the Melville Islanders have such a detailed knowledge of the night sky as the tribes of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 479). This fact suggests, as do other aspects of the culture, that the natives of Melville Island have been isolated from the mainland cultures for a long time.

The effects of this isolation are most evident in two of the sky myths, i.e., the Milky Way, and the constellations of Orion and the Pleiades.

Throughout Australia, with few exceptions, the Milky Way is looked upon as a celestial river, along which the sky people travel in their canoes, and gather their food (Mountford, 1956, p. 491). No trace of this widespread myth is present on Melville Island, the Milky Way being a multitude of caterpillar men, the *Maludaianini*.

Similarly with Orion and the Pleiades. In the Australian mainland myths, Orion is a man or men, and the Pleiades, a group of women, more often than not, the wives of the men of Orion.

In the place of this widespread myth, the Melville Islanders look upon the stars of Orion as a group of dingoes chasing the Pleiades, a mob of wallabies.

Even in the myth of the moon-man, there is a reversal of the adjacent Arnhem Land beliefs. In Arnhem Land, it was the moon who brought death to the world (Mountford, 1956, p. 495; Warner, 1937, p. 523). On Melville Island, it is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, who tries to stop *Purukupali* from imposing death on all living creatures.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4.5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

796 827 An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch his wives or children, because a deadly sweat called *hilamini* comes from his body and will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

[88] Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the 764 775 Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *eminkery* of the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yatarahs*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

773 776 *Culture Heroes.* They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumereka*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orati*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marakarti*.

776 *The Present Day Spirits.* Some spirits vitally affect their present lives. Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain [82] spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

754 *Magic.* Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *hulumpara*. It is interesting to compare the Anula belief; if a person is sung with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

123 For a while we all stretched our legs walking up the sandy bank of the river until mangrove roots stopped our progress.

Once back in the canoe, Albert took over my place in the bow [226] and with his fish-spear poised he kept a watchful eye on the deep green waters. Once he spied a barramundi and cautiously directed Big Jack to paddle towards the large fish, but it glided out of reach.

About a half mile up the river we came upon the shaded glen of casuarinas, another camping spot with its fresh-water well, named Anderaningo. Here instead of Black Joe's mob we found the Superintendent, Bill Grimster, his son Billy, and two natives, Billy-Two and Brownie. Black Joe's mob had arrived the afternoon before and had been ferried the ten miles up river to the next camping spot in the motor launch. Bill Grimster, having been told by Black Joe that he had seen our smoke near Piriu, knew that we had camped there, and he came back down river with an invitation for me to join them for a night of crocodile hunting before they returned to Snake Bay.

225 For many people in this area, hunting the large salt-water crocodile is a profession or a sought-after sport. In both cases it is dangerous, for this particular species of crocodile is intimidated by nothing and frequently will attack men or beasts without provocation. The crocodiles, which often measure twenty feet in length, occupy a prominent place in the myths, legends, and art of the [773] Tiwi, and many are the true-life tales of people who have lost their [538] lives in battling these beasts, which are hunted by the natives for their meat and valuable skins. When one considers the size of the animals and the size of the canoes, it is no wonder that Bill had discouraged any requests of mine to accompany them. So this invitation was a most welcome and pleasant surprise.

123 I transferred to the launch for the up-river camp so that I would be in time to leave on the hunt at dusk. For the first six miles the river wound seemingly aimlessly through the deep, dank, and mysterious mangrove swamps. At times the branches almost met across the water, brightly colored birds flitted from branch to branch and a subdued splash indicated a crocodile disturbed from his after- [776] noon slumber on the muddy bank. Adding to this almost evil atmosphere were strange clacking and sucking noises emanating from

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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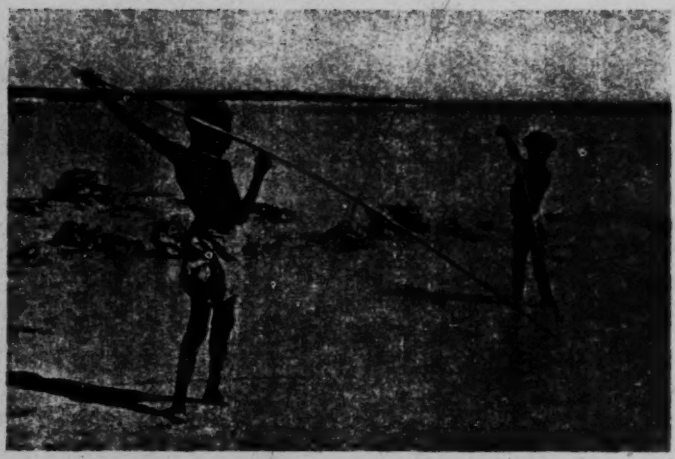

Fig. 9. Two young hunters practicing with fish-spears

123
the impenetrable jungle, which were attributed to the *Ningawi*, the
[776]
weird and mysterious "little people" of the mangrove. Rounding a curve in the river, we surprised a flock of whistle ducks sitting on an exposed mudbank. Young Billy tried to shoot one for supper but missed, and soon they were well out of range. On a rare piece of solid ground we saw the long tail and massive hips of a startled
[136]
wallaby as he hopped to safety. However, a successful throw of the fish-spear brought us a large barramundi, and the .22 rifle provided both a possum and a fruit bat, or flying fox, for supper.

All of a sudden the mangroves disappeared and our view was no longer restricted to the river bank; rather we gazed through
[137]
thick, gnarled white paperbarks on the water's edge to wide expanses of marshy grasslands. A few flocks of black and white geese, which had returned to the swamps early in the evening, were startled by the sound of the motor and rose honking in fright.

About five, we reached Minianapi, a landing place about fifteen yards wide, where solid ground reached the river bank. We were

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
0120 Tiwi 0120

once erected on the grave; the names of dead people immediately became *pukimani* on their deaths and could not be used, and the same was true of all the names bestowed by a dead man on the children of his household and all the other words in the language that sounded similar to the name of the dead man.[4] All ceremonials and rituals were *pukimani* as were the main performers and the armlets, neck ornaments, and other ceremonial objects. People in a *pukimani* state had to observe all sorts of avoidances of and abstentions from everyday actions, particularly with regard to food and sex. Close relatives of dead people could not touch food but had to be fed by nonmourners. That pillar of rigid orthodoxy, Tu'untalumi, was virtually never able to feed himself but was in a *pukimani* state almost the whole year round and needed one of his wives to feed him. (Another advantage of a large household.) Certain spots in the bush or on the banks of streams were *pukimani* places; the dimly seen outline of the Australian coast was *pukimani* as was the ocean near Cape Keith where the Tiwi ancestors had first created the Tiwi world; and finally, the violation of a *pukimani* restriction rendered the violator *pukimani*.

Pukimani as thus applied to people, places, things, names, words, restrictions, and avoidances, meant both sacred and taboo, and was clearly one of that widespread class of words and concepts that is almost standard among the simpler societies. The only noteworthy thing about its Tiwi form is that *pukimani* was a state which people did not actively seek to enter but which happened to people regardless of their wishes. Furthermore, when a man found himself in a state of *pukimani*, his behavior was automatically prescribed for him and for the duration of his *pukimani* condition he observed his avoidances and his abstentions just as automatically as he dropped them when his *pukimani* period expired. When he became *pukimani*, he punctiliously fulfilled the requirements because if he did not, he was likely to be unsuccessful in his enterprises. Big men simply did not dare to be casual about the requirements lest their reputations suffer and they lose face and influence. Less successful men were occasionally explained as probably being secret violators. "His wives and daughters all seem to die young; he must have broken some *pukimani* restrictions sometime" was a reason often given for somebody's failure to be as successful as he might have been. It was noticeable in such explanations of nonsuccess that the failure, or in our terms the bad luck, was attributed to the violation of the taboos, never to the active displeasure of the spirits. The spirits simply did not figure in the picture.

Apart from the big ceremonial occasions, a Tiwi did not have much concern with religion in his everyday life except through some aspect of the *pukimani* system. It was only through *pukimani* that the sacred world impinged upon him at all for most of the year. Since *pukimani* was a condition that could not be actively sought but "just happened" to a person every so often by such common events as the death of a relative, his wife giving birth, or his

[4] When a man named Tibuki died in 1928, a crisis occurred at the Mission where the natives were supposed to make their requests in pidgin English. How could they now ask for tobacco, since that word was now *pukimani*?

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

disembarked on the edge of a large expanse of wet, grassy marsh. 123
On the bank a few low trees provided cover for the hunters, who 223
spread out about fifty yards apart. We waited. Then in the distance the first flock of six geese appeared, flying low over the marsh. They were not headed for us, but passed over the line of hunters about a hundred yards upstream. We could not see the hunters, but the same six geese continued safely after passing the firing line. Now another small group of geese seemed to be heading in our direction. Albert slowly took his position, his legs apart, the left stretched in front, the right somewhat bent as his body arched backward. One *milingani* he held near the charred end in his right arm which was so far back over his head that the tip of the stick almost touched the ground. As counter balance, his left hand, holding several spares, was pointed forward toward the geese. Just as the geese were to pass over our heads, they swerved and went instead over the man to the right of us. You could hear the whir of the stick as it was thrown with tremendous force up into the air, turning end over end, and then the 'thwack' as it reached its mark. A goose, its neck hanging loosely, spiralled down, to land with a splash close to the hunter's feet.

Now the flocks were more numerous as the dusk grew thicker. Soon a group flew directly overhead and Albert aimed and threw, but the spiralling stick slid off the wing tip of the lead goose and he continued, somewhat shaken but quite unharmed. Again and again Albert threw at the increasing numbers of honking homeward-bound geese, but when the last stick was thrown and it was quite dark, we still had no geese. When we gathered, it was found that [763 out of ten hunters with perhaps three hundred sticks thrown, only 777] ● two sticks had found their mark. This was not good. Albert was worried. "Maybe someone bin die, make me bad luck."

Later that evening Black Joe started singing a chant. 223
"*Mobuditi*, plenty goose here; give us some." I asked him 789
whom he was singing to and, although names of the dead are most 775
infrequently mentioned for fear that the ghost of that person, its *mobuditi*, will hear it, this was one occasion where the *mobuditi* could do more good than harm. So the *mobuditi* of Bangri was called upon. Bangri, it was explained, had been a big man, "Plenty wives, maybe hundred. This his country; him grave close up along

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

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Fig. 35. Weather-worn poles mark the grave of someone long dead but not forgotten

223 bush. He bin die long time ago." This had been his country while
789 alive and it was still his country, for his spirit remains near the
775 grave and still hunts the wild animals and birds, while the spirits of his wives collect the wild yams, and his little spirit children play in the bush. Bangri will share this food with others who come, and their *mobudities*, should they die and be buried in the country, for as long as his name is remembered, and until his grave-posts rot with the passing of time.

123 But Bangri was not cooperative. The next day the hunters found little game in the bush and the women turned to the laborious
[222 job of digging six-foot holes with a stick to obtain the small yams
224] that are to be found at this season. Again the grass was too thick, the snakes too cheeky, and Albert advised against our going bush.
[152 I decided the more logical explanation was that Albert considered
777] we ourselves had ample food, and besides he was sincerely worried
[223] about his long run of bad luck. But he left with the others that

123 ping the axe with his teeth, he ran up the sapling on all fours with
222 as much agility as a monkey. Upon reaching the crotch, he put his
481 arms around the trunk, placed the soles of his feet close together against the bark, and quickly progressed in a sort of leaping motion up to the top of the tree. Once there he casually climbed up, over, and around the various branches, until he reached the object of his climb, the hollow branch with the little hole through which was passing a steady stream of small insects. This branch was quickly cut through and fell crashing to the ground. Soon Albert was down again, investigating this find with Agnes and me. The hole was enlarged and the combs of dark honey exposed, still crawling with the little black bees. We dug in with our fingers or
[133] brushes made by chewing small twigs, quite unmindful of the bees, who obligingly never developed stings in this part of the world.
[262 The honey was dark and very strong, but when mixed with the dry,
237] crumbly, yellow "bee bread" a nice balance of taste was obtained. It took the three of us very little time to finish the sugar-bag and off we went—this time in a homeward direction.

123 The one possum looked very small and Albert again began mut-
224 tering about "someone *mobuditi* make me bad luck." We separated again and when almost to the creek Agnes suddenly held me back
[777] and cautioned silence. Carefully she picked up a stout stick from the ground and then approached what I suddenly noticed was a very fat goana, about two feet long, apparently sound asleep on a nearby tree trunk. One quick blow and the lizard fell to the ground, quite dead. We carried the catch to the landing and quickly had another swim before Albert caught up. We were gathering firewood when Albert arrived and explained his delay by holding up another
123 possum. The second possum was immediately gutted, then both
252 were laid on the fire and turned frequently until all the fur had been burned off and the skin made brittle. The animals were quartered and laid again on the fire until well roasted. The goana received no preliminary treatment before going on the fire. When all were
[264] cooked, they were removed and laid on a "table" of clean, green leaves, and we reached in and tore off pieces of the steaming, juicy
123 meat. It is impossible to describe this meat to someone who has not
262 tasted it. All I can say is that it was tender and tasty and perfectly

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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2: Mountford

773, 778, 776, 821

OI20 Tiwi OI20

[Materials pertaining to these categories will also be found in category 532.]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 However, before all these changes took place, *Tukimbini* assembled the mythical people who had attended *Purukupali's* ceremony, and taught them the rules of behaviour, and the laws of marriage and tribal relationship they must always obey. *Tukimbini* also laid down the periods of light and darkness that still determine the daily cycle of aboriginal life.

512 When the first light appears in the morning sky it is the melodious call of 821 *Tukimbini*, now the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) that [825] wakens the aborigines from their sleep.

The sun-woman, rising above the eastern horizon with her blazing torch, is a signal for the aboriginal men, with spears and wooden clubs, to go hunting, and for the women, with bark baskets hanging from the sticks over their shoulders, to gather their food from the forest and the swamp-lands.

About mid-day, the sun-woman, cooking the food she has gathered, makes the heat of the day unbearable. The aborigines then retire to the shade of the trees until the late afternoon when they continue their food gathering, returning to camp to cook their evening meal just as the sun-woman sinks below the western horizon.

Soon, darkness creeps across the sky, the stars, *tapalinga*, show themselves and the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, span the heavens. It is then [512] that the dried perspiration which the *Maludaianini* rub from their bodies, falls on the eyelids of the aborigines, making them so heavy that they cannot keep awake. Next morning, at dawn, *Tukimbini* wakes the aborigines to a new day.

776 The following is the list of the totemic places of Melville and Bathurst 778 Islands, illustrated by bark paintings, the names of the totemic people and their relationships to each other.

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
Murupianga	Tukimbini (bird)	Great-grandson of *Mudungkala*
Wuriupi	Garagalani (turtle)	Not known
	Wuriupranala (sun)	Daughter of *Mudungkala*
Panindu	Paninduela (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Wailu	Andjalui (fresh water)	Husband of *Wuriupranala*
	Kwouk-kwouk (frog)	Not known

2: Mountford E-5 (1954). 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
	Pakadringa (thunderstorms)	Son of *Kwouk-kwouk*
	Tomituka (monsoon rain)	Daughter of *Kwouk-kwouk*
	Bumerali (lightning)	Daughter of *Kwouk-kwouk*
Pirilou	Pirilouka (catfish)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Arangu	Wuringa (fish)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Jutapinna	Ringa (turtle)	Not known
Wilinda	Wilinduela (crocodile)	Sister of *Tukimbini*
Numanira	Numanirakala (red ochre)	Sister of *Tukimbini*
Rungani	Baraka (spider)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Alaparima	Imburai-inga (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Mandumpi	Timarai-inga (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Patinapuru	Pungulu (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Puirwini / Puntubu	Aragoutourina (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Matingalia	Matingalia (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Turiturina	Puruliangkala (bush fire)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Murninini / Cape Fourroy / Taliliu	Mandubuka (sand-fly)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Milapuru	Milapukala (cockatoo)	Not known
Primadua	Mistrina (pandanus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Primadua	Tililindigia (yam)	Not known
Primadua	Ubuna (yam)	Not known
Munguna	Inkaka (cockatoo)	Not known
Jurubulinai	Mudungkala (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Ralijanga	Mantinuria (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Arunumpi	Mudati (kite)	Not known
Muranapi	Murungimpili (flying fox)	Not known
Muranapi	Kalalili (bamboo)	Not known[58]
Muranapi	Mandubuka (blow fly)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Kudjatumpi	March-fly (Kudjatumpi)	Wife of *Tukimbini*

[58] There is little doubt that most, if not all, of the totemic women whose relationships I did not find out, would have been wives or relatives of *Tukimbini*.

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

6. THE BARK PAINTINGS OF THE TOTEMIC PLACES

×532 ● 778 [115]

The aborigines of Melville Island produced forty-five bark paintings dealing with the totemic localities of Melville and Bathurst Islands. The assistance of the two aboriginal artists, *Tjamalampua* and *Mahunerinita*, and Mr. W. E. Harney, who had spent many years on the islands, coupled with the aboriginal names on the official map of Melville and Bathurst Islands, and my increasing knowledge, enabled me to locate the approximate position of twenty-five totemic areas associated with the bark paintings.

The Honey-eater Bird-man, Tukimbini, at Murupianga

Four bark paintings deal with the myth of *Tukimbini* and the totem place he created at Murupianga, south-eastern Melville Island; Pl. 4A, B; Pl. 4C, D; Pl. 6C, D; Pl. 7A.

The circle *a*, on Pl. 4A, B, is a mangrove swamp on a low island adjacent to Murupianga, *b*, *b*, and *p*, *p*, *p*, being rocks on its shore. The long sandy beach at Murupianga is shown at *d*, and a shoal at *j*. At *c* is a stingray, *h*, a dugong, *k*, a turtle, and *l*, a diamond fish. At *f*, *f*, etc., are piles of dead leaves on the beach, and at *e*, *e*, *e*, and similar designs, stringy-bark trees growing along the shore. A freshwater spring is at *t*, with two trees growing from its banks. Bunches of sea-weed are at *g*, and *r*, *r*, *r*, and at *s*, on the left-hand side of the painting, are the tree-covered uplands at Murupianga. The totemic place, Wuriupi, created by the woman, *Wuriupranala*, and her son, is at *m*.

On Pl. 4C, D, a jungle near the shore at Murupianga,[87] is indicated by the central black disc, *g*, and the camps of the bird-man, *Tukimbini*, are shown by the symbols *a*, *a*, etc. The circle, *d*, *d*, pictures high, white cliffs, adjacent to the totemic jungle; *k*, is a monsoon forest tree, and *f*, *f*, its limbs; at *h*, *h*, are living paper-bark trees, at *b*, *b*, *b*, dead jungle trees; and at *c*, *c*, etc., poisonous yams, similar to the *kulama* (Pl. 44D), which *Tukimbini* created for food. The dots on the painting indicate the red seeds of a jungle vine lying on the ground.

Pl. 6C, D, is one side of a *pukamuni* basket;[88] the holes at *a*, *a*, show that it is a female basket.

[87] In the companion bark painting, Pl. 4A, B, the totemic place is a mangrove swamp. Within the same area, as with *Mandubuku*, south-western Bathurst Island, several adjacent localities are associated with the same totemic being.

[88] Klaatsch (1907), p. 377, who saw this type of basket on an old grave, states that, according to the aborigines, it indicated the burial place of a woman. Though it may be that Klaatsch was correct, my informants simply referred to the *pukamuni* baskets as male and female, as they did to male and female *pukamuni* spears (Pl. 32A, B). No female baskets were used at the *pukamuni* of the woman, *Makapini*.

[114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Circle *y*, pictures the totem place of *Tukimbini* at Murupianga; *w*, a mangrove swamp not far from the coastline; circle *t*, a cliff with sand at its base (probably on the sea shore); and circles *f*, *j*, and *r* are the open sea. Circle *g* pictures a submerged reef at Murupianga; *d*, *d*, are two sandbanks off the shore, and *h*, *k*, patches of jungle on the land. At *c*, *c*, etc., are the sandy shores; at *b*, *b*, etc., the lines of driftwood and debris cast upon them, while the cross-hatched background represents the tracks made in the soft sand by the hermit crabs. 532x 778

Pl. 7A deals with *Tukimbini* and his many wives at Murupianga during the *palaneri* (creation) period.

The central figure is *Tukimbini*, the circles on either side of his face indicating the yellow ornaments he wore while he was a man. When later, he transformed himself into the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) he still retained those decorations. *Tukimbini's* penis is at *b*. The white oval, *c*, is his paper-bark shelter, the black oval, *e*, being the bough shed he built over the shelter to make it cooler. His camp fires, on either side of him, are at *d*, *d*, etc., and those of three of his wives at *n*, *n*, *n*.

The eight circles, *g*, *g*, etc., represent some of the wives of *Tukimbini*. Within the white circle, the dots, *c*, indicate *Tukimbini's* grass bed, and those over the remainder of the painting, the beds of his wives. The outer white circle, *m*, symbolizes the high ground at Murupianga.

The Hawk-bill Turtle-woman, Garagalani, at Wuriupi

The hawk-bill turtle-woman, *Garagalani*, and her husband, *Marakuni*, in company with the crocodile-man, *Jirakupai*, the wild honey-man, *Mauwini*, and many others, took part in the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*. It was the duty of *Garagalani* and the other turtle-women, to make the large folded bark baskets, and for their husbands to decorate them. 773

At the close of the creation period, when *Garagalani* and the other turtle-women were transformed into sea creatures, the baskets became their carapaces, and the painted designs on the baskets, the shell pattern on their backs.

Pl. 8A, B, two sides of a *pukamuni* basket, refers to the turtle-woman, *Garagalani*. On B, the circular designs symbolize turtle eggs; the vertical bands, lengths of turtle rope, made from fibrous bark, and the cross-hatched areas, patches of sea-grass, the food of the turtles. 532x 773

On the opposite side of the basket, Pl. 8A, the bands refer to the turtle rope, while the cross-hatching is the sea-grass.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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The vertical lines at the bottom of the painting symbolize the rays of the sun-woman as she rises in the east, and the groups of dots throughout the design, the stars, *tapalinga*, in the night sky. 532x 773

On Pl. 5C, D, the two concentric circles, *d*, indicate the surface, while *a*, is the *imunka*,[81] or life centre of the sun.

The painting shows a number of different clouds; a thin misty cloud at *b*, heavy rain clouds which temporarily obscure the sun at *h*, *h*, *h*, etc., a mackerel sky at *c* (indicated by the short radiating lines), and cumulus clouds at *j*, *j*.

The colours of sunrise and sunset are indicated by the horizontal bands, *g*, *g*; while the lines of light, which sometimes radiate from the sunset, are at *e*, *e*, etc., and those from the sunrise at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 6A, B, is a bark painting of Wuriupi, the totem place of *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman. Her body, now a patch of jungle, is at *a*; her head at *n*, and her abdomen at *k*. Her arms are at *b*, *b*; her legs at *c*, *c*; her breasts at *j*, *j*; her ears at *m*, *m*; the chevron scars on her arms and back at *e*, *e*, etc. 532x 778

The windbreak of her camp, *d*, is a sandy beach at Wuriupi, and the shelter, under which she rested, is a large yam, whose leaves, vine and blossoms, are indicated by symbols, *h*, *h*; *l*, *l*; *v*, *v*, etc. Tracks made by the sun-woman are shown at *x*, *x*; *x*, *x*; red rocks on the beach at *g*, *g*; and black rocks at *f*, *f*.

Pl. 7B, a painting on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, also refers to the sun-woman. 532x 821

The sun is represented by the black circle in the lower section of the design, while the disc in the centre of the circle is the torch of blazing bark which the sun-woman carries across the sky to provide the world with light and heat. The white, upper disc represents the large thunderclouds which, at the beginning of the wet season, often obscure the sun.[82] The surrounding concentric circles and the parallel lines across the middle of the design symbolize the colours on the edge of the clouds at sunrise or sunset.

The lighter coloured diagonal lines refer to groups of cirrus clouds, and the darker, to monsoon clouds of the rainy season. The dots are the stars of the night sky.

The vertical black line in the middle of Pl. 7D, is the track across the sky of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*. The black disc across the bottom is the sun in the morning; the one immediately above, the sun at midday; the next,

[81] The *imunka* is a universal life essence which permeates all living things, the plants, the creatures and man. It is situated in the solar-plexus of man. This is the same life essence as that of the Pitjendadjara tribe of the western deserts of Central Australia (Mountford, 1948, p. 111). [774] [171]

[82] When a thundercloud obscures the sun, the aborigines believe that *Andjahi* (fresh water) has taken his wife, *Wuriupranala*, to his camp.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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×532 821 the sun at mid-afternoon, and the disc on the upper edge, *Wuriupranala* at sunset.

The lighter coloured radiating bands are the lines of light from the blazing bark torch, carried by the sun-woman; the dark-coloured ovals between, a number of *tukimbinis* (yellow-eared honey-eaters), and the lighter coloured ovals, a number of *wuriuprinilis* (mistletoe birds).

In the centre of Pl. 7C, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, seated in her bark hut at Wuriupi. The central dark mark on her abdomen indicates body paint; the white lines, *a*, *a*, are her legs, *b*, *b*, her feet and *c*, *c*, her arms.

The dark-coloured oval, *g*, is the sun-woman's paper-bark hut; the light-coloured outer circle, *d*, is a bough shed built over the hut to keep it cool, and the short radiating lines between the two circles, the posts supporting the roof.

The Eucalyptus-tree Woman, Panindusla, at Panindu

773 The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Panindusla*, created the totemic country of Panindu, north-eastern Melville Island, the streams, fish, turtles, geese and other creatures, as well as water-lilies, spike-rushes and other plants that grow in the freshwater swamps.

●778 Panindu is on the upper reaches of an unnamed river in north-eastern Melville Island; Wailu, the totemic place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at the mouth of the same stream.

×532 778 On Pl. 9A, B, *a*, *a*, are the Panindu waterholes; *b*, *b*, waterfalls which flow from upper to lower pools; and *c*, *c*, are lines of foam caused by the falling water. At *t*, *t*, etc., are *pubiaks*, and *u*, *u*, etc., paper-bark trees on the banks of the stream, and at *h*, *h*, and *j*, *j*, dead *pubiaks* and paper-bark trees lying in the water.

Two lagoons, or backwaters, are indicated at *e*, *e*; two sedge-covered swamps at *f*, *g*. Water-grass on the bottom of the swamp is shown by the cross-hatched areas, *s*, *s*.

The Freshwater-man, Andjalui

778 776 The totem place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island. At Wailu there also lived the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*,[88] her son, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms, and her two daughters, *Tomisuka*, the woman of the monsoon rains, and *Bamerali*, the woman of the lightning.

[88] Some aborigines thought, but were not sure, that *Andjalui* was the husband of both *Kwouk-kwouk*, and the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Five bark paintings, Pls. 9C, D, 10B, D, 22A, B, and 58B, deal with Wailu and its inhabitants. 532x 778

On Pl. 9C, D, the totemic lagoon, Wailu, is at *a*, the outer circle, *b*, symbolizing the broken water of the stream, *f* (in circle above) as it runs over the stony bed of a watercourse into Wailu. At *d*, *d*, are the paper-bark and *e*, *e*, *pubiaka* trees which grow on its banks.

At *j*, *j* (below), and *s*, *s*, etc., are living paper-bark, and *m*, *m*, and *p*, *p*, etc., *pubiaka* trees on the bank; *n*, *n*, are dead paper-bark and *o*, *o*, *pubiaka* trees in the swamp. The cross-hatched areas throughout the painting symbolize watergrass on the bottom of the lagoon.

Pl. 58B, which is associated with Wailu, deals with the rainbow-woman, *Maratji*, the thunderstorm-man, *Pakadringa*, and the monsoon rain-woman, *Tomituka*. 532x 776

The four black horizontal bands represent the dark-coloured clouds of *Tomituka* (monsoon rain); the lighter-coloured chevrons indicate large cumulus clouds, the home of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*; and the darker chevrons are the rainbow-women, *Maratjis*, who live at Maundu.

The Frog-Woman, Kwouk-kwouk, at Wailu

The frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, lives with her family, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka*, and *Bumerali*, at Wailu, the totem place of *Andjalui*. 776 778

The three children of *Kwouk-kwouk* always obey their mother, so when, in the wet season, the rain falls and thunderstorms rage, she croaks with joy over their handiwork. No aboriginal would dare to kill a frog; if he were so foolish, her son, *Pakadringa*, and daughter, *Tomituka*, would send down so much rain that everyone would be drowned. 821 825

Pl. 10B deals with the frogs at Wailu. The central black oval is the lagoon at Wailu. At *a*, *a*, are large paper-bark trees which grow in Wailu lagoon, and at *b*, *b*, another species of paper-bark which prefers the drier conditions of the banks. The frogs, which live in the lagoon, are indicated at *c*, *c*, etc.; a water-lily swamp is shown at *d*, *d*, and the white, broken water, running over fallen trees, at *e*, *e*. The groups of dots represent the water-grass, and the faint lines separating them, small streams of running water in an adjacent swamp. 532x 778

Pakadringa, Bumerali and Tomituka at Wailu

During creation times, before *Pakadringa* was transformed into the man of the thunderstorms, he was a hairy giant, huge in size, and repulsive in appear- 776

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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a, *a* (the black areas), indicate stony hills near her camp in the upper world; 532 x
and the dots on the background, the stars, *tapalingas*, which live in the upper 821
world with the lightning woman. 776

The Cat-fish Woman, Pirilouka at Pirilou

Pirilou, on the upper Goose Creek swamps, is the totemic place of a mythical 778 ●
cat-fish woman, *Pirilouka*. She was sent by *Tukimbini* to create both the 776
totemic country and the food necessary for the natives to live on it, i.e., [262]
geese, brolgas, ducks, freshwater goannas, turtles, waterlily bulbs, red and white fruited *Eugenia* trees, and the various kinds of yams that prefer the damp soil.

On Pl. 10c, the darker crossed circles are the black, and the lighter, the 532 x
white rocks at Pirilou. Panels, such as *a*, symbolize the trunks of the paper- 778
bark trees growing in the swamp; *b*, the many waterlilies on its surface, and the white vertical lines on the background, streams of fresh water in the swamp-lands.

The Fish-woman, Wuringa, at Arangu

Tukimbini sent the fish-woman, *Wuringa*, to establish a camp at Arangu, in 773
Curtis Haven, northern Melville Island. Later, *Wuringa's* camp was trans- [778]
formed into a group of flat rocks which are uncovered only at low tide.

Wuringa created the aboriginal foods of the area, turtles, crabs, fish of all kinds, yams, cabbage palms and hives of wild honey.

Two bark paintings illustrate Arangu and its surroundings, Pl. 11c and 532 x
Pl. 11D. 778

On Pl. 11c, *a*, is a long submerged reef at Arangu; *d*, *d*, *d*, smaller submerged rocks; *b*, *c*, long sand-bars, while at *e*, *e*, are jelly fish. The remainder of the ovals are oysters on the rocks at Arangu.

On Pl. 11D, *a*, is the totemic place, Arangu; *b*, represents the soft friable boulders near by; *c*, a large rock on the coast; *d*, wave breaking over it; *h*, white sand on the beach, and *j*, the sand and gravel on the sea bottom.

Symbol *e*, indicates black trepang; *f*, *f*, white trepang; *r*, an especially large trepang; *n*, a jelly fish, and *m*, a bed of oysters. At *k*, are many pearl shells, and at *s*, *s*, conch shells. A deep channel in Curtis Haven is indicated at *p*, a yellow rock under the water, at *o*, and the seaweed growing on the rocks at Arangu, by the lighter-coloured dots on the background.

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The Logger-head Turtle-woman, Ringa, at Jutapinta

773 At the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, *Ringa*, the logger-head turtle, with *Garagalani*, the hawk-bill turtle, were responsible for making the large bark ceremonial baskets.[87] When, at the close of the creation period, the men and women changed themselves into creatures or plants, the turtle-women, including *Ringa*, became the sea-going turtles.

×532 778 Pl. 12c deals with the totemic place of the logger-head turtle, a submerged reef, called Jutapinta, some miles north of Karslake Island. The central figure is the reef, the totemic body of the woman, *Ringa*, and the encircling dark-coloured area, *a*, the white sand on the sea bottom. At *b*, is the sea-water, and *c*, *c*, etc., are black rocks under the water, which today are frequented by the logger-head turtles. The yellow bands, *d*, *d*, etc., indicate the seaweed, and the white dotted areas, *e*, *e*, etc., the oysters that live on the reef. The dots, surrounding the central figure, symbolize the eggs inside the body of the logger-head turtle. Unlike the green or hawkbill turtles, the logger-heads do not lay their eggs on the sandy shore.

The Crocodile-woman, Wilinduela, at Wilindu

773 Toward the close of the creation period, the woman, *Wilinduela*, and her sister, *Numanirakala*, were sent out by their brother, *Tukimbini*, to establish totemic centres on northern Melville Island. When they reached Shark Bay, *Wilinduela* stayed on the high ground, i.e., Wilindu Island, while she sent her younger sister to Numanira, a reef uncovered only at low water. Before the two sisters separated, however, they camped together on the mainland at Mundinju (Pl. 10A).

×532 778 The black centre of Pl. 11A, is the totem place of the crocodile-woman on Wilindu Island, the surrounding white circle indicating the jungle around the totemic place. The small black discs are dark-coloured rocks on the cliffs, and the ligher-coloured, rocks on the sea beach. The outer circle is the sea.

On Pl. 11B the central disc is Wilindu Island, while the four circles on its circumference are freshwater springs.

The lower panel *a*, indicates black and *b*, yellow rocks on the coast; *c*, and *e*, *e*, etc., are areas of jungle; *f*, is a rock projecting from the sea, and *h*, the shores of Shark Bay. Poisonous yams, *kuku*, are indicated at *d*, and edible yams at *g*. The many circular discs are oysters on the rocks at Wilindu.

[462] [764] [87] At the conclusion of the present-day burial rites, these baskets, made by the women and painted by the men, are placed on the top of the burial poles as presents to the dead.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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Pl. 10A pictures Mundinju, the place where the two sisters, *Wilinduela* and *Numanirakala* camped before the former made her home at Wilindu, and the latter at Numanira. 532x 778

The central black disc is Mundinju; the smaller black discs, throughout the painting, are holes in the cliffs from which seep streams of fresh water. The long, radiating panels are bands of red and yellow ochres in the cliffs, the groups of parallel lines, gutters formed in the cliffs, where *Wilinduela* urinated; and the groups of chevron designs, ferns growing among the rocks.

The Red-ochre Woman, Numanirakala, at Numanira

Numanira, created by *Numanirakala*, is a partly submerged reef a short distance from Wulrungku (Karslake Island), north-western Melville Island. 778

At low tide, the aborigines collect one of the best ochres in the country from this locality, even better than that from Imilu (Fig. 1), for, although Imilu ochres are brightest when used dry, those from Numanira are best when mixed with water. [317]

The central design on Pl. 12B indicates the flat rocks of the submerged totemic place at Numanira, while similar designs, above and below, are other rocks near by. The darker-coloured segments in these three designs indicate the red ochre, and the lighter segments the mud on the sea bottom. The white circles represent sea-weed, the darker, small rocks under the water, and the dots, the corals growing on those rocks. 532x 778

The central black disc of Pl. 12D is Numanira; the surrounding white circle, the sand on the sea floor, and the narrow darker line on the periphery, the red ochre, for which the island is noted.

The radiating black panels symbolize clams, the lighter panels, oysters, both of which are plentiful on the rocks of the island. The outer circle is the mud, and the dots are bunches of weed on the sea-bottom.

The Spider-woman, Baraka, at Rungani

During *palaneri* times, the spider-woman, *Baraka*, who lived at Rungani, made a bark basket for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*. She first stripped a sheet of bark from a eucalyptus tree, heated it over the fire to make it flexible, then, bending it double, sewed the edges together with split lawyer vine. From that day until now, the women of Melville and Bathurst Islands have made their baskets in the same manner. After the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* instructed his wife, *Baraka*, to establish a totemic place at Rungani, northern Melville Island. 773 285 [462] 773

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532 776 The black oval in the middle of Pl. 13A is a mark on the spider-woman, whose body is indicated by the central oval.

The irregular oval *a*, is her abdomen, and *b*, *b*, is her thorax. At *c*, *c*, are her legs; *f*, *f*, etc., the hairs on her legs, and *d*, *d*, etc., her many knees and elbows. Semi-circles *h*, *h*, and the dotted sections, are spider eggs, and the cross-hatched areas, spider webs.

532 778 On Pl. 13C, the central black circle, representing an area of dry land at Rungani, was once the body of *Baraka*, and the surrounding lighter-coloured circle; the egg-case of the spider. The central square is the totemic place, Rungani, the radiating lines within the square being the legs of the spider.

The barred horizontal and vertical panels *a*, *a* (once roads made by the spider-woman as she travelled to and from her totemic place in search of food), are now high, red cliffs, and the diagonal panels leading from the central squares, additional tracks made by the spider-woman. These tracks have since been transformed into watercourses. The eight black concentric circles symbolize the daughters of *Baraka* and *Tukimbini*, and the dotted panels the legs of the children. The chevron designs indicate the faeces of both the spider-woman and her daughters.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Imburai-inga, at Alaparima

Pl. 13B, D, pictures the totemic place of a eucalyptus-tree woman, *Imburai-inga*, at Alaparima, north-western Melville Island.

This totemic place, *d*, *d*, is on the sea-beach, with high cliffs, *e*, to the north, and jungle trees, *f*, *f*, near by. At *h*, on the left-hand edge of the painting, is the island, Purapundili (Fig. 1), one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipinuis*.

Rocks, near the shore at Piper Head, are indicated at transverse panel, *g*; and a small rocky island, with trees growing along its shore is at *j*. The long design, *k*, at the bottom of the painting, represents the Apsley Straits, which separate Melville and Bathurst Islands.

The oval, *n*, is the aboriginal locality, Punata, in Apsley Straits, which is near the old military settlement of Fort Dundas, *m*.[88] Designs around the edge of this section are trees on the high land, while at *p*, on the bottom of the drawing, are trees on the shore.

The two crescents, *o*, *o*, which practically encircle Punata (*n*), are aboriginal roads; *a*, *a*, etc., are turtles; *b*, *b*, etc., dugongs, and *c*, *c*, etc., dug-out canoes.

[88] Established in 1824, abandoned in 1828.

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The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Timarai-inga, at Mandumpi

Pl. 12A pictures the totem place of a eucalyptus-tree woman, *Timarai-inga*, a small rocky island, near the coast at Mandumpi, north-western Melville Island. 532x 778

The black diamond shapes indicate bands of yellow ochre, and the light-coloured designs, *a*, *a*, etc., white ochres in the cliff face at Mandumpi. The barred panels, *b*, *b*, symbolize a freshwater stream which flows into the sea. The chevrons throughout the design picture ferns growing among the rocks.

Although I did not gather specific details of the totemic story, it is safe to assume that *Timarai-inga* was the creator of this totemic place. [114]

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Pungulu, at Patuapuru

The totemic place of the eucalyptus-tree woman, *Pungulu*, is at Patuapuru (Deception Point), northern Bathurst Island.

The horizontal lines *b*, *b*, on Pl. 14C, D, symbolize the open sea at Patuapuru, and *a*, *a*, etc., on the top of the painting, high light-coloured cliffs. At *c*, is another cliff of reddish colour, and *d*, *d*, etc., are the many rocks on the beach which are covered at high tide.

The long panel *f*, *f*, on the left-hand side of the painting, is the open beach at Patuapuru, and the vertical panels *e*, *e*, etc., are parallel lines of sand-ridges behind the beach.

In the centre line of the painting, at *h*, and *n*, are two casuarina trees, and at *k*, is a freshwater lagoon on the banks of which are many unidentified jungle trees. A high sandhill is indicated at *m* (upper right), and the marine grass on the sea-shore, by the cross-hatching on the background.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Aragoutourina,[39] *at Putawini*

The first camp of *Aragoutourina* was at Puntubu, at the headwaters of the Tjipripu River, central Melville Island, where she stayed for a while. She then travelled south-west over the watershed to Kuruwu River which empties its water into the Apsley Straits. After making this water-course, *Aragoutourina* walked to Putawini Point, western Bathurst Island,[40] where she created the topography and natural history of the surrounding country. 773

A jungle near Putawini is represented on Pl. 14A, B, by the central white 532x 778

[39] A red-flowering eucalypt locally known as the bloodwood.
[40] Called Marloo Point on the official maps.

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circle, *a*; a small adjacent island by symbol *b*; a large boulder in the sea by *k* (lower right), and the waves breaking over it by the black disc, *c* (above).

Putawini is at *d*, in upper circle; two adjacent freshwater lagoons are at *e*, *h* (upper and lower circles), the uplands are at *t* (upper left), and a spring in the cliffs is at *g*. Sharp-edged water-grasses grow in the lagoons, *e*, *l*; reeds at *n*, *o*, (upper right); red lotus lilies at *q* (top); and paper-bark trees at *p* (upper right).

A boulder at *u* (left), was once the small bark basket of this eucalyptus-tree woman, and a freshwater lagoon *v* (left), her large bark basket.

Putawini Point, *x* (lower right), where *Aragoutourina* left her *pukamuni* ornaments behind, is now one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Piapiuis*.

At *aa* (bottom), is a small watercourse with *bb* as its tributary; *y* and *z* are two paper-bark trees, *ff*, is one of their limbs; *cc* (bottom), and *vv* (upper right), are hibiscus trees; *ee*, *rr*, *xx* and *ww*, mangrove trees; *kk*, represents eucalyptus trees; *ll*, *nn*, pandanus palms; *mm*, stringy-barks; *oo*, kapok, and *qq*, grevillea trees.

The entrance to Putawini creek is at *ii*, with its sandy sea-shores at *gg*, *tt*, and *ww*. White cliffs are at *jj*; red cliffs at *pp*; and isolated boulders at *ss*. The mangrove swamps *zz*, are at the mouth of the Putawini Creek.

Both sides of a large *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 15A, B, C, D, refer to the myth of *Aragoutourina*.

On 15A, B, the vertical line of rectangles, *a*, represents the Kuruwu Creek that flows into Aplsey Straits. This creek was created by the mythical woman. The track she made as she walked from this watercourse to Putawini Point is indicated by line of rectangles at *d*. Tributary, *b*, was created where *Aragoutourina* dug for red ochre, and tributary *k*, where she dug for white ochre with which to decorate herself.

Horizontal lines, *e*, *f*, indicate bands of red, and *g*, *h*, white ochres in the banks of the Kuruwu Creek. The lighter-coloured rectangles, *c*, *c*, etc., throughout the painting, represent deposits of yellow ochre and the darker panels, *q*, *q*, etc., red ochre. Pandanus trees, growing along the banks of the Kuruwu Creek, are indicated by the black discs, *m*, at the intersection of the horizontal and vertical lines.

Pl. 15C, D, describes the seacoast at Putawini. The central black disc, *a*, is a sandbank, once *Aragoutourina's* bark hut; the enclosing circle *b*, the surrounding ocean; and the outer circle *c*, the sea-weed growing on the rocky bottom.

The black square above, at *d*, is a mangrove swamp, and the lighter

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border, the muddy floor. The other black rectangles, *p*, *p*, etc., indicate rocks in the sea, and their lighter-coloured borders, the waves breaking over them. 532x 778

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Matingalia, at Putawini

A eucalyptus-tree woman *Matingalia* created a rocky island of the same name at the mouth of Putawini Creek, western Bathurst Island. I was not able to gather further details of the mythical story. 773

The central vertical panel *a*, of Pl. 16A, is the open sea, and the outer surrounding white rectangle, *h*, *h*, the dry land of the island. Small hills are at *k*, *k* (top), a large hill is at *o* (top); and deposits of red ochre, *m*, *m*, etc., also form part of the island. 532x 778

A small branch of the Putawini Creek is indicated by the white band at *b*; another branch, Piriki, at *c*; another near Pintamu, at *d*; and still another (unnamed) at *f*, *f*. Timinindu and Dunkunaru Creeks (unidentified) are at *g*, *g*, and *e*, respectively. The eggs of a crocodile, *lukupiangu*, similar to those of *Jirakupai*, the dangerous, sea-going *Crocodilus porosus*, are indicated by the white discs, *n*, *n*, etc. [825]

The Bush-fire woman, Puruliangkala, at Turiturina Island

The totemic place of the woman of the bush-fires, *Puruliangkala*, is on Turiturina Island, in Port Hurd, western Bathurst Island, where the mythical bird-men and later the *Ningauis* performed the first *kulama* ceremonies (p. 123). 778 [773]

The central white circle on Pl. 16D, is Turiturina Island: the smaller circles, *a*, *a*, are low rocks in the sea, once the camp-fires of *Puruliangkala*; and *b*, *b*, freshwater springs that provided her with water. The black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., are deposits of red ochre, and *d*, *d*, *d*, etc., deposits of white ochre, used by both the mythical woman and the *Ningauis* to decorate themselves for their ceremonies during *palaneri* times. 532x 778

At *e*, *e*, etc., are many milkwood trees, the sap of which, like the ochre deposits, was also utilized by both *Puruliangkala* and the *Ningauis* for body decorations. This sap is still used in the opening rituals of the *kulama* (p. 131). The dots are white fruits, *mandikama*, which *Puruliangkala* created for food. [824] [386]

The Sand-fly woman, Mandukuka, at Murninini

Mandukuka, the sand-fly woman, established the totemic place of Murninini, south-western Bathurst Island. 773 778

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532
778

Pl. 17A, B, deals with the topography of Murninini. The central disc *a*, the transformed body of the mythical woman, is a large red-coloured cliff on the sea-coast, and the outer white oval, *b*, *b*, a band of white rock along the cliff's upper edge.

The black oval, *c*, *c*, is a stream, created by *Mandubuka* to provide herself with drinking water. This stream, which runs over the cliff, *a*, forms a small waterfall, and at *f*, the place where the stream, *c*, *c*, runs into the sea.

A large white cliff, *h*, *h*, *h*, is visible at sea for some distance. Piles of yellow stone, *u*, *u*, etc., were created by the mythical woman, so that she would have ochres with which to decorate herself.

Lururundu Hills, the black rectangles, *g*, *g*, were once the grass huts of *Mandubuka*; *j*, *j*, long rocks on the shore, her digging sticks; and the large boulders, *k*, *k*, her bark baskets. At *l*, is a piece of wood with which the woman pounded the cooked trunk of the fan palm; *t*, (upper left) now a hollow rock, was her palm-leaf (*tulini*) basket, and at *n*, *n*, are places where she once cooked her food.

Pl. 17D refers to another of the totemic places of Mandubuka at Taliau,[41] a salt-water lagoon adjacent to Murninini on Cape Fourcroy.

The light-coloured rectangles above the central horizontal line, *a*, picture the mangrove swamps that fringe the lagoon, and the darker, the sandy patches among the trees. The symbols below *a*, refer to a freshwater swamp, Maundu, about eight miles south-east of Murninini. The darker-coloured rectangles picture the many *Maratjis*, great and small, that inhabit Maundu, and the lighter, the clear water of the swamp. Lines *b*, *b*, etc., are streams of reddish water that flow from Maundu into the sea (myth, p. 157).

Pl. 17C deals with still another locality in the totemic area of *Mandubuka*, at Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island.

At *a*, *a*, the totemic places of *Mandubuka*, are large rocks in the sea. At *b*, *b*, the parallel lines represent a long sandy beach, and *c*, *c*, the waves breaking on that beach. The sea mist rising from the breaking waves is indicated by the dotted background.

The black semi-circles, *f*, *f*, at the top and bottom of the painting, are the cliffs at Taliau; *d*, *d*, etc., the light-coloured rocks; and *g*, *g*, etc., the red boulders on the sea-shore. At *e*, *e*, (top and bottom) is an old aboriginal road.

[41] Hart, 1930, p. 174, refers to the food-collecting rights of this area.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The White-Cockatoo woman, Milapukala, at Milapuru

A white-cockatoo woman, *Milapukala*, made a large freshwater lagoon at Milapuru, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. At the same time she created opossums, wallabies, carpet snakes, many kinds of lizards, hives of wild honey and many other foods so that she, and later the aborigines, would have plenty to eat. 773

The central black oval on Pl. 16c, is the lagoon, the totem place of the white cockatoo-woman, the short radiating lines between this and the white oval being groups of rushes on the edge of the water. 532 × 778 ●

The large white oval represents the backwaters of Milapuru, and the outer black oval, the red soil of the surrounding uplands. The radiating lines between these ovals are pandanus trees growing along the shores.

The Pandanus-tree woman, Miatrina, at Primadua

At the command of *Tukimbini*, the *Miatrina* women and their children travelled to Primadua, southern Bathurst Island to establish a totemic centre. [773]

On Pl. 18a, the bark hut of the *Miatrina* women is shown as a black oval in the centre of the painting. This hut is now a submerged rock, called Purupatimu. The dark-coloured band, *a*, *a*, a red sandbar encircling Purupatimu, was once the grass and leaves which the mythical women pushed back when they were cleaning the ground for their camp.

The small white discs (the breasts of the *Miatrina* woman), are now black, submerged rocks; the series of vertical panels (once the children), sandbars in the shallow water; and the two meandering lines, *b*, *b*, (where the children played), salt-water creeks at Primadua. Mungunu, an adjacent locality, is associated with both the *Miatrina* woman and a white cockatoo-woman, *Inkaka*.

The Yam people, Tililindigia and Ubuna, at Primadua

This simple painting, Pl. 18b, about which I gathered but little information, deals with the totem place of two poisonous yams,[48] *Tililindigia* and *Ubuna* at Primadua.

The white oval, the totem place of the yam people, is now a hill at Primadua; the diagonals, outlined in white, are the large *ubuna* yams, and the dark-coloured diagonals, the smaller *tililindigia* yams. The dots represent trees of the Taulama jungle at the base of which trees the aborigines find these yams.

[48] In their raw state these yams are highly poisonous. If, however, they are husked, pounded out flat and soaked in water for several days, the yams are edible. [252]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mudungkala,[48] *at Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island)*

773 After the burial of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* sent his wife, *Mudungkala*, to Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island) to establish a totemic place and create the local foods.

*532 Pl. 19c, D, illustrates, with considerable detail, the topography of the island and the home of the little spirit children, *Pitipituis*.

778 The central design, *a*, is Jurubulinai; circle *b*, (lower left) depicts a small island nearby on which there is a freshwater spring where *Mudungkala* once urinated; and circle *c* (lower right) is a bed of cockles, one of the local foods created by the mythical woman.

On the lower left, a crescent, *d*, symbolizes a small salt-water creek in a mangrove swamp where *Mudungkala* quenched her thirst. At *f*, there is a large rock in the deeper water, a favourite haunt of the turtles. Here the mythical woman once collected white ochre to decorate herself.

Boulders, at one time the stone axes, *mungwenis*, of *Mudungkala* are at *e* (bottom); a stony point of land, the transformed bark basket, is at *g*; a pile of red rocks (her camp fire), at *h*; a sandbar (the cycad palm under which *Mudungkala* sheltered), at *j*; and a salt-water swamp (where she ground her stone axe), at *k*, *k*. The passage between Jurubulinai and Bathurst Island is indicated by the horizontal bands, *gg*, *gg*.

The white crescent, *m*, at the top of the painting, a large sand-bar, Unakumba, on the south of the island, is one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*. The aborigines claim that, when some distance from [776] Unakumba, they often see the spirit children, but, as they come closer, the little people disappear.

When the tide is out, the *Pitipituis* play on a sandbar, *p*, but when it is covered, the spirit children go to their camps at *o*, under the sand, where everything is dry and warm.

[787] Should one of the spirit children wish to visit an aboriginal man in a [842] dream, to ask for a mother, it walks along the road, *q*, and, if unsuccessful in its quest, returns by road, *r*. At *s*, on the left-hand side, is the waterhole from which the *Pitipituis* obtain their drinking water, and at *t*, is their diminutive bark canoe, less than a yard long, which, like the spirit children themselves, can be seen at a distance, but disappears when the aborigines come closer.

Red stones, *ee*, and yellow stones, *dd* (right), were once body paint used by the mythical eucalyptus-tree woman. Her nautilus-shell ornament is at *v*;

[48] Locally known as the ironwood tree.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

her camp, now a bed of oysters at *y*; her bark hut, a large boulder projecting from a sandbank, at *ee*; and her paper-bark water-carrier, now a large tree, at *ɣ* (left). 532x 778

The body and head of a carpet snake cooked and eaten by *Mudungkala* are boulders, *x*, *w*, on the coast of Jurubulinai. One of the spots at Cockle Point, in Apsley Straits, where *Mudungkala* camped when returning from *Purukupali's pukamuni*, is now a large rock, *bb* (lower left); a spring of fresh water, where she cooked her shell-fish, is at *ff*; while at *l* (centre), there is a patch of submarine grass, the favourite food of the turtles.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mantinuria, at Rulijunga

The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Mantinuria*, created a totemic place, Rulijunga, on the headwaters of the Tjipripu River. 773 778

At Rulijunga there is a large flat plain (central black design, Pl. 18A), which *Mantinuria* cleared so that the mythical people, travelling from Bathurst and western Melville Island, to attend the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, could perform an *ilania* (p. 32). 532x 773

The circles on the periphery of the central black disc, are the roots, and the eight long ovals, the trunks and leaves of cabbage palms which the *Mantinuria* woman created to provide food for herself and the participants of the *ilania* ceremony.

The outer dark-coloured oval, at *a*, *a*, is the level plain surrounding the ceremonial ground, the inner black line symbolizing the red clouds at sunset and the white outer line, the cumulus clouds of the day-time. The dots represent small shrubs and tufts of grass at Rulijunga.

The Fork-tailed Kite-man, Mudati, and his wife, the Dingo-woman, Kirijuna, at Arunumpi

During *paloneri* times, *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite-man and his wife, *Kirijuna*, a dingo-woman, were travelling together near Arunumpi, southern Melville Island, when *Mudati* saw his wife's brother, *Jurumu*, the eagle-man, coming towards them. *Mudati* warned his wife, for her own safety, not to speak or even look at her brother, but the woman, who had not seen her brother for many years, took a quick glance just to see how much he had grown. Instantly, she dropped dead at her husband's feet. But even as he watched he saw her change into a dingo, rise to her feet and slink away. 773 825 593

Since then, the dingo, ashamed of her actions in those early times, keeps

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

825 out of sight, while, following the command of *Mudati*, aboriginal brothers
[593] and sisters, once they become adult, never look at each other, nor converse, except through a third person.

Pl. 20A, B, describes the natural features at Arunumpi. A large rock, at *a*,
×532 was once *Mudati's* camp; a boulder, *d*, his fire; and a path, *c*, made by the
778 mythical man as he walked to and from his camp at *a*. Another path, *b*, was made by a mangrove bird-man, *Ulubingini*, whose camp is at *j*. *Mudati* is at *m*; his wife, *Kirijuna*, at *k*, and *Jurumu*, at *f* (lower left).

Nearby, at *e*, there is a deposit of yellow ochre, and another at *g*, of white, both of which *Mudati* used when he was a *wadjeniati* initiate at the first *kulama* ceremony held at Turiturina (p. 123). *Mudati's kulama* initiation ornaments, now unspecified natural features are: his cockatoo feather head-dress, *primitiki*, at *w*, *w*; arm ornaments, *palmatjinas*, at *x*, *x*, *x*; and cane arm ornaments, *jairinis*, at *v*. A *kulama* ground, *u*, where a ceremony was once held, is now a flat rocky surface, a half a mile in diameter, and the shelter, *t*, behind which the initiates rested during the ceremony, a large boulder.

At *h*, is a patch of jungle where *Kirijuna*, *Mudati's* wife, once collected yams. She left her palm leaf, *tulini*, basket at *l* (upper right); her small bark basket at *o*; and her larger bark basket at *s*. These are now outcropping rocks at the totemic site.

A turtle, once speared by *Mudati*, is now a submerged boulder at *m*; the sand-bank, on which he stood, is a high red cliff at *n*, and the large stream, in which he often caught fish, is indicated by the crescent-shape at *r*.

The Flying-fox man, Murungimpili, and Bamboo-woman, Kaialili, at the Kaialili lagoon

778 At the Kaialili lagoon, near the head of the De Vere creek at Muranapi, southern Melville Island, there are two totemic places, one belonging to *Murungimpili*, the flying-fox man, and the other to *Kaialili*,[44] the bamboo-
[773] woman. Together, these mythical people created many trees, plants, cat-fish, crabs and other sea creatures.

Pl. 20C, D, deals with the topography of the area. At *m*, is the Kaialili
×532 lagoon, the totem place of the bamboo-woman, at *p*, the Buliati (De Vere)
778 Creek; at *c*, *c*, are other small watercourses, and *e*, *e*, etc., springs, all of which run into the Kaialili lagoon. The cross-hatching at *o*, *o*, is a swamp, at the source of Buliati Creek, and the cross-hatched area, *f*, *f*, the grass on its

[44] I did not find out the relationships between *Murungimpili* and *Kaialili*; it is likely that they were man and wife.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

bottom. Symbols, *d* (right) and *g* (top), indicate the red cliffs of the Kaialili lagoon. The rocky banks of the Buliati Creek are indicated at *j*, and holes in the ground (once the camps of the man, *Murungimpill*) at *h*. 532 778

The open space on the bottom of the painting is the sea, circles, *b*, *b*, etc., being stones on the sandy bottom. Mangrove swamps *w*, *w*, are on the seashore; the dotted areas are jungle trees, *pintabinga*, and two species of eucalyptus trees, *tiwingarina* and *ukisangira*. At *a*, *a*, etc., are places where the aborigines dig for ochre, which is similar to that at Imilu. Clouds as seen through the trees, are indicated by triangles, *k*, *k*, and eucalyptus trees by the dots at *n* (top).

The Blow-fly Woman, Mandubuka,[48] *at Muranapi*

Mandubuka, the blow-fly woman, established totemic places first in the mangrove swamps at Muranapi, then on Waitbak (N.W. Vernon) Island. [773] The lower part of the design on Pl. 19A, B, pictures the natural features at Muranapi, and the upper, those at Waitbak.

The horizontal white band, *c*, *c*, symbolizes the swift tide-way between Muranapi and Waitbak Islands, while the central circle, *a*, the camp of *Mandubuka*, is a rock in the mangrove swamps.

Salt-water creeks, *b*, *b*, flow first into the small lagoons, *x*, *x*, then into the sea at *d*.

Mandubuka brought her drinking water from a spring, *f*, in palm-leaf (*tulini*) baskets. These baskets were later transformed into white boulders in the mangrove swamps.

The two freshwater swamps at *g*, and *h*, filled with bamboos, belong to *Kaialili* (the bamboo-woman of upper Muranapi, Pl. 20C, D). In swamp, *g*, grow the thick-walled species which the aborigines do not use, and in *h*, much smaller bamboos. At the present time, the mainlanders use these smaller bamboos as the shafts of their hunting spears.

Two groups of red stones, *j*, *j*, were once the cooking hearths, while the white boulders, *k*, *k*, are the transformed stone axes of *Mandubuka*.

After the mythical woman created the natural features on the coast of Muranapi, she continued her work on Waitbak Island. Setting out from her camp at *a*, she travelled along the right-hand path, *y*, only to find that the way was blocked by deep water. So she returned to her starting place and, by using the left-hand track, *l*, succeeded in reaching her destination. These tracks have since been transformed into long sand-bars in the sea. 773

[48] This is also the name of the sand-fly on Bathurst Island. There is possibly a link between the two totemic places, or they may be the same totemic being.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

At *m*, is Waitbak Island, where *Mandubuka* established her second camp; *v* and *w*, being springs where she obtained her drinking water, and *p*, a place where she left one of her yam sticks. The larger stick is now a small island off the coast of Waitbak, and two smaller sticks, *r*, *r*, are rocks on the shore.

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Mandubuka sheltered from the rain under a large pandanus palm, *t*, and at *u*, cut a branch from a mangrove tree to make her digging sticks. This locality is now a large mangrove swamp.

The dots, on the upper panel, symbolize tufts of grass and small plants at Waitbak; and on the lower, the tall annual grass of the high land at Muranapi.

The March-fly Woman, Kudjatumpi, at Bonkaitji

[773] The totemic place created by the March-fly woman, *Kudjatumpi*, is a low rocky island, Kudjatumpi, about three miles from the coast at Bonkaitji, southern Melville Island.

The central black dot, *a*, on Pl. 21A, B, is the totem place of *Kudjatumpi*, and the surrounding white area, *b*, a bar of sand exposed at low tide. In the salt-water creek, Bonkaitji, *c* (upper left), which flows into the Clarence Strait, is a small rock, *d*. A fish, with stinging spines, called *pururidji* (probably the stone fish) is at *e* (upper left); and, an edible fish, since transformed into low rocks, on the edge of the waters, is at *j*.

Other natural features made by *Kudjatumpi* are: a small freshwater creek, Biriki, *f*, which flows into Bonkaitji; a lagoon, *h*, created by the mythical woman so that the freshwater turtles would have a place in which to live; a flat rock, *k*, in the deep water, where the present sea-going turtles gather their food; and a lagoon, *l*, which was once *Kudjatumpi's* permanent camp.

A hill, *i* (left) is her transformed bush shelter; a lagoon, *jj* (upper left), her temporary camp; a low rounded boulder, *q*, her fireplace; and a flat rock, *r*, a sheet of stringy-bark which she used as a roof. Long narrow stones at *p*, were once sticks that supported her bark shelter, and piles of stones, *s*, *s* (lower panel), places where she cooked her food.

Kudjatumpi's personal belongings, her paper-bark water carriers, *jurululu*, *w*, her crooked sticks, *m* (lower left), and *n* (centre), used to carry those baskets, her throwing sticks, *x* (right), and her stone axes, *o* (bottom), are now scattered piles of boulders on the uplands of Bonkaitji. Her head ornament of feathers, *hh* (upper left), on the other hand, has been transformed into a group of submerged rocks in the sea.

When the mythical woman painted her body, she created still more

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

natural features. At *v*, *v*, etc. (right), are her piles of yellow ochre; at *g* (left), her baskets of red ochre, and at *aa*, *aa* (upper right), the cockle shells in which she mixed the colours. These deposits of ochres are still used by aborigines to decorate themselves. 532x 778 [202]

Other natural features created by *Kudjatumpi* are: *u* (lower right), Bonkaitji Creek, on the banks of which she placed many trees as homes for the opossums; *ff* (centre) a reef under the water, made from the stones which the mythical woman threw away whilst digging for yams, and the dots on the background, the forests of trees growing on the highlands at Bonkaitji. A hill, *dd* (upper right), is the place where the March-fly woman stood when she created the watercourses, Bailai-intara, *cc*, and Pimaltji, *bb*. The latter is a tributary of Bonkaidji creek.

Pl. 18c, one side of a female *pukamuni* basket (indicated by the square openings), pictures the totemic place of the March-fly woman, at the Kudjatumpi lagoon.

The line of rectangles, *b*, *b*, and *d*, *d*, *d*, represents the water in the lagoon; *a*, *a*, *a*, the patches of sand on the bottom; and *c*, *c*, etc., are white cliffs on the adjacent sea-coast. The vertical lines, *f*, and the horizontal lines, *e*, indicate the water running from the Kudjatumpi lagoon over the beach, into the sea.

DISCUSSION

Although this research on the creation period and its related phases must be regarded as incomplete, the data gathered does provide a general picture of the beliefs of the Tiwi in their totemic heroes, and the relationship of those beliefs to the topography of their land. Not being able to visit any of the totemic places, their position on the map (Fig. 1), must also be regarded as approximate. 771 123

It is to be hoped that, before the Tiwi lose their culture, some ethnologist, with ample time, will both fully investigate their remarkable culture and visit each of their totemic localities to collect, in detail, the mythical story of the area and its associated natural features. 000

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

I. BELIEFS IN THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

The fear of the spirits of the dead and the desire of the living to propitiate them are the bases for the complicated burial rituals, not only of the Tiwi, but of all Australian tribes. 769 763

The Tiwi spirits of the dead, the *mopaditis*, live in self-contained communities at the various totemic places on Melville and Bathurst Islands. The *mopaditis* have the same appearance as the aboriginal folk, except that their bodies no longer have substance, being but nebulous images of their former selves. 775 [778]

No living person has seen these *mopaditis*, for they are invisible by day, white in the moonlight and black in the darkness. Although, normally, the *mopaditis* travel on the surface of the ground in the same manner as the aborigines, they are able, when crossing a river, or an arm of the sea, to walk on the surface of the water.

In the spirit land, the *mopaditis*, who are eternal, retain their totems (*pukwi*), marry spirit women of the correct tribal relationships, and have children who grow to maturity.[47] They eat the same food as the aborigines, going hungry if the hunting is poor,[48] and use the same implements and weapons.[49]

At the death of an aboriginal, the *mopaditi* rises out of the chest of the corpse. If the corpse is that of an infant, or a very small child, its *mopaditi* stays in the immediate neighbourhood, sleeping with the bereaved mother every night, but leaving in the morning before she wakes up. This continues until the woman has recovered from her grief.

After some months, the spirit child, now called a *buda-buda*, re-enters the body of its previous mother through her vulva and starts life again as a human being. [842]

On the other hand, if the person has lived for some time, its *mopaditi* stays around the grave, mourning because it has to leave its old companions. But after three days have elapsed, the *mopaditi* calls out "*Nimbungi*" (good-bye), and sets off, unaccompanied,[50] to the locality where it was born, which, before

[47] The aborigines are not certain whether the children, like their parents, have eternal life.

[48] This is unusual; in most of the aboriginal heavens I have heard of, for example, north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 323), there is ample, easily-gathered food. [171]

[49] These days, the *mopaditis* have even the modern wooden canoes, although, up to fifty years ago, their canoes, like those of the living people, were made from a folded sheet of bark. [177]

[50] Some aborigines believe that the father, or some close relative, comes to the grave and guides the spirit to its birthplace.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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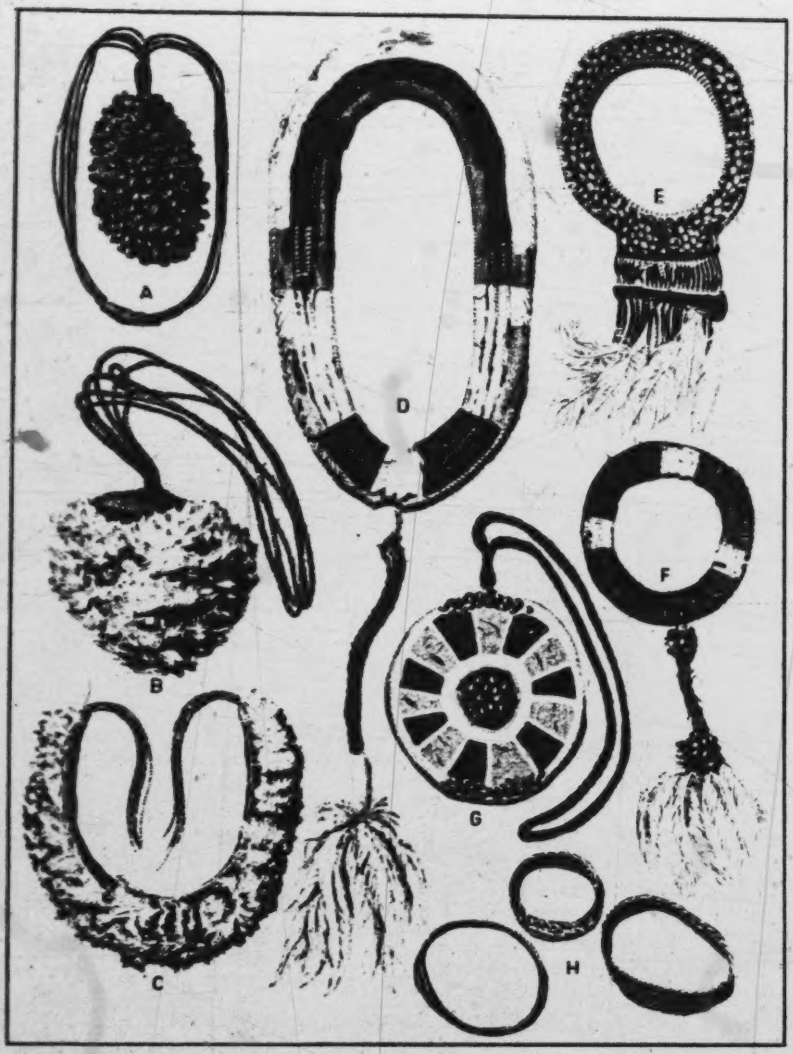

PLATE 31. *Ceremonial Decorations*
A, D, G, Chest Ornaments, Pukabinda; B, Goose-feather Ball, Tokwianga; C, False Beard, Baludi; E, F, Arm Ornaments, Palmatjinas; H, Cane Arm Bands, Jairinis.

[p. 88 C]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

All the facial designs, about which I was able to find out the meanings (except Pl. 28B), dealt with some totemic creature, or myth. This was in direct contrast to the designs painted on the *tudini* burial poles, where few, if any, were associated with the myths or the totemic places. 302 778 [531]

A Wadjeniati Initiate

Pl. 28A is the facial design of a *Wadjeniati* initiate in the *kulama* ceremony (p. 130). The white dots represent a white edible plum, *murumbatana*, the red dots, a small red fruit, *kupalitju*, and the lines, the limbs of the trees on which the fruit grew. The white around the eyes and on the forehead is symbolical of *Purutjiktini*, the boobook owl-man (*Ninox novæ-zealandiæ*), the leader of the second *kulama* ceremony. [881]

The Poisonous Water Snake, Tuluma

Pl. 28B, a facial *pukamuni* design, symbolizes the markings on the skin of a poisonous water snake, *tuluma*. Although I neglected to ask the aborigines whether there was any myth associated with this facial decoration, it is likely that the design refers to an incident in creation times.

The Shark, Tuduwala

At *Purukupali's pukamuni*, the shark-man, *Tuduwala*, represented on Pl. 28C, painted his face so that he would appear as ferocious as possible. The radiating lines round his eyes were supposed to have added greatly to his savage appearance. After the *pukamuni*, *Tuduwala* fought with *Kumuninu*, the salmon man, because the latter, although he had a large number of hair-belts, refused to give any to *Tuduwala*. [773]

Although the shark-man escaped injury in that encounter, he wounded the fish-man a number of times with his throwing sticks, wounds which can still be seen, as parallel lines, on the head of the salmon (see Pl. 28F).

The Fish, Mungumini

Pl. 28D is a facial design, called *Mungumini*, worn at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* by a fish of the same name. The markings on the face are supposed to be similar to those on the head of the present-day fish.

The Thunder-man, Pakadringa

Pl. 28E, a *pukamuni* facial design, refers to the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, and the dangerous *Maratji* (p. 154), both of whom are closely associated in the myths.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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The yellow bands encircling the face and eyes, and stretching from the forehead to the base of the nose, all symbolize the dreaded *Marapi*; the white cross-hatching represents the thunderstorms of *Pakadringa*.

The Salmon, Kumuninu

Pl. 28F, the *pukamani* decorations on the face of an aboriginal, are the same as those used by the mythical salmon-man, *Kumuninu*, who, at the first *pukamani* ceremony, fought with *Tudawala*, the shark-man (Pl. 28c). The present-day fish still carries the marks of that encounter on his head.

The March-fly, Kudjatumpi

Pl. 28G is the facial pattern of an aboriginal belonging to the March-fly totem of Kudjatumpi, southern Melville Island (p. 58).

The black discs symbolize dark-coloured stones which formed on the footprints of *Kudjatumpi*, the small white and yellow dots, an edible plum, *murumbatana*, and the white lines, the limbs of the tree on which the fruit grows.

The red lines in the design represent the strata of red rocks at Kudjatumpi, which were created when the woman squeezed the milk from her breast and allowed it to run down the face of the cliff. All these things happened at Kudjatumpi after the March-fly woman had returned from the *pukamani* of *Purukupali*.

The Boobook Owl, Purutjikini

The design on Pl. 28H was used in one of the *ilanias*. The white ears refer to *Purutjikini* the boobook owl, and the lines on the face to its feather patterns.

The Barn Owl, Pintoma

Pl. 28J is the facial decorations of *Wurarbuti*, the *alouwia* of the *pukamani* ceremony of *Waniamperi*. He is wearing the false beard, *baludi*, and the head-dress of cockatoo feathers, *primitiki*. The design on his face, particularly the rings around his eyes, symbolize *Pintoma*, the barn-owl woman, who assisted her husband, *Purutjikini*, the boobook owl-man, at the first *kulama* ceremony (see dance of *Pintoma*, Pl. 29B and frontispiece).

The Ningaui Men

The facial design on Pl. 28 O resembles that used by the *Ningaui* men when they performed the second *kulama* ceremony on Turiturina Island (p. 124). The yellow dots are the cockles in the mangrove swamps on Western Bathurst Island, one of the foods of the present-day *Ningauis*.

[262]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

Unidentified

The designs on Pl. 28T are the same as those painted on the face of the chief mourner, *Kasapi*, at *Waniamperi's* final *pukamuni*. I did not ask about their meanings. 302 778

Although I did not learn the meanings of the facial designs on the remaining faces on Pl. 28, it is reasonable to suppose they all referred to some mythological story, probably associated with the totem of the aboriginal who wore them.

7. THE PUKAMUNI DANCES

A number of the dances we saw at the *ilanias* and final *pukamuni* rituals belonged exclusively to certain Tiwi totemic groups. They were so constant in form that, in no time, we could recognise the dance and the totem to which it belonged. [794] 765 535

Many of these dances are more strenuous than any belonging to the mainland; some of them, indeed, so strenuous, i.e., the crocodile (Pl. 30E), the shark (Pl. 30G), or the sea-eagle (Pl. 30J), that they seldom lasted more than a minute. [171]

Although I recorded only fourteen of these totemic dances (illustrated on Pls. 29 and 30), I feel sure that these represent but a small proportion of those performed by the Tiwi. For instance, none of the totemic dances belonging to the dead person would have been performed at the burial rituals we witnessed.

Pl. 29A is the dance of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, which was performed with such skill and abandon by *Nilitama* at the Bathurst Island *ilania* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* ceremony.

Pl. 29B is the dance of the boobook owl, *Purutjikini*, who with his wife, the barn-owl, *Pintama*, organized the second *kulama* ceremony on Turiturina Island, western Bathurst Island. The dancer is indicating the large eyes of the boobook owl.

Pl. 29C is the dance of the blanket-lizard, *Kilpuruni*, who was punished by *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, because the former seduced *Jurumu's* wife. The dancer walked around the ceremonial ground with an awkward gait, in imitation of the blanket-lizard's curious method of locomotion.

Pl. 29D pictures the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, who is the mother of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, the woman of the monsoon rain, *Tamiauka*, and the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. The frog dance was performed many times at the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi*, the frog being the totem of his father.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

8. THE CEREMONIAL OBJECTS OF THE TIWI

The ceremonial objects of the *pukamuni* ceremony, like the carved and painted burial poles and elaborate facial and body decorations already described, are totally unlike those used by the mainland aborigines. 301 778 765

A series of objects obtained on the 1954 expedition is illustrated on Pls. 31, 32.[24] [171]

On Pl. 31, A, D, and G, are chest ornaments called *pukabinda*, which are suspended around the neck with a loop of human hair string. Fig. A is an oval ball of the soft wax of the native bee, into which has been pressed a large number of the red and black seeds of a jungle vine. Fig. D, made of several ovals of lawyer vine, is bound together with strips of the same material. The pendant is made of human hair and white cockatoo feathers. The oval opening is too small to pass over the head, therefore this ornament, and similar examples which I saw, were suspended around the neck with string. Fig. G is a flat disc like Fig. D, with lengths of lawyer vine bound together. This disc was coated with wax, and further decorated with red and black jungle seeds. [237]

Pl. 31E and F are ornaments, *pałmatjinas*, decorated with red and black seeds, which are pushed up the arm over the elbow.[25] Both have been made in the same manner as Fig. D, G.

Pl. 31B is a goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, worn around the neck or tied around the upper arm. *Wurarbuti* (frontispiece) is wearing a *tokwianga*.

These ornaments are made by embedding ends of the downy feathers of the pied goose in a ball of wax. So much work was entailed in making a *tokwianga* that the aborigines were loth to part with them. The *tokwianga* is worn on all ceremonial occasions. [237]

Pl. 31C is a false beard, *baludi*, which was worn at the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni* (see frontispiece), and the *kulama* rituals. The *baludi* may be pure decoration, or it may replace the beard, which up until comparatively recently was plucked out at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals. [302]

Fig. H illustrates three cane arm rings, *jairinis*, made from plaited lawyer vine. These were worn on the upper and lower arms of the *pukamuni* men and women, and occasionally by other performers, as decoration. At the end of the burial ceremony the performers take these rings from their arms and leave them on the grave as a present for the spirit of the dead.

[24] Spencer, 1928, Pl. XII, Figs. 450–4, illustrates a number of *pukamuni* ornaments he collected in 1911.

[25] Several of the men illustrated on Pl. 26a, are wearing these arm ornaments.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama*
●778 rituals.

Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known
[411] respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear,
[531] *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines
[114] told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville
[322] Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making
[412] of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *miluanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *muruguna*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines
[302] of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin
[413] paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[94]

Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati*
[515] *kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed
[413] to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkita*, are used by the Tiwi
765 for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkitas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in
[301] white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, his chest ornaments,
[302]

[94] The lines of dots on *Wurarkuti* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (*b*) "The spirits of my children are dancing on a sand-bank beside the sea."
539 (*c*) "My children's spirits are paddling about in a canoe, looking for fish
881 and turtle eggs."

Another man first chanted a secular song, which he had tried to do earlier, but had forgotten the tune.

[177] (*d*) "I saw a tractor pulling big trees out of the ground to make the new aerodrome."

Then he continued with his *Kararitjui* song.

(*e*) "My little children have gone to the island, but they must come back because they are short of tobacco." After a pause he continued, "They're back because someone has just taken the tobacco out of my hand."

(12) *The Ceremonial Eating of the Kulama Yam*

881 On the third day, at early dawn, everybody went to the swamp to eat some of the prepared yams. The leader quietly plucked a bunch of grass from the edge of the water "to waken the *kulama* yam", for should it get a fright the yam would cause much sickness in the camp.

The fully initiated men, the *Mikingulas*, ate the first few pieces "to tame the yam", after which everyone took some to eat. This ritual ensures for all the participants, good health until the next *kulama*. Some of the prepared yam is left in the water for others to eat should they desire it.

This ritual completed the *kulama* ceremony. Everyone returned to his camp, and, except for the initiates of the lower grades, pursued a normal life. The grass ring and the pieces of antbed were left in place but the *kulama* ground and the *milimika* were deserted (Pl. 45D).

784 There are, however, a number of taboos and restrictions associated with
881 the deserted *kulama* ground and oven. For instance, should anyone make his camp or light a fire in the deserted *milimika*, the spirit of the *kulama* yam
● [778] would be offended and blind the culprit.

If anyone were so foolish as to toss a piece of the antbed, from the oven, sand from the *milimika* or a fragment of cooked *kulama* yam into the sea, *Mareiji*, the rainbow, would be angry and create heavy seas and storms.
[821] The aborigines of the Cape Fourcroy area were convinced that a recent hurricane, which devastated the whole area, was caused by some foolish person throwing a piece of *kulama* into the sea.

On the other hand, if a *kulama* man takes a piece of antbed from the oven,
[224] and throwing it at a tree, hits the mark, his hunting will be successful, until the next *kulama* ceremony. But, if he misses his mark, his hunting will be poor.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

4. THE SEA-DOGS, THE WANKUIS

773 A fragment of a myth tells of how, at the close of the creation period, a mythical man, called *Kirinua*, assembled all the dogs and asked them whether they would prefer to live on the land or in the sea. The present-day dingos, the *Kirijunas*, chose the land, and others, the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, the sandbanks in the sea.

776 The home of one group of the sea-dogs is a long sand-bar on the eastern side of the entrance to Snake Bay, about a mile from the expedition camp, over which, except at the spring tides, the waves break continuously. [823] The aborigines look on the breaking waves as the wagging tails of the *Wankuis*.

When the tide is out in the day-time and the sandbank exposed and dry, the sea-dogs, to escape being seen go to their camps under the sand.

When it is dark, the *Wankuis* leave their watery home, come on shore and make their camps in low caves at the base of a cliff at Snake Bay (Pl. 47E). While there, the *Wankuis* capture the sea-foods of the shallow waters, sting-rays, shell-fish and crabs. The aborigines claim that on the still nights they often hear the *Wankuis* barking.

In the shallow waters of a sandbar near Cape Fourcroy, the aborigines frequently see another kind of *Wankui* which walks on three legs, waving the fourth in the air.

*532 Pl. 47D pictures the *Wankuis* at the sandbar in Snake Bay. In the centre, with many teats, is the mother surrounded by her twelve sons. It is significant 776 that there was no mention of the father.

5. THE RAINBOW, MARATJI

171 A belief in a mythical serpent-like creature, which is associated with, or is, 776 the rainbow, and is dangerous to strangers, but not to the local inhabitants, occupies an important place, not only in the mythology of the Australian [821] aborigines, but in the mythologies of people in many parts of the world. These mythical creatures are usually highly-coloured (like the rainbow), of huge size and have both mane and beard.

I have traced these mythical creatures, in their various forms, from the River Murray in South Australia, through Central Australia to Arnhem Land. In the western deserts of Central Australia, Mountford, 1948, p. 138, writes, "The snake (*wonambi*) is a huge, many-coloured creature with a [778] mane and a beard. It is feared . . . because it attacks all strangers who approach

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the water in which it lives, usually calling with a deep booming note. The 171
rainbow serpent . . . is related . . . to water, rainbow . . ." The rainbow- 776
serpent myth is widespread throughout Arnhem Land. At Oenpelli (Mount- 778
ford, 1956, p. 210), "mythical serpents live in deep waterholes. . . . The aborigines are . . . afraid of these mythical creatures for should anyone interfere with their . . . home, the serpents, particularly *Ngalsis*, will make their waterholes overflow and drown everyone. The rainbow-serpent woman, *Narama*, of the Liverpool River area . . . destroys all aborigines who approach her home."

In north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 462; Warner, 1937, p. 541) the rainbow-serpents live, in one form or another in most of the important water-holes; they are associated with water, the rainbow, lightning, and thunder. Again these serpents are usually highly coloured (like the rainbow), and have a mane and beard. The aborigines claim that they are dangerous to all strangers who approach their waterholes, and even to local aborigines who do not perform the proper rituals before drinking. On Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 75), however, it is a lizard, the gekko, *Ipilja-ipilja*, which takes the place of the rainbow-serpent. It is highly coloured, about one hundred feet in length, has long hair on its head and whiskers on its lower jaw. It lives in a swamp, called Numarika, on south-western Groote Eylandt. Should anyone drink from this swamp, they will surely die. *Ipilja-ipilja* is associated with thunder, thunderstorms, and rain, but not, as far as I could ascertain, with the rainbow.

The lizard-like *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands[47] have many of 776
the characteristics of the gekko, *Ipilja-ipilja* of Groote Eylandt[48] as well as [171]
the rainbow serpents of the Central Australian deserts, and Oenpelli, in Arnhem Land.

The *Maratjis* are highly coloured lizards, the males being up to one hundred yards in length, with horns on their heads instead of hair, and long projecting jaws in the place of beards.

Should any unauthorized person interfere with their waterholes, the *Maratjis* become annoyed. They roar loudly, make the water bubble up [821]
(like the Oenpelli serpent, Mountford, 1956, p. 210), and send a waterspout into the air which, falling as torrential rain, floods the countryside. One of the *Maratjis* then changes himself into the rainbow and travels across the land seeking to injure the offender or anyone else in its path.

[47] Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 231, refers to *Maratji* as the rainbow snake.

[48] It is of interest to note that on isolated places, such as Groote Eylandt and Melville Island, these mythical creatures resemble lizards, and on the Australian mainland, and in most other places in the world, they take the form of snakes.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

776 The *Maratjis* belong to the totem of *Andjalui* (fresh water), in common with *Pakadringa* (thunderstorms), *Tomituka* (monsoon rain) and *Bumerali* (lightning). They are mortal creatures who die and disintegrate like everything else (Pl. 48D).

[123] I collected bark paintings and crayon drawings of a number of *Maratjis*, living with their wives and families in three lagoons on Melville and Bathurst Islands, i.e., Maundu, southern Bathurst Island, and Kulimbini, north-western, and Maratjiana, northern Melville Island.

776 The *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands are not always of the same temperament. For instance, the *Maratjis* who live at Kulimbini (Pl. 48A) ●778 are so dangerous that should any aboriginal dare approach their water, they will steal his *imunka* (spirit), and he will die.

Although the *Maratjis* of Maundu (Pl. 48C) are feared, it is possible, if certain rituals are performed, for even a stranger to drink the water without harm; while those who live in the Maratjiana lagoon at Goose Creek, are looked upon by the aborigines as "properly quiet fellow".[49]

776 The rainbow, as a *Maratji*, however, is universally feared, the aborigines 821 believing that the primary bow is the *imunka* (spirit) of a male, and the secondary bow, that of a female *Maratji*.

If a rainbow goes too near an aboriginal camp, the occupants will quickly [789] build up their fire[50] and call out to frighten *Maratji* away, but should he come too close, the people will feel ill and break out into a cold perspiration. If an aboriginal is overtaken by a rainbow,[51] it will kill him by taking his spirit.

Should some aboriginal be so foolish as to throw a spear at a rainbow and injure it, the *Maratjis* would destroy the whole country and the people who live in it.

Two heavy wind-storms, which occurred whilst the expedition was at 776 Melville Island, were supposed to have been caused by angry *Maratjis*. The 821 first was due to some foolish aboriginal who broke a *kulama* ceremony taboo 648 (p. 142) by throwing some of the termite mound from the *kulama* oven into the sea. The second happened when a *pukamuni* pole, taken from a grave by one of the senior officers of the Native Affairs Branch, was being loaded on a boat for transport to Darwin.

The aborigines explained that as these poles are a gift from the living to

[49] Further research will no doubt reveal other waterholes on Melville and Bathurst Islands, inhabited by *Maratjis*.

[50] This would suggest that *Maratji*, like the *Wonambi* of the Central Australian deserts, [171] is afraid of fire (Mountford, 1948, p. 138).

[51] These conditions are, of course, impossible because the rainbow is always several feet from the observer.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat and so prevent the theft. 776 821 648

The Maratjis at Maundu

Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained by the faeces of the *Maratjis*. 776 778

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandububa* totem are the only people safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from his own armpits, rubs it over his companion. 751 776 [827]

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then, walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi* which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of Maundu. [437] [753] [164]

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon, they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an aboriginal, called *Alumgun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this taboo. [841] [784]

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu. 532 x 778

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained) water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the 776

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

K 532 776 [778]

lighter, the bubbles of water (supposed to be caused by the *Maratjis*), which rise from the bottom of the lagoon. The cross-hatching represents a grass which grows on the shores of Maundu.

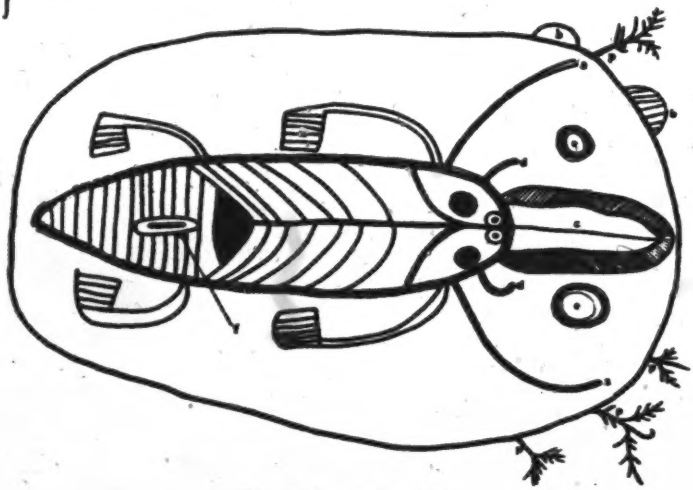

FIG. 16. *The Spirit People*
The Rainbow-spirit, Maratji.

Fig. 16, the copy of a crayon drawing of *Maratji*, was the work of a sophisticated aboriginal who had been employed for some years in Darwin. It shows a young female *Maratji*, a lizard-like creature measuring about fifty feet, with two long horns, *a*, *a*, and two short horns, *d*, *d*, projecting from her head. At *c*, are both her tongue and lower jaw; *f*, is her vulva, and circles *e*, *e*, show the bubbles of water which rise to the surface when she becomes annoyed.

K 532 778 776

The outer oval is the shore of Maundu, the designs, *p*, *p*, etc., are trees, and *b*, *b*, piles of rocks on the shore.

The Maratjis at Kulimbini

On Pl. 48A, the long central black rectangle is the body of a female *Maratji* at Kulimbini, north-western Melville Island. The six encircling rectangles are the colours of the *imunka* (spirit) of *Maratji*, i.e., the rainbow, and the dark-coloured spaces at the top and bottom of the design, the falling rain.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Pl. 48B does not deal with the myth, but the natural features of Kulimbini lagoon, in which the *Maratjis* live. The central black dot symbolizes an area of blue water-lilies in the lagoon, and the white circles, the surrounding water. The diagonal lines, *b*, *b*, etc., indicate the Kulimbini creek, and the rectangles, *a*, *a*, *a*, the broken water of the stream as it flows among the stones of its rocky bed. The short black panels and the two black rectangles indicate a grass with an edible bulb (probably the spike rush) that grows in the shallow water. The chevrons on the outer part of the design represent dead leaves lying on the grass, and those within the first and second inner rectangles, *a*, *a*, a red-coloured algae found along the edge of the still water.

532x
778
776

The Maratjis at Maratjiana, Goose Creek

Pl. 54A pictures a large freshwater stream, called Maratjiani, on the northern end of the Goose Creek swamps.

The meandering lines on the right and left hand edge and the central vertical panel are freshwater creeks, and the outer vertical panels, two *Maratjis* who live in them. The short, transverse panels are rocks along the banks of the stream and the dots, dry land covered with grass.

Pl. 48D pictures the skeleton of a *Maratji*, which the artist claimed had died in a swamp to the north-east of Maratjiana. At present there are no remains, they have all disintegrated.

The bulk of the skeleton is at *a*, the backbone at *b*, the ribs are shown by the radiating lines at the top and the vertical panels at the bottom; the jaw is at *c*. The dotted background symbolizes the many-coloured skin of the dead *Maratii*.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

restriction; they have no ceremonies for the increase of the totem species.

Since the totem of a child is that of its mother it follows that the members of one totemic clan are found in different hordes, and inversely each horde contains persons of several totemic clans. Nevertheless each totem is associated in the minds of the natives with a particular locality or district. This association appears in the myths, there being a number of stories which connect particular natural species with particular localities. Thus each clan may be said to have its ancestral home or centre, but there is little or nothing of any feeling of reverence or ritual attachment to the home of one's totem. Taking it all in all Tiwi totemism does not amount to very much compared with the elaborate forms of totemism found in other parts of Australia.

The word for totem and totemic clan is *pukui*. But the same word means also "sun" and in addition "breath." The connection between these three concepts denoted by one word is not at all apparent.

The totems are grouped into three phratries. The term phratry is here used in the sense of an exogamous group containing a number of clans and not being a moiety. The phratries are unnamed. Should a man want to mention a phratry he will call it by the name of one of the totemic clans composing it. He will generally use the name of his own totem clan if his own phratry is in question, or that of the clan that is powerful in the phratry. Thus the phratry that I am calling Phratry 1, will more often be called *Tjilarui* than anything else because at the present time the *Tjilarui* clan is very numerous and many of them are the kind of people who are usually much in the public eye. For a similar reason Phratry 2 is more often called *Timiririyui* than anything else, and Phratry 3 is usually *Tokwombui*. There is a much stronger feeling of solidarity with one's clan than with one's phratry, which will perhaps explain that while the clan name is very important there seems no need, or much less need, for any specific name for the phratry.

A complete list of the clans and their totems is given below. Each clan name has three forms, masculine singular, feminine singular, and plural, and these are given in the list in this order.

Clan Name	Totems
Phratry 1.	
(*a*) *Tjilati, Tjilariya, Tjilarui*	jaberoo
(*b*) *Ariri, Arawidina, Arwudui*	mullet

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there, and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilized people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed round with trees of 7 feet or 8 feet high, some of which were carved with a stone or shell, and further ornamented by rings of wood, also carved. On the tops of these posts were placed the waddies of the deceased. . . . At the head was placed a piece of a canoe and a spear, and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and the earth were cleared away from the sides, and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."

Major Campbell,[1] who in 1826 relieved Captain Barlow as commandant of Fort Dundas, in his interesting memoir to the Royal Geographical Society also refers to native graves observed by him. He writes: "It appears to be the custom of the natives to bury their dead, their burial places being in retired spots near their most frequented encamping ground. The burial place is circular, probably 10 or 12 feet in diameter; it is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberds, 14 or 15 feet high; and between these the spear and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground." This description applies equally well to those seen by us, [114] with the exception that the cleared circular space was considerably larger in our case, while the height of the posts, above the ground, was less.

171 764 In 1847, Bete Jukes,[2] naturalist to the expedition of H.M.S. "*Fly*," described and figured a native tomb seen at Port Lihou in Endeavour Strait; "Round a central mound of sand there had been a broad ditch or hollow scooped out and swept quite clean for several yards in width. The mound was of a quadrangular form, 8 feet long, 4 feet wide, and 3 feet high. A stout post stood upright at each corner, and the sides were ornamented by rows of the ribs of the dugong placed regularly along them. . . . On each post was either a large shell or the skull of a dugong, and on the grave were several other dugongs' skulls and shells of the *Nautilus pompilius*. All these, as well as the posts, were smeared with red ochre." Additional interest is attached to the description of Jukes, since he states that "between the two posts, near the sea, a long stick had been inserted, ornamented with feathers and streamers of grass, and fastened to the post by other cross-sticks similarly ornamented." From this wording, and more so from the [778 114] figure reproduced by him, it would seem that the decoration between the posts was one of those sacred ornaments to which I have elsewhere referred as the *wanningi*.[3]

[1] *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, 1834, vol. iv, p. 158.

[2] *Narrative of the Surveying Voyage H.M.S. "Fly,"* vol. i, pp. 149 and 150 (1847).

[3] *Vide* also George French Angas, *S. Australia*, illustrated, 1847, Plate XXIV; Edge Partington, Album III, Plate CXIV; Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes Cent. Australia*, pp. 230 and 231; W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies, Queensland Aborigines*, Fig. 427;

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

614 Each of these *emuya*, sometimes called Pukui (sun),[8] has a number of cult
778 centres and in them resides the "old woman" of the clan; these are also called *emuya*. The sacred site of the Tukambani clan is at Morapeanga, Cape Keith; of the Miatui, Irapulanwa, Buchanan Island in the Apsley Straits; of the Kudjali, Padupi; Sanke Bay, or as the natives say in their quaint pidjin, Djenakaba, which is on the north of Melville Island, an old trepang site.

As far as could be ascertained, no fixed belief is associated with these clan centres. They are not burial caves invested with a ritual significance such as we find in parts of the mainland (Wadaman and other tribes), yet the shade or spirit of the dead does
[775] follow the track made by the natives as they come from the sacred centre to "show it the road." Only some natives know this. It is probably a ritual that has become lost with the advent of new ideas.

614 *Clan Relationship*. To marry within a major clan or phratry, *aramipi*, is taboo,
615 *kimiyari*. A person of one phratry can only marry into the other two major clans.
601 Thus, all Tukambani and their kindred sub-clans are mother, mother's brother, mother's mother, mother's mother's brother, sister's son and daughter, brother and sister. They call people in the other two clans father, father's sister, son, daughter,
[611] wife, wife's brother, wife's mother, wife's mother's brother, wife's mother's mother and wife's mother's brother. In other words, descent is matrilineal.

582 *Marriage Law*. The marriage law is the same as in most tribes: a man marries his mother's mother's brother's daughter's daughter or, as the natives would say, "a man marries his group sister's son's daughter." They have equal exchange in marriage, that is "opposite brothers exchange sisters." An "uncle" (mother's brother) takes his (group) nephew's daughter, and the group nephew receives the uncle's daughter in exchange (cross-cousin type). There are neither subsections nor
[616] sections and indeed, no moieties. A reason may be suggested for this: being isolated on the island, each person knew his or her relationship to the others, and as there was no intertribal exchange, the need for this type of classification never arose. One of the important functions of the section and subsection systems is to facilitate intercourse between tribal groups.

582 The marriage system with relationship terms is explained in the following table:

		1		2
601 A	.. *ubunga* m.m.m.m. or sr.	*UWANI* M.M.M.M.B. or B. (Ego)	*yarbunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.
614 B	.. *yamoriy* m.m.m.	*YARMURDI* M.M.M.B.	*umbreniwa* w.m.	*YAPINAWINI* W.M.B.
C	.. *imaninga* m.m.	*IMANANI* M.M.B.	*tumaliya* w.m.m.	*TAMALITI* W.M.M.B.
D	.. *inari* m.	*ILAMANI* M.B.	*umarani* w.m.m.m.	*IMERANINGA* W.M.M.M.B.
A	.. *ubunga* sr.	*UWANE* B.	*yabunaiya* w.	*YANUMINI* W.B.

[8] These natives have numerous names for the same object, the result of the taboo on certain words after a death.

884 tive, community ceremony, its benefits accrued only to individual participants, and then only to those who had followed the complex procedures correctly. Thus it was vitally important to every Tiwi individual, male or female, to receive instruction in the *Kulama* ritual before being considered a fully adult member of the tribe. The instruction period lasted six years, during which the initiates, among other requirements, had to participate actively in six *Kulama* rituals. Following this training, the individuals were considered responsible adults by other members of the tribe, but only through continued participation in the ritual could that condition be maintained.

[178] TODAY the ritual is still performed by those who believe in it, and it will probably continue until the last initiated Tiwi dies, or until the underlying meaning is totally lost and is replaced by ideas of how to be successful that have their origins in Western thought.

[962] [957] The ceremony itself takes three days to complete and centers on the preparation of a toxic variety of yam, the *Kulama*. To make this yam edible, it must first be soaked. It is then baked, mashed, and again soaked for a time in fresh water. Even after the poisons have been removed by this elaborate process, an extremely bitter taste remains. The Tiwi say they never eat the yam except at the conclusion of the *Kulama* ceremony. Those who believe in the ritual say the yam has tremendous power for causing good or evil, and thus one must handle the yam carefully during the preparation, speak to it softly, sing to it at times, and always treat it with respect. The individual absorbs the power of the yam by touching it, by rubbing the body with it, and finally by eating it. All these steps are ritualized. [178] [962] Special digging sticks are made, and, contrary to the usual practice of having the women gather plants, only men

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 13(B)..Analyst]

[P. 12, (C)]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER III

The Pukamuni Ceremony

765 THE burial ceremonies of the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands,
182 based on the *pukamuni* of the mythical man, *Purukupali*, are, by far, the most important events in their ceremonial life.

These ceremonies, which allow the aborigines full expression for their grief, provide, at the same time, a complete cultural outlet for their philosophical beliefs, their music, their art and their dancing. No one, watching these
[781] primitive rituals, night after night, could fail to be impressed by the obvious pleasure experienced by both the participants and the onlookers.

Spencer (1928, pp. 647–52), is the only investigator to describe and illus-
114 trate any details of the *pukamuni* ceremony. Although he saw but one day of
765 the ceremonials, and that of the closing rituals, he records, briefly, many of the procedures which we witnessed in 1954, i.e., the rite of fire-jumping (p. 73), the spearing of the grave (p. 83), and (p. 89), the "spearing" of one of the participants and the erecting of the poles. This evidence shows
177 that, in spite of the disturbing effects of civilization and the complete
765 ecclesiastical ban on Bathurst Island, the *pukamuni* ceremony is still a vital force in the lives of the Tiwi people.

During the six months the expedition was on Melville Island, Miss Jane
123 Goodale, Mr. W. E. Harney and I witnessed some, or all of the rituals of four *pukamuni* ceremonies; one of a man, *Waniamperi*, who had been buried within half a mile of our camp; another of an old woman, *Makapini*, who, against the wishes of her relatives, had been buried in the mission cemetery on Bathurst Island; still another of a premature infant; and, only a few weeks before I left Melville Island, one of *Nulatini*, the deceased wife of our helper, *Pulanimbuwi*.

I will describe the burials of *Waniamperi* and *Nulatini*, and the final rituals
123 of *Waniamperi* and *Makapini*. However, as we saw, in all, twenty-seven
128 *ilanias*, the general pattern of which was similar, I will describe but five of them; three belonging to *Waniamperi*, one to *Makapini* and one to *Nulatini*.[44] The short rituals, associated with the dead infant, will be treated as a separate unit.

[44] The final rituals took place after my departure from Melville Island. These will be dealt with by Miss Goodale.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

775 the white man came, would have been its totemic place. As the *mopaditi*
[825] travels, flocks of screeching black cockatoos fly overhead to tell the spirits at its birthplace, that a new *mopaditi* is coming to live with them. The local spirits, on its arrival, rush out to welcome the *mopaditi*, beating themselves over the head and shoulders[51] with throwing sticks to indicate their pleasure. At its new home, no matter what its previous state, the spirit is transformed into a young person of good health and equable temperament, for, in the land of the spirits, everyone must be healthy, happy and at peace with each other.

Making its camp with the other *mopaditis*, many of whom were old companions, the new spirit goes out hunting and foodgathering with them until the beginning of its own burial ceremonies. Then, with all of its dead relatives, the new *mopaditi* returns to watch the living people perform the dances and chant the songs of its *ilania* and *pukamuni* ceremonies.

As the *mopaditis* are invisible to mortal eyes, the performers at the burial rituals do not see them, although they know the *mopaditis* are in the surrounding forest, watching all that is going on.

When the rituals of the day are over, and all the people have gone to sleep, the *mopaditis* themselves enter the ceremonial ground, carrying out the same dances, and chanting the same songs as those of the living. This happens at all ceremonies, whether they are the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni*, or the *kulama* rituals.

At the conclusion of its final *pukamuni*, the new *mopaditi* returns to its birthplace. There it is treated as a youth, and has again to pass through all stages of the *kulama* initiation, progressing at the same rate as when it was a living person.

Occasionally parties of *mopaditis*, especially if not long dead, will return to have a look at their living friends and relatives. But, although the aborigines regard these *mopaditis* as well-mannered and kindly, they still fear them.

[781] Sometimes, particularly at night, a *mopaditi* will follow an aboriginal too
[789] closely, making his skin clammy and his hair rise on end. To protect himself, the affrighted person calls out loudly to scare away the spirit. If this is not successful, he will kindle a fire or carry a torch of flaming bark, knowing that the *mopaditis* fear the light. For that reason, the aborigines are safe from the attacks of the spirits of their dead so long as they keep their camp-fires burning.

[576] [51] This is the custom of the living when they meet someone they have not seen for a long while.

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

726 One man will then take a step or two forward, hold up a hand, and stamp vigorously, and all the warriors of his side will copy his actions. "Let 'em all come!" is the attitude adopted. If the enemy does not start hostilities at once, they throw their spears down and jump about like wallabies to show their contempt for the sluggard's marksmanship. They are, however, careful not to get too far away from their own weapons, on which they pounce immediately the first spear is hurled by their opponents. The air is soon thick with flying spears and war-clubs, and the exchange goes on until some unlucky warrior is really hurt, when the engagement ceases.

727 BOTH sides gather round, howling their dismay, until repairs to the injured have been effected. A red-dyed ball of goose-down, which is hung from the neck by a string woven of human ●[781] hair, is held before the mouth as a charm to divert the missiles, but the warriors owe their immunity from death or serious injury to their own remarkable eyesight and to the dexterity with which they evade, or turn to one side, the hurtling weapons of the enemy. The war-clubs used by the islanders are far more 411 difficult to dodge than the spears, which come straight at you.

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A BATHURST ISLANDER BRANDISHES HIS CLUB.

The war-club is merely a short, bent stick with a knob at one end; but, spinning in the air like a boomerang, it can be thrown for amazing distances by the islanders, considerably over a hundred yards, and not far off two hundred. This weapon is not thrown straight at an opponent, but at a stone, or a tuft of

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing. 768 [428] [783] [825]

(a) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulanimbuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers". 764

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[88] from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *ukwiangu* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs. 302 751 775

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[84] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground 764

[88] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[84] After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditis* fear the light. 123 775

For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

171 nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked
789 what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on
[754] the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation.
13 Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because
[182] they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life—
[789] for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals
[164 (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws)
731] scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago.
[761 Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle
764] that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their
101 cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next
131 door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature,
182 though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic
754 making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their
784 environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; graveposts were *pukimani*

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
0120 Tiwi 0120

once erected on the grave; the names of dead people immediately became *pukimani* on their deaths and could not be used, and the same was true of all the names bestowed by a dead man on the children of his household and all the other words in the language that sounded similar to the name of the dead man.[4] All ceremonials and rituals were *pukimani* as were the main performers and the armlets, neck ornaments, and other ceremonial objects. People in a *pukimani* state had to observe all sorts of avoidances of and abstentions from everyday actions, particularly with regard to food and sex. Close relatives of dead people could not touch food but had to be fed by nonmourners. That pillar of rigid orthodoxy, Tu'untalumi, was virtually never able to feed himself but was in a *pukimani* state almost the whole year round and needed one of his wives to feed him. (Another advantage of a large household.) Certain spots in the bush or on the banks of streams were *pukimani* places; the dimly seen outline of the Australian coast was *pukimani* as was the ocean near Cape Keith where the Tiwi ancestors had first created the Tiwi world; and finally, the violation of a *pukimani* restriction rendered the violator *pukimani*.

Pukimani as thus applied to people, places, things, names, words, restrictions, and avoidances, meant both sacred and taboo, and was clearly one of that widespread class of words and concepts that is almost standard among the simpler societies. The only noteworthy thing about its Tiwi form is that *pukimani* was a state which people did not actively seek to enter but which happened to people regardless of their wishes. Furthermore, when a man found himself in a state of *pukimani*, his behavior was automatically prescribed for him and for the duration of his *pukimani* condition he observed his avoidances and his abstentions just as automatically as he dropped them when his *pukimani* period expired. When he became *pukimani*, he punctiliously fulfilled the requirements because if he did not, he was likely to be unsuccessful in his enterprises. Big men simply did not dare to be casual about the requirements lest their reputations suffer and they lose face and influence. Less successful men were occasionally explained as probably being secret violators. "His wives and daughters all seem to die young; he must have broken some *pukimani* restrictions sometime" was a reason often given for somebody's failure to be as successful as he might have been. It was noticeable in such explanations of nonsuccess that the failure, or in our terms the bad luck, was attributed to the violation of the taboos, never to the active displeasure of the spirits. The spirits simply did not figure in the picture.

Apart from the big ceremonial occasions, a Tiwi did not have much concern with religion in his everyday life except through some aspect of the *pukimani* system. It was only through *pukimani* that the sacred world impinged upon him at all for most of the year. Since *pukimani* was a condition that could not be actively sought but "just happened" to a person every so often by such common events as the death of a relative, his wife giving birth, or his

[4] When a man named Tibuki died in 1928, a crisis occurred at the Mission where the natives were supposed to make their requests in pidgin English. How could they now ask for tobacco, since that word was now *pukimani*?

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

sister's son being initiated, the attitude of a Tiwi toward the whole *pukimani* state was essentially a passive attitude. *Pukimani* behavior was something one accepted and conformed to when required; it was in no way an active attempt to change nature, people, food, gods, spirits, or anything else in the universe. It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that since their *pukimani* system offered them no handle by which to seek actively to alter the universe in which they lived, the Tiwi found that universe to their liking as it was. Unlike the tribes of central Australia who lavished a lot of thought upon magical methods of improving the food supply or the rainfall, the Tiwi believed and acted on the belief that as long as they observed their *pukimani* taboos, the food would continue to be as abundant and the rains as regular as they had always been. The central Australians, by seeking to coerce nature through magic, suggest that they found nature unsatisfactory; the Tiwi, by relying upon passive taboo-observance alone, suggest rather that their relationship to nature was an acceptable equilibrium that they wanted to preserve, not change. And if everybody observed his *pukimani* taboos when required, that equilibrium would remain undisturbed. Hence the antisocial man in Tiwi was not the maker of individual magic (he was unknown, anyway) but the nonobserver of taboo. By his nonobservance he threatened to upset the normally satisfactory equilibrium between man and nature. For a senior Tiwi male to be charged publicly with breaking *pukimani* rules was a disgrace and a blow to his prestige and his position in public opinion. His behavior was possibly a sin against the spirits but it was certainly a shame in the eyes of his fellows. *Pukimani* observance was thus a matter of respectability to a much greater degree than it was a matter of pleasing the spirits.

DEATH As was mentioned above, death is the natural phenomenon around which the Tiwi had woven their most elaborate web of ritual. The most frequent and most important Tiwi ceremonies were the mourning ceremonies, and they came in three sizes—small, medium, and large—depending on the age, sex, and importance of the dead person. The mourning ceremonies which drew the crowds were not held until some time after the death and burial. All bodies of dead persons were buried within twenty-four hours of their death by digging a hole near the camp where the death had occurred and placing the body, wrapped in bark, in it. Near most well-used camping spots there was already a graveyard marked by old graveposts, and the latest corpse was buried there or near there. Seldom was the body carried any distance for burial. If a person died even less than a mile from an old burial ground, there was little inclination to carry the body that far. He would be buried, instead, within perhaps a hundred yards of where he died. This had certain awkward repercussions for social organization, since occasionally a person died while away from his home district and, being buried where he died, his ceremonies were held and his posts erected in a district in which his immediate family did not live. Young men often used this to validate a change of residence, giving as their reason for living in a band territory in which they had not grown up, the location there of their father's graveposts.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
QI20 Tiwi QI20

761 [825] [761] wallaby, so that he could see the grave of his victim without being recognised.

On one occasion, when I was travelling with *Pulanimbuwi*, just after the death of his wife, he went to her grave, carefully searched the ground for tracks, then lifting up the sheets of paper-bark, examined the mound. Later, *Pulanimbuwi* announced that a *Marajji* (p. 154) had killed his wife, *Nulatini*, by getting inside of her body. But, although still there when she was buried, the *Marajji* had escaped through the hole *Pulanimbuwi* had seen in the mound.[57]

(2) *The Seclusion of the Grave*

769 The grave of *Waniamperi* was about a hundred yards from the road between our camp and the Snake Bay aboriginal settlement. Although aborigines, who were only distantly related to the dead man, walked backward and forward along this road, all the *pukamuni* people had to take a roundabout path from which it was not possible to see the grave site.

One night, *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, had to pass along the road to our camp. When he was approaching the position from which the grave site could be seen in the day-time, his wife, wrapping his head in a blanket, led him past the spot. This practice was only allowed at night; it was prohibited during the day.[58]

[775] [784] No aboriginal man hunted the creatures, or woman gathered the plant foods adjacent to the grave, so that, should the *mopaditi* of *Waniamperi* return to his burial place for a while he would find ample food.

4. THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONIES, THE ILANIAS

(1) *The Ilanias of Waniamperi*

765 About two months after the burial of *Waniamperi*, *Wurarbuti*, the ceremonial leader of the Melville Island people, sent message sticks to Bathurst Island aborigines telling them that the *ilanias* (preliminary rituals) of *Waniamperi* were about to start.

[123] We saw eleven of *Waniamperi's ilanias*. But, as they were more or less the same, I will describe only three.

[57] *Pulanimbuwi's* action was viewed with considerable disfavour. He, as a near relative, [765] should not have gone near the grave until the final rituals. Only the *wanaras* (workers) who cut the poles are allowed to do that.

[58] Under the normal tribal conditions, these precautions would have been unnecessary, [183] because the place of burial would then have been in some distant, unfrequented locality.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (*b*) "The spirits of my children are dancing on a sand-bank beside the sea."
539 (*c*) "My children's spirits are paddling about in a canoe, looking for fish
881 and turtle eggs."

Another man first chanted a secular song, which he had tried to do earlier, but had forgotten the tune.

[177] (*d*) "I saw a tractor pulling big trees out of the ground to make the new aerodrome."

Then he continued with his *Kararitjui* song.

(*e*) "My little children have gone to the island, but they must come back because they are short of tobacco." After a pause he continued, "They're back because someone has just taken the tobacco out of my hand."

(12) *The Ceremonial Eating of the Kulama Yam*

881 On the third day, at early dawn, everybody went to the swamp to eat some of the prepared yams. The leader quietly plucked a bunch of grass from the edge of the water "to waken the *kulama* yam", for should it get a fright the yam would cause much sickness in the camp.

The fully initiated men, the *Mikingulas*, ate the first few pieces "to tame the yam", after which everyone took some to eat. This ritual ensures for all the participants, good health until the next *kulama*. Some of the prepared yam is left in the water for others to eat should they desire it.

This ritual completed the *kulama* ceremony. Everyone returned to his camp, and, except for the initiates of the lower grades, pursued a normal life. The grass ring and the pieces of antbed were left in place but the *kulama* ground and the *milimika* were deserted (Pl. 45D).

784 There are, however, a number of taboos and restrictions associated with
881 the deserted *kulama* ground and oven. For instance, should anyone make
[778] his camp or light a fire in the deserted *milimika*, the spirit of the *kulama* yam would be offended and blind the culprit.

If anyone were so foolish as to toss a piece of the antbed, from the oven, sand from the *milimika* or a fragment of cooked *kulama* yam into the sea, *Maratji*, the rainbow, would be angry and create heavy seas and storms.

[821] The aborigines of the Cape Fourcroy area were convinced that a recent hurricane, which devastated the whole area, was caused by some foolish person throwing a piece of *kulama* into the sea.

On the other hand, if a *kulama* man takes a piece of antbed from the oven,
[224] and throwing it at a tree, hits the mark, his hunting will be successful, until the next *kulama* ceremony. But, if he misses his mark, his hunting will be poor.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat and so prevent the theft. 776 821 648

The Maratjis at Maundu

Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained by the faeces of the *Maratjis*. 776 778

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandubuka* totem are the only people safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from his own armpits, rubs it over his companion. 751 776 [827]

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then, walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi* which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of Maundu. [437] [753] [164]

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon, they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an aboriginal, called *Alumgun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this taboo. [841] [784]

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu. 532 x 778

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained) water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the 776

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Sickness is cured by beating the ground around the victim to hunt the evil spirit 755
away. Likewise, a song, Upripu, is sung by the wives of the sick man to make him
better. The *Kurawa*, a pointed bone, or sometimes a tomahawk is used to stab a 754
person's urine or an article his body has touched (e.g. a bark he has lain upon to sleep)
and so cause him to die. Blood thrown into the sea will cause a violent wind and a [821]
big tide. The Kulama rite will bring about the same result. No instance has been 775
found of magic being used to entice the spirit from a person's body, yet if a person
failed to show sympathy for the dead, the dead person's " shade " would cause that
person to die and then run away with his " shade." To mention the name of the 784
newly dead is taboo. If a person accidentally does this he must immediately hit his
mouth and spit to cleanse it of the evil.

Names. The names given to the women and men are of three types ; the first 551
is the actual name and is given to a person at the Kulama rite ; this is an ordinary
word such as " honey nest," etc., but it is always in a different language from the
ordinary one which is used everyday. The child also receives the name of his father,
father's brother or father's sister ; this is a traditional name. Then, in the case of a
male, come the terms denoting his initiation grade in the Kulama. First stage—
Murakmani ; second stage—*Wadjaneta* ; third stage—*Migingartiya*=first song
and *Midjintera*=second song ; fourth stage—*Mekearterima*=third song ; and finally,
Mahagala, which denotes that the man is qualified to conduct a Kulama. Likewise,
both sexes have grade names denoting their status in the Pukamane death ritual.
Male terms: first stage—*waniati* ; second stage—*warunerera* ; third stage—
wanereterima ; fourth stage—*wanderara*. With girls and women these names are
the same except for the ending denoting the sex.

In the case of women there are terms denoting age or condition. *Kudjine*— 551
child ; *alinga*—girl ; *miriyaleta*—puberty ; *murogarbra*—breasts developed ; *pira-* 561
muruka—first sign of pregnancy ; *paprungala*—pregnant woman ; *wanantaka*—
woman who has a child dead, and *umparu*—widow. Other terms are *pilukwen*—
widower ; *mentuygini* and *padrubayga*—boy and girl respectively, whose mother is
pregnant ; *indjula*— a woman whose breasts have fallen ; and as on the mainland, a
mother is always called by the sex of the child she carries in her arms : *oriowri* if a
boy, *kudjine* if a girl.

Language. The language is peculiar. In many instances, owing to the masculine 193
and feminine endings of the words, the women seem to speak a different language to
the men. In addition, another language, or set of words, which is very rarely spoken, 192
seems to obtrude itself. Thus one article will have many names. This is brought 551
about by the strong death-taboo on names ; as soon as a native dies, his names and
his son's names are taboo and others are substituted. In this way every year new 192
words are coined. Only recently at a Kulama two new ones appeared as a conse-
quence of this taboo. *Purinteriya*, new name for tree, and *alepwa*, new name for
coconut. Or a Kulama name may be given as, say, *wilinkurawa*, the meaning of
which will be given as honey nest ; and yet numerous words for honey are nothing

884 the technique had to be made meaningful to the initiates,
194 the lifesaving qualities of this famine food were explained as health-giving powers. A ceremony accompanied by song and dance was certainly a dramatic and effective means of impressing the initiates in preparation methods. The ritual served another purpose as well: because traveling is so
[180] difficult during the rainy season, each household is isolated from the others. The *Kulama* ritual follows this period, and it is natural to expect a reunion to be an occasion to exchange news, settle differences, and tell stories or sing songs that keep traditions alive.

885 MUCH harder to account for is the Tiwi idea of adulthood. That every adult is solely responsible for his own health and wealth, and that success in life depends entirely on personal behavior and industry, are ideals strangely similar to those that underlie the American way
[171] of life, despite the great gulf between the aboriginal culture and our own. But it is not at all surprising that the Tiwi
177 have a great sympathy for much of Western civilization. Many hold the same views as the *Kulama* singer quoted earlier in this article who saw his children wearing clothes and shoes and going to school to learn to write, for this is
[181] the Tiwi's contemporaneous idea of success in a way of life introduced to them only a few short years ago.

Early in the summer of 1962 I revisited the Tiwi for
[114] two weeks. Although I knew that the Tiwi desired schooling and training in European ways of life and would seize any such opportunity afforded them, I was hardly prepared for the tremendous changes that had taken place during the eight years that had elapsed since my first visit.

Three months after the *Kulama* ceremony of 1954, a
[871] government school was opened. Now all the Tiwi children go to school, and some who have finished the six-year program in the government school have received subsequent training as teaching or nursing assistants. Some others have had "on-the-job" training in various activities connected with a large-scale forestry project that has been started on Melville Island. In fact, all the able-bodied Tiwi men and women are currently employed, and their tasks bear little or no relation to their old life in the bush.

It is perhaps significant—but to me not at all surprising—that I did not hear a single real complaint from the Tiwi regarding their new manner of living. They seem to like it and are anticipating bigger and better things (in the
[224] Western sense) for their children. Hunting has become
[868] a week-end diversion and the children receive little or no real instruction in that traditional skill.

178 SOME aspects of Tiwi life are slow to die, however. Most of the old taboos, the observance of which was con-
● 784 sidered necessary in the past in order to insure health and wealth, are still observed, although at least one teen-ager expressed doubt that the taboos had any actual effect on the outcome of one's life. Western medicine and public
177 health practices are fast replacing belief in the *Kulama*.
884 During the past eight years only three men have begun the six years of training for *Kulama* initiation, and some of the older men no longer participate in the ceremony. However, as long as even a small number of Tiwi believe in the *Kulama*, the ritual will survive, but I doubt that it will for long.

000 NEAR END of *Kulama* ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.
[P. 16, (B)]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint 764
from his body (Pl. 23E).

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly, while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial, [304]
and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real. [785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn, everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual, originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's pukamuni*, was supposed
so to confuse the *mopaditi* of *Nulatini* that, should she leave the grave, she [775]
would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey, then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over.

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopaditi* to warm herself and to cook her [775]
food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanimbuwi*, who should have departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23 D).

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the 765
death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark, was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as instructed by *Jilunglialuni* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 57, 6, 11), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp could not see it.

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the 761
dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines, believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being, not the result of natural causes.

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby [825]
looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, [754]
having been responsible for the death,[86] had changed himself into a

[86] This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Hurney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the mature-man, *Papiyawari*, to an enemy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

When all the "workers" had been paid, *Wurarbui* called my name and presented me with a number of *pukamuni* arm and chest ornaments (Pl. 31), which normally would have been left on the grave. 431 765 123

These ornaments, *Wurarbui* explained, were a gift from the dead man, *Wenimpari*, because I had assisted in making his *pukamuni* a success.[68]

In the Bathurst Island *milimika* the three "workers" were also receiving their payments. 765

Jilungilakuni, although he did not have as good a story to tell as *Wurarbui*, danced around the poles with some of the presents in his hand, singing, "Here I come in an expensive motor-car, with lots of money to pay the 'workers' for cutting such beautiful poles."[69] [535] [539] [177]

(d) *Erecting the Poles around the Graves*

The distribution of the last of the presents was a signal for the "workers" to carry the poles from the respective *milimikas* to the grave. 765

Some of the poles were both large and heavy; in particular that illustrated on Pl. 34D, which was eighteen feet long, and so heavy that it took seven "workers" to carry it from the *milimika* and up-end it in the hole prepared for it at the grave (Pl. 26A).

As the poles were carried past the Bathurst Island ceremonial ground, *Jilungilakuni* threw short sticks over them to commemorate the time when the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, took part in a spear-throwing contest at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* (p. 33).

While the "workers" nonchalantly carried the poles to the grave, the women, with tears running down their cheeks, beat themselves with sticks (until someone restrained them), and the close male relatives, mourning loudly, hysterically cut their heads with steel knives. 765 785

Katopi, the son of the dead man, had washed the painted decorations from his body, and was about to cut his head when he was stopped by his stepmother, *Dunimao*. On seeing this, *Marawani*, one of the chief *pukamuni* men, took the knife from the woman and gave it to *Katopi*, who gashed his head two or three times, and, with blood pouring down his face, threw himself on the ground in a paroxysm of grief.

[68] To help them in their payments I had given the *pukamuni* men some printed calico.

[69] Although these stories about great wealth to pay the "workers" are much Europeanized, they are probably following a traditional pattern, when, instead of referring to money and the goods of the white man, the ceremonial leaders exaggerated the number of spears, ornaments, and other goods they had collected to pay the "workers".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

202 765 *pabnatjinis*, and cane armlets, *jairinis*. Then, taking a female *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaguni*, in his hand he seated himself within sight of the camp.

[301] [302] The local aborigines went out to welcome him, but on seeing the message stick and hearing the news, they mourned hysterically, cutting their heads [785] and beating themselves with sticks.

When the mourning died down, the aborigines gave the messenger a meal, [574] after which he returned to his own camp.

Although the general distribution of the totemic *purunkitas* has been dis- [126] continued in recent years, the aborigines who knew them well, made nine [184] examples for me. It would seem that each totemic place had its own particular [794] design, for when I showed the *purunkita* (Fig. 7D) to old *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinitu*, neither of whom had seen it previously, they recognized it immediately as a message stick which would have been sent to the *Mudungkala* totemic group of Buchanan Island, at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. However, other *purunkitas*, i.e. (Fig. 5C; Fig. 5F, G, H; and Fig. 6A, E) are still being used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

During the early days of our stay, when the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were about to start, three men, two of them, *Marawani* and *Uramatjina*, being the chief mourners, made a journey to the Bathurst Island people for the purpose of giving them a *purunkita* and telling them the news.

A few days later a Bathurst Island man returned with the message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H, and verbal instructions relating to the forthcoming burial rituals.

Although I did not see the message stick which *Marawani* and his com- [126] panions carried to Bathurst Island, I was able to make a rubbing of another (Fig. 7C), which was sent to the same locality on the death of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife.

Later, old *Tjamalampua* sent another message stick (Fig. 7A, B), to the men of the *Mudungkala* totem of Buchanan Island, asking for European goods and food to pay the "workers" at the final rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*.

Notification of Death

202 211 ×532 The designs on message stick, Fig. 7C, which an aboriginal carried to the Bathurst Island people, together with the news of the death of *Nulatini*, did not, in any way, refer to the message that accompanied it, but to topographical details along the motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point on Apsley Straits.

The upper section, *d*, is the aboriginal camp at Snake Bay, and the indentations, *a*, *a*, are the rocks on its shores. The cross-hatched rectangle in the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mudungkala,[48] *at Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island)*

773 After the burial of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* sent his wife, *Mudungkala*, to Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island) to establish a totemic place and create the local foods.

Pl. 19c, D, illustrates, with considerable detail, the topography of the
× 532 island and the home of the little spirit children, *Pitipituis*.
778 The central design, *a*, is Jurubulinai; circle *b*, (lower left) depicts a small island nearby on which there is a freshwater spring where *Mudungkala* once urinated; and circle *c* (lower right) is a bed of cockles, one of the local foods created by the mythical woman.

On the lower left, a crescent, *d*, symbolizes a small salt-water creek in a mangrove swamp where *Mudungkala* quenched her thirst. At *f*, there is a large rock in the deeper water, a favourite haunt of the turtles. Here the mythical woman once collected white ochre to decorate herself.

Boulders, at one time the stone axes, *mungwanis*, of *Mudungkala* are at *e* (bottom); a stony point of land, the transformed bark basket, is at *g*; a pile of red rocks (her camp fire), at *h*; a sandbar (the cycad palm under which *Mudungkala* sheltered), at *j*; and a salt-water swamp (where she ground her stone axe), at *k*, *k*. The passage between Jurubulinai and Bathurst Island is indicated by the horizontal bands, *ll*, *ll*.

The white crescent, *m*, at the top of the painting, a large sand-bar, Unakumba, on the south of the island, is one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*. The aborigines claim that, when some distance from
[776] Unakumba, they often see the spirit children, but, as they come closer, the little people disappear.

When the tide is out, the *Pitipituis* play on a sandbar, *p*, but when it is covered, the spirit children go to their camps at *o*, under the sand, where everything is dry and warm.

[787] Should one of the spirit children wish to visit an aboriginal man in a
[842] dream, to ask for a mother, it walks along the road, *q*, and, if unsuccessful in its quest, returns by road, *r*. At *s*, on the left-hand side, is the waterhole from which the *Pitipituis* obtain their drinking water, and at *t*, is their diminutive bark canoe, less than a yard long, which, like the spirit children themselves, can be seen at a distance, but disappears when the aborigines come closer.

Red stones, *cc*, and yellow stones, *dd* (right), were once body paint used by the mythical eucalyptus-tree woman. Her nautilus-shell ornament is at *v*;

[48] Locally known as the ironwood tree.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

former locality make their camp in a dense jungle, and at the latter, in the forest near the sea-coast. At one time, these *Pitipituis* lived at Juruna, but left after a while and established these camps at Jurilupa and Jampanurai. 776

(9) Umakumbi (Buchanan Island). Here, the home of the *Pitipituis* is on a sandbank on the southern side of the island. When the tide is low, the little people play on the sandbank, but when it is high, they go to their underground homes, where it is warm and dry.

During the early creation (*palumeri*) times, *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the *Pitipituis* in a bark canoe, brought back some of the little people and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala* so that they could have children. In a later period, *Purukupali* gave the *Pitipituis* to his wife, *Bima*, who in turn presented them to their future mothers. 773 776

Before *Purukupali* drowned himself, after the death of his son, *Djinini*, he told the *Pitipituis* that they must find their own mothers. Now, should one of these little people wish to become a human being, it travels to a native camp, and giving her name, asks one of the married men (when he is asleep) where its future mother is camping. After the father has indicated the particular wife, the little sprite waits a suitable opportunity to enter her vulva and start life as a human being. 776 842 787

The aborigines believe implicitly in the *Pitipituis* and the mystical origin of their children; several of them gave me details of how their children came to them in dreams.

Old *Tjamalampua* told of the time when, while he was asleep, the *mopaditi* of his dead father brought him a spirit child, and sat it on his knee saying, "This is your daughter." *Tjamalampua* directed the little *Pitipitui* to one of his wives, who later became its mother.

Muramajua described how his three children came to him.

(1) A boy, now dead, came from a Japanese plane[48] and asked for his wife as a mother. Later she felt the movements of the child. [177]

(2) A little girl came to him in a dream and spat at him. His wife conceived soon afterwards.

(3) His last girl hit him on the head whilst he was asleep, and, in his fright, he slapped her face. It was not long afterwards that his wife became pregnant.

Those accounts indicate that although, ideally, the child comes to the father and asks for the mother, in actual practice they visit the father under a number of conditions.

[48] This aboriginal had worked with the Australian Navy during the war; an example of acculturation.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 776 the background is the sea. The white central transverse panel is the beach at Wuirangku.

The meaning of the designs on the lower panel are similar, the black central and branching lines representing the tracks made by the *Pisipinis* as they travel to and from their camps (the black discs); the encircling lines represent the sand around those camps, and the painted background, the jungle which shelters the little people.

3. THE PARAMANUAS[46]

776 The *Paramanuas* are short, particularly active, agile men, about three feet high, with thick, powerful limbs, tusk-like teeth, and projecting toe and finger nails.

In general, except for these details, they resemble the aborigines in appearance, eat the same foods and follow a similar way of life.

They live in many places throughout Melville and Bathurst Islands, but no one except those captured by the *Paramanuas*, has seen either them or [753] their homes. As they dislike being talked about, and often make those people [124] ill who do so, I found it somewhat difficult to gather information about the *Paramanuas*.

The homes of the *Paramanuas*, their wives and their children, are spacious underground caves, the entrances to which are openings either in the side of termite mounds, or hollow trees. In these caves, the men store their utensils, [343] weapons and food (Fig. 14). Their cooking fire, like that of the aborigines, is always outside of their camp.

Occasionally a *Paramanua*, wishing to befriend an aboriginal, will watch 776 him for some time. Then one day when the aboriginal is hunting by himself, ●787 the *Paramanua* will cast a spear at him. But, before the spear has reached its mark, the *Paramanua* will have caught it and, standing at the back of the aboriginal, will be tickling his ribs. The aboriginal, thoroughly scared, turns to strike his opponent, only to find him again at his back. This game goes on until the aboriginal is exhausted, dizzy and confused. Then hitting him on the side of the head with an open hand, rendering the aboriginal unconscious, the spirit man picks up the prostrate man and carries him to the underground home of the *Paramanuas*.

Awaking to find himself in a dark place, the aboriginal is terrified, but on receiving plenty of food from the *Paramanuas*, and treated with every kindness, the aboriginal loses all fear, and as the weeks go by, all sense of time.

[46] Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to these little people as Barminuar.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

776 After many weeks, the *Paramanua* takes the aboriginal to a forest close to his old camp and releases him, saying, "You're lucky to have been caught
●787 by a *Paramanua*. From now onward, if you don't tell anyone about me, and the things you have seen, I'll be your friend. I'll protect you in a fight; I'll chase game toward you so that you'll be known as a good hunter, and because I can see into the future, I'll make sure that you do not get into serious trouble."

To this, the aboriginal always agrees; but should he divulge the source of his good luck, his *Paramanua* guardian, who is always nearby, will either kill the aboriginal for his breach of faith or withdraw his protection.

532 Fig. 14 and Fig. 15, are copies of two crayon drawings of the *Paramanuas*,
776 one (Fig. 15) being the work of a younger sophisticated aboriginal.

Fig. 14 deals with a *Paramanua* and his family at home in a termite mound. The central figure, *a*, is a conventionalized representation of a *Paramanua*. His face and head are at *b*, the radiating lines within the two circles indicating his hair. His feet are at *c*, and shoulder blades at *h*, *h*. I did not gather the interpretation of symbols *d*, *d*, but they may be his arms. The outer concentric circles are the walls of the termite mound and discs, *e*, *e*, the entrances to the *Paramanua's* home.

The *Paramanua* is shown again at *f*, in a more naturalistic form, the line across the fingers of the left hand indicating his long finger-nails. The interpretation of design *g*, was somewhat confused, some informants saying that it was a *Paramanua* woman, others that it was a turtle caught for food.

In the upper left is the son, *j*, and the daughter, *k*, of the *Paramanuas*. In these drawings the various parts of the body are separated[46] and have no relation to normal position or appearance.

The head of the son is at *p*, the upper radiating lines being his hair; *q*, is his mouth, the upper lines symbolizing the teeth; *r*, *r*, are two goose-feather balls, and *s*, *s*, his feet. The lines *t*, *t*, indicate his ribs.

On the right is the *Paramanua's* daughter. Her eyes are at *n*, *n*; her eyebrows at *m*, *m*; breasts at *l*, *l*, and her feet at *o*. The chevrons on either side of her body indicate her ribs. The cooking hearths of the *Paramanua* are at *v*, *v*, *v*; piles of rocks at *u*, *u*, *u*; and a jungle is at *w*.

In the middle of Fig. 15 is a *Paramanua* with a goose-feather ball, *tokwiangu*, *b*, around his neck, and on the lower right at *a*, his camp in the middle of a large anthill. Within the camp are many foods and weapons; *c*,

[170] [46] The separation of the parts of the body is not unusual in aboriginal art, Mountford, 1937, Fig. 2, illustrates a crayon drawing of the Ngadadjara tribe of the western Australian deserts, where these characteristics are present.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

on whom, but they also brooded long and suspiciously upon who had supported whom and why, either verbally or with spear in hand. In addition, all the incidents of the battle, in minute detail, were relayed to the rest of the tribe who had not been present, and many of these absentees would discover, among the proceedings, things they did not like or suspicious-looking actions on the part of some of their competitors or putative friends. These they would weave into their own strategies and store up for future use. An elder frequently found some basis for a new grievance against somebody in the events of a battle at which he had not even been present. 628 578

Finally, through all these disputes and hostile actions between senior men ran their united suspicion of bachelors. The only "battle" in two years between large groups drawn from distinct bands that had a clear-cut and definite final act was one fought in Rangu in late 1928. On that occasion, after disputing and fighting among themselves from early morning until mid-afternoon, all the old men present from both war parties gradually channeled all their anger toward one unfortunate young Mandiimbula bachelor whom they finally accused of going around from band to band creating misunderstandings between various elders. Several elders on both sides testified publicly that their mistrust of each other had started shortly after the bachelor in question had begun hanging around their households; whereupon the senior warriors of the two opposing armies had no difficulty in deciding that most of their suspicions of each other "were all his fault," and with great unanimity ganged up on the bachelor and quickly clubbed him into unconsciousness for being a troublemaker and a suspicion spreader. In the midst of battle the gerontocracy had reasserted its solidarity by finding a bachelor scapegoat upon whom to unload all their mutual suspicions and aggressions. 54 578 628

Religious Activities

If by religious activities we mean those beliefs and practices which pertain to unseen or supernatural forces, including rituals whose performance somehow affects those forces, then Tiwi religion readily crystallized around three focal points. These were: 1) their elaborate system of day-to-day taboos; 2) the elaborate set of beliefs and rituals pertaining to death; and 3) their complicated initiation ceremonies for young men. Add to these their myths and folklore about creation and their tribal past, and the whole of Tiwi religion has been covered. Space permits only brief mention of these three focal points. 771

TABOO In earlier chapters we have pointed out several aspects of life in which Tiwi culture diverged sharply from what anthropologists have come to regard as Australian mainland norms and we have suggested that these differences from the mainland are most reasonably to be attributed to either Tiwi isolation or favorable food supply, or some combination of both factors. In their religious life this same line of explanation continues to have validity. To those familiar with the cultures of Australian tribes, perhaps 171 789

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation. Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life—for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws) scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago. Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature, though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; graveposts were *pukimani*

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

775 the white man came, would have been its totemic place. As the *mopaditi* travels, flocks of screeching black cockatoos fly overhead to tell the spirits [825] as its birthplace, that a new *mopaditi* is coming to live with them. The local spirits, on its arrival, rush out to welcome the *mopaditi*, beating themselves over the head and shoulders[51] with throwing sticks to indicate their pleasure. At its new home, no matter what its previous state, the spirit is transformed into a young person of good health and equable temperament, for, in the land of the spirits, everyone must be healthy, happy and at peace with each other.

Making its camp with the other *mopaditis*, many of whom were old companions, the new spirit goes out hunting and foodgathering with them until the beginning of its own burial ceremonies. Then, with all of its dead relatives, the new *mopaditi* returns to watch the living people perform the dances and chant the songs of its *ilania* and *pukamuni* ceremonies.

As the *mopaditis* are invisible to mortal eyes, the performers at the burial rituals do not see them, although they know the *mopaditis* are in the surrounding forest, watching all that is going on.

When the rituals of the day are over, and all the people have gone to sleep, the *mopaditis* themselves enter the ceremonial ground, carrying out the same dances, and chanting the same songs as those of the living. This happens at all ceremonies, whether they are the *ilaniqs*, the final *pukamuni*, or the *kulama* rituals.

At the conclusion of its final *pukamuni*, the new *mopaditi* returns to its birthplace. There it is treated as a youth, and has again to pass through all stages of the *kulama* initiation, progressing at the same rate as when it was a living person.

Occasionally parties of *mopaditis*, especially if not long dead, will return to have a look at their living friends and relatives. But, although the aborigines regard these *mopaditis* as well-mannered and kindly, they still fear them.

Sometimes, particularly at night, a *mopaditi* will follow an aboriginal too [781] closely, making his skin clammy and his hair rise on end. To protect himself, [789] the affrighted person calls out loudly to scare away the spirit. If this is not successful, he will kindle a fire or carry a torch of flaming bark, knowing that the *mopaditis* fear the light. For that reason, the aborigines are safe from the attacks of the spirits of their dead so long as they keep their camp-fires burning.

[576] [51] This is the custom of the living when they meet someone they have not seen for a long while.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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(i) The ceremonial fight between the *pukamuni* men and the "workers" returning from cutting the poles which are near the grave.
(ii) The feeding of the "workers" by the *pukamuni* men and women.
(iii) The totemic songs and dances.
(iv) The *pumasi*, in which married men and women beat the relatives of their spouses with boughs.
(v) The rite of fire-jumping (*wandiatapinda*).

(i) *The Ceremonial Fight.* When, late in the afternoon, the "workers" were returning to the *milimika* from the grave site, where they have been cutting the burial poles, they announced their coming with the honey and mosquito calls.

The *alouwia*, who had assembled the *pukamuni* men in the *milimika* in readiness for this ritual, answered with the honey call.

The "workers" emerged from the forest in a body and, running toward the men in the *milimika*, cast short sticks, as spears, at the *pukamuni* men, who replied vigorously with throwing sticks, neither group of contestants, however, trying to hit the other.

The "workers" having exhausted their spears, rushed into the *milimika*, where, to the accompaniment of much laughter and good-humour, they wrestled with the *pukamuni* men (Pl. 25D), until they (the "workers") were pushed out of the *milimika*.[63]

(ii) *The Feeding of the Workers.* It is the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the "workers" while they are cutting and painting the poles.

On the edge of the *milimika* were two baskets, both painted red, one made by a woman of the rain and freshwater totem of Wailu, and the other by a woman of the fire totem of Wuriupi, the totemic place of the dead man, *Waniamperi*. Food caught or gathered by the *pukamuni* men and women was cooked and placed in those baskets for the "workers" only, it being taboo to all members of the *pukamuni* group.

After the "workers" had been "vanquished" in the ceremonial fight, the *pukamuni* men carried the baskets[64] into the centre of the *milimika* and there stood guard while the "workers" had their meal (Pl. 25B).

[184] [175] [189]

[63] There is no clear-cut belief behind this ritual. Some informants said that the "workers", having been adjacent to the grave for many hours, were inhabited by *mapadiiis* who must be driven out before the "workers" are "safe" to associate with the *pukamuni* group; others said that the *mapadiiis*, following close on the heels of the "workers" had to be frightened away by what, to them, appeared to be a real fight, before the *ilanias* could start.

[64] These baskets, though they always stood on the edge of the *milimika*, were not often used in the *ilanias* we witnessed, as the participants were able to get most of the food they required from the settlement. If, however, the burial ceremony had been held at some remote place, the *pukamuni* men and women would have had to spend the day in hunting in order to provide food for the "workers".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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776 The *Maratjis* belong to the totem of *Andjahi* (fresh water), in common with *Pakadringa* (thunderstorms), *Tomisuka* (monsoon rain) and *Bunerali* (lightning). They are mortal creatures who die and disintegrate like everything else (Pl. 48D).

[123] I collected bark paintings and crayon drawings of a number of *Maratjis*, living with their wives and families in three lagoons on Melville and Bathurst Islands, i.e., Maundu, southern Bathurst Island, and Kulimbini, north-western, and Maratjiana, northern Melville Island.

776 The *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands are not always of the same
778 temperament. For instance, the *Maratjis* who live at Kulimbini (Pl. 48A) are so dangerous that should any aboriginal dare approach their water, they will steal his *imunka* (spirit), and he will die.

Although the *Maratjis* of Maundu (Pl. 48C) are feared, it is possible, if certain rituals are performed, for even a stranger to drink the water without harm; while those who live in the Maratjiana lagoon at Goose Creek, are looked upon by the aborigines as "properly quiet fellow".[49]

776 The rainbow, as a *Maratji*, however, is universally feared, the aborigines
821 believing that the primary bow is the *imunka* (spirit) of a male, and the secondary bow, that of a female *Maratji*.

If a rainbow goes too near an aboriginal camp, the occupants will quickly
[789] build up their fire[50] and call out to frighten *Maratji* away, but should he come too close, the people will feel ill and break out into a cold perspiration. If an aboriginal is overtaken by a rainbow,[51] it will kill him by taking his spirit.

Should some aboriginal be so foolish as to throw a spear at a rainbow and injure it, the *Maratjis* would destroy the whole country and the people who live in it.

776 Two heavy wind-storms, which occurred whilst the expedition was at
821 Melville Island, were supposed to have been caused by angry *Maratjis*. The
648 first was due to some foolish aboriginal who broke a *kulama* ceremony taboo (p. 142) by throwing some of the termite mound from the *kulama* oven into the sea. The second happened when a *pukamuni* pole, taken from a grave by one of the senior officers of the Native Affairs Branch, was being loaded on a boat for transport to Darwin.

The aborigines explained that as these poles are a gift from the living to

[49] Further research will no doubt reveal other waterholes on Melville and Bathurst Islands, inhabited by *Maratjis*.

[171] [50] This would suggest that *Maratji*, like the *Wonambi* of the Central Australian deserts, is afraid of fire (Mountford, 1948, p. 138).

[51] These conditions are, of course, impossible because the rainbow is always several feet from the observer.

11:Goodale E-5 (1954,1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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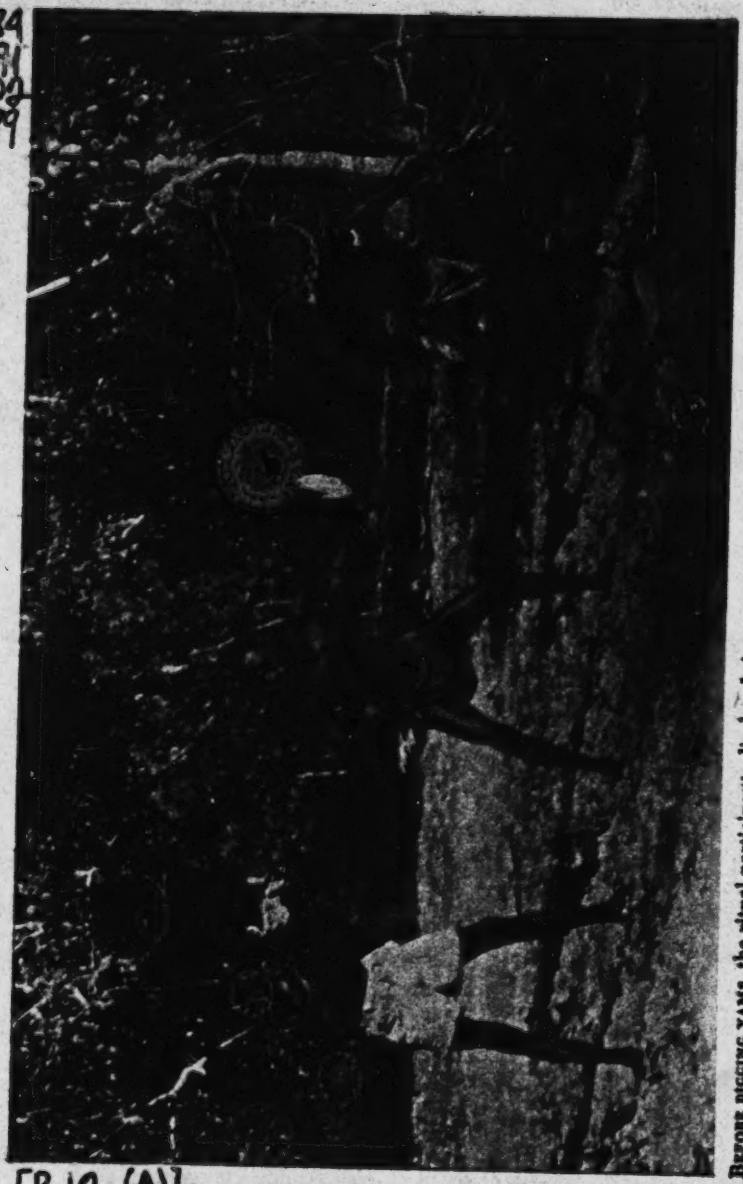

BEFORE DIGGING YAMS, the ritual participants dip hands into white paint and put it around eyes to insure acute vision.

[P. 12, (A)]

discembarked on the edge of a large expanse of wet, grassy marsh. 123
On the bank a few low trees provided cover for the hunters, who 223
spread out about fifty yards apart. We waited. Then in the distance the first flock of six geese appeared, flying low over the marsh. They were not headed for us, but passed over the line of hunters about a hundred yards upstream. We could not see the hunters, but the same six geese continued safely after passing the firing line. Now another small group of geese seemed to be heading in our direction. Albert slowly took his position, his legs apart, the left stretched in front, the right somewhat bent as his body arched backward. One *milingani* he held near the charred end in his right arm which was so far back over his head that the tip of the stick almost touched the ground. As counter balance, his left hand, holding several spares, was pointed forward toward the geese. Just as the geese were to pass over our heads, they swerved and went instead over the man to the right of us. You could hear the whir of the stick as it was thrown with tremendous force up into the air, turning end over end, and then the 'thwack' as it reached its mark. A goose, its neck hanging loosely, spiralled down, to land with a splash close to the hunter's feet.

Now the flocks were more numerous as the dusk grew thicker. Soon a group flew directly overhead and Albert aimed and threw, but the spiralling stick slid off the wing tip of the lead goose and he continued, somewhat shaken but quite unharmed. Again and again Albert threw at the increasing numbers of honking homeward-bound geese, but when the last stick was thrown and it was quite dark, we still had no geese. When we gathered, it was found that [763 out of ten hunters with perhaps three hundred sticks thrown, only 777] two sticks had found their mark. This was not good. Albert was worried. "Maybe someone bin die, make me bad luck."

Later that evening Black Joe started singing a chant. 223
"*Mobuditi,* plenty goose here; give us some." I asked him 789
whom he was singing to and, although names of the dead are most 775
infrequently mentioned for fear that the ghost of that person, its *mobuditi,* will hear it, this was one occasion where the *mobuditi* could do more good than harm. So the *mobuditi* of Bangri was called upon. Bangri, it was explained, had been a big man, "Plenty wives, maybe hundred. This his country; him grave close up along

142
764

Fig. 15. Weather-worn poles mark the grave of someone long dead but not forgotten

223 bush. He bin die long time ago." This had been his country while
789 alive and it was still his country, for his spirit remains near the
775 grave and still hunts the wild animals and birds, while the spirits of his wives collect the wild yams, and his little spirit children play in the bush. Bangri will share this food with others who come, and their *mobuditiies*, should they die and be buried in the country, for as long as his name is remembered, and until his grave-posts rot with the passing of time.

123 But Bangri was not cooperative. The next day the hunters found little game in the bush and the women turned to the laborious
[222 job of digging six-foot holes with a stick to obtain the small yams
224] that are to be found at this season. Again the grass was too thick, the snakes too cheeky, and Albert advised against our going bush.
[152 I decided the more logical explanation was that Albert considered
777] we ourselves had ample food, and besides he was sincerely worried
[223] about his long run of bad luck. But he left with the others that

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Unidentified

The designs on Pl. 28T are the same as those painted on the face of the chief mourner, *Katapi*, at *Waniamperi's* final *pukamuni*. I did not ask about their meanings. 302 778

Although I did not learn the meanings of the facial designs on the remaining faces on Pl. 28, it is reasonable to suppose they all referred to some mythological story, probably associated with the totem of the aboriginal who wore them.

7. THE PUKAMUNI DANCES

A number of the dances we saw at the *ilanias* and final *pukamuni* rituals belonged exclusively to certain Tiwi totemic groups. They were so constant in form that, in no time, we could recognise the dance and the totem to which it belonged. [794] 765 535

Many of these dances are more strenuous than any belonging to the mainland; some of them, indeed, so strenuous, i.e., the crocodile (Pl. 30E), the shark (Pl. 30D), or the sea-eagle (Pl. 30J), that they seldom lasted more than a minute. [171]

Although I recorded only fourteen of these totemic dances (illustrated on Pls. 29 and 30), I feel sure that these represent but a small proportion of those performed by the Tiwi. For instance, none of the totemic dances belonging to the dead person would have been performed at the burial rituals we witnessed.

Pl. 29A is the dance of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, which was performed with such skill and abandon by *Nilisuma* at the Bathurst Island *ilania* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* ceremony.

Pl. 29B is the dance of the boobook owl, *Purujikini*, who with his wife, the barn-owl, *Pisuma*, organized the second *kulama* ceremony on Turiturina Island, western Bathurst Island. The dancer is indicating the large eyes of the boobook owl.

Pl. 29C is the dance of the blanket-lizard, *Kilpurui*, who was punished by *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, because the former seduced *Jurumu's* wife. The dancer walked around the ceremonial ground with an awkward gait, in imitation of the blanket-lizard's curious method of locomotion.

Pl. 29D pictures the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, who is the mother of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadinga*, the woman of the monsoon rain, *Tomimbu*, and the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. The frog dance was performed many times at the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi*, the frog being the totem of his father.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

202 765 *palmatjinis*, and cane armlets, *jairinis*. Then, taking a female *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaguni*, in his hand he seated himself within sight of the camp.

[301] [302] The local aborigines went out to welcome him, but on seeing the message stick and hearing the news, they mourned hysterically, cutting their heads [785] and beating themselves with sticks.

When the mourning died down, the aborigines gave the messenger a meal, [574] after which he returned to his own camp.

Although the general distribution of the totemic *purunkitas* has been dis- [126] continued in recent years, the aborigines who knew them well, made nine [184] examples for me. It would seem that each totemic place had its own particular [794] design, for when I showed the *purunkita* (Fig. 7D) to old *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, neither of whom had seen it previously, they recognized it immediately as a message stick which would have been sent to the *Mudungkala* totemic group of Buchanan Island, at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. However, other *purunkitas*, i.e. (Fig. 5C; Fig. 5F, G, H; and Fig. 6A, E) are still being used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

During the early days of our stay, when the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were about to start, three men, two of them, *Marawani* and *Uramatjina*, being the chief mourners, made a journey to the Bathurst Island people for the purpose of giving them a *purunkita* and telling them the news.

A few days later a Bathurst Island man returned with the message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H, and verbal instructions relating to the forthcoming burial rituals.

Although I did not see the message stick which *Marawani* and his com- [126] panions carried to Bathurst Island, I was able to make a rubbing of another (Fig. 7C), which was sent to the same locality on the death of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife.

Later, old *Tjamalampua* sent another message stick (Fig. 7A, B), to the men of the *Mudungkala* totem of Buchanan Island, asking for European goods and food to pay the "workers" at the final rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*.

Notification of Death

202 211 ×532 The designs on message stick, Fig. 7C, which an aboriginal carried to the Bathurst Island people, together with the news of the death of *Nulatini*, did not, in any way, refer to the message that accompanied it, but to topographical details along the motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point on Apsley Straits.

The upper section, *d*, is the aboriginal camp at Snake Bay, and the indentations, *a*, *a*, are the rocks on its shores. The cross-hatched rectangle in the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

224 roos,[3] wildfowl, and other game, keen eyesight is essential, hence Tiwi men
[887] did very little hunting once they were past about forty-five, though they hated to admit their hunting days were over. The meat, fish, and game provided for the large household of an old man was obtained by the young men, and this was about the only thing an old man thought his sons or his step-sons were good for. Typically the young man, when he returned at nightfall with
[592 a kangaroo which he had spent most of the day tracking down and spearing, would ignore the old man and dump the carcass at the feet of his mother as
888] if to say, "I brought this back for you, not for that old So and So."

As the women straggled back to camp toward sundown with the results
512 of their day's gathering and the young hunters brought in their bags, cooking
595 began and the main meal of the day (usually the only hot meal) was eaten. The Tiwi themselves had no doubt about the close relationship between plural marriage and good eating. "If I had only one or two wives I would starve,"
[797] the head of a large household once told the missionary who was preaching against plural marriage, "but with my present ten or twelve wives I can send them out in all directions in the morning and at least two or three of them are likely to bring something back with them at the end of the day, and then
262 we can all eat." This was a realistic appraisal of the economic situation and it is to be noted that he put the emphasis on the food obtained by the women
[222] gatherers rather than that supplied by the male hunters. Based on the observations of 1928-29, it would appear that the Tiwi ate pretty well, especially in the larger households. Kangaroo and other marsupials, and some of the larger lizards (for example, the goanna) were very plentiful in the bush, as were fish and turtles and dugong on the coasts and wild geese in many districts. But all these were extras or dividends; the staple everyday foods were the vegetable foods gathered day after day in apparently unending quantities by the women. For most months of the year there was always plenty of *kwoka*,
[252] a porridgelike dish prepared by soaking and mashing the small nuts of a native palm. These nuts grew in such quantity that in every large camp baskets or dishes of *kwoka*, at various stages of preparation, were always available, even for midnight snacks if anybody woke up hungry. *Kwoka* was about as dull and tasteless as Scotch porridge, but equally filling, and naked small boys full of *kwoka* had stomachs distended like balloons. In the wet season the place of *kwoka* was taken by *kolema*, a yam whose ripening and growing season was much shorter than that of the nuts from which *kwoka* was made. It was
[796] on the abundance of the *kolema* yams during January and February that the Tiwi supported the more elaborate of their collective ceremonials.

The abundance of these and other vegetable foods, plus the ample supply of game and fish in many places, meant that under aboriginal conditions the Tiwi lived at a food-consumption level much further above the near-

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[3] Actually there are no kangaroos on Melville and Bathurst Islands; the chief meat animal is a slightly smaller species of marsupial technically called the wallaby. As the distinction is important only to zoologists, and as many of the so-called kangaroos in American zoos are in fact wallabies, we prefer to use the more familiar word.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

627 staged and this was usually sufficient to incapacitate the offender and make
684 him decide to move—at least for a while—into some other district. The group thus hastily convened to mete out public justice seldom numbered more than sixty or seventy people (seven or eight households) and having been convened *ad hoc* would remain camped together only for the forty-eight hours or less needed to deal with the emergency.

Joint Activities

This discussion of the alternative lines of action open to an outraged
● 796 household head enables us to specify the relatively rare occasions during the
619 year when the dull, quiet, day-by-day, food-gathering routines of the dispersed
527 household camps were interrupted by events that required many households to
764 gather together in one place and indulge in joint action. Foremost among these
221 occasions were big funerals and the *kolema* ceremonial, both of which were mentioned above. These were the main religious events of the year, full of dancing, singing, wailing, and excitement. The excitement was the psychological result of so many people being together at the same time, a rare experience in the life of any Tiwi. Since the *kolema* ceremonial was an annual event and even the most enthusiastic funeral goer did not attend more than three or
[887] four really big funerals in the course of a year, we may reckon that even an old and important man, much concerned with ritual observances, would probably find himself a participant in such crowd activities on not more than some six occasions per year. For less important men and for women and children the number of such occasions was less than six. The *kolema* ceremonial lasted two weeks or more, big funerals, even when they became the occasion for carrying on other public business, did not last more than four or five days each. Hence we may reckon an average of about a week each for the half-dozen times a really big man spent in the company of a sizable crowd of fellow tribesmen, giving a total annual average of about six or seven weeks at most out of every fifty-two—or a little less than 10 percent of the year spent by an old important man in large ceremonial activities or what Durkheim calls the collective life of the tribe.

In addition there were the smaller gatherings, such as the funerals of
527 younger men and most women, and the calling together of a number of house-
619 holds to settle a dispute in the manner we have described above. These were
764 collective occasions also but they brought together a considerably smaller
571 crowd. A really big man's funeral was likely to draw over three hundred people or even as much as one-third of the whole tribe.[4] Not only did many

[4] Tamboo's funeral in May 1929 (he died in the previous August) drew practically the full band membership (men, women, and children) of the four Bathurst Island bands; almost all the Munupula; many Mandiimbula; and large delegations from the remaining three bands. With such a crowd, an actual head count was difficult, especially of the children, but there must have been over four hundred people present. Needless to say, excitement was intense; more fights occurred, more insults were exchanged, more ancient feuds revived and new ones started, and more food consumed than at any funeral in living memory. At least that was the opinion of Tamboo's chief mourners, but since it was they who threw the party and had to pay for it, they may have been biased.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

women by *d*, to a place, *n*, where they painted one another for the final *pakumani* rituals. 532x 773

Whilst there, the fish-men engaged in the spear-throwing contest mentioned in the myth.[35] Their footmarks are in circle, *n*, and the places where the spears fell at *p*. *Pipinjawari*, who stood behind the others at *g*, threw his spear the furthest, a large eucalyptus tree, *h*, being the transformed spear. The spears of the other fish-men at *p* are smaller eucalyptus trees.

When everyone had finished decorating themselves, both men and women moved to *m*, where the burial poles had been erected around the grave, the women again reaching their destination by a different path, *k*. It was at the completion of these rituals that the fish-men quarrelled with *Pipinjawari* because he refused to give the "workers" presents for their duties.

5. THE CLOSE OF THE CREATION PERIOD

The escape of *Pipinjawari*, which brought the *palaneri* (creation period) to a close, was the signal for the mythical people to return to their camps and to transform themselves into the various birds, fish, reptiles, heavenly bodies and inanimate objects of today. 773

Tjapara, the moon-man, rose into the sky, his face and body deeply scarred with the wounds he had received in his quarrel with *Purukupali*. [821]
Bima, his lover, and the mother of the dead child, *Djimini*, still bearing the mark on her head where *Purukupali* had struck her with his throwing stick, [825]
became the curlew (*Numenius cyanopus*) which still roams the forest at night, wailing in remorse for her misdeeds and for the child she lost.

Wurinprenala, one of the daughters of the original creator, *Mudungkala*, changed herself into the sun-woman, who travels across the sky carrying the [821]
torch of blazing bark given to her by *Purukupali*. The *Maludaianini* men, with the ceremonial paint still on their bodies, became that sparkling galaxy, the Milky Way.

Tukinkini, the grandson of *Murupiangkala*, instructed the mythical people (many of whom were his wives and relatives), to establish a totemic place at their old camps on Melville and Bathurst Islands to create the aboriginal foods belonging to each place, and then to change themselves into the particular bird, reptile, fish or inanimate object with which that locality is now associated.

[35] At a *pakumani* ceremony we witnessed at Melville Island, one of the Bathurst Islanders, *Jilungkilani*, impersonating *Pipinjawari*, threw sticks, as spears, over the men carrying the poles to the grave, chanting "*Kaniprak wanikali kurinari*", meaning "We throw spears to find out who goes furthest." [796]

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

All those in number one group belong to the same clan, and are "opposite" to those of number two group, who also belong to one clan. The lines A, B, C and D are intermarrying groups, i.e. Ego marries his *yabunaiya*, etc. 582 601 [614]

Of course, relationship terms also include others denoting the type of relation or blood tie. For instance, a mother's brother or a sister's son (group) when distantly related to Ego could be his father-in-law and would then be called *YUNARENIWA*. A true father is *ERINGANI*, a father's sister, *yananiya*; father's father *ARMINI*; father's mother, *arnma*; mother's brother's own daughter, *yamuina*, and one son, *YAMUWANINI*[4]; half brother is *INGULABINI* and a half-sister *inguleba*.[5]

This system of marriage is not unlike the Murngin and Anula system and also is the same as the *wadji wadji* (wrong side marriage) of the Mudbara. In one, cross-cousins—not *inguleba*—can marry, while in the true Mudbara cross-cousin marriage is prohibited. 582

Rites. The rituals centre around the Kulama. The underlying principle of this is to ensure that the Kulama (a small hot yam that embodies the spirit of the "old woman" and guardian of the horde) is cooked correctly, for this ensures her protection against Maradji, the rainbow snake, another old woman who can cause evil to come upon them and "swallow them" up. It is performed during the wet season by each family, and is said to bring about a plentiful supply of food. The Kulama is also used to pass the initiates, both male and female, from a lower to a higher order in the social scale, although I myself could not see that any important results were obtained by the initiates through the ritual.[6] 796 [561]

Some result, or at least protection, however, is obtained: if the Kulama is not sung or danced at the prescribed time or place, the Marakarti (spear grass) and also the ring used for cooking the Kulama yams at the ritual, would give rise to a poison, *Tani*, which would pass into the air and cause sickness; perhaps a youth who had not passed through the Kulama would sicken and die. On the other hand, a youth who has passed through the ritual may gain a certain satisfaction by believing that he can drive the sickness away and protect the family. In addition, the Kulama is not only an increase ritual for yams; in it the father also "sings" the name of his child in a form of song, *apa*, and foretells in a dream that a certain spirit "shade" will be incarnated through one of his wives at some future date; for these children are waiting at that "spirit dreaming" place called Bilawuwi. In other words, it is a human increase ritual. [751] [842]

[4] These are true cousins and cannot marry.

[5] This *inguleba* native is the term for persons who are taboo to Ego; they cannot approach Ego's wives, as their sweat must not touch. They are people who are "out of line" in relationship. For instance, if a Kudjarli man marries two women, one a Tukambani and the other a Miatui, his children would be of two different *pubai* or totems. These children, half-brothers and half-sisters, are *inguleba* to each other.

[6] It is unlike the Karawadi of the subincised people, in which the initiate is freed of certain food taboos, and again in the Kudidjingara, through which the old men receive magical power to levy tribute from the young people of the tribe, who have not passed through that ritual.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch his wives or children, because a deadly sweat called *kilamini* comes from his body and will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *eminka:r* of the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yatarahs*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

Culture Heroes. They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumereka*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orati*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marakarti*.

The Present Day Spirits. Some spirits vitally affect their present lives. Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

Magic. Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *kulampara*. It is interesting to compare the Anula belief; if a person is sung with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

11: Goodale
● 796

OI20 Tiwi OI20

[For a discussion of the Kulama ceremony of initiation into adulthood see category 116, pp. 10-17.]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

621 Tiklauila" or "My wife is a Munupula woman"; a mourner would say, "He
619 died when visiting the Munupula and therefore we will have to go to Munupi for the funeral"; an old man would reminisce about being brought up as a youth by his mother's brother, who was a Turupula, and the good times he had in Turupi; and another would recount details of big battles between the Munupula and the Malauila. All of these were band names or band territories. The nine bands thus acted, psychologically, as small tribelets or semisovereign groups, since it was with one of them that every Tiwi most closely identified in his day-to-day life on the islands. It is only when, as nowadays, he leaves the islands to go to work for the white man in Darwin that he has to think of himself as a Tiwi, since there he mingles with men of other tribes. Even then,
[177] work and residence in the white man's town does not entirely obliterate band identification. A Tiklauila in Darwin prefers to work with and to consort in the evenings with other Tiklauila, and Malauila with Malauila.[8]

Because of certain peculiar features of Tiwi domestic life, to be dis-
621 cussed below, it is difficult to sum up the Tiwi band in any simple formula.
591 People, especially women, changed their band residence frequently in the course of their lives, and being born into a band did not at all require permanent residence with that band, either for males or for females. Thus the district (for example, Tiklaru or Malau) was a firm, fixed, known quantity, but the people who "owned" the district (for example, Tiklauila or Malauila) were a flexible and constantly shifting collection of individuals.

The territorial boundaries between bands were clear and well known
423 to everybody, though they were not the sharp lines on a map such as we
621 regard as essential for a frontier or a land boundary. All pieces of country—clumps of jungle, stretches of grassland, sections of thick woods—had names. One such piece of country, say a thickly wooded area, belonged to one band, while the more open country that began where the woods thinned out belonged to another; thus the boundary was not a sharp line but a transitional zone—
[137] perhaps of several miles—where the change from trees to open savannah became noticeable, with the band territories thus fusing into one another rather
[823] than being separated by sharp lines. The Tiwi, so to speak, thought of the landscape as a sort of spectrum where a man moved gradually out of one district into another as he passed from one type of horizon to the next. Since
[133] rivers, and even Apsley Strait, a very narrow arm of the sea separating Melville from Bathurst Island, usually have similar types of vegetation on *both* sides or banks, none of the island rivers nor Apsley Strait was a boundary or frontier between bands. The Mandiimbula, predominantly a Melville Island

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177 [8] In the early 1930's the situation at the Government Hospital in Darwin offered
797 a good illustration of this. The hospital authorities said they gave preference for house-
181 boy jobs to "Melville Islanders because of their greater intelligence and reliability." In point of fact, some of the younger Tiklauila had established a monopoly on hospital jobs and no Tiwi other than a Tiklauila was ever hired there. The whites thought they were hiring Tiwi but the Tiklauila saw to it that they hired only Tiklauila and felt no vestige of obligation to other Tiwi to help them get these desirable jobs. The alleged greater intelligence of the islanders was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Tiklauila, having had a Catholic mission in their territory since 1911, were more used to white requirements.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

fifty was likely to be left a widow by him within the next fifteen years, and 587
even if she remarried a man of the same age as her first husband, she could
easily be widowed for the second time while still herself a comparatively young
woman. There were several different patterns, most of them intermingled in
the same household, for a female matrimonial career, but the situation may be
illustrated by the concrete case of one of Turimpi's widows, an ancient crone
(in 1930) named Bongdadu. Born about 1865, she was betrothed at birth to
a powerful old man named Walitaumi who was at least the same age as her
father, if not older. Not unnaturally, he died while she was still a child and
well before she was old enough to join his household. Her betrothal was then
reassigned, so to speak, to Walitaumi's half-brother, Turimpi, then in his early
forties. About seven years later, she joined Turimpi's household as a blush-
ing bride of fourteen, her husband then being close to fifty. In the next twenty
years she became Turimpi's most prolific wife and bore numerous children, three
of whom, Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, all born between 1883 and 1900,
were men of importance in Tiwi politics in 1930, and one of whom, Louis, is
still alive today.[6] Around 1900, when Bongdadu was still only about thirty-five,
she passed to M., a middle-aged Tiklauila, and was his wife until his death
around 1925. By this date, Bongdadu was over sixty and had borne ten children,
four of whom died young. Not unnaturally, she was beginning to approach the
hag or crone stage of Tiwi womanhood. Nonetheless, she had to remarry, but
by now all of the people who might have claimed any rights of bestowal in
her were long since dead, her eldest sons were adult men of some importance
and able to protect their mother's interests, and clearly she was unlikely to
produce any more children.[7] Her chief value was as a food producer and
housekeeper and female politician, roles for which she had been well trained
in her long years as wife of Turimpi and M.

Old women in Bongdadu's position had to remarry, but they were in 587
a good position to exercise some choice of their own as to whom they re- 888
married, especially if they had strong influential sons to support them in their
wishes. There was a frequent pattern in such cases for the widow, aided and
abetted (or perhaps even forced) by her sons, to arrange a marriage of con-
venience with some obscure nonentity much younger than herself and usually
a friend or contemporary of her sons. In 1925, then, Bongdadu, widowed
three times already, married as her fourth husband one Dominico, a man of [554]
no importance whatever, as was shown by the fact that at this time he was
nearly forty and had not been able to attract even one bestowed wife. He had, 587
however, already married one widow, so that his marriage to Bongdadu gave 595

[6] Tiwi personal names are polysyllabic and hard for the reader to remember; hence, [551
whenever possible, we have used "whiteman names" for individuals. The frequency of 128
Spanish names among these "whiteman names," such as Mariano or Dominico, derives 797]
from the fact that the original buildings for the Mission Station were built by a number
of Filipino workmen whom the priests brought with them.

[7] The Tiwi saw no inconsistency between believing in spirit impregnation and
believing at the same time that an old woman was unlikely to bear children. It was to [842]
them a matter of probabilities, and of course with them as with us, occasionally an
elderly lady did—disconcertingly—have a baby, proving the logic of their position.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

224 roos,[9] wildfowl, and other game, keen eyesight is essential, hence Tiwi men
[887 did very little hunting once they were past about forty-five, though they hated to admit their hunting days were over. The meat, fish, and game provided for the large household of an old man was obtained by the young men, and this was about the only thing an old man thought his sons or his step-sons were good for. Typically the young man, when he returned at nightfall with
[592 a kangaroo which he had spent most of the day tracking down and spearing, would ignore the old man and dump the carcass at the feet of his mother as
888] if to say, "I brought this back for you, not for that old So and So."

As the women straggled back to camp toward sundown with the results
512 of their day's gathering and the young hunters brought in their bags, cooking
595 began and the main meal of the day (usually the only hot meal) was eaten. The Tiwi themselves had no doubt about the close relationship between plural marriage and good eating. "If I had only one or two wives I would starve,"
[797] the head of a large household once told the missionary who was preaching against plural marriage, "but with my present ten or twelve wives I can send them out in all directions in the morning and at least two or three of them are likely to bring something back with them at the end of the day, and then
262 we can all eat." This was a realistic appraisal of the economic situation and it is to be noted that he put the emphasis on the food obtained by the women
[222] gatherers rather than that supplied by the male hunters. Based on the observations of 1928-29, it would appear that the Tiwi ate pretty well, especially in the larger households. Kangaroo and other marsupials, and some of the larger lizards (for example, the goanna) were very plentiful in the bush, as were fish and turtles and dugong on the coasts and wild geese in many districts. But all these were extras or dividends; the staple everyday foods were the vegetable foods gathered day after day in apparently unending quantities by the women. For most months of the year there was always plenty of *kwoka,*
[252] a porridgelike dish prepared by soaking and mashing the small nuts of a native palm. These nuts grew in such quantity that in every large camp baskets or dishes of *kwoka,* at various stages of preparation, were always available, even for midnight snacks if anybody woke up hungry. *Kwoka* was about as dull and tasteless as Scotch porridge, but equally filling, and naked small boys full of *kwoka* had stomachs distended like balloons. In the wet season the place of *kwoka* was taken by *kolema,* a yam whose ripening and growing season was much shorter than that of the nuts from which *kwoka* was made. It was
[796] on the abundance of the *kolema* yams during January and February that the Tiwi supported the more elaborate of their collective ceremonials.

The abundance of these and other vegetable foods, plus the ample supply of game and fish in many places, meant that under aboriginal conditions the Tiwi lived at a food-consumption level much further above the near-

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[9] Actually there are no kangaroos on Melville and Bathurst Islands; the chief meat animal is a slightly smaller species of marsupial technically called the wallaby. As the distinction is important only to zoologists, and as many of the so-called kangaroos in American zoos are in fact wallabies, we prefer to use the more familiar word.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

outdance and out-sing and out-party most of the men fifty years younger than himself.[6] 159 888

Since Tu'untalumi was a senior Tiwi household head who spent more of his time attending festivals, funerals, fights, and other collective occasions than did most of his contemporaries, it is instructive to examine his movements over a full year. If he had kept an engagement book during 1928-29, it would have looked something like this: 159 887

Early April (end of wet season): Leaves his home base in Tangio where he has spent most of the wet season and visits the Mission station to attend a few small funerals (children who have died at the Mission in the preceding months). During these funerals a series of fights and duels also takes place. Total people present: perhaps fifty or sixty. Time thus spent in helping to wind up public business: five days. Returns home to Tangio and remains there for rest of April. [797]

End of April: Goes to Rangu with a big party of other Tiklauila for a funeral (junior elder). Fairly big funeral, lots of people, lots of disputes. Time away, including leisurely journey to and from Rangu, about two weeks. Gets back home about middle of May. [764 166]

Middle of May—end of June: Lives quietly at home with his household in Tangio.

About July 1st: Goes to Mission for a few days, "visits" with whoever is there. Tries out a new composition of his own (song and dance) on group camped at Mission. Returns home for rest of July. [533 535]

Last week of July: Taking his younger wives and their children with two senior wives in charge of them, sets out for Malau for a big funeral with lots of people and fights. There he performs his new dance; is much consulted on ceremonial matters by the Malauila; gets into a few fights himself but handles them with dignity and honor; remains in Malau two weeks; stops off to visit and attend a small funeral with the Munupula on his way back; has a fight with a Munupula while there; returns to the Mission; stays there a day or two dispensing all the news from Malau and Munupi to those camped there; issues invitations for a grass burning in some sections of Tangio which were not burned in April or May. Goes on home to Tangio where some of his older wives have remained during his absence. Total time away: about three weeks. [166]

End of August: Is joined in Tangio by several other Tiklauila and Rangwila households whom he has invited. Grass burning and joint kangaroo hunting goes on for four or five days. Dancing and partying at night. After five days most of visiting group leave and he and his household remain alone in Tangio until well into October. [224]

[6] There is no suggestion that Tu'untalumi was in any way an official ritual leader. All old men, by virtue of their years, were to some extent ritual leaders; he had merely worked harder and longer at it than most of them. His tirelessly joyful personality had a good deal to do with his success in the self-established role. In a culture that might be thought likely to make all its men gloomy, anxiety-ridden introverts, he was a warm, happy, dignified old extrovert and he was widely admired. [156]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission, automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their opponents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were economically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Women were, however, a form of capital that possessed the power of talking back to the investors. As daughters or as wives they were quite thoroughly subordinate to the wishes of their fathers or husbands, and Tiwi wives were as frequently and as brutally beaten by their husbands as wives in any other savage society. But as mothers and as sisters the women were not coerced by their sons and their brothers. On the contrary, sons or brothers wishing to use their mothers or their sisters in their political schemes (typically when those mothers or sisters became or were about to become widows) could only do so with the active collaboration of the women concerned. Tough-minded young widows could drive a hard bargain with their brothers as to where they remarried, since each needed the other to make the remarriage acceptable to the tribe at large and to beat down the other competitors (the dead husbands' brothers, for example) who wished to control the remarriage of the widows. Young girls thus had no bargaining power but young widows had a good deal. Old mothers with influential senior sons were extremely powerful. Any affront to an old woman was an affront to her sons, and some of the strongest influence networks were alliances of several senior brothers, in which their old mother seemed to be the mastermind and the senior sons largely the enforcers of what the old mother and her middle-aged daughters (their sisters) had decided among themselves.

562 593 587

Thus, for women, as for men, age and political skill were the crucial factors in determining their position. Young girls were chattels and as such were passed around from husband to husband. But with increasing age, smart young women, especially in alliance with their smart young brothers, could control their own fate with some firmness, and if they and their brothers had a shrewd old mother (also with powerful senior brothers still alive) to advise them and support them, then the decisions of such a group as to where the girls remarried were very difficult decisions for anybody else to combat or oppose. Not as independent operators, but as behind-the-scenes allies of their sons and brothers, Tiwi mothers and sisters enjoyed much more essential freedom in their own careers as often-remarried widows than would appear at first sight in a culture which ostensibly treated all women as currency in the political careers of the men. No matter how males, both old and young, might connive, they were constantly aware that no remarriage of a widow could ever be arranged and made to stick unless the widow herself was agreeable.

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In the limited space available, all we can offer are a few samples of how the influence game was played by a few selected individuals of various ages. Age was of great importance in Tiwi careers and therefore we select our samples from all the adult male age-groups. We have selected them all from the same band—the Malamila—so as to show as clearly as possible the interplay between one career and another for men of the same band. And finally we select men of the Malamila band for our examples because in 1928-29 it was a band little affected as yet by the outside influences—Catholic missionaries and Japanese pearl divers—which were beginning to modify Tiwi marriage customs among some of the other bands.

557 888 177 797 121

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

once erected on the grave; the names of dead people immediately became *pukimani* on their deaths and could not be used, and the same was true of all the names bestowed by a dead man on the children of his household and all the other words in the language that sounded similar to the name of the dead man.[4] All ceremonials and rituals were *pukimani* as were the main performers and the armlets, neck ornaments, and other ceremonial objects. People in a *pukimani* state had to observe all sorts of avoidances of and abstentions from everyday actions, particularly with regard to food and sex. Close relatives of dead people could not touch food but had to be fed by nonmourners. That pillar of rigid orthodoxy, Tu'untalumi, was virtually never able to feed himself but was in a *pukimani* state almost the whole year round and needed one of his wives to feed him. (Another advantage of a large household.) Certain spots in the bush or on the banks of streams were *pukimani* places; the dimly seen outline of the Australian coast was *pukimani* as was the ocean near Cape Keith where the Tiwi ancestors had first created the Tiwi world; and finally, the violation of a *pukimani* restriction rendered the violator *pukimani*.

Pukimani as thus applied to people, places, things, names, words, restrictions, and avoidances, meant both sacred and taboo, and was clearly one of that widespread class of words and concepts that is almost standard among the simpler societies. The only noteworthy thing about its Tiwi form is that *pukimani* was a state which people did not actively seek to enter but which happened to people regardless of their wishes. Furthermore, when a man found himself in a state of *pukimani*, his behavior was automatically prescribed for him and for the duration of his *pukimani* condition he observed his avoidances and his abstentions just as automatically as he dropped them when his *pukimani* period expired. When he became *pukimani*, he punctiliously fulfilled the requirements because if he did not, he was likely to be unsuccessful in his enterprises. Big men simply did not dare to be casual about the requirements lest their reputations suffer and they lose face and influence. Less successful men were occasionally explained as probably being secret violators. "His wives and daughters all seem to die young; he must have broken some *pukimani* restrictions sometime" was a reason often given for somebody's failure to be as successful as he might have been. It was noticeable in such explanations of nonsuccess that the failure, or in our terms the bad luck, was attributed to the violation of the taboos, never to the active displeasure of the spirits. The spirits simply did not figure in the picture.

Apart from the big ceremonial occasions, a Tiwi did not have much concern with religion in his everyday life except through some aspect of the *pukimani* system. It was only through *pukimani* that the sacred world impinged upon him at all for most of the year. Since *pukimani* was a condition that could not be actively sought but "just happened" to a person every so often by such common events as the death of a relative, his wife giving birth, or his

[4] When a man named Tibuki died in 1928, a crisis occurred at the Mission where the natives were supposed to make their requests in pidgin English. How could they now ask for tobacco, since that word was now *pukimani*?

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

forward to the periodic visits of the luggers, for they brought a new source of iron and trinkets. 175 648

Joe Cooper, the Australian buffalo hunter who had been chased out of the islands on his first attempt in 1897, returned again a few years later having first kidnaped two Tiwi women so that his mainland native helpers of the Yuwatja (Iwaidja) tribe near Cape Don could learn the language. When they had, he returned with a strong mainland detachment and well equipped with guns and horses. By 1900, European firearms were efficient weapons and a Tiwi spearman no longer could expect to kill a man armed with a modern rifle. Cooper is said never to have gone unarmed in his fifteen or so years (from about 1900-1916) as "King of Melville Island."[4]

In retrospect it is apparent that the agent through whom the Tiwi learned of the outside world was not Cooper, the white man, but his companions the Yuwatja (Iwaidja). They were more numerous and more approachable than Cooper, and several of them even had Tiwi wives whom they had captured. Tiwi accounts of these captives are noteworthy. It was the young Tiwi men hanging around Cooper's camp who suggested to the Yuwatja that they go and capture, by force of arms, Tiwi females who had recently become widows. The young men were thus performing their customary role of agents in widow remarriage—but in this case for foreign clients.

Cooper and his Yuwatja camped at various localities on Melville Island until about 1916 when their last base, at Paru opposite the site of the Mission, was abandoned and he and his mainlanders withdrew from the islands. It was this last camp at Paru that was made headquarters by Sir Baldwin Spencer, the well-known Australian anthropologist, when he visited the Tiwi in 1912.[5] [114]

While Cooper was at Paru he was also visited by a young Alsatian priest, Father Francis Xavier Gsell, M. S. C., who was contemplating establishing a mission on adjacent Bathurst Island. Cooper tried to discourage Father Gsell by telling him that the Bathurst Islanders had guns and were dangerous; apparently Cooper did not want any missionaries around his rough-and-ready establishment. But Father Gsell did not scare easily; in June 1911 he returned and built his mission station on the southeast corner of Bathurst Island, where it still stands today. Cooper left Paru permanently about five years later. 175 797

By 1916, five years after its founding, the Mission had two French priests, several French nuns and some Filipino workmen, and a lugger which ran to and from Port Darwin once a month. It was not until the nuns came that the local Tiwi put any trust in the missionaries; they could not understand why a man who claimed to be as important as Father Gsell claimed to be did not have any wives. When the nuns arrived, the Tiwi were more ready to accept the priest as "a big man" and began to bring their women around.

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[4] Hardly a year goes by without a newspaper in Australia running a Sunday supplement article on Cooper's stay at Melville Island. Such stories often are titled "The King of Melville Island" and are normally extremely romanticized.

[5] Spencer 1914. Spencer's account of the Tiwi is remarkably inaccurate and confused. On this trip to the Northern Territory in 1912 he was without his usual collaborator, Gillen.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Thus Cooper with his well-armed retinue of mainlanders had made the islands safe for white men and introduced a desire for white men's goods, particularly tobacco. His retirement from Melville Island left the newly established Mission on Bathurst Island as the only source of supply for these goods. After World War I, however, another influence began to grow in importance. Large numbers of Japanese pearling boats came and anchored off the coasts of southern and southeastern Melville Island, where they traded with the local bands—the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula. These bands got tobacco and European-type food (flour, rice, tea, sugar) from the Japanese in quantities which the Catholic missionaries could not afford to provide; all the Japanese asked in return was access to young native women. Men who controlled many women—as fathers, as husbands, or as brothers—were thus in a favorable position to profit by the traffic with the Japanese.

Whereas the demands made by the Japanese on the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula for women were quite straightforward and uncomplicated, Father Gsell's demands on the bands of south Bathurst Island were somewhat more complex in their consequences. Many aspects of the old pattern of Tiwi life had to be abandoned to make them into Christians. To the missionaries, polygamy was sinful and could not be part of the new Tiwi life. Prenatal and infant bestowal had to be abolished. Marriages should be between agemates and should be arranged freely and solely by the couple involved. Such changes were the crux of Father Gsell's program, and the story of how he went about it has run in many a Sunday supplement in the cities of Australia under the title "The Bishop With 150 Wives."[6] Father Gsell did not try to convert or drastically change the behavior of the older Tiwi; he believed that they were too set in their ways. Rather, he built toward a distant day by working among the younger generation. When infant girls became widows, he purchased them from their fathers. Men with young widowed daughters and those with spare young wives sold such girls for axes, flour, tobacco, cloth, and trinkets. Such "Blackies," as they became affectionately called,[7] lived in the convent with the French (and later Australian) sisters. When such a girl reached the age of about 18, she was asked to choose one of the young single men for her husband. For his part in this excellent deal which provided him with a wife long before he would get one under the old tribal system, the young man had only to promise that he would never take another wife. Such a wedding was not a Mass, for neither party was Catholic. However, the children born of this new union were baptized and reared as Catholics. Later, a few of the girls who had been sold to Father Gsell before they were ten went through confirmation as did their youthful fiances. The first nuptial Mass between two such Tiwi took place in 1928.

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[6] Father Gsell became Bishop of Darwin in 1938. He lived on in retirement to 1958, having seen in his lifetime the fulfilment of his dream of the Tiwi as a Catholic tribe.

[7] The Tiwi today strongly resent being called "African," "Negro," or "nigger," but they do not seem to mind being called "Blacks." The term "Blackie" for a young female is in general use by Mission school girls for themselves; it is in no sense derogatory.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

When between the mid-1920's and the early 1940's the Japanese began to give trade goods to men for sexual access to their wives, Father Gsell's missionization program ran into competition. The Japanese gave the old Tiwi males a much better deal than did Father Gsell. The Japanese with their continuous payment for access to women poured into the households of these old men the same sort of goods which Gsell provided. But in the case of the Japanese, the goods were paid time and again over a matter of years and the old father or husband was kept permanently in tobacco and food. Thus, oddly indeed, the two chief outside influences which came to bear upon the traditional Tiwi system of marriage, after about 1920, were both agencies which were anxious (for entirely different reasons and ends) to "buy" young girls and pay their ancient husbands or fathers for relinquishing them; temporarily in the case of the Japanese, permanently in the case of the missionaries. The Tiwi could scarcely be expected to cease putting a high value on women, and upon control over women, under these conditions.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

6

The Tiwi Today

Changes since 1930

There were in 1929 only two year-round settlements of outsiders which were significant to the Tiwi. One was Bathurst Island Mission, by then nearly twenty years old, the only permanent white-man establishment on the islands. It acted as the main exit point for travel to Darwin, the other focus of Tiwi life. There was also the large camp of Mandiimbula and Yeimpi on the south coast of Melville Island, which owed its existence to the sexual arrangement between the Tiwi and Japanese pearlers. 648 [797] [361 459]

In the 1930's, the centers of Tiwi activity shifted somewhat. The Australian government successfully broke up the camp located on the south coast by transporting nearly all of the Yeimpi to Darwin and by sending patrol boats out to discourage the Japanese from frequenting the area. In about 1935, the Japanese moved their base for contact with the Tiwi north to the region of Garden Point, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, just beyond the ruins of old Fort Dundas. Around the great fresh-water pool on the beach at that locality there developed a Tiwi camp like that which formerly had existed on the south coast; however, the native bands involved were no longer the Yeimpi and Mandiimbula but the Malauila, Munupula, Wilrangwila, and Turupula of northern Bathurst and Melville islands. The government again attempted to control sexual activities between Tiwi and Japanese, but to get to this spot a patrol boat from Darwin had to travel along forty miles of indented coastline which amplified and seemed to project every throb of an engine toward the ears of the Japanese miles away. The patrol boats found that they could not sneak up on the pearlers unannounced and, therefore, could not catch them in the act of cohabiting with native women. [361]

By the late 1930's, pressure from missionary and other humanitarian circles in the southern part of Australia forced the government to attempt to terminate, or at least to control, the trade pattern which had become estab-

[p. 104 is blank]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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648 lished between the northern Tiwi and the Japanese. A government ration depot was founded at Garden Point about 1939 and many of the local Tiwi females were taken by the government to Darwin in order to stop their use by Japanese pearlers. However, by that time many Japanese half-castes had been born to the women.

797 In 1940, a new Catholic mission was established at Garden Point to care for these half-castes. This Melville Island Mission brought together not only the island part-aborigines, but also other Catholic half-castes from all over the Northern Territory. By late 1940, it became clear that the existence 648 of a government depot for aborigines at Garden Point was incompatible with a policy aimed toward educating the adjacent half-caste children for life as members of the white Australian community. The government ration center was removed to Snake Bay. Also, by 1940, the government had begun to remove lepers from both Bathurst and Melville islands to a leprosarium on Channel Island in Darwin harbor. Here, over the following years, developed a community of Tiwi which often numbered as many as forty persons. At Channel Island they found themselves forcefully confined amongst natives from many mainland tribes. Tiwi who returned from Channel Island after years of residence there were more sophisticated in European ways than their fellow-tribesmen and found themselves agents of white Australian culture.

The winter (our summer) of 1941 was the last in which the Japanese came to Garden Point. The Catholic brothers who were there at the time viewed at least one extraordinary event in those months before Pearl Harbor. On this occasion, a man in the uniform of a Japanese naval officer was seen aboard the mother ship of the Japanese pearling fleet which called in at Garden Point; under Australian law neither ship nor officer were allowed within the three-mile limit. Pearl Harbor occurred a few months later.

The year 1942 brought modern warfare to the Tiwi. An American plane running out of the Philippines lacked enough fuel to get to Darwin; it landed on the small airstrip at Bathurst Island Mission. Then on February 19, 1942, Darwin was bombed. Japanese planes flew over Bathurst Island Mission on their way to commit what became "Australia's Pearl Harbor." Father McGrath, the local priest, recognized the raiders as Japanese and radioed his warning into Darwin twenty minutes before the horror commenced. The message went unheeded and the loss of life and property was great. Bathurst Island Mission was itself strafed, possibly for the attempt to warn Darwin. The bombing of Darwin left the Northern Territory in chaos. The white residents evacuated southward by any means at hand; in one case, two men drove a road grader seventy miles "down the track" before they felt safe enough to stop.

The disruption of the Tiwi community was as great as that of the white settlement at Darwin, although no Tiwi were killed in the bombing and strafing by the Japanese. The Catholic authorities realized that they could not guarantee a food supply to the natives, and the Tiwi families at the Mission were sent to the bush to support themselves. Tipperary, a Tiwi who was by 1942 an old hand in Darwin, told Pilling (1954) of the privation he had endured when he had taken to the bush and had not had a smoke for four months after the attack on Darwin.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

months after the attack on Darwin. Many of the older Tiwi who were in Darwin during the bombing did not survive the war; the psychological strain and lack of sufficient food was too much for them. Genealogies show that an unusual number of deaths occurred among Tiwi between 1942 and 1946. 648 [165]

When Western food supplies again became available, the old Tiwi bush living seems to have departed. The Tiwi suddenly realized their full dependence upon the products which only the whites could provide. As the war came to an end and one after another of the temporary military bases were abandoned, the missionaries and the Tiwi salvaged what they could, transporting large amounts of corrugated iron to Bathurst Island Mission for native huts. The Tiwi were drawn together around the Mission in larger numbers than ever before, their camps ranging in a line along the Mission beach. The majority of the Tiwi, about 600, considered Bathurst Island Mission their home, although some of the young adult males spent most of the year in Darwin. About 50 islanders lived adjacent to the half-caste Melville Island Mission at Garden Point. Another 150 were permanently located at the government settlement at Snake Bay. The remaining Tiwi, about 150, were year-round residents of Darwin; over one hundred lived at Bagot Native Compound and at an unsupervised native camp at Point Gunn directly opposite the southernmost tip of Melville Island; the rest were inmates at the leper colony. The resulting total population of about 950, in 1954, is only about a hundred less than the figure of 1062 which Hart obtained in his census of 1928-29. 177 361 797 162 [161]

Marriage Arrangements

We have discussed how, under the traditional Tiwi pattern of life, the greatest energies of mature males were expended in bargaining with each other for new wives. The old social system was one which had as normal features prenatal and early childhood engagements for females, remarriage for all widows, considerable age difference between marriage partners, and polygamy. The new Catholic system introduced by Father Gsell outlawed, or at least discouraged, polygamous marriages, nuptial unions between persons of greatly differing ages, and all prenatal or childhood betrothals. As indicated, Father Gsell initiated his new policies by purchasing young females and then allowing them to choose their own partners from among their single agemates. 177 797 58

It is of interest to inspect the actual circumstances surrounding one of the earliest unions which took place under Father Gsell's supervision. About 1914, Polly, an attractive young female who had already had a rather checkered career, having been stolen by a Yuwatja male from her rightful mate, was "stolen back" by another Tiwi, Timalarua of the Rangwila. Polly, however, decided that she did not want an old husband like Timalarua, so she ran away to the sisters and Father Gsell. In time, old Timalarua allowed Father Gsell to buy this wife who did not want to live with him. Shortly afterward, Father Gsell asked Polly whom she wanted to marry. Polly named Cabbagee as the 159 177 584 797

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 177 584 797 male of her choice and the couple soon set up housekeeping with Father Gsell's blessing. This was, at least, how the missionary saw it.

But what were the real circumstances surrounding this "free choice" by Polly? Her real father—that is, the husband to whom her mother Rita was married when Polly was born—had promised Polly to Kardu. Timalarua had "stolen" Polly from Kardu, her rightful husband. Nor is this the whole story. Rita had been "stolen" by Puti from Polly's father Turimpi. After several fights between Puti and the aging Turimpi and after Rita's complete refusal to return to Turimpi, Turimpi allowed Puti to keep Rita as his wife. Polly, however, was ultimately to go to the man to whom she had been promised, Kardu. But Puti, as the potential next father of Polly, had promised Cabbagee that as soon as Kardu died Polly was to be Cabbagee's wife. That is, when Polly chose Cabbagee as her mate she was only bypassing Kardu and taking as her husband the next normal alternative open to her.

When one considers what parts of Father Gsell's reform were significant in this case, one finds that only late consummation of marriage, monogamy, and marriage between agemates were important. A female did not actually have a "free choice" of her mate as Father Gsell had hoped and, in fact, had specified. She selected a youth to whom one of her relatives had at least tentatively promised her. Or (to put it in Hart's terms) she married—under Mission auspices—a young man who had at least a second or third mortgage on her.

159 177 595 797 Let us follow the case of Cabbagee's marriage further. He married Polly when he was about 23; he was too young to be married in the old pattern and was, therefore, happy to get a wife and be on his way up the social ladder. But when the next female promised to him (before her birth) came of age and he collected her, Polly made a terrific row. She did not want any younger female around her household as a second wife and told the priest at the Mission so. He in turn deprived Cabbagee of all gifts of tobacco and food and sent him and his family to the bush to think over the matter. After a few months, Cabbagee decided that he wanted tobacco and that after all the only place he could get it was at the Mission. He and his family returned and he gave up his second wife to Father Gsell, for a payment of food.

Younger men who were getting wives from among Father Gsell's convent girls thus found that they were unwise to accept a second wife from any other source. But such a young man, married under Catholic auspices, soon found that he could enhance his prestige without invoking criticism from the [584 557] Mission if he gathered around him his own female relatives, the younger of whom he could give away later, one at a time, to men of his choice. A married man like Cabbagee, who gave another man his sister or sister's daughter, was in a position to ask all sorts of favors from the recipient, especially gifts of food, tobacco, and trade goods, and support in politics.

177 583 By the end of World War II, even these newer concepts of marriage agreement had begun to alter. There were many young Christian females desiring to have husbands whose fathers and brothers were not asking further wives as repayment. The fathers began to ask for new types of concessions

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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from their future sons-in-law and demands which look very much like bride price and bride service developed as a basis for marriage arrangement. A young girl had a relatively "free choice" of her future spouse. But following this selection, her father let it be known to the young man what he expected. The desired payment was often stated in Australian money by the 1950's; some men were asking as much as a hundred pounds for a daughter. (This was a very high sum, since Tiwi males working for the Army received four pounds a week as normal wages.) Other men were asking that their sons-in-law live with them, thus leaving their own parental home, and contribute regularly to the upkeep of the household of the father-in-law. This was, indeed, quite a practical arrangement, for when such a young man went to work in Darwin his wife had to be supervised at home and, further, his employer was supposed to send home to the Mission part of the young man's wages.

Thus, by 1954, the following type of marriage agreement was initiated by the great majority of Tiwi with marriageable daughters, specifically those who centered their activities at Bathurst Island Mission and Garden Point. A young girl chose her future husband from her single, male agemates, sometimes with a suggestion from her father. Her father informed his future son-in-law of the obligations incumbent upon him, which normally included matrilocal postmarital residence and a bride price. An older woman with children, or even one without any offspring, who became a widow, was discouraged from remarrying by her father, if he survived, and by her brother after her father's death. The father or eldest brother of a widow with a daughter reaped the benefits of allowing that daughter to marry the young man whom she desired. The widow herself did not remarry but stayed in the household of her father or brother.

Residence Patterns

By 1953, traditional Tiwi residence patterns had undergone major modifications, some of which have already been mentioned. The old residence areas of the bands had been depopulated; in fact, nearly all the Tiwi were located around one of four European establishments—those at Darwin, Bathurst Island Mission, Garden Point, or Snake Bay. In each of these areas a centralized village pattern had developed. Within the Tiwi communities at Snake Bay, Garden Point, and Bathurst Island Mission there remained a few of the old large households with a polygamous base. But in all these camps the household heads were well past sixty and in most cases past seventy. Polygamous households were dying out by 1953.

But what was replacing them? One might assume that the European pattern of the single family household based upon neolocal residence would have emerged as the new Tiwi system. This was not the case, however. Just as Hart found in 1928-29 that successful Tiwi men were the heads of large establishments, so in 1953-54 the younger male leaders had gathered around

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After Cooper had established himself a number of investigators, Brown in 1905, Klaatsch in 1906, Spencer and Basedow in 1911, and Fry in 1913, paid short visits to the Islands, and recorded valuable information on the aborigines and their ceremonial life. 175 114

Following their departure no research work was carried out until 1929, when Hart spent a year or more among the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands. But though Hart must have collected a great deal of data among the almost untouched aborigines of those times, he has published only two short papers on their customs. (Hart, 1930, pp. 167–80; pp. 280–290.)

Again there was a lag in time, except for a short paper by Harney and Elkin (1942, pp. 228–34), until Pilling in 1953, stationed at the Bathurst Island Sacred Heart Mission, spent over a year studying aboriginal life and social organization.[8]

In 1954 the National Geographic Society's expedition established a camp at Snake Bay on the north coast of Melville Island (Fig. 1), and for six months studied the ethnology, the geology and the ornithology of the area. Although the National Geographic Society of America provided the bulk of the funds, Mr. John Bonython of Adelaide financed the geological survey of Melville and Bathurst Islands. 121 114 [122]

The expedition party of American and Australian scientists was an excellent example of international co-operation. It was made up of Miss Jane Goodale, ethnologist, and Dr. Carleton Coon, Professor of Anthropology, both from the University of Pennsylvania; Mr. David Parsons, ornithologist from Yale University; Mr. Brian Daily, geologist from the University of Adelaide; Mr. William E. Harney, guide, Mr. George Joy, cook, and myself, as leader and ethnologist.

Our combined research covered a wide field. Miss Goodale concentrated on the place of the women and children in the community, Mr. Parsons collected and studied the birds of the island, Mr. Daily, by an examination of the outcropping rocks, established the geological history of Melville and Bathurst Islands, whilst I, apart from the duties of leadership, concentrated on the art, myth, and particularly the burial ceremonies.

During their visit, Dr. Carleton Coon and his wife made a special study of the physical characteristics of the aborigines.

I chose Melville Island as a centre of research, because it was evident from the scattered writings of Basedow, Fry, Hart, Harney, Spencer and 121 01

[8] The Sacred Heart Mission was established on Bathurst Island, opposite Cooper's camp, during 1911. [797]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

their heads. During these songs, the husband sat quietly at one end of the *milimika*, with his head in his hands (Pl. 23B). 765 [535]

The *ilania* concluded with *Nangrinini* calling *Ahuprumani* (a mangrove bird); *Malumerinita* calling *Tjirinini* (the red-backed sea-eagle) and the assembled men, making the honey and mosquito call.

During one of the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, a near relative had his name changed from *Miralipaiwa* to *Tukuwuinganili*.[71] [553]

(3) *The Ilanias of Makapini*

At the same time as the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi* was being performed, an old woman, *Makapini*, was baptized at Bathurst Island by the priest, just as she was dying, and, although she had never accepted Christianity, was buried, against the wishes of her relatives, in the mission cemetery. 797 ●

The aborigines of both Bathurst and Melville Island were distressed over this incident because as *Makapini* had always been a "pagan" (as the mission authorities call the unconverted), her spirit could not go to the white man's "heaven", and, as the *pukamuni* ceremonies were prohibited on Bathurst Island, the spirit of *Makapini* was doomed to wander, lonely and unhappy, for ever. To prevent such a calamity (for lonely *mopaditis* are a danger to the living), the aborigines of Melville Island performed a modified *pukamuni*, called the *aramatruni-nipungari*,[72] so that, at its conclusion, the spirit of old *Makapini* would travel happily to her future home. 765 [775]

The pattern of this ceremony differed somewhat from that of *Waniamperi*. At a *milimika* near the camp of the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, the Melville Island aborigines held five *ilanias* over a period of eight days. The final two days of the *pukamuni* were held among the poles.[73] I will describe a typical *ilania* and later the final *pukamuni* rituals.

The *ilania* opened with one of the "workers", who had been in the forest cutting the burial poles, running toward the *milimika*, stick in hand, giving the honey call. One of the *pukamuni* men rushed out to drive him away, but, after a sham fight with throwing sticks, brought him into the *milimika*.

The predominating songs and dances of this and other *ilanias* of *Makapini* were associated with the mythical wild-honey people[74] of Bathurst Island. 765 533 535

[71] Hart (1930, pp. 280–99) describes how the custom of altering the names of near relatives at death causes rapid changes in the language.

[72] This type of *pukamuni* ceremony is also held when aborigines are drowned at sea and their bodies not recovered. [766]

[73] This was a variation of the previous *pukamuni*, probably because the body was not at the place of ceremony.

[74] Although I did not inquire, it is certain from the songs, that the father or mother of the dead woman belonged to one of the honey totems of Bathurst Island.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532 765 [114] Dr. Kenneth Fry, when visiting the islands during 1913, made sketches of the pole shapes of eight *tudinis* and found out the meanings of five of them. These are reproduced on Fig. 8.

Fig. 8A represents a man carrying a roll of blankets on his back, *a*, being his hat, and *b*, his blankets. Fig. 8B also represents a man, *a*, as before, indicating his hat. On Fig. 8C, *a*, is the mast of a boat; on Fig. 8D, *a*, is the crutch in the boom of a pearling lugger (usually called branches of trees in the 1954 series); and on Fig. 8G, *a* is a window.

Dr. Fry did not find out the meanings of Fig. 8E, F, and H.

The present-day meaning of design, Fig. 8F, which could have applied to [177] [797] Dr. Fry's example, is somewhat interesting. The aborigines at the Bathurst Island mission are warned of the terrors of their future life if they are not buried "under the cross", i.e., in the mission cemetery.

When I asked the aborigines at Melville Island what was the significance of the cross they had carved on the top of several of their *pukamuni* poles, they explained that it was there purely as a "safety measure", just in case there was something in the mission story.

11. THE CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

[171] It has been known, for about twenty years, that aboriginal craftsmen, in widely separated places in Northern Australia, but particularly in north-eastern Arnhem Land, have made carved and painted figures in wood.[10] It was a surprise, however, to find that the Tiwi people, who appear to have been separated from the mainland cultures for a considerable time, were using similar figures in their burial rituals.

Inquiries revealed that, for some years, one or another of the aboriginal craftsmen, skilled in the carving of *pukamuni* poles with steel tools, and, no doubt, experimenting with new shapes, occasionally made a burial pole in the form of a conventionalized human body (Pl. 39), or smaller human figures (Pls. 40, 41), which were placed on the grave.

I gathered information about three old human-headed burial poles as well as adding to the expedition collection, two recently made poles and six smaller figures.

At the burial, about thirty years ago, of the mother of one of my informants, a "worker", called *Kado*, made and erected a human-headed burial pole. In 1941, Mr. W. E. Harney saw a well-carved head on a burial

[10] Mountford, 1956, p. 415, traces the distribution of the carved wooden figures in Northern Australia and their development at Yirrkalla, from simple human-headed burial posts of Malay origin to carved heads and full-length figures of considerable merit.

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

[31 [997] Island (Hart 1930) is inhabited by a subtribe called the Tiklauila. In 1911 a Roman Catholic Mission station was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island, virtually in Tiklauila territory, and at the time of the present writer's field work this was the only white settlement. In the generation before the missionaries arrived the "big man" among the Tiklauila was Turimpi. 159 Because of their complicated marriage and inheritance regulations the average Tiwi old man in the course of his lifetime accumulates an impressive number of wives and Turimpi was no exception to this rule. At the time of his death, which occurred toward the end of the 1890's at an age which was probably something approaching 70, Turimpi counted as his wives then living or pre-deceasing him no less than 25 females. Of these the only one we need to pay any attention to is the woman named Bongdadu. She, while Turimpi's wife, had borne numerous children, of whom three males grew to manhood—Antonio, born in approximately 1883, Mariano born three or four years later, and Louis born around 1893. Sometime between 1895 and 1900 she was widowed by the death of Turimpi, whereupon she married another elderly man, Murikambunga, to whom she bore two more sons—Tipperary, born around 1900, and Bob born about a year later. Bongdadu of course had numerous other children who did not survive childhood.[8] It is her five adult sons who concern us here.

Turimpi, as the number of wives suggests, was an important tribal figure during his lifetime. Importance, prestige, tendency to be spoken of as a "big [554] man" are in Tiwi functions of a number of factors in which age, number of wives, fighting ability, wisdom in council, and "family" in the sense of having relatives who are also "big men," are all compounded. On all these counts Turimpi was important, and his prestige tended to carry on after his death. 554 Since the horde or subtribe is a comparatively small group, ranging in size 62 from 214 for the Tiklauila (the biggest) to 57 for the Mingwila (the smallest), there will seldom be more than two or three "big men" in a subtribe at the same time, and at certain periods there may be none at all since the few old men who have the age qualification may not have the other qualifications. Turimpi's death left the Tiklauila to some extent in this state. There were few other men with comparable seniority and none of them had the qualifications for informal leadership and local prestige that he had possessed. His death left a gap, and [768] a gap that could hardly be filled by his eldest son Antonio, who at the time of his father's death was a youth of about 16 years of age. About thirty years [114] later, in 1928 to 1930, the field work upon which the present paper is based was carried out.

ANTONIO

159 It so happened that the present writer had been with the Tiwi for nearly three months before he met Antonio, although during those three months he had been closely associated with two of his brothers, Mariano and Tipperary. These two gave Antonio a great build-up as one of the most important men around, as a "big man" in every possible Tiwi sense. But when encountered in person he proved most disappointing. The only words that fitted Antonio

were words like "insecure" and "uneasy." He was not particularly aggressive nor particularly submissive, but he fluctuated between the two attitudes. One got the impression after associating with him that he was never sure of what was expected of him and acted therefore in contradictory ways according to what *he thought* was expected of him. Or to put the same impression another way, there seemed a constant discrepancy between what people expected of Antonio and what he wanted to do if left alone. In tribal fights, for instance, he acted fiercely and aggressively and with the air of swaggering braggadocio that that all important men are expected to show in fighting, yet at the earliest possible moment he melted into the crowd with visible relief at being able to quit the center of the stage and without a trace of rancor or ill will toward any of the people whom he had been abusing or had been abused by a few minutes before. In council meetings of senior men he was always listened to with respect yet always had to be prodded into speaking at all. He never initiated a policy or offered his opinion until pressure was put upon him to state what he thought, and while his opinion when given was listened to with attention it was always a paraphrase of some opinion already given, usually the majority opinion of the group. He expressed what he thought the group wanted him to say, never an "opinion of his own." In this respect Antonio had many of the characteristics of a "yes-man" and like his counterparts in more civilized societies he seldom took the unpopular side and seldom stood up to opposition.

Two burning political issues agitating the Tiwi in 1928-30 were the issues of (1) plural marriage and (2) the visits of the Japanese pearling luggers. The Catholic missionaries had taken a strong stand on plural marriages and were bringing all the economic and moral pressure they could exert on the younger Tiwi to induce them to restrict themselves to one wife. Failure to bow to Mission pressure resulted in the recalcitrant's being cut off from the European food, tobacco, clothes, etc. which could only be obtained through the Mission. But beginning in the middle 1920's Japanese pearling boats in ever increasing numbers had carried on the practice of anchoring on the further side of Melville Island during the period of high tide (when diving for pearl shell was impossible) and inviting the natives to provide their women as prostitutes for the use of the crews during their stay on the beaches. The Japanese captains paid lavishly in European goods for any women thus provided and the subtribes on the southeast side of Melville, in particular the subtribe called the Yeimpi, proved very susceptible to the Japanese temptations.

These two issues of plural marriage and prostitution for the Japanese rather neatly complemented each other at two points. Not only did the Japanese rival the Mission station as a source of supply for European goods; the possession of a large number of wives was a condition that made a man very unpopular with the missionaries, but, if he were disposed to rent out some of them, made the same man very popular with the Japanese. The plural marriage issue, if alone, would clearly have divided the tribe into the conservatives, staunchly upholding plural marriage as the Tiwi way, and the radicals abandoning it in return for Mission favor. But such an alignment was cut right across

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

by the Japanese issue, since it tempted the conservative with several wives to violate all the old tribal sanctions by renting out his wives, and it provided the Mission adherent radicals with a grand opportunity to pose as the real defenders of the old culture and to charge the old polygamists with being the real renegades from the ancient ways.

It can be easily guessed how high feelings ran on these issues and how hotly they were debated when a number of Tiwi gathered together. But on neither of these issues or on any aspect of them did Antonio show any signs of leadership. He accumulated wives but always apologized in a rather deprecating and apple-polishing way when he met the missionaries, and spent part of his time hanging around the Mission despite the contemptuous attitude which the missionaries adopted toward him. He thus contrasted very unfavorably with some of his contemporaries, notably one Dooley who, having been for years a one-wife man and a Mission favorite, inherited a second wife at around the age of forty. Dooley's decision was clear-cut and highly spectacular. He accepted the second wife, shook the dust of the Mission station from his feet and never set foot near it again, taking up again the traditional life of a Tiwi elder, deep in the bush, with his two wives and later additions, ignoring all white innovations, even tobacco.[4] Dooley's uncompromising behavior was greatly admired by the tribe but few had the strength of character to emulate him, certainly not Antonio.

On the Japanese issue Antonio was just as vacillating. Prodded by others to make a statement he would in ringing tones denounce as disgraceful and scandalous the behavior of the Yelmpi wife-renters, but on his visits to the Yelmpi country ostensibly "to see for himself what was going on" he shared eagerly in the proceeds of vice which his friends there offered him and was even heard on a few occasions to wonder aloud why the Japanese always went to the Yelmpi country when there were plenty of secluded beaches in Tiklaulla country. Instantly challenged, "Would you want the Japanese to come here?" "Would you rent your wives to them if they did?" poor Antonio quickly turned it into a feeble joke, saying deprecatingly, "Oh no, no, no. I just wondered why they always go to those ugly Yelmpi women?"

In summary we might say that Antonio's personal behavior appeared to be that of a man pushed into a position rather too big for him to fill. He was not by nature particularly aggressive or domineering, but as the eldest son of Turimpi he was constantly being pushed by public opinion onto the center of the stage, whereas he would have been much happier if public opinion had left him alone to be an ordinary, average member of the crowd. The role he was called on by his status position to play seemed to give him little or no pleasure, little or no personal satisfaction. Such a view of his "personality" is supported by the fact that when alone in the bush with his own family and away from the society of his peers Antonio was relaxed and at ease. As Durkheim pointed out, the basic factor in Australian social psychology is that men spend a great part of their lives hunting and collecting in the bush, completely out of physical contact with all people except members of their own households,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

usually wives and children only, but this life lived in an isolated household is broken in upon at intervals by short interludes of the "collective life," when members of numbers of households gather together for ceremonies, legal proceedings, fights and initiations. If we may call these two types of living the public life and the private life of the adult male Australian, then we may say that Antonio was very happy in private life and uncomfortable in public life. The two activities which made him happiest were playing with his children and hunting with his dogs. When left alone by society to do these two things Antonio was a kindly, patient, gentle, good-natured and relaxed man, but in all social relations with other adult men he was nervous and uncertain of himself. One might hazard the opinion that it was because children and dogs made no great demands upon him that he was happy and at ease with them, but people he found very trying since they were always expecting him to "take a stand" or to make a decision and this was something he had no talent for, something which did not "come naturally" to him, and something which gave him no satisfaction. Turimpi's mantle had fallen on a man who just wanted the world to let him alone, who preferred his home, his family and his dogs to any rewards which public life could give him.

159 [571]

MARIANO

Mariano was first encountered in Port Darwin before the writer had got to the Tiwi. Finding me waiting for transportation to the islands, Mariano offered to come with me and act as my chief interpreter and informant. As he appeared a very intelligent and mature member of the tribe, I promptly hired him. Or so I thought at the time. Events were to prove that what had happened was that Mariano had appropriated me. For Mariano was (in his own opinion, at least) the only possible person fit to escort and advise a white man visiting the Tiwi. He had created something of a monopoly in the job of white man's escort and adviser. The beginning of this not unusual native profession went back, in his case, to the foundation of the Mission station. When the missionaries arrived in 1911 and began to build their mission houses Mariano became almost immediately the principal go-between of Mission and natives. As far as the situation of 1911 can now be reconstructed the factors operating to select Mariano for this position were merely suitability of social status, availability and willingness to undertake it. As already mentioned, the Mission was established at the southeast tip of Bathurst Island. This was Tiklauila territory and at that time the dominant family among the Tiklauila was that of Turimpi. Of Turimpi's sons, Antonio, the eldest, was about 28 or 29, Mariano was about 25 and Louis, the third son, was a youth not yet 20. Antonio's role as eldest son was already fixed, Mariano's, as second son, was still flexible. Antonio was personally unaggressive except when forced into taking a strong stand, Mariano (we may speculate) was already more forceful and more prone to draw attention to himself by aggressive behavior.[5] Mariano was just ready in 1911 to emerge from the age group of young men who should, according to Tiwi ideas, be seen and not heard into the age group of "junior adult men" who

123 159 [115] 159 [797] [561]

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 [561] have some slight voice in tribal affairs. Antonio had already emerged into this latter group and therefore was already committed to the old way of things to an extent that Mariano was not. This line of reasoning will explain at least why Mariano was chosen rather than Antonio. Louis, on the other hand, was still a boy indistinguishable among the group of 18 year olds.

159 554 797 Students of social organization in small societies are aware that in such societies the status requirements for certain positions are frequently such that often only a very few individuals, sometimes only one individual, are actually available to fill the positions. A similar narrow range of potential holders also pertains, it would seem, to statuses not known to the native culture but thrown up, as it were, by the demands of the culture-contact situation, as in the present case by the arrival of the Mission. What the missionaries needed among the natives was a spokesman for them (a) who had some influence, and influence in Tiwi is a combination of age, family prestige and personal forcefulness; (b) who was a local man in the district in which the Mission was built; (c) who was young enough to be flexible in his actions and thinking and therefore capable of being influenced by them; (d) who was not yet so committed to tribal mores (plural wives, strict observance of taboos, etc.) that once trusted by the Mission and identified in the native mind as a Mission-supporter he would be likely to embarrass the Mission by backsliding; and (e) who was willing to take on the job. They found their man in Mariano. A careful review of all the other possible candidates as they existed in 1911 fails to reveal any other man who had so many of the above desiderata. Dooley had many, but was a person of no family, certainly not a son of Turimpi.

In the early days of the Mission Mariano thus became its main spokesman among the tribe and the most trusted interpreter for and adviser of the priests. By 1928 he to some extent still occupied this position. But by then the Mission had had seventeen years in which to build up wider contacts and find other spokesmen, and its needs were no longer the same needs as in its pioneer days. Moreover, not only had the Mission matured in those seventeen years but so had Mariano. At the age of 42 or so, he was now a man of influence and prestige in the tribe but, like many better-known leaders of men in other societies, he was inclined toward an aggressive, bumptious self-importance and an exaggerated belief in his own indispensability. He had therefore become rather a trial to the missionaries (and to all the other white men to whom he had attached himself). The result was a continued series of quarrels between him and the Mission, which usually ended with Mariano, in a rage, storming off either to the bush or Port Darwin. In Port Darwin he characteristically worked for only the more important whites, senior government officials or at the hospital, until his anger had cooled sufficiently for him to return, self-contained, dignified, completely humorless and rather pompous, to ascertain whether the missionaries realized how foolish they had been to quarrel with him. If they had not, then he simply quit the Mission and waited for the arrival of some white visitor who needed a native sponsor. He thus acquired a greater knowledge of white ways than most of the Tiwi and as a result no doubt of his op-

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6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

portunities for cultural comparison he at the same time acquired an acute insight into his own culture and into the psychology of his fellow tribesmen. For the anthropologist he was a magnificent informant and a continuous pain in the neck. As increasing years gave him increasing tribal seniority, Mariano became increasingly domineering and touchy about his own importance and increasingly recognized by the younger men as the man who voiced the "promission" and hence "pro-white" point of view in tribal arguments. However, it would be a mistake to think of him as the "detribalized" native of the literature (as another Benelong, e.g., in the magnificent study of culture contact given by the Australian novelist Eleanor Dark, 1941). On the contrary the tough old unacculturated natives who lived deep in the bush and who tried to act much of the time as if white men didn't exist not only accepted Mariano but respected him and paid deep attention to his arguments. The reasons why they did this are, I think, all considerations of "personality," that is, they respected Mariano despite his collaboration with the Mission largely because Mariano was the kind of man he was. He was forceful and determined; he was sincere, he was consistent both in word and in deed, he was intelligent and knew both the psychology of his audience and how to marshal his arguments so as to obtain maximum impact from his material. And he had supreme confidence in his own righteousness. Time and again one was struck by the contrast between him and his elder brother Antonio. When Antonio spoke (always after being prompted or coerced into giving his opinion), people listened hoping to hear wisdom and force and cogency; instead they heard only hackneyed phrases and inconsistent arguments which left them dissatisfied and unconvinced. When Mariano spoke (always without invitation and frequently ahead of many of his seniors), he laid down, in vehement tones, a definite policy, and even though his policy was unacceptable to his hearers as it frequently was, they listened with close attention and voiced their approval at the end, not so much of the policy he outlined as the directness and clearness of the delivery and the logic of his position.

The difference between the two men is well illustrated by their attitudes toward the Japanese wife-renting on the Yeimpi beaches. On this, the burning issue of the day, Antonio never took a stand but shilly-shallied on all sides of it, despite the fact—frequently drawn to his attention—that his small daughter was betrothed to an old Yeimpi who was a notorious wife-renter and he, therefore, in a very short time would be faced with the decision of whether to hand the girl over to her promised husband or not. Mariano on the contrary seized upon the Japanese issue from its first appearance as proof of the essential soundness of the Mission campaign against plural marriages. His speeches were clear-cut and definite. "It all goes to show that the priests are right when they say that having a lot of wives is a bad thing. These old Yeimpi have too many wives. If they had only one each, like white men (and inferentially like Mariano himself), they would not be doing this disgusting thing of renting out their wives to Japanese, they would want to keep their one wife to themselves like decent Tiwi." Most of his hearers (a) considered themselves decent Tiwi, but

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 (b) had each a number of wives at home, (c) had not rented any to the Japanese
548 as yet (mainly because of lack of opportunity), but (d) were all suspecting each
595 other of contemplating an early trip to the Yeimpi country and therefore were
668 in chronic indecision on the whole matter. Hence Mariano's arguments were
797 greeted with the applause that any group of people caught among a complicated set of moral alternatives will give to one of their number who has solved for himself the conflicts that beset them and has solved them moreover in a way perfectly consistent with all his previous attitudes. It was the applause and approval that is expressed in our culture by some such phrase as "I may not agree with him but at least he is sincere and you always know where he stands."

159 But like similar people elsewhere Mariano inspired no close intimate
593 loyalty. Nobody felt warmly toward him. The missionaries used him but didn't like him, the anthropologist found him invaluable as an informant but intensely irritating in his self-importance and his belief in his own indispensability; among the natives he had no intimates and no close friends. His relations with his wife were much more formal and distant than was usual among monogamous couples and she frequently criticized him both in public and in private for what she called his "failure to talk to her"—undoubtedly the Tiwi equivalent of the American wife's complaint against her husband's absorption in business or politics. He was fond of his children but played with them little and then in a silent, brooding sort of way, confining his caresses to tickling and squeezing them, unlike Antonio whose play with his children was always carried on in an endless flow of chatter and two-way conversations. Child-talk, one surmises, was beneath Mariano's dignity.

All in all, Mariano was a forceful, domineering, self-important, introverted
177 man, pursuing his dedicated way as the leader of a cause—collaboration with
159 and imitation of the whites—but having personality traits which prevented him from inspiring any of the affection or warm devotion that other types of leaders inspire. There were many Tiwi, especially among the younger men, who were ready and willing to adopt at least the easier aspects of white culture such as clothes, work in Darwin, disrespect for tribal laws, violation of taboos, but in no sense can they be described as Mariano's followers, still less his admirers. Everyone respected Mariano, everybody consulted him, everybody made use of him and listened to him, but nobody warmed to him. He was as sound, as domineering, as aggressive, as humorless, as dedicated, as admirable as one of the Old Testament prophets—and just as difficult to like.

DARWIN

159 Of the five sons of Turimpi, it may be that the two who were most similar in whatever it is that is called personality were the second and third sons, Mariano and Louis. Both were "lonely ones," both had about them a kind of gloomy, inward-focused aura which inhibited warm friendly relations with
[522] others. Among a people to whom laughter and gaiety come easily, both were completely devoid of humor. Both were men dedicated to a cause, but in the

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 admitted the charge along the age-old line of "the woman tempted me," Louis always faced his accusers silently, sullenly, almost disinterestedly. He never excused himself, never alibied. On the other hand he never gloried in or boasted of his sexual exploits, he merely gave the impression that he was completely disinterested in the whole procedure of argument and punishment and wanted to get it over with as quickly as possible. It was very evident that, despite his sexual reputation, he was not invested with any glamour nor did he excite any hero-worship on the part of the younger men. The role of Don Juan [555] in some cultures can presumably be a role that leads to a successful seducer's [837] being envied and even to some extent hero-worshipped by the young bloods, but this seems quite absent as a cultural possibility in Tiwi values. Successful young seducers never act publicly as if they were proud of themselves nor in any way show off or assume a "look how clever I am" manner. Absence of such behavior was very noticeable in others besides Louis, and certainly he never acted in such a way, despite his obvious suitability for such a role were it culturally available.

In camp and during the periods of the collective life he was silent, gloomy and dour, frequently irritable, unfriendly and hostile to everybody. He was too young, in Tiwi terms, to rate a wife, but the policy of the Mission to dis- [582] courage plural marriages had as its positive correlate the promotion of mar- [797] riages for the wifeless young men and Louis was one of those who had obtained a wife through Mission manipulations. She died after a beating which Louis in one of his frequent fits of anger had administered to her, and while the natives never said so openly, they clearly agreed with the Mission's charges that Louis had murdered his wife. Thus accused to his face by the Mission, Louis shrugged his shoulders in his normal, indifferent way. In council he seldom spoke and what he said carried no weight. This, of course, may well have [561] been due to his age as in Tiwi terms Louis at 31 or 32 was still a young man who should keep silent in the presence of his seniors. But it was very noticeable that even in the quick informal conferences between members of a party on the march involving such petty decisions as whether to camp at this waterhole or try and make the next one before nightfall, or in similar minor decision-making, Louis took no part. He listened silently to the debate, was very quick to foresee correctly what the decision was going to be as was evidenced by his starting off again by himself before the main party had realized where the consensus lay, but he apparently felt no urge to express aloud his own views on the issue. His actions showed that in his private analysis of the situation he was way ahead of most of the debaters but apparently his personal satisfactions came from correct anticipation of majority decision rather than from any desire to participate himself in decision-making. The same ability to listen, analyze what he heard, to act upon his own analysis but never to intervene actively was very noticeable in Louis' reaction to the accusations against him by the outraged husbands. An outraged husband usually begins his charges late at night when the camps are quiet. At such a time he begins to yell his accusations through the darkness at the top of his voice, naming the seducer,

159 522 572 of the oldest and most respected seniors, particularly of Tu'untalumi and those swayed by his opinion. It follows from this that Tip though given to jokes and pranks cannot be written off as merely a privileged buffoon. On the contrary his wit and gaiety earned him friends and his friends gave him influence out of proportion to his youth. Some insight into this is supplied by the shadow of the ubiquitous Louis. Tipperary, through the missionaries' efforts on behalf of monogamy, had obtained a wife at a much earlier age than would have been possible under pre-white conditions, and according to the women, who have their own sources of information about such things, Louis was strongly attracted by Tipperary's wife. Since Louis was not noted for restraint or self-discipline in these matters the obvious question was why he did not press his attention on her as he had done on numerous other women, including the wife of Tip's younger brother Bob. "Oh no, he doesn't dare chase after Tipperary's wife. The old men would be very angry if he did anything to her," was the reply of the old hags who were the local gossip columnists. This belief that the "old men" would undoubtedly protect Tip's wife while they had noticeably failed to protect Bob's wife from a similar threat (see below) is a pretty clear indication that the two young men had very different places in tribal estimation—a fact that in turn can be correlated with no status differential between them and leaves only the "personality" difference between the two men to account for it. Tip was popular with the control groups, Bob was not, therefore the control groups would support Tip because they liked him. They were indifferent toward Bob.[10]

[177] [582] [626]

159 To summarize Tipperary is relatively easy. He was a cheery, relaxed, fun-loving young man who enjoyed his own humor but enjoyed it all the more if it were shared by an appreciative audience. He was therefore gregarious, friendly, outgoing and extroverted. He would have been a good Rotarian or a better disk-jockey. Because of these traits he was noticed a great deal more by his elders than his age justified and the notice he received was usually favorable. He was popular in a way none of his brothers were, and because of this popularity was able to express opinions and exert influence to an extent unusual for one of his years. In a society where men under 30 are expected to be seen and not heard, Tip was constantly being heard. This was only possible because his natural gaiety and warmth prejudiced almost everybody in his favor. He was the sort of man about whom it is often said in our culture "he always makes a party go," or, "he is the sort of person who just naturally makes friends."

BOB

The youngest brother, Bob, needs only two words to describe him—complete nonentity. About 27 or 28 when I knew him and, because of the Mission's efforts, married a good deal younger than he would have been under pre-white conditions, Bob, whatever the occasion or circumstances, was always part of the background. Like many of the younger Tiwi he was inclined to spend part of each year in Darwin working for the white men, and by them he was regarded as a good, willing, obliging and respectful worker.

[464]

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

121 theorists," says Boas, "assume a mental equipment of primitive man distinct from that of civilized man. I have never seen a person in primitive life to whom this theory would apply. There are slavish believers in the teachings of the past and there are scoffers and unbelievers; there are clear thinkers and muddle-headed bunglers; there are strong characters and there are weaklings" (1951). It is noteworthy that this (for Boas) unusually flat and definite statement was made in an attempt to demolish the views of Levy-Bruhl that between civilized man and the primitive there is an impassable psychological gap. Perhaps—as Tipperary would say, if he understood the matter—perhaps, the personality and culture movement is merely Levy-Bruhl in modern dress, perhaps the latent content of the movement is to deny to the people of the simpler cultures the ordinary elementary human qualities of individual difference and human variation, thereby enabling "personality" and "individuality" to be treated as unique creations of the white races to be found only among the followers of the American way of life. If this indeed be the latent content of much "personality and culture" literature, it seems to warrant a flat and unqualified rejection, in terms as emphatic as those of Boas, by all those anthropologists who, like Boas, may not know projective tests but do know something about the simpler native societies.

NOTES

121 [1] In view of the wide discrepancies in the use of the word "personality" it must be made clear again that all that is meant by the word here is the level of description one is apt to get if in ordinary social conversation one asks the question, "What sort of person is he?"

115 [2] The native names of these men are all polysyllabic and difficult for the reader to remember. I use therefore the names bestowed upon them by white men, to aid in keeping them distinctly in mind. The Spanish names, Antonio, etc., were bestowed by certain Filipino carpenters who built the building for the Roman Catholic missionaries when they first arrived. Tipperary is, of course, a white corruption of a native name.

159 [3] It will be noticed by close students of the above information that Turimpi must have been born in the 1830's, Bongiadu born somewhere around 1865. She had her first child when she was about 16 or 17, at which time her husband Turimpi was at least 50. This is a perfectly normal Tiwi marital situation, the commonest marriage arrangement being one in which a newly-born female child is betrothed by her father to a man in his thirties.

159 177 797 [4] Even from the anthropologist Dooley would not accept tobacco until he had convinced himself that in return he would not be required to sacrifice any of his principles. Nor would he take his son, to whom he was passionately attached, to the Mission station for medical treatment—perhaps the most striking proof of the uncompromising attitude that Dooley had adopted toward the Mission.

159 [5] Such a speculation about Mariano's personality at the age of 25, seventeen years before the author knew him, is based upon the general belief of social scientists that personality does not change much between 25 and 42, and the particular evidence of the older missionaries that Mariano was "already inclined to throw his weight around" when they first arrived.

13 182 837 [6] Goodenough (1949) is apparently one of the few anthropologists to discuss the relation between extra-marital sexual activity and the opportunities provided by the nature of the physical environment. The point here is slightly different; whether the Tiwi physical environment encourages adultery is uncertain since a social system such as theirs would promote adultery whatever the physical environment, but it certainly helps to increase the suspiciousness of husbands.

837 [7] That seduction has to be a daytime activity is implied in what has already been said. After sundown the women are concentrated in their husband's camp and have no opportunity. Which

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

192 like this word. They also have a strange way of twisting words; for example Port Darwin is called *Pudarnap*.

177 *The Future.* The people themselves are—in Mr. Harney's opinion—mentally lazy, and hold a curious mixture of mission and native teaching. Although 797 Christians—Roman Catholics—believing in God, they have a fixed dread of *Maratdje*, the rainbow serpent. The good that the mission would do is limited by two facts, in spite of the sincere labours of the missionaries: (1) there is no fixed progressive policy with regard to material advancement. The missions are not self-supporting, probably owing to the poor quality of the soil around that part. (2) The younger natives have too easy an entrance into Darwin. They reach it by short stages with canoe from Melville Island. Moreover, their presence in the town is always welcome and encouraged, because it means cheap labour for the white people. Unfortunately, it is the beginning of the end for the native.

000 One thing is urgently required if they are to be saved: (1) complete control forcing them to stay on their Islands; these provide plenty of native food. And (2) subsidizing of the mission to do "controlled work" in line with government policy. Apart from that, but only if necessary, a station, such as at Garden Point, could be opened and attention given to the medical and other needs of the islanders, in particular, of the aged and sick.

W. E. Harney.
A. P. Elkin.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

137
342
361

Fig. 1. Snake Bay Settlement

114 Islanders on a hunt. The trip took us to a small clearing on the right bank of the Paluwiunga River, ten miles upstream from where it empties into the Arafura Sea.

131 A brief glance at the map will help to further pinpoint this location. Ten degrees south of the equator and at a distance of twenty to fifty miles due north from the Australian Northern Territory capital of Darwin, lies the relatively large Melville Island (1,000 square miles), named for Viscount Henry Dundas Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, who authorized the coastal survey of 1818 during which the island was circumnavigated. To the west, separated by a narrow strait, lies the smaller Bathurst 101 Island. The group of people with whom I found myself camped by the river bank were members of the Tiwi, a tribe of Australian [161 Aboriginals whose country includes both these islands. Today about 361] seven hundred members of the tribe live near to the southeast corner 197 of Bathurst Island where they are in various ways administered to by the Sacred Heart Mission. On the northern coast of Melville 161 Island, on a hill overlooking Snake Bay, near the mouth of the

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OVO out from East Point, and from the nearest island of the Vernon group, were also clearly visible as we passed over them. Straight ahead, Melville and Bathurst Islands now showed up, the hills a darker blue, and every moment they became more and more distinctly visible.

133 We turned west again as we reached the shores of Melville Island. Below, and near at hand, in turn were sandy beaches,
137 cliffs that come straight down to the water's edge, or low mangrove-flats through which wind serpentine inlets of salt water. Inland, low green hills are covered with open tropical forest, denser on the lower slopes and thinning towards the arid, stony summits. Fan-palms grow among the tropical eucalypts, and the familiar pandanus palm borders open grassy flats just as it does on the mainland across the narrow seas. Buffalo, now
[136] so much reduced in numbers that nobody shoots them, feed on the flats, and in the forest-covered hills are many kangaroos and wallabies. Little bays, and now and then projecting lines of reef, make natural boat-harbours, and far away across the tree-tops a wide expanse of shining water seems to be a great lake surrounded by wooded hills—it is actually an arm of the sea on the eastern side of Cape Van Diemen.

The funnel-shaped entrance to Apsley Strait, the mile-wide, fifty-mile-long stretch of fast-flowing waterway that separates the two islands, soon appeared beneath us. Looking towards the north, on the eastern side of this narrow silvery passage, one sees the wooded hills, the dense patches of vivid green jungle, and the open swampy plains of Melville Island. To the west, on the Bathurst Island side of the entrance, dense plantations of coco-nut palms occupy the foreground. There are cleared fields with a wall of forest beside them, white roofs among the palms, and beyond again are thickly-timbered heights.

DENSE mangroves, of a deeper green than that of forest or jungle foliage, give contrast at the water's edge on either side of the narrow strait, which, a silver streak in the blue distance, leads on to the sea, faintly visible far beyond at the height at which we were flying. The tide runs through this strait like a mill-race; but at the moment it was dead-water, and, with sail set, a large dug-out canoe was making across from Melville to
177 Bathurst Island. As the 'plane banked round preparatory to landing, I saw, beyond the canoe and across the strait, the iron roof of the only European dwelling on Melville Island.

It was formerly the permanent camp of Joe Cooper, a famous buffalo-hunter; but, now, since Cooper's death, even this solitary outpost has long been deserted. It is more than a century since the old military settlement of Fort Dundas, at the northern end of Apsley Strait, was abandoned. Nothing of the fort now remains except a few heaps of stone, and, buried in thick scrub, the grass-grown brickwork that faced the surrounding deep trench. The area of Melville Island is 2,240 square miles.
131 Bathurst Island is only half as large. Although Melville
● 797 Island may, some day, come within the scope of North Australian settlement schemes, the major part of Bathurst Island is vested in perpetuity in the authorities of the Mission of the Sacred Heart, and the latter island will remain, fortunately almost entirely in its virgin state, a sanctuary alike for man and beast.

797 We taxied to a standstill on the well-kept landing-ground of the Sacred Heart Mission in the presence of many spectators. Notified of the time of our arrival by means of the wireless

[p. 14(A)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OL20 Tiwi OL20

797 telephone, with which they keep in touch with the Presbytery in Darwin, not only were the good fathers there to greet us, but the children of the mission school had also been given a holiday to celebrate the occasion. Small boys and half-grown lads were there in force and soon crowded round the 'plane. The bearded men against the fence kept in the background, while women and girls peered over the stile that leads into the garden. Men and boys wore only the little naga, women and girls a short sarong —and they are all the better for this lack of clothing.

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KINDLY and shrewd old Father Gsell, who founded the mission rather more than a quarter of a century ago, has his own ideas with regard to the black man. He does not ruin his health by dressing him (or her) up in mission clothing, and he sees that the blacks who come into the mission do not become mere spongers and hangers-on. When a black asks for flour or anything else that he requires, Father Gsell replies, "What have you to give for it?" He may have a spear, for which the good father has no use, but he will take it, or anything that the black can offer in payment. If the black's reply is "Nothing," Father Gsell will say "Well, you are a big, strong man; you can dig the garden."

It does not matter that the garden has been dug before. The thing is to keep the blacks from becoming cadgers. Treated so, they retain their self-respect and do not degenerate into useless loafers hanging round the mission station, just for what they can get without any effort. The mission fathers, of course, do all they can for the sick and injured—that is an entirely different matter. Every missionary who has been long on any field in North Australia must recognise that it is impossible to do anything with a full-grown black to alter his outlook in any way, and the methods of the Sacred Heart Mission must appeal to all unbigoted members of any church as admirable common-sense.

It is only with the very young that the missionaries can hope for any success in the inculcating of Christian ideals, and it is towards the little boys and girls that the good fathers look for the reward of their self-sacrificing labours. They are able to get them, too, without pandering to the laziness of their parents. The natives, who are always fond of children, are quite willing to have their little boys well fed and well looked after; but, when it comes to the girls, self-interest enters into the question. Little girls can be sold to the Japanese of the pearling fleets, and the Japanese are liberal in the matter of prices.

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FATHER Gsell must therefore buy the girls in competition with the Japanese. It has been said that this is countenancing a shameful and revolting slave-trade, and that to buy the girls is definitely wrong in principle. What would the worthy critics do? Are they content to see this dreadful traffic continued, or have they any practical alternative to offer? Father Gsell is trying at least to save as many girls as possible from the horrible fate in store for them. The regular patrol of North Australian waters by the forces of the Government may eventually put an end to the practice, but what of all these little girls in the meantime? As they grow up, the Christian boys and girls marry one another, and, as the Christians have one wife only, they are unwilling to sell or to hire her out to the Japanese. This, like all the dealings of the Sacred Heart Mission with the islanders, is based on practical common sense.

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

797 The couples marry young without any thought for the future.
582 They just marry as, and when, they feel inclined, and the mission
342 fathers provide the new home. Under the palms beside the Strait are many of the queer little iron humpies provided, just a roof, as it were, sloping on each side from the ridge-pole to the ground. The whole can be picked up and moved to a fresh position when fleas become too numerous and the surroundings otherwise unpleasant. These humpies scarcely seem attractive to white folk, but the islanders like them, and they are at least a great improvement on the dog-kennels of old iron that the blacks persist in erecting for themselves on the beach at Darwin.

797 Proper houses are provided in the Kahlin compound there, but
342 the blacks despise them; and, although the miserable humpies on the beach are demolished from time to time by the authorities, they are all up again by next evening. The good fathers know what the islanders prefer, and they have given the married couples the kind of accommodation in which they feel most happy. The humpies may be hot and stuffy, but they are dry inside when it rains.

142 The island blacks, in many respects, differ considerably from
144 the tribes of the mainland. They are excessively hirsute, and, on attaining maturity, the men grow long beards, many being of truly patriarchal proportions. The upper lip is kept bare, which practice seems to emphasize the magnificence of the beard. Shocks of hair, sometimes standing six inches high, add to a wildly impressive appearance. They are tall and muscular, and, as they stride along, they seem the very acme of physical development, a living advertisement for the natural, open-air existence.

302 The hairs, by the way, are plucked from the upper lip one by one, and this painful proceeding is undertaken in the calmest manner, certainly with less fuss and facial distortion than the average white man makes during his morning shave.

171 The use of the woomera for throwing spears, and of the
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[p. 15(A)]

171 boomerang, is unknown to the islanders. Ceremonial customs,
[411] language, origin, and burial rites all differ from those of the mainland tribes, and constitute an interesting study for anthropologists. They are the only aborigines who erect memorials on the graves of the departed, and, in the forest beside the
764 aerodrome, you may see a typical grave surrounded with queerly-
[322 carved ironwood totem-poles. The poles, some eight feet in height, are carved in varying patterns. They had been painted
532] in highly decorative designs with red, yellow, and white ochre, with black bands of charcoal to give sharp and artistic contrast. Each kindred totem to that of the deceased must place a pole at the grave. Failure to erect a pole is supposed to signify that no sorrow is felt for the death, and punishment will follow. Something unpleasant always *does* happen to those who neglect this duty.

● 797 AFTER these necessary digressions, let us return to my visit to the mission station. We followed the fathers over the stile, up an avenue of palms, and on through the garden, where
[245] pineapples and bananas grow, and there are rows of immense and beautifully shady mango-trees. Sturdy, fuzzy-headed aborigines strode in front (one of them had just come in with
[262] a couple of kangaroos for the larder), and the boys trooped along behind us. The quarters of the fathers are very much those of bachelors, perfectly bare, with guns in the corners and a few native weapons and curios hanging on the walls.

Here two lubras brought us morning tea, and here I learnt much of the foregoing matters. The fathers themselves are entertaining men of the world, and their white cricket shirts and khaki slacks gave no indication of their calling. The boys gathered at the foot of the steps leading up to the quarters,
797 and every now and then black-bearded Father McGrath would
522 banter them in their own language. Like all the native peoples

[p.15 (B)]

797 of North Australia, they are fond of a joke. They chuckled
522 delightedly. Father McGrath can preach in the native language,
but dear old Father Gsell (every one on the north alludes to him
in these affectionate terms) must deliver his sermons in pidgin.
[198] Sometimes this greatly amuses the congregation, and many
spirited and life-like reproductions are enacted again and again
after the service.

797 WHILE taking a walk round the grounds of the mission
station, an urchin of no more than three and a half years of age
753 was pointed out. That very morning this little fellow had
761 plunged into the shark-infested straits and saved his baby sister
from drowning. She was unconscious when brought ashore, and
the usual methods of resuscitation were followed by Father
McGrath, who had hurried to the scene. Then arose one of the
difficulties the mission staff are constantly encountering. All the
[754] ills that befall the islanders are attributed to magic. No black
ever dies a natural death: always there is some evilly-disposed
person responsible!

When treatment was commenced, the child had been laid on her stomach while the water was pushed out of her body. The blacks had seen an apparently drowned boy revived when laid on his back, and immediately became excited and angry. It was necessary to turn the child over for a while, otherwise the mission fathers would have been held responsible if she had not recovered. And, all the time that treatment was in progress, an old woman (very much in the way) had sung in the baby's ear.

In the opinion of the women who had gathered round, it was the singing that brought the little girl back to life, and her recovery had nothing whatever to do with the father's efforts, although he would have been held responsible if he had not been able to save her! The old men have some glimmerings of common sense, but the old women are terrible old witches and it is quite impossible to convince them.

When anyone is sick, it is the invariable custom to sing a monotonous phrase over and over again in the patient's ear to bring him back to health; and, wherever a pain is felt, it is usual to cut the skin down to the third integument to let the sickness out. On one occasion a man was suffering from acute abdominal pains, and his relations, who wanted to cut him open, came to the mission fathers to seek their approval of this drastic treatment. Here was an awkward predicament! If the sick man was cut open, he was sure to die; and, since nothing would induce him to go to the hospital at Darwin for skilled attention, he might die in any case. In either event the fathers would be held responsible. They stood firm and refused their approval. However, while the relations were hesitating in view of the emphatic assertions of the mission fathers, the man made a surprising recovery. The cure was of course ascribed to the singing, not to the good advice that kept the man on a starvation diet of water only.

755 The islanders firmly believe that they will be poisoned if they go to Darwin for treatment, but they will always trust their own people. One man, who had been employed on a pearling lugger (all the islanders are naturally good seamen), had a leg taken by a crocodile, and was forced to find some new way of making a living. He had learnt a lot too much in the years that he was away, and, on his return to Bathurst Island, he set up in practice as a witch-doctor. A woman on the point of

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

726 received any serious damage, and it seemed to have been a most enjoyable occasion. An islander, who had seen the world from the decks of many luggers, made a remark that was truer than he knew, "When white feller go to war, he takem rifle, he takem

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HUNTING TURTLE, FROM A DUG-OUT CANOE NEAR BATHURST ISLAND.

bomb. Some feller *must* be killed! White feller silly b——!" It cannot be said that the mission fathers have a dull time at Bathurst Island.

797 There are two sisters of the order at the Mission Station. In addition to teaching the girls, they attend to all household mat-

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

797 ten, supervising the lubras' work and ordering stores, which are brought from Darwin by the mission's own lugger *St. Francis*. The pleasant lunch we had at the refectory, where wide windows, open all round, admitted every wandering breeze, was due to their efforts, and later I was to see something of the results of their teaching.

797 871 School, both for boys and for girls, takes up only two and a half hours each day, but the pupils learn quickly, and the more they are taught the more they can absorb. Reading and writing are mastered without any more difficulty than in the case of white children of the same age, though the pupils were very shy and almost inaudible when exhibiting their prowess. Arithmetic they do not take to so kindly, unless they happen to be interested by some problem that has a definitely practical application to their own lives; but drawing comes natural to the islanders, as it does to the blacks of the mainland, where I had already seen very spirited sketches made by aboriginal children. Of the affection of the children, both for the sisters and the mission fathers, there was no doubt. To be as close to them as possible was an honour they were all bent on securing.

797 562 THE "blackies," as they call the girls, range in age from tiny tots to those who are practically young women. They were all much excited by the novelty of our visit, bubbling over with laughter, whispering and giggling together. The older "blackies" eye a visitor coyly, smiling over their shoulders with a flash of white teeth; and, when the pilot and I came along with one of the sisters to hear them sing the "Magnificat" and "Adeste Fideles," they fled shrieking, only to turn round and giggle again when they thought that they were far enough away.

"No more gammon!" called the sister, and they lined up demurely to sing their hymns right tunefully, with spasms of giggles in the intervals. To hold up a finger is quite sufficient to bring shrieks of delight from these childish, happy creatures. "Georgie," a very little boy with a very big tummy, so young that he was not yet at the boys' school, sang "Georgie Porgie, puddiny pie, kissed the girls and made them cry" with much aplomb and gesture. If Georgie was at the girls' school, he did not forget that he was a man. He spoke man's language, not woman's talk such as women by custom must use on Bathurst Island, and he sat down like a man with knees wide apart, not together as a woman must.

[198 516]

535 [562] Then, while the older "blackies" formed a circle, chanting in their own language and clapping their hands in time, little girls, two by two, performed women's dances, which again differ from those of the men. There were buffalo, bullock, and lugger dances, when they imitated the animals with arms widespread or bent slightly at the elbows to represent the horns, or held at angles such as those at which sails are set on a lugger, while, now and then, two little feet beaten together faithfully copied the "pur-pur" of Diesel engines.

More ambitious and complicated was the dance of the overseas mail 'plane that flies from Singapore to Darwin, when whirling arms represented the propellers and stamping feet the beat of the engines. There is, by the way, a sacred language used for songs, and it is only in this language that the name of the dead can be mentioned. If by chance anyone should mention a dead man's name in the ordinary language, every one within hearing will spit with vigour. If deliberate, the maker of such a faux pas will be hit about the head.

[198 533 768]

797 The sisters frequently take their charges into the bush for a day's "walkabout," and all the children go back to their parents at intervals. Thus their education at the mission does not mean that they lose all the bushcraft that is their natural inheritance.

[23] 241] THEY are busy people at the mission. In addition to the fruits already mentioned, lay brothers grow crops of peanuts and sweet potatoes and attend to the pigs, goats, and cattle that form the live-stock of the settlement. They are their own mechanics and electricians, and the tractor used in the farming operations also charges the six-volt battery which, transformed to 360 volts high tension, is employed in radio communication with the mainland. Boats are built in the workshop by the brothers, and a launch, of 26 feet deck measurement, has been completed and very neatly fitted with bunks, cooking shelf for a primus stove, crockery cupboard, and lockers. When fitted with an engine, this launch will replace the old lugger *St. Francis*, so well known in North Australia, and will afford a more rapid and certain passage to the mainland.

As we walked back to the aerodrome, little black boys drove a long string of white goats through the palm-trees, and the "blackies" waved and called "Um-bung-ie!" (good-bye). Major

[p. 19(A)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 OI20 Tiwi OI20

●797 Brackley, out of petrol, landed here when the 'drome was not quite completed, and then the wondering Christian blacks of the mission decided that the 'plane must be "motor car belonga God"!

000 With the islands left behind us, we saw our native land as those who come by air first see Australia. It is a wide and beautiful scene, where the misty blue of the sea melts into the misty sky with no clearly defined horizon, and there is Australia, a darker vague and misty patch far away beyond the dark-green mangroves and light sands of the low-lying Vernons.

We circled over Darwin. Seen from the shore, the harbour is beautiful. From the air one is surprised at its ramifications. Great arms penetrate the wooded hills, and innumerable creeks wind into the mangroves. In the evening light, twenty anchored luggers stood out in high relief on the smooth blue water. A grey oil-tanker lay at the jetty close to the huge grey oil-tanks that hid in the yellow cliffs, and the red roads and white roofs of the little town were clean and pretty amongst the trees that cover the promontory.

Brilliant scarlet patches through the green were the glorious poincians in full flower, white and pink the frangipani. From the air this first glimpse of Australia's front door is entrancing.

[p. 19(B)]

I was told that

765 the old man had chanted about the *Tarula*,[1]
533 who had planted magic on the beaches to
the north at the beginning of the wet season.
754 The sun heated the magic, and up it went
[648] like smoke and the wind blew it all about.
The magic works on the blackfellow with a
feeling like a snake crawling up the legs.
It moves up to his stomach, and when it
reaches his heart he eats no more and dies.
He also sang that he was an old man, his
wind was short and soon he would die. Later
he sang of a fight he had had with another
tribe. Later he sang of people who came
and fed him while he was sick. When
standing in the water he was calling on the
others to make the ceremony. When he
threw up the stones he called *wei tua*, i.e
" finish."

754 During the next four weeks I visited
tribes in various parts of the islands and
heard the same story. I was shown a
sample of the magic. It was a tightly
woven string bag about the size of a billiard
ball and stuffed with kapok. This was said
to have been " sung " before it was buried.

124 Statistics of the mortality of the epidemic
presented a problem. The only words for
802 numbers which I could obtain with certainty

[1] The *tarula* were mainland blacks in the employ of local white men. They were called *tarula* (" lightning ") after the guns carried by their employers.

[p 80-A]

7:Fry D-5 (1813) 1949 O120 Tiwi O120

124 802 were *yadi*, *irrara*, *irradroma*, *arkwawi* and *inalti*, respectively one, two, three, few and many. Some natives had a vague idea of five and ten. A nominal roll of the dead [551] was impossible, as the names of the dead are *ardjidit*, "unlawful," "taboo." A method was arranged whereby flat sticks were used and notched. Separate sticks were taken for males and for females. A group would sit about and the dead identified by relationship with the living. A big notch in the sticks would be made for each adult, a smaller notch for a child, and a tiny notch for a baby. Records obtained in this way 165 showed that at least 56 men, 87 women, 17 boys, 25 girls and one male and one female infant had died. The population of the islands, before the epidemic, was estimated as a result of general enquiries to be about 650, so the known death roll of 187 indicates a high mortality rate.

The original rumour suggested that the natives were dying of measles, as someone had diagnosed some illnesses at the Mission about Christmas time as measles. The extremely low number of infant deaths was entirely against measles being the cause of the holocaust, and supports the native diagnosis of magic.

H. K. Fry,
D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.

[p. 80-B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER II

The Creation Period

WHATEVER differences may exist between the Melville Island cultures and those of the mainland, and, in some aspects, those differences are considerable, the creation stories indicate that the two cultures sprang from the same source.[9] 174 773

At the close of the creation period, both on Melville Island and the mainland, the original creators, men and women, were transformed, or transformed themselves, into various creatures, plants, natural forces or heavenly bodies. 771 773 82

Although I would not claim that the list of totems is complete, I feel certain that the aboriginal artists pictured, on the bark paintings, most of the areas created by their mythical forbears. More detailed research may reveal additional totemic places. 532 771 82

The list of the thirty-four totemic ancestors illustrated on the bark paintings is curiously unbalanced in its distribution. More than a third of these are trees, almost all eucalypts. The remaining four groups are: the natural forces, creatures of the air, the sea, and one inanimate totem, i.e. red ochre. Neither land animals nor reptiles are referred to in the bark paintings of the totemic places, although they appear in the myths.

These facts contrast strongly with the Central Australian beliefs regarding their totemic creatures (Mountford, 1948, p. 23; Spencer and Gillen, 1899, p. 387), where almost every living thing, particularly the creatures, took some part in the creation of the topography; plant totems are uncommon in Central Australia. 171 771 773 82

The same Central Australian characteristics are also evident in the myths of Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 21), although in the adjacent Arnhem Land, the great creators, i.e., the *Wawalik* Sisters (Warner, 1937, p. 250), and the *Djunkgoo* Sisters (Berndt, 1952; Mountford, 1956, p. 267; Warner, 1937, p. 336), made the bulk of the topography, plants and creatures.

Although the Groote Eylandt pantheon, like that of Melville Island, originated as men and women, they were, almost without exception, changed to non-human totems, whereas the great creators of Arnhem Land, the *Wawalik* and the *Djunkgoo* Sisters, have always remained human.

[9] Little research has been carried out on the creation stories of the Australian aborigines; Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 387) giving the most detailed account. [114]

2: Mountford
773, 778, 776, 821

OI20 Tiwi OI20

[Materials pertaining to these categories will also be found in category 532.]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 Puzzled over this new phenomenon, *Jurumu* placed the smouldering wood-
[372] dust into the pith of a dead pandanus palm and blew upon it. To the surprise of both men the speck became larger and larger, finally bursting into a flame. This frightened the men so badly that they rushed to *Purukupali* and asked him to destroy the strange thing they had made. But when *Purukupali* saw the blazing wood and felt its heat he realized that *Jurumu* and *Mudati* had inadvertently discovered something that would give the aborigines not only light to dispel the darkness, but heat to cook their food and to keep them warm.[14]

Calling his sister, *Wuriupranala*, he gave her a torch of bark lit from the blazing log and told her that it was her duty to keep it alight always. *Tjapara*,
● [821] who later became the moon, was given a smaller torch.

With the coming of light and heat, the descendants of *Mudungkala* spread over the island, hunting and camping in places which, at the close of the creation period, became their totemic country.

About that time, two men, *Puruti* and *Jirakati*, were spearing fish in Tiaupu, a freshwater swamp at Piper Head, near the northern entrance to Apsley Straits, when they noticed, by the movements of the stems of the water-lilies, some large creature moving about under the water.

Not knowing it was his mother, *Tipuru-undunga*, *Puruti* speared her in the neck. Screaming with pain and urinating in her fright, *Tipuru-undunga*
[823] rushed into the sea, which in those days was fresh water, polluting it so much with her blood and urine that it became as salt as the sea of today.

The wounded *Tipuru-undunga* changed herself into the tall, stately bird,
[825] the jabiru (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) which now lives on the edge of the fresh-water lagoons; while the fishermen, *Puruti* and *Jirakati* became the sea-osprey (*Pandion halioetus*) and the graceful white-headed sea-eagle (*Haliaetus leucogaster*).[15]

During those early *palaneri* times, a man, *Jirakupai*, lived beside a fresh-water lagoon, *Jiriringa*, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. He had married two sisters, *Kuraruna* and *Jaknia*.

Jirakupai was an expert in the making of both the large many-barbed, male
[411] spears, *tunkaringa*, which have a row of barbs on one side (Pl. 32A), and the female spears, *tunkaguni*, with their double row of barbs (Pl. 32B). Both forms are now used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

[14] The aborigines distinguish between light (*milajuka*) from the sun or burning wood, and heat (*ikwani*) from glowing coals.

[15] The large hawk-like birds, *Jirakati*, the sea-eagle, *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite, appear as men in a number of the myths. In each one they transformed themselves from men into birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 Still railing, *Purukupali* picked up the dead body of his son, which *Bima* had wrapped in a sheet of paper-bark, and walking backward into the sea, called out loudly as the waters closed over his head,

Mauliantenili awangtini tangini mu mu.

(You must all follow me; as I die, so must you all die.)

[823] The place where *Purukupali* died, adjacent to Impanali, on the east coast of Melville Island, became a whirlpool so strong that any aboriginal who approached it in a canoe would be drowned. When *Tjapara* saw what had 773 happened, he changed himself into the moon. But he did not entirely escape ●821 the decree of *Purukupali*, for, even though *Tjapara* is eternally reincarnated, he has to die for three days. On any clear night, one can see on the face of the moon-man the wounds which he received in his fight with *Purukupali* so long ago.

X 532 One bark painting, Pl. 2B, C, deals with the death of *Purukupali* and his 773 son *Djinini*. At *a*, is the whirlpool off Impanali Point, eastern Melville Island, where *Purukupali*, *b*, carrying his dead son, disappeared beneath the surface of the water.

The foot-marks of *Purukupali*, as he walked backward into the water, are the white dots at *c*; his arms, the two white bars, at *d*; and the dead child he carried is at *e*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, at *f*, is asking for the body of the dead child to restore him to life.

The moon in the sky is shown at *g*; the forked throwing stick, *mihunta* at *h*; and at *j* are the plain throwing sticks, *muruguna*, which when thrown by *Purukupali*, caused the wounds on the face of *Tjapara*.

At *l*, *l*, are the goose-feather balls, *tokwiangu* (Pl. 31B), of *Purukupali*; *n*, *n*, his cane armlets, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H); *s* (upper left) is his cockatoo-feather head ornament, *primitiki*; *k*, *k*, are his bark baskets, *wanatuna*; *u*, his firesticks; *o*, is his camp fire; and *r*, his water-hole.

Tjapara's fireplace, an unlocalized spot, *Oulini*, in the sky, is at *q*; his camp-fire is at *p*, and his firestick at *t*.

4. THE PUKAMUNI OF PURUKUPALI

773 When *Tukimbini*, who was living at Murupiangu, heard of the death of *Purukupali*, he sent a message stick to *Talinini* of the honey-people of central Bathurst Island, appointing him the ceremonial leader (*ukuwia*) of the burial rituals.

At the same time, because they were near at hand, he told the people who lived at Murupiangu, Wuriupi and Waihu, that as they were the appointed

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 Circles *a*, *a*, are places where the women stood at *Purukupali's* ceremony,
×[532] and lines *c*, *c*, the paths they made as they danced toward the central dancing ground, the *milimika*.

According to other informants, the honey-men from Bathurst Island and
[184] other groups from western Melville Island assembled and performed an *ilania* at Tuju, while the people from south and south-western Melville Island performed yet another *ilania* at Puntubu (Fig. 1).

At the conclusion of these *ilanias* the mythical people from the west met
+[532] at Rulijunga, where *Mantinuria*, one of the eucalyptus-tree women (Pl. 18A) had prepared a ceremonial ground for them. Here the assembled people performed another *ilania*, after which they moved off as a body to Timbaranapi, where the "workers", having cut the poles and prepared the *pukamuni* spears, baskets and other paraphernalia, had already assembled for the final *ilania*.

After a ceremonial fight[22] and the performance of the *ilania* ceremony, the men and women travelled to Tapararimi by different paths to carry out the final rituals.

×532 A simple bark painting, Pl. 2A, pictures the *pukamuni* ground of *Purukupali*
773 at Tapararimi.

The lower black space is the ceremonial ground (*milimika*) on which the participants performed their dances, and the white area on the top, the several honey-men, one of whom, *Talinini*, was in charge of the rituals.

The five upright vertical panels are the *tudinis* (*pukamuni* poles); the lower line of black horizontal rectangles represents the red ochre, and the upper line of rectangles, black paint, with which the performers decorated themselves.

The dots represent paint on the bodies of the caterpillar men, the *Maludaianini*, who, at the close of the ceremony, transformed themselves into the
●[821] Milky Way.

The *pukamuni* rituals and those who mourned beside the poles at Tapararimi are illustrated on a bark painting, Pl. 2D, E.

The central black oval, *c*, is the swift whirlpool off Impanili, where *Purukupali*, walking along the track, *f*, *f*, with his dead son in his arms, drowned himself.

[22] In the ceremonies of the present day, the "workers" when they return from cutting
[764] the poles, which are adjacent to the grave, are looked upon as *mopaditis* (spirits of the dead). Before the *ilania* can proceed, the *pukamuni* men and the "workers" take part in a ceremonial fight (Pl. 25D), in which the "workers" (as *mopaditis*) are vanquished. During creation times, a similar fight took place at Timbaranapi, when the *pukamuni* people from the west coast met the "workers" from the east.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

women by *d*, to a place, *n*, where they painted one another for the final *pukamani* rituals. 532x 773

Whilst there, the fish-men engaged in the spear-throwing contest mentioned in the myth.[86] Their footmarks are in circle, *n*, and the places where the spears fell at *p*. *Pipinjawari*, who stood behind the others at *g*, threw his spear the furthest, a large eucalyptus tree, *h*, being the transformed spear. The spears of the other fish-men at *p* are smaller eucalyptus trees.

When everyone had finished decorating themselves, both men and women moved to *m*, where the burial poles had been erected around the grave, the women again reaching their destination by a different path, *k*. It was at the completion of these rituals that the fish-men quarrelled with *Pipinjawari* because he refused to give the "workers" presents for their duties.

5. THE CLOSE OF THE CREATION PERIOD

The escape of *Pipinjawari*, which brought the *palaneri* (creation period) to a close, was the signal for the mythical people to return to their camps and to transform themselves into the various birds, fish, reptiles, heavenly bodies and inanimate objects of today. 773

Tjapara, the moon-man, rose into the sky, his face and body deeply scarred with the wounds he had received in his quarrel with *Purukupali*. [821] ●
Bima, his lover, and the mother of the dead child, *Djinini*, still bearing the mark on her head where *Purukupali* had struck her with his throwing stick, [825] became the curlew (*Numenius cyanopus*) which still roams the forest at night, wailing in remorse for her misdeeds and for the child she lost.

Wuriupranala, one of the daughters of the original creator, *Mudungkala*, changed herself into the sun-woman, who travels across the sky carrying the torch of blazing bark given to her by *Purukupali*. The *Maludaianini* men, with the ceremonial paint still on their bodies, became that sparkling galaxy, the Milky Way. [821]

Tukimbini, the grandson of *Murupiangkala*, instructed the mythical people (many of whom were his wives and relatives), to establish a totemic place at their old camps on Melville and Bathurst Islands to create the aboriginal foods belonging to each place, and then to change themselves into the particular bird, reptile, fish or inanimate object with which that locality is now associated.

[86] At a *pukamani* ceremony we witnessed at Melville Island, one of the Bathurst Islanders, *Jikungkatani*, impersonating *Pipinjawari*, threw sticks, as spears, over the men carrying the poles to the grave, chanting "*Kuniprak wanikali kurinari*", meaning "We throw spears to find our who goes farthest." [796]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 However, before all these changes took place, *Tukimbini* assembled the mythical people who had attended *Purukupali's* ceremony, and taught them the rules of behaviour, and the laws of marriage and tribal relationship they must always obey. *Tukimbini* also laid down the periods of light and darkness that still determine the daily cycle of aboriginal life.

512 When the first light appears in the morning sky it is the melodious call of
821 *Tukimbini*, now the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) that
[825] wakens the aborigines from their sleep.

The sun-woman, rising above the eastern horizon with her blazing torch, is a signal for the aboriginal men, with spears and wooden clubs, to go hunting, and for the women, with bark baskets hanging from the sticks over their shoulders, to gather their food from the forest and the swamp-lands.

About mid-day, the sun-woman, cooking the food she has gathered, makes the heat of the day unbearable. The aborigines then retire to the shade of the trees until the late afternoon when they continue their food gathering, returning to camp to cook their evening meal just as the sun-woman sinks below the western horizon.

Soon, darkness creeps across the sky, the stars, *tapalinga*, show themselves and the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, span the heavens. It is then that the dried perspiration which the *Maludaianini* rub from their bodies,
[512] falls on the eyelids of the aborigines, making them so heavy that they cannot keep awake. Next morning, at dawn, *Tukimbini* wakes the aborigines to a new day.

776 The following is the list of the totemic places of Melville and Bathurst
778 Islands, illustrated by bark paintings, the names of the totemic people and their relationships to each other.

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
Murupianga	Tukimbini (bird)	Great-grandson of *Mudungkala*
Wuriupi	Garagalani (turtle)	Not known
	Wuriupranala (sun)	Daughter of *Mudungkala*
Panindu	Paninduela (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Wailu	Andjalui (fresh water)	Husband of *Wuriupranala*
	Kwouk-kwouk (frog)	Not known

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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[124]

Although, in the interpretation of the paintings on this basket, gathered in the early days of the expedition, the designs were not given topographical meanings, there is little doubt that fuller inquiries would have shown that the designs and the topography were linked.

On Pl. 8c, D, *c*, pictures the body of the turtle-woman, *a*, *a*, being the front flippers, *d*, *d*, the hind flippers, *b*, the carapace, *g*, the head, and *e*, *e*, *e*, etc., the bones of the creature; the dotted background, *f*, represents the marks on the tortoise-shell of the carapace.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala, at Wuriupi

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Every morning, the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,[30] climbs a high mountain in the east, and, carrying her blazing torch of bark, travels across the sky, parallel to the earth. Sometimes, the sun-woman, to please her husband, powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which, flying into the sky, rdedens the early morning clouds.

On reaching the western horizon the sun-woman extinguishes her bark torch, and, by the light from its glowing end, finds her way back to the east through the underground world, Ilara.[30] But, before setting out on that journey, *Wuriupranala* again decorates herself with powdered ochres thereby colouring both the western sky and the clouds.

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Nine bark paintings, i.e. Pls. 5A, B, C, D, 6A, B, 7B, C, D, illustrate the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, and the topography of Wuriupi. The remainder of the paintings dealing with the sun are described under Astronomy, Chapter 7.

Pl. 5A is a painting on a small bark basket, which deals with the myth of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

The circle in the centre of each disc, of which there are sixteen, symbolizes the sun-woman, the radiating lines being the rays of light at sunrise and sunset. The three wide vertical bands represent the track of the sun-woman as she moves across the sky, and the lines, linking the discs, the path in the underground world, Ilara, along which *Wuriupranala* returns to the east. The cross-hatched areas are rain, the dots, stars (*tapalinga*), and the short parallel lines, top and bottom, rain falling from the clouds.

The central dot on Pl. 5B, is the "eye" of the sun-woman seated in her paper-bark hut (the inner circle). The five radiating lines within the circle are the posts of her hut, the cross-hatching is her hair, and the five outer concentric circles are her hair-string belts.

[30] In one bark painting, Pl. 60A, B, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala* alternately travel across the sky. This is the only time that *Murupiangkala* was referred to as a sun-woman.

[30] The moon returns to the east by a similar road.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The vertical lines at the bottom of the painting symbolize the rays of the sun-woman as she rises in the east, and the groups of dots throughout the design, the stars, *aparlinga*, in the night sky. 532x 773

On Pl. 5C, D, the two concentric circles, *d*, indicate the surface, while *a*, is the *imunka*,[81] or life centre of the sun.

The painting shows a number of different clouds; a thin misty cloud at *b*, heavy rain clouds which temporarily obscure the sun at *h*, *h*, *h*, etc., a mackerel sky at *c* (indicated by the short radiating lines), and cumulus clouds at *j*, *j*.

The colours of sunrise and sunset are indicated by the horizontal bands, *g*, *g*; while the lines of light, which sometimes radiate from the sunset, are at *e*, *e*, etc., and those from the sunrise at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 6A, B, is a bark painting of Wuriupi, the totem place of *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman. Her body, now a patch of jungle, is at *a*; her head at *n*, and her abdomen at *k*. Her arms are at *b*, *b*; her legs at *c*, *c*; her breasts at *j*, *j*; her ears at *m*, *m*; the chevron scars on her arms and back at *e*, *e*, etc. 532x 778

The windbreak of her camp, *d*, is a sandy beach at Wuriupi, and the shelter, under which she rested, is a large yam, whose leaves, vine and blossoms, are indicated by symbols, *h*, *h*; *l*, *l*; *v*, *v*, etc. Tracks made by the sun-woman are shown at *x*, *x*; *x*, *x*; red rocks on the beach at *g*, *g*; and black rocks at *f*, *f*.

Pl. 7B, a painting on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, also refers to the sun-woman. 532x 821

The sun is represented by the black circle in the lower section of the design, while the disc in the centre of the circle is the torch of blazing bark which the sun-woman carries across the sky to provide the world with light and heat. The white, upper disc represents the large thunderclouds which, at the beginning of the wet season, often obscure the sun.[82] The surrounding concentric circles and the parallel lines across the middle of the design symbolize the colours on the edge of the clouds at sunrise or sunset.

The lighter coloured diagonal lines refer to groups of cirrus clouds, and the darker, to monsoon clouds of the rainy season. The dots are the stars of the night sky.

The vertical black line in the middle of Pl. 7D, is the track across the sky of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*. The black disc across the bottom is the sun in the morning; the one immediately above, the sun at midday; the next,

[81] The *imunka* is a universal life essence which permeates all living things, the plants, the creatures and man. It is situated in the solar-plexus of man. This is the same life essence as that of the Pitjandjara tribe of the western deserts of Central Australia (Mountford, 1948, p. 111). [774] [171]

[82] When a thundercloud obscures the sun, the aborigines believe that *Andjahi* (fresh water) has taken his wife, *Wuriupranala*, to his camp.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532 the sun at mid-afternoon, and the disc on the upper edge, *Wuriupranala* at
●821 sunset.

The lighter coloured radiating bands are the lines of light from the blazing bark torch, carried by the sun-woman; the dark-coloured ovals between, a number of *tukimbinis* (yellow-eared honey-eaters), and the lighter coloured ovals, a number of *wuriuprinilis* (mistletoe birds).

In the centre of Pl. 7c, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, seated in her bark hut at Wuriupi. The central dark mark on her abdomen indicates body paint; the white lines, *a*, *a*, are her legs, *b*, *b*, her feet and *e*, *e*, her arms.

The dark-coloured oval, *g*, is the sun-woman's paper-bark hut; the light-coloured outer circle, *d*, is a bough shed built over the hut to keep it cool, and the short radiating lines between the two circles, the posts supporting the roof.

The Eucalyptus-tree Woman, Paninduela, at Panindu

773 The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Paninduela*, created the totemic country of Panindu, north-eastern Melville Island, the streams, fish, turtles, geese and other creatures, as well as water-lilies, spike-rushes and other plants that grow in the freshwater swamps.

778 Panindu is on the upper reaches of an unnamed river in north-eastern Melville Island; Wailu, the totemic place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at the mouth of the same stream.

×532 On Pl. 9A, B, *a*, *a*, are the Panindu waterholes; *b*, *b*, waterfalls which flow
778 from upper to lower pools; and *c*, *c*, are lines of foam caused by the falling water. At *t*, *t*, etc., are *pubiaka*, and *u*, *u*, etc., paper-bark trees on the banks of the stream, and at *h*, *h*, and *j*, *j*, dead *pubiaka* and paper-bark trees lying in the water.

Two lagoons, or backwaters, are indicated at *e*, *e*; two sedge-covered swamps at *f*, *g*. Water-grass on the bottom of the swamp is shown by the cross-hatched areas, *s*, *s*.

The Freshwater-man, Andjalui

778 The totem place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at Wailu, north-eastern
776 Melville Island. At Wailu there also lived the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*,[33] her son, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms, and her two daughters, *Tomituka*, the woman of the monsoon rains, and *Bumerali*, the woman of the lightning.

[33] Some aborigines thought, but were not sure, that *Andjalui* was the husband of both *Kwouk-kwouk*, and the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Five bark paintings, Pls. 9C, D, 10B, D, 22A, B, and 58B, deal with Wailu and its inhabitants. 532x 778

On Pl. 9C, D, the totemic lagoon, Wailu, is at *a*, the outer circle, *b*, symbolizing the broken water of the stream, *f* (in circle above) as it runs over the stony bed of a watercourse into Wailu. At *d*, *d*, are the paper-bark and *e*, *e*, *pubiaka* trees which grow on its banks.

At *j*, *j* (below), and *s*, *s*, etc., are living paper-bark, and *m*, *m*, and *p*, *p*, etc., *pubiaka* trees on the bank; *n*, *n*, are dead paper-bark and *o*, *o*, *pubiaka* trees in the swamp. The cross-hatched areas throughout the painting symbolize watergrass on the bottom of the lagoon.

Pl. 58B, which is associated with Wailu, deals with the rainbow-woman, *Maratji*, the thunderstorm-man, *Pakadringa*, and the monsoon rain-woman, *Tomituka*. 532x 776

The four black horizontal bands represent the dark-coloured clouds of *Tomituka* (monsoon rain); the lighter-coloured chevrons indicate large cumulus clouds, the home of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*; and the darker chevrons are the rainbow-women, *Maratjis*, who live at Maundu.

The Frog-Woman, Kwouk-kwouk, at Wailu

The frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, lives with her family, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka*, and *Bumerali*, at Wailu, the totem place of *Andjalui*. 776 778

The three children of *Kwouk-kwouk* always obey their mother, so when, in the wet season, the rain falls and thunderstorms rage, she croaks with joy over their handiwork. No aboriginal would dare to kill a frog; if he were so foolish, her son, *Pakadringa*, and daughter, *Tomituka*, would send down so much rain that everyone would be drowned. 821 825

Pl. 10B deals with the frogs at Wailu. The central black oval is the lagoon at Wailu. At *a*, *a*, are large paper-bark trees which grow in Wailu lagoon, and at *b*, *b*, another species of paper-bark which prefers the drier conditions of the banks. The frogs, which live in the lagoon, are indicated at *c*, *c*, etc.; a water-lily swamp is shown at *d*, *d*, and the white, broken water, running over fallen trees, at *e*, *e*. The groups of dots represent the water-grass, and the faint lines separating them, small streams of running water in an adjacent swamp. 532x 778

Pakadringa, Bumerali and Tomituka at Wailu

During creation times, before *Pakadringa* was transformed into the man of the thunderstorms, he was a hairy giant, huge in size, and repulsive in appear- 776

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

776 ance, with a long black body, short, thick legs and arms, and a pendant abdomen, caused by continuous over-eating.

Pakadringa, with his sister, *Bumerali*, the lightning-woman, her husband, *Kilipatu*, and their many children travel together in the thunderclouds.

776 *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, has flaked stone axes, called *rikas*,[84]
821 mounted on long crooked handles, which she carries in either hand. With these, while travelling in the clouds with *Pakadringa*, she strikes the ground beneath, destroying the trees and sometimes the aborigines.[85] *Bumerali* becomes angry when her children jump from cloud to cloud. The sharp crack of the thunder which immediately follows the lightning flash is the voice of *Bumerali*[86] reprimanding her children for their disobedience.

Tomituka, *Pakadringa's* other sister, is the woman of the monsoon rain. At the start of the wet season, the trees and plants become happy when they hear the distant rumblings of *Pakadringa* for they know that *Tomituka* comes with him, bringing rain for their thirsty roots.

x 532 Pl. 10D illustrates the mythical *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms.
776 The black central oval and the semi-circles at the top and bottom of the
821 painting are the dark-coloured thunderclouds of *Pakadringa*. At *b*, *b*, etc., are white thunderclouds, and *c*, *c*, etc., red-coloured clouds which appear in the sky after a storm has passed. The designs *a*, *a*, etc., indicate the rainbow-women, *Maratji* (p. 154), and the dots on the background, the falling rain.

Pl. 22A, B, deals with the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. Her eyes are indicated at *a*, *a*; her breasts at *d*, *d*; her feet at *f*, *f*; her camps at *k*, *k*; and her nose is at *b*.

The crooked handles of her stone axes are at *c*, *c*, and the "road" of the lightning (the flash) is at *e*.

The upper crescent, *g*, is the thundercloud in which *Bumerali* and her family travel; *h*, a yellow cloud which forms after the storm has passed, *s*, *s*, *s*, are stringy-bark trees, and *n*, *n*, other trees killed by *Bumerali's* axe;

[84] Some of my informants said that the axes of *Bumerali* were made of a white stone which she had picked up at Moonga Hill, north of Turiturina, western Bathurst Island, where, I was told, there is an outcrop of quartz. Others said she made the axes from a white stone found in the upper world, Tuniruna, p. 171.

[85] There is a widespread belief throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and some of the
[191] Indonesian Islands, that the prehistoric stone axes, found by the peasant people, were thunderbolts (Mountford, 1955, p. 1). At Oenpelli (Mountford, 1956, p. 208) a lightning man, *Mamaragan*, carries stone axes on his hands and knees. With these axes he strikes the ground. It is of some interest to find the myth of such a widespread belief among the Australian aborigines.

[86] The aborigines distinguish between the sharp crack of thunder (the voice of *Bumerali*) and the rumble of distant thunder, that of *Pakadringa*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

a, *o* (the black areas), indicate stony hills near her camp in the upper world; 532 x
and the dots on the background, the stars, *tapalingas*, which live in the upper 821 ●
world with the lightning woman. 776

The Cat-fish Woman, Pirilouka at Pirilou

Pirilou, on the upper Goose Creek swamps, is the totemic place of a mythical 778
cat-fish woman, *Pirilouka*. She was sent by *Tukimbiei* to create both the 776
totemic country and the food necessary for the natives to live on it, i.e., [262]
geese, brolgas, ducks, freshwater goannas, turtles, waterlily bulbs, red and white fruited *Eugenia* trees, and the various kinds of yams that prefer the damp soil.

On Pl. 10C, the darker crossed circles are the black, and the lighter, the 532 x
white rocks at Pirilou. Panels, such as *a*, symbolize the trunks of the paper- 778
bark trees growing in the swamp; *b*, the many waterlilies on its surface, and the white vertical lines on the background, streams of fresh water in the swamp-lands.

The Fish-woman, Wuringa, at Arangu

Tukimbiei sent the fish-woman, *Wuringa*, to establish a camp at Arangu, in 773
Curtis Haven, northern Melville Island. Later, *Wuringa's* camp was trans- [778]
formed into a group of flat rocks which are uncovered only at low tide.

Wuringa created the aboriginal foods of the area, turtles, crabs, fish of all kinds, yams, cabbage palms and hives of wild honey.

Two bark paintings illustrate Arangu and its surroundings, Pl. 11C and 532 x
Pl. 11D. 778

On Pl. 11C, *a*, is a long submerged reef at Arangu; *d*, *d*, *d*, smaller submerged rocks; *b*, *c*, long sand-bars, while at *e*, *e*, are jelly fish. The remainder of the ovals are oysters on the rocks at Arangu.

On Pl. 11D, *a*, is the totemic place, Arangu; *b*, represents the soft friable boulders near by; *c*, a large rock on the coast; *d*, wave breaking over it; *h*, white sand on the beach, and *j*, the sand and gravel on the sea bottom.

Symbol *e*, indicates black trepang; *f*, *f*, white trepang; *r*, an especially large trepang; *n*, a jelly fish, and *m*, a bed of oysters. At *k*, are many pearl shells, and at *s*, *s*, conch shells. A deep channel in Curtis Haven is indicated at *p*, a yellow rock under the water, at *o*, and the seaweed growing on the rocks at Arangu, by the lighter-coloured dots on the background.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, 881
dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp, and prepared them for cooking.

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42E).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place 302
where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42E), 881
and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh", threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[83] It is [821] believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunderstorms and so prolonging the wet season.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikingulas*, the *Mikiatarinas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts, 881
went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* [386]
sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a [824]
line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[84]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the [775] portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always [824] present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the *kulama* people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates then sat down to a meal of the edible yams.

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a *pukamuni* man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any [753] part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them [626] ill.

[83] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[84] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 46, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated men.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

881 led by the *Mikinatrinas*, carrying the baskets, followed by the *Mikinataras*, the *Mikiatarimas*, and the *Mikingulas*. No *kulama* woman accompanied this party.

As the *kulama* men entered the jungle they separated, each searching for vines which indicated the presence of the yam.[89] Before digging, however, the [824] [753] *kulama* men, softly calling "Oom-oom", gently patted the ground to wake up the yams, for, should any yam get a fright, its spirit, becoming annoyed, would make everyone ill with the *kulama* sickness. When digging the yams, the men were most careful not to break even one of the fine roots (Pl. 44D).

On filling in the holes, the men again made the thunder call, "Oom-oom", [821] which, they said, would cause more rain to fall before the day was over. One aboriginal accidentally broke a *kulama* yam while digging it. Instantly, he was on his feet, and, with the broken yam in his palm, dodged in and out among the trees, to escape the spirit of sickness released by the angry yam. After a few minutes, however, he returned, placed the broken yam carefully in the basket with the rest, and resumed his digging. His companions said that it was fortunate that he had only damaged the yam slightly, otherwise, its spirit would have made not only the careless aboriginal, but all of the *kulama* people ill.

When sufficient yams were collected, the party returned to camp in the same order as they went out, i.e., *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinataras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*. The *Mikinatrinas* carried the yams to the foot of a blood-wood tree, called the *wuringaleta*, cleared the grass from around the base and, taking the yams from the basket, placed them on the ground. They were covered with leaves by the female initiates, the *Mikinatrininges*.

(4) *The Preparation of the Ceremonial Ground*

In the late afternoon, the *kulama* men and the male initiates, excluding the *Marukumuni* and the *W'adjeniatis*, prepared the ceremonial ground, the *milimika*.

372 The men walked toward an open space in the forest, and with low cries, 881 beat the ground with sticks, while the leader, pulling up a tuft of grass, threw it into the air. At the place where it fell, the men dug a small circle, the *tumarapi* (navel), in which the yams were to be cooked. Then, sitting down, the men pushed the sand and grass outwards with their feet until the *milimika*, about fifteen feet in diameter, was cleared and surrounded by a low mound of earth and grass.

[222] [137] [89] The *kulama* yam (*Dioscorea sativa*, variety *rotunda*) (Pl. 44D), is about the size of a hen's egg and covered with hairs similar to a board. It is held in the palm of the hand until it is placed carefully in the bark basket.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 *Wurarkui* described some of his experiences when he visited Brisbane to
533 dance before the Queen of England.
539 (*a*) "I saw the big boat, Marella, beside the jetty at Brisbane, many motor
881 cars, boats and trains. The boats went under a big bridge over the river, and across that bridge went the motor cars. The ship's flags were flying."

Another man sang.

(*b*) "The *tapalingas* (stars) are like those on the American flag in Darwin. They lifted the flag up in the morning, and let it down at night."

(*c*) "The *tadawali* (shark) swims about the sea looking for stingrays."

[535] The onlookers applauded this song and asked the singer to perform the shark dance (Pl. 300), which he did to the delight of all.

(*d*) "I am a wireless man, and have sent native tucker (food) all over Australia. The Native Affairs branch in Darwin listened in."

(*e*) "Leo Hickey's boat comes quickly to Snake Bay with a cargo of food from Darwin."

Another *Mikingula* chanted a lengthy song describing the making of a wooden canoe, the felling of a tree in the jungle, the length and shape of the craft and the final launching.

After these songs, the *kulama* men rested in the shade, and the initiates sat by the side of the *milimika*, until about sunset.

(10) *Taking the Cooked Yams to Water*

881 The *Mikingulas*, starting from equally spaced positions on the periphery, crawled toward the basket of cooked and sliced yams standing in the centre of the *milimika*, and pretended to fight over it. While this was going on, the women, beating sticks together, called out "Brr-brr", as did the owl-man, *Purutjikini*, at the first *kulama*. Meanwhile two of the *Mikingulas* vigorously
[535] performed the crocodile dance (Pl. 301). Then with a loud cry, one of them picked up the basket containing the yams, and followed by most of the women and children, carried the basket to the water.

With long-drawn-out calls, and the sound "Brr-brr", the men tipped the cut-up yams from the basket on to a grass bed on the bottom of the stream. While the leader patted the surface of the water, the rest of the people called in a high trilling note, similar to the mosquito call of the *pukamuni* ceremony,
[821] ending up in a loud *yoi*. These calls, they said, would cause still more thunder storms and heavy rain.

533 It was quite dark (about 7.30 p.m.) when the *kulama* people assembled to
881 hear the *Mikinatrina* initiates sing for the first time. For, at this stage of the ceremony, each male initiate of the *Mikinatrina* grade was invited by the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (*b*) "The spirits of my children are dancing on a sand-bank beside the sea."
539 (*c*) "My children's spirits are paddling about in a canoe, looking for fish
881 and turtle eggs."

Another man first chanted a secular song, which he had tried to do earlier, but had forgotten the tune.

[177] (*d*) "I saw a tractor pulling big trees out of the ground to make the new aerodrome."

Then he continued with his *Kararijui* song.

(*e*) "My little children have gone to the island, but they must come back because they are short of tobacco." After a pause he continued, "They're back because someone has just taken the tobacco out of my hand."

(12) *The Ceremonial Eating of the Kulama Yam*

881 On the third day, at early dawn, everybody went to the swamp to eat some of the prepared yams. The leader quietly plucked a bunch of grass from the edge of the water "to waken the *kulama* yam", for should it get a fright the yam would cause much sickness in the camp.

The fully initiated men, the *Mikingulas*, ate the first few pieces "to tame the yam", after which everyone took some to eat. This ritual ensures for all the participants, good health until the next *kulama*. Some of the prepared yam is left in the water for others to eat should they desire it.

This ritual completed the *kulama* ceremony. Everyone returned to his camp, and, except for the initiates of the lower grades, pursued a normal life. The grass ring and the pieces of antbed were left in place but the *kulama* ground and the *milimika* were deserted (Pl. 45D).

784 There are, however, a number of taboos and restrictions associated with
881 the deserted *kulama* ground and oven. For instance, should anyone make
[778] his camp or light a fire in the deserted *milimika*, the spirit of the *kulama* yam would be offended and blind the culprit.

If anyone were so foolish as to toss a piece of the antbed, from the oven, sand from the *milimika* or a fragment of cooked *kulama* yam into the sea, *Maraiji*, the rainbow, would be angry and create heavy seas and storms.
[821] The aborigines of the Cape Fourcroy area were convinced that a recent hurricane, which devastated the whole area, was caused by some foolish person throwing a piece of *kulama* into the sea.

On the other hand, if a *kulama* man takes a piece of antbed from the oven,
[224] and throwing it at a tree, hits the mark, his hunting will be successful, until the next *kulama* ceremony. But, if he misses his mark, his hunting will be poor.

CHAPTER V

The Spirit People of the Tiwi

776 775 THE Tiwi believe that a number of spirit people live on the land, in the swamps, the sea and the sky of their tribal country. They are: the *mopaditis* (p. 61), the spirits of the dead whose homes are in the various totemic localities; the *Ningauis* (p. 124) of the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island; the *Maratjis*, or rainbow people, living in the swamps; the *Pitipituis*, or spirit children, who later become aboriginal children; the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, of the shallow sandbars of the sea; the *Papinjuwaris*, the meteor-men, who live in a place in the sky, far away to the west, and the *Paramanuas*, who often befriend the aborigines.

Although the aborigines are afraid of the *Papinjuwaris*, the *Maratjis* and, to some extent, the *Mopaditis*, they do not particularly fear the other spirit people.

000 The aborigines of Oenpelli, western Arnhem Land, however, believe that their countryside is inhabited with a multitude of spirit people (Mountford, 1956, p. 181), some dangerous and some harmless. This is unusual in aboriginal Australia, most tribes fearing only the spirits of the dead.

1. THE METEOR-MEN, THE PAPINJUWARIS

776 The *Papinjuwaris* live, with their wives and children, in a large paper-bark hut at Wangidji, a place far away to the west, where the sky ends.

The men, large and heavily built, have only one eye as bright as a star. The aborigines often see a *Papinjuwari* streaking across the sky, a blazing firestick in one hand and a fighting club in the other.

The *Papinjuwaris* are ghoulish people, who, although their food consists of bandicoots and large centipedes (Fig. 12), are always craving for the bodies of the dead and the blood of the sick to satisfy their degraded appetites.

[821] One evening, the aborigines pointed out a brilliant meteor which they said was a *Papinjuwari*; he was taking the body of *Waniampari*, whose grave was not far from our camp, back to his companions at Wangidji.

753 776 When a *Papinjuwari* hunts for blood, he locates a sick person (by smell), and standing some distance away (they can make themselves invisible) sucks

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

4. THE SEA-DOGS, THE WANKUIS

773 A fragment of a myth tells of how, at the close of the creation period, a mythical man, called *Kirinua*, assembled all the dogs and asked them whether they would prefer to live on the land or in the sea. The present-day dingos, the *Kirijunas*, chose the land, and others, the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, the sandbanks in the sea.

776 The home of one group of the sea-dogs is a long sand-bar on the eastern side of the entrance to Snake Bay, about a mile from the expedition camp, over which, except at the spring tides, the waves break continuously. [823] The aborigines look on the breaking waves as the wagging tails of the *Wankuis*.

When the tide is out in the day-time and the sandbank exposed and dry, the sea-dogs, to escape being seen go to their camps under the sand.

When it is dark, the *Wankuis* leave their watery home, come on shore and make their camps in low caves at the base of a cliff at Snake Bay (Pl. 47E). While there, the *Wankuis* capture the sea-foods of the shallow waters, sting-rays, shell-fish and crabs. The aborigines claim that on the still nights they often hear the *Wankuis* barking.

In the shallow waters of a sandbar near Cape Fourcroy, the aborigines frequently see another kind of *Wankui* which walks on three legs, waving the fourth in the air.

*532 Pl. 47D pictures the *Wankuis* at the sandbar in Snake Bay. In the centre, with many teats, is the mother surrounded by her twelve sons. It is significant 776 that there was no mention of the father.

5. THE RAINBOW, MARATJI

171 A belief in a mythical serpent-like creature, which is associated with, or is, 776 the rainbow, and is dangerous to strangers, but not to the local inhabitants, occupies an important place, not only in the mythology of the Australian [821] aborigines, but in the mythologies of people in many parts of the world. These mythical creatures are usually highly-coloured (like the rainbow), of huge size and have both mane and beard.

I have traced these mythical creatures, in their various forms, from the River Murray in South Australia, through Central Australia to Arnhem Land. In the western deserts of Central Australia, Mountford, 1948, p. 138, writes, "The snake (*wenambi*) is a huge, many-coloured creature with a [778] mane and a beard. It is feared . . . because it attacks all strangers who approach

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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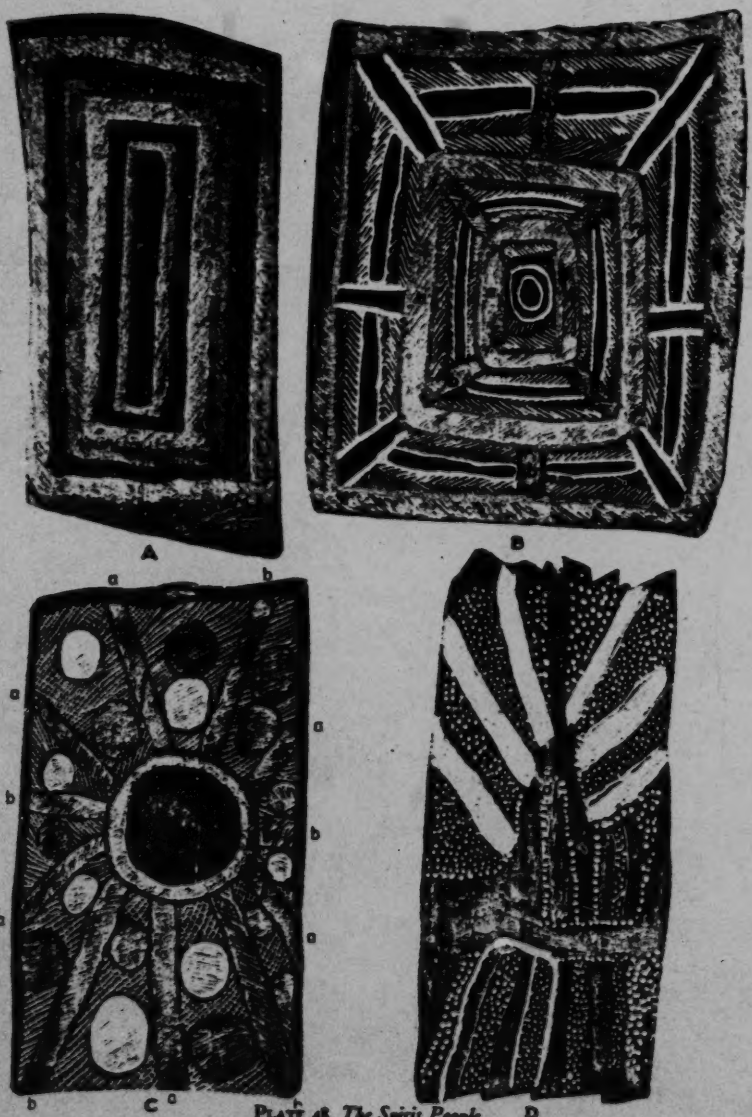

PLATE 48. *The Spirits People*
A, B, The Rainbow-spirit, Maratji, at Kulimbini; C, Maratji at Maundu; D, Maratji, at Gouse Creek.

[p. 154 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

the water in which it lives, usually calling with a deep booming note. The 171
rainbow serpent . . . is related . . . to water, rainbow . . ." The rainbow- 776
serpent myth is widespread throughout Arnhem Land. At Oenpelli (Mount- 778
ford, 1956, p. 210), "mythical serpents live in deep waterholes. . . . The aborigines are . . . afraid of these mythical creatures for should anyone interfere with their . . . home, the serpents, particularly *Ngalois*, will make their waterholes overflow and drown everyone. The rainbow-serpent woman, *Narama*, of the Liverpool River area . . . destroys all aborigines who approach her home."

In north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 462; Warner, 1937, p. 541) the rainbow-serpents live, in one form or another in most of the important water-holes; they are associated with water, the rainbow, lightning, and thunder. Again these serpents are usually highly coloured (like the rainbow), and have a mane and beard. The aborigines claim that they are dangerous to all strangers who approach their waterholes, and even to local aborigines who do not perform the proper rituals before drinking. On Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 75), however, it is a lizard, the gekko, *Ipilja-ipilja*, which takes the place of the rainbow-serpent. It is highly coloured, about one hundred feet in length, has long hair on its head and whiskers on its lower jaw. It lives in a swamp, called Numarika, on south-western Groote Eylandt. Should anyone drink from this swamp, they will surely die. *Ipilja-ipilja* is associated with thunder, thunderstorms, and rain, but not, as far as I could ascertain, with the rainbow.

The lizard-like *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands[47] have many of 776
the characteristics of the gekko, *Ipilja-ipilja* of Groote Eylandt[48] as well as [171]
the rainbow serpents of the Central Australian deserts, and Oenpelli, in Arnhem Land.

The *Maratjis* are highly coloured lizards, the males being up to one hundred yards in length, with horns on their heads instead of hair, and long projecting jaws in the place of beards.

Should any unauthorized person interfere with their waterholes, the *Maratjis* become annoyed. They roar loudly, make the water bubble up [821]
(like the Oenpelli serpent, Mountford, 1956, p. 210), and send a waterspout into the air which, falling as torrential rain, floods the countryside. One of the *Maratjis* then changes himself into the rainbow and travels across the land seeking to injure the offender or anyone else in its path.

[47] Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 231, refers to *Maratji* as the rainbow snake.

[48] It is of interest to note that on isolated places, such as Groote Eylandt and Melville Island, these mythical creatures resemble lizards, and on the Australian mainland, and in most other places in the world, they take the form of snakes.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

776 The *Maratjis* belong to the totem of *Andjalui* (fresh water), in common with *Pakadringa* (thunderstorms), *Tominuka* (monsoon rain) and *Bumerali* (lightning). They are mortal creatures who die and disintegrate like everything else (Pl. 48D).

[123] I collected bark paintings and crayon drawings of a number of *Maratjis*, living with their wives and families in three lagoons on Melville and Bathurst Islands, i.e., Maundu, southern Bathurst Island, and Kulimbini, north-western, and Maratjiana, northern Melville Island.

776 778 The *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands are not always of the same temperament. For instance, the *Maratjis* who live at Kulimbini (Pl. 48A) are so dangerous that should any aboriginal dare approach their water, they will steal his *imunka* (spirit), and he will die.

Although the *Maratjis* of Maundu (Pl. 48C) are feared, it is possible, if certain rituals are performed, for even a stranger to drink the water without harm; while those who live in the Maratjiana lagoon at Goose Creek, are looked upon by the aborigines as "properly quiet fellow".[49]

776 ●821 The rainbow, as a *Maratji*, however, is universally feared, the aborigines believing that the primary bow is the *imunka* (spirit) of a male, and the secondary bow, that of a female *Maratji*.

[789] If a rainbow goes too near an aboriginal camp, the occupants will quickly build up their fire[50] and call out to frighten *Maratji* away, but should he come too close, the people will feel ill and break out into a cold perspiration. If an aboriginal is overtaken by a rainbow,[51] it will kill him by taking his spirit.

Should some aboriginal be so foolish as to throw a spear at a rainbow and injure it, the *Maratjis* would destroy the whole country and the people who live in it.

776 821 648 Two heavy wind-storms, which occurred whilst the expedition was at Melville Island, were supposed to have been caused by angry *Maratjis*. The first was due to some foolish aboriginal who broke a *kulama* ceremony taboo (p. 142) by throwing some of the termite mound from the *kulama* oven into the sea. The second happened when a *pukamuni* pole, taken from a grave by one of the senior officers of the Native Affairs Branch, was being loaded on a boat for transport to Darwin.

The aborigines explained that as these poles are a gift from the living to

[49] Further research will no doubt reveal other waterholes on Melville and Bathurst Islands, inhabited by *Maratjis*.

[171] [50] This would suggest that *Maratji*, like the *Wonambi* of the Central Australian deserts, is afraid of fire (Mountford, 1948, p. 138).

[51] These conditions are, of course, impossible because the rainbow is always several feet from the observer.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat and so prevent the theft. 776 821 648

The Maratjis at Maundu

Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained by the faeces of the *Maratjis*. 776 778

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandubuka* totem are the only people safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from his own armpits, rubs it over his companion. 751 776 [827]

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then, walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi* which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of Maundu. [437] [753] [164]

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon, they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an aboriginal, called *Alumgun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this taboo. [841] [784]

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu. 532 x

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained) water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the 778 776

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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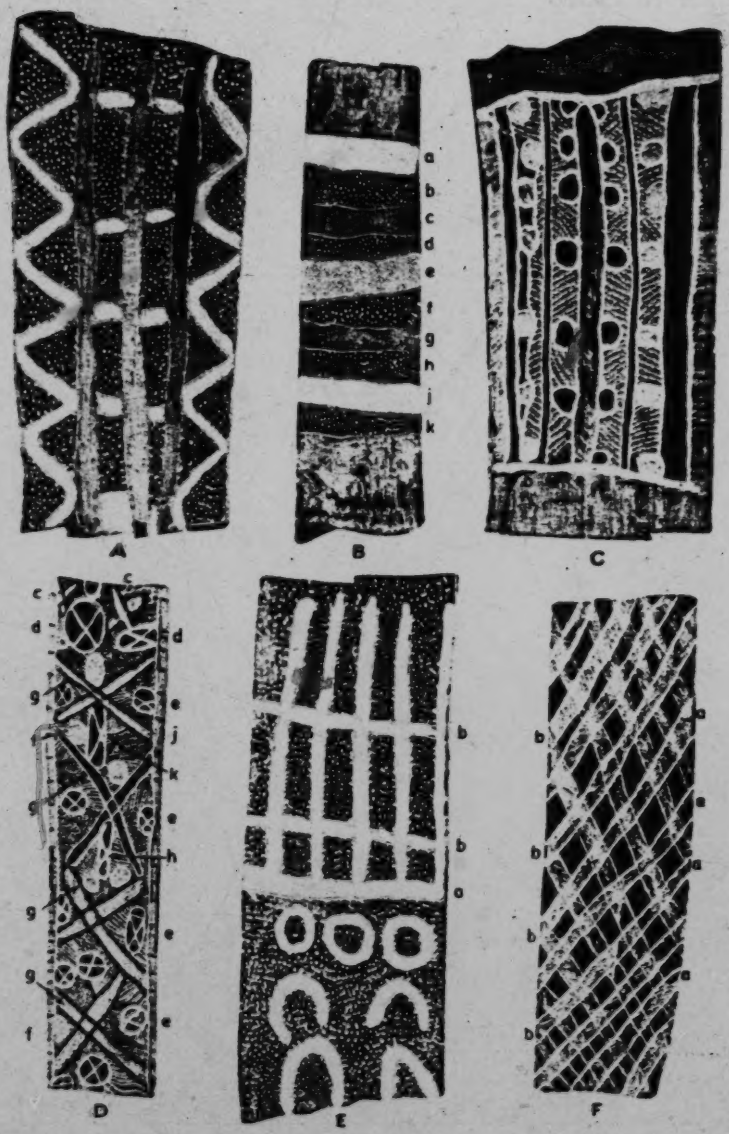

●[821]

PLATE 54. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Maratji, Goose Creek; B, Sea-shore; C, Sea and Sea-coast; D, Marine Creatures; E, Topography, Snake Bay; F, Jungle.

[p. 160 F]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

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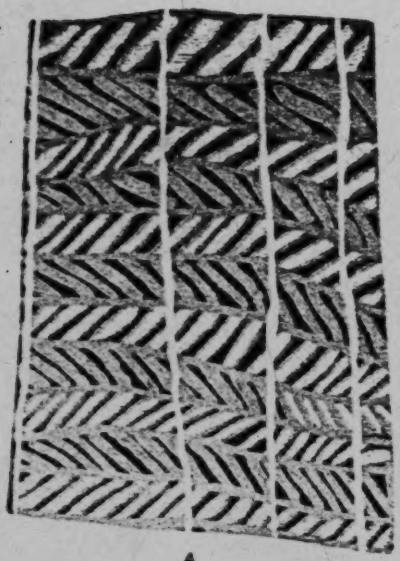
[304]
[821]



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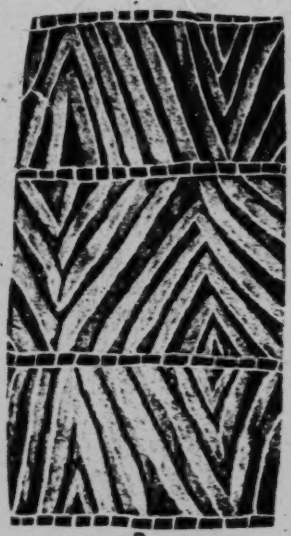

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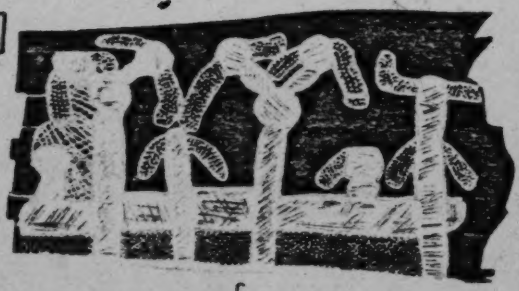

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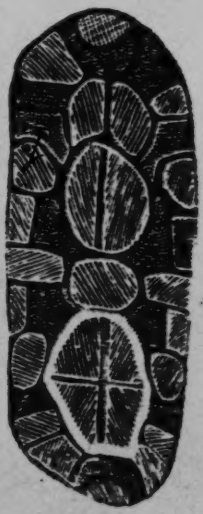

D

PLATE 58. *Secular Bark Paintings*

A, Chevron Body Scars; B, Wet-season Sky; C, Honey-bearing Trees; D, Unidentified.

[p. 160 J]

Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The intersecting diagonal lines symbolize the trunks of those fruit-bearing trees, and the dots on the ground, a small edible berry. 532 x 137

The Poisonous Yams

Pl. 57B illustrates two of the poisonous yams, the *kulama* and the *kwani*. These yams have to be sliced and soaked in water for about three days to remove the poison. They are then edible. The dots on the background indicate grass and shrubs.

The Jungle Trees

This simple painting, Pl. 54F, represents two species of trees that grow in the jungle. The diagonal lines such as *a*, *a*, etc., leading from lower left to upper right of the painting, symbolize a large white-barked jungle tree, and those crossing at right-angles, i.e., *b*, *b*, etc., the milkwood tree. The unpainted diamonds indicate the bare ground and the small plants on the floor of the forest.

A Eucalyptus Forest

The central horizontal panel, *a*, of Pl. 54E represents a track that leads through the forest adjacent to our camp. The five vertical white lines are large eucalyptus trees in a nearby forest which have been hollowed out by the termites, the hollows being indicated by the two upper horizontal lines, *b*, *b*, in the top panel. The dots indicate grass and low shrubs.

On the lower panel, the four crescents are the new moons; the dots, the stars in the sky, and the circles, rocky outcrops. I did not find out whether these rocky outcrops were celestial or terrestrial features. [821]

A Jungle Scene, Imilu

Pl. 52E pictures the trees in a jungle at Imilu, Cape Van Diemen.

The short vertical lines, *a*, *a*, in the top and bottom panels and the short horizontal lines at *b*, on the right-hand edge are trees in the jungle, and the spaces between them, the sandy ground. The five semi-circles at *c*, on the left-hand edge and the ovals in the panels, are the trunks and branches of other jungle trees, and the cross-hatching is a carpet of fallen leaves.

Honey-bearing Trees

The painting, Pl. 58C, deals only with the honey-bearing blossoms of the trees. The long horizontal rectangle is a fallen tree in the forest and the six upright symbols, the trunks of living eucalyptus trees with their upper

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER VII

The Astronomy of the Tiwi

171 THE Tiwi's knowledge of the night sky does not appear to be as extensive as
773 that of the aborigines of the adjoining Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, Part 6).

821 Although myths relating to the sun, the moon, the Milky Way, the stars and Orion and the Pleiades were often told, I was unable to find any relating to the Southern Cross, Scorpio, the Magellan Clouds and other constellations well-known to the aborigines of Arnhem Land.

The Universe

821 The Tiwi believe that the earth is flat, and so limited in area that, if they travel far from the shores of their tribal country, they would fall over the edge. As evidence of this they point out that, in the morning they can see *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman, rise above the eastern rim and, at the end of the day, disappear beneath the western rim of the world.

The earth, too, is of limited thickness, the aborigines believing that, if they dug a hole sufficiently deep they would reach the lower world, *Ilara*.[66]

772 The aboriginal universe of the Tiwi consists of four levels, (*a*) a subterranean world, Ilara, (*b*) the earth on which the aborigines live, (*c*), the sky-land, Juwuku, and (*d*) an upper world, Tuniruna.

On Ilara where it is always dark, there are two high stony ranges with a
772 valley between. It is along this valley that the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,
776 and according to some informants, the moon-man, *Tjapara*, guided only by
821 the light of their glowing torch of bark, travel each day from the western horizon to their homes in the east. As there are no plants or animals on Ilara, the celestial travellers cannot gather any food during their underground journey, although they can quench their thirst at a stream which flows from the top of one of the high mountains.

During the wet season, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms; *Tomituka*, the woman of the monsoon rains; *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, with her husband and her many children, make their home on the sky-land,

[171] [66] I did not find a belief among the Melville Islanders, like that of the aborigines of Groote Eylandt, that the earth was a thin crust resting on the top of the water. (Mountford, 1956, p. 67.)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

Juwuku; while the sun-woman, the men of the Milky Way, the star women and the moon-man (except for a short period each month) travel daily across its surface. 772 776 821

Above the sky is another world, Tuniruna. This is the day-time home of numberless star women, the *Tapalinga*, and the men of the Milky Way, the *Mokuinini*. During the dry season, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*, with her family leave the sky-world, Juwuku, and make their homes in Tuniruna.

Unlike the Ilara, the lowest world, Tuniruna resembles the earth except that there is no sea, although there are many freshwater streams and swamps. All the creatures and plants that live on Melville Island, with the exception of the saltwater fish, are also at Tuniruna.

Every morning the inhabitants of the upper world leave their camps, the women to gather the plant foods of the forest, the men to hunt and capture the creatures, such as freshwater fish and the geese, ducks, pelicans and jabirus, that live in the extensive swamps. Also, many fruits grow at Tuniruna, some of which were specifically named, i.e., *rakarina*, the wild plum; *saurarina*, the white-fruited eugenia; *kinamia*, the red-fruited eugenia; *puta-tabuna*, a small egg-shaped fruit about three-eighths of an inch long; *kwerka*, cycad fruit, and the various yams.

By the time the sun-woman has sunk below the western horizon and extinguished her torch, the inhabitants of Tuniruna, the upper world, have returned from their foodgathering and are lighting their camp-fires to cook the food they have brought in. The light from these fires illuminates the upper world as brightly during the night-time as the sun-woman, with her blazing torch, illuminates the earth during the day-time.

About November, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali* leave Tuniruna and travel from place to place in the sky-world, shedding rain on the parched earth. During this time, the aborigines claim that those with good hearing can distinguish a low "Sh . . . sh . . .", the pleasure call of the thirsty trees as their roots drink the moisture from the sodden ground. It is then that the trees and plants of the upper world, using the raindrops as a vehicle, send their spirits (analogous to the human *Pitipituis*) (p. 146), to the ground beneath, where they grow into plants similar to their progenitors in the upper world.[87] That is, all the plants and trees in the land of the Tiwi were once, as tiny spirits, dropped from the upper world, Tuniruna. 776 821 [824]

[87] I did not specifically inquire whether the creatures in the upper world also sent down their spirits in the same manner as the plants. However, as both plants and human beings have a spirit origin, it is reasonable to assume that the creatures originate in a similar manner. Further research on this subject will be of considerable interest. [124]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

824 This belief probably accounts for the fact that I did not hear any songs chanted, or witness any ceremonies (with the possible exception of the *kulama*) that would bring about a plentiful supply of food. Nor did I hear [171] of any increase centres such as I saw on Groote Eylandt, (Mountford, 1956, pp. 84, 91), and were seen by Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 166), and myself (1948, p. 145) in Central Australia.

The Sky and the Upper World

*532 Pl. 63D is a bark painting of the sky and the upper world, Tuniruna. The central series of concentric circles represent an unidentified planet, one ●821 of the wives of *Tjapara*, the moon-man; the designs, *d, d, d, d*, are some of the 772 stars, *Tapalinga*; *f, f*, are the plum trees (already mentioned), which grow in the upper world. The radiating lines are the limbs of the plum trees.

The inner square, *b*, is the upper world, Tuniruna, the chevron patterns are the clouds in the sky, and the outer square the surface of the earth.

The groups of dots, throughout the painting, are the spirit fruits of the many trees at Tuniruna, which (as mentioned earlier), fall from the upper world to the earth beneath.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala

773 A myth, belonging to the early creation period, tells of how *Wuriupranala*, one of the first women, was given the task of keeping alight a torch of blazing 776 bark. When, after the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, the men and women changed themselves into creatures and plants, *Wuriupranala* became the sun-woman, who travels daily across the sky, her torch of blazing bark providing the world with light and heat.

776 However, before *Wuriupranala* sets out from the eastern horizon, she powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which flying into the air, 821 reddens the clouds of early morning.

When she reaches the western horizon, *Wuriupranala* again powders her body (this accounts for the brilliant sunsets), extinguishes her torch and rests for a while beside a celestial lagoon, Kumpinulu, before returning to the east along a path through the subterranean world, Ilara. On this journey, she is guided only by the light from the glowing end of her smouldering torch.[50]

*532 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60A, B, Pl. 61A, B, and Pl. 63A, B, deal with the 773 myth of the sun-woman.

The designs on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 61A, B, picture the sun, 776 moon and stars.

821

[50] See pp. 35, 40 for more details of the sun-woman.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The crescent, *a*, symbolizes the eastern horizon, beneath which both the sun-women and moon-man have their camps; the transverse panels, *j, j, j*, indicate the western horizon. 532 x 773 776

The disc, *b*, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, while the black dot in the centre is her life essence, *imunka* (p. 137). 821

The sun-woman again is represented by the white disc, *s*, on the upper edge. This time she has several of the blazing torches, *m, n*, which she carries across the sky. Her many camps in the east are at *p, p*, etc. (lower edge).

The white oval, *h* (upper centre), is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, with his torches, shown as a series of radiating lines. Crescent, *g*, is the waxing, *f*, the waning moon, and the three adjacent squares, *e, e, e*, are places in the east where the moon-man made his camps. The cross-hatched areas, *p, k*, etc., indicate the men of the Milky Way, *Maludaiamini*, and the groups of dots, such as *t*, the star-women, *Tapalingas*. At *o* (upper right) is an unidentified celestial tree.

Pl. 60A, B, pictures two suns, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*,[50] the moon, *Tjapara* and the stars, *Tapalinga*.

One of the sun-women, *Wuriupranala*, is shown at *f* (upper edge) the circle of radiating lines, *g*, symbolizing the flames of her bark torch. At *h*, on the bottom of the painting, is the other sun-woman, *Murupiangkala* with her bark torch, *j*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, is at *b*, his head at *e*, his shoulders at *c*, and his genitals at *d*.

The oval at *k* (upper right), is a mountain in the east from the top of which *Wuriupranala* or *Murupiangkala* alternately set out on their daily journey across the sky. The white oval at *l* (upper left) indicates the mountain on the western horizon where the sun-women rest for a while before they travel to the Kumpinulu lagoon, and prepare and eat their meal before returning to the east via the underground road, *m* (upper left).

The designs on the lower edge of the painting deal with the journey of the sun-woman, *Murupiangkala*; the white design *o*, is the mountain in the east from which she sets out on her journey across the sky; *p* represents the mountain in the west where she finishes her journey.

At *a, a*, etc., are the wives of *Tjapara*, the planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. Black ovals, *s, s*, are dark-coloured rain clouds, and ovals, *q, q*, clouds reddened by sunrise and sunset light. The dots are the star-women, the *Tapalingas*, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

Pl. 63A, B, deals with the sky journey of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

[50] The artist claimed that two sun-women travelled alternately across the sky. This however, was not the dominant belief. [184]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

At *c*, is the sun-woman with her *imunka* (life essence) (see Pl. 61A, B). Her palm-leaf baskets are at *u* and *r* (left); her hair-string belts at *k*, *v* (bottom); a dingo-skin hair ornament is at *s* (left), and her head at *m* (top left).

The place where the sun woman appears above the eastern horizon is indicated at *f* (bottom) with her mid-day camp at *g*. There she makes a fire, *e* (the four radiating lines being the firewood), and cooks the food she has collected during the morning. Black rain clouds are indicated at *d*, and a thin cloud, which partly obscures the sun, at *h*.

The upper section of the painting deals with the evening camp *o*, of the sun-woman. Her fire and firewood are at *p*, *q*.

At *n*, on the upper left, is the daughter of the sun-woman (an unidentified star), the central dot at *m*, symbolizing her eye.

The Moon-man, Tjapara

At the conclusion of the fight between the moon-man, *Tjapara* and *Purukupali*, during creation times, the moon-man went up to the sky, bearing on his face the wounds he received at the hands of *Purukupali*.[60]

It was then *Purukupali* decreed that the whole of creation once dead, would remain dead for ever. However, *Tjapara*, the moon-man, partly escaped that decree, for, although he dies for three days every month, his life is eternally renewed.

As soon as *Tjapara* comes to life, he eats huge meals of the flesh of the mangrove crabs, which makes him grow fat and round at the end of a fortnight. However, this food makes him so ill that he sickens and dies.

The aborigines look upon the thin crescent of the waning moon as the skeleton of *Tjapara*,[61] and the body of the moon (visible by earth shine) as his spirit, *imunka*.

During his daily journey across the sky, the moon-man follows the same path as the sun-woman. He, however, carries a much smaller torch.

At one time the moon-man used to return to the east by a road just under the southern horizon. But a nest of hornets, which lived along that road, stung him so badly that he changed his path and now returns to his home by a northern route.[62]

The moon has four wives who live in the sky with him. They are the

[60] See p. 29 for details of the fight between *Purukupali* and *Tjapara*.

[61] A larval form of one of the cockroaches which curls up into an almost complete circle, is called *Tjaparalinga*, the son of the moon.

[62] Most informants, however, said that the moon returned to the east through the same underground world as the sun-woman.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. My informants were certain, however, that *Tjapara* had many more wives in his eastern camp. 776 821

When a ring forms around the moon, during moist weather, the aborigines believe the moon-man is taking part in a *kulama* ceremony. The ring is the mound of earth around the ceremonial circle, the *milimiba* (p. 134), inside of which a multitude of star people are dancing and singing the *kulama* songs.

Two bark paintings illustrate the myth of the moon, Pl. 61C, D, and Pl. 62D. 532x 821

On Pl. 61C, D, one side of a *pukamuni* basket illustrates the moon and the clouds. 776 [773]

In the centre, at *b*, is the crescent moon, *Tjapara*, the black oval, *a*, indicating his genitals. The monsoon clouds, *tarutapijina* (cumulus-nimbus) of the wet season are indicated by the six black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., and cumulus clouds, *kundaratina*, by the three circles on the left-hand side at *e*, *e*, *e*. The older aborigines referred to these clouds as hills in the sky. The intersecting lines, *d*, *d*, etc., are "young" cumulus clouds, which, when they appear in the sky at the beginning of the wet season, remind the natives it is time to search the trees of the forest for the hives of the wild bees.

The surface of the ground is indicated by the long rectangle, *g*, on the lower edge, and the place of the stars, by the groups of dots at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 62D pictures the moon-man, *Tjapara*, and his many wives.

The central circle is the full moon, the lighter coloured crescents and ovals being the white clouds that sometimes obscure the moon at night; the dark-coloured, but similar designs are the clouds made yellow with the sunset light. The white circles are the planets, the wives of the moon man, and the dots, the stars, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

The Moon and the Stars

Pl. 62C is a painting of the night sky. The crescent, *b*, is the new moon, *Tjapara*, and the white vertical panel, the road, along which he travels. 532x 821

The larger circle on the right hand of the painting represents the morning star, probably Venus, and that on the left, the evening star. The many smaller circles are unidentified stars in the night sky. These are the wives of the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaiaini*.

The Men of the Milky Way

In creation times, certain men, the *Maludaiainis*, although each had many wives, were always sneaking off into the jungle with the wives of other men. 773

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 This behaviour led to a great deal of trouble, developing later into a fight in which many of the *Maludaianini* men were wounded.

After that fight, the *Maludaianini* men rose into the sky and became the Milky Way; their wives were turned into stars.

776 When the sun-woman sinks beneath the western horison, and the light
821 from the blazing torch leaves the sky, the *Maludaianini* travel in a long line across the firmament (similar to the processional caterpillars at the beginning of the wet season), visiting their wives, the stars, as they go.

Early in the evening the men of the Milky Way rub their hands over their
[827] bodies to remove the dried perspiration. This dried perspiration, falling on the eyelids of the aboriginal people, make them heavy with sleep.[65]

x Three bark paintings, Pl. 60D, Pl. 62A, and Pl. 63C, illustrate the myth of
532 the men of the Milky Way.

776 The black bars between *c*, *c*, and *c*, *c*, Pl. 60D, are the men of the Milky
821 Way, the *Maludaianini*; the white disc, *a*, being their camp, while similar white designs, *b*, *b*, indicate the camps of their star wives.

The central white panel, *d*, is the Milky Way; the dark squares, *e*, *e*, etc., are the red clouds at sunrise and sunset, the dark-coloured vertical panels on either side of *d*, white cumulus clouds at night, and the six black discs, dark-coloured clouds, in the night sky.

Pl. 62A is another painting of the Milky Way. The circles with the radiating lines are the camp fires of the stars, the background being the shadows cast by those fires. The Coal Sack in which there are no fires, is the camp of the star women.[66]

The lighter panels, leading from the upper left to the lower right, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, the darker panels, from upper right to lower left, indicate the night sky.

Reading from the left on the lower edge, panels one, three and five symbolize cumulus clouds, *Kumbaratina*, of the night sky, and two, four and six, unidentified clouds, called *aratinia*.

The dotted panels on Pl. 63C represent the men of the Milky Way, the barred panels, the "roads", i.e., dark spaces, in the galaxy, and the five horizontal panels, eucalyptus trees in the firmament.

[855] [65] The aboriginal women, to the accompaniment of a lullaby, send their children to sleep by rubbing their fingers together above the face of the child in the same manner as the *Maludaianini* do in the sky.

[66] The Coal Sack is visible at Melville Island only during the hot "wet" season, i.e. from November to March. This had given rise to the belief that the star-women, who make their camp within that heavenly spectacle, do not need fires. The same belief accounts for the fact that, within the Coal Sack there are no stars (the camp-fires of the star-women).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Orion and the Pleiades

Pl. 6a illustrates the myth of Orion and the Pleiades. In the astronomical myth Orion, *a*, is a pack of dingoes, called *daiimini*, who are for ever chasing the *Pleiades*, *b*, a group of wallabies, *karaka*. 532x 776 821 [773]

The black vertical lines on either side of *a*, and *b*, starless spaces in the Milky Way, *Maludaiamini*, are the trunks of celestial bloodwood trees; the short lines at right-angles, their limbs, and the dots on the background, the many spider-webs on their branches.

The large outer ovals, unidentified parts of the Milky Way, are patches of bare and grass-covered land of the sky, and the eight discs on the insides of the ovals, some of the larger stars.

Discussion

There is a wide difference between the astronomical myths of Melville Island and those of the adjacent mainland. Nor do the Melville Islanders have such a detailed knowledge of the night sky as the tribes of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 479). This fact suggests, as do other aspects of the culture, that the natives of Melville Island have been isolated from the mainland cultures for a long time. 171 773 821

The effects of this isolation are most evident in two of the sky myths, i.e., the Milky Way, and the constellations of Orion and the Pleiades.

Throughout Australia, with few exceptions, the Milky Way is looked upon as a celestial river, along which the sky people travel in their canoes, and gather their food (Mountford, 1956, p. 491). No trace of this widespread myth is present on Melville Island, the Milky Way being a multitude of caterpillar men, the *Maludaiamini*.

Similarly with Orion and the Pleiades. In the Australian mainland myths, Orion is a man or men, and the Pleiades, a group of women, more often than not, the wives of the men of Orion.

In the place of this widespread myth, the Melville Islanders look upon the stars of Orion as a group of dingoes chasing the Pleiades, a mob of wallabies.

Even in the myth of the moon-man, there is a reversal of the adjacent Arnhem Land beliefs. In Arnhem Land, it was the moon who brought death to the world (Mountford, 1956, p. 495; Warner, 1937, p. 523). On Melville Island, it is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, who tries to stop *Purukupali* from imposing death on all living creatures.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

796 An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch
827 his wives or children, because a deadly sweat called *hilamini* comes from his body and will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

[88] Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected
764 with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *emuke:r* of
775 the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yataraka*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

Culture Heroes. They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the
773 "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-
776 tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumereka*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orati*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marakarti*.

The Present Day Spirits. Some spirits vitally affect their present lives.
776 Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain
[82] spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

Magic. Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs
754 slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *kulampara*. It is interesting to compare the Aanla belief; if a person is sung with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Sickness is cured by beating the ground around the victim to hunt the evil spirit away. Likewise, a song, Upripu, is sung by the wives of the sick man to make him better. The *Kurewa*, a pointed bone, or sometimes a tomahawk is used to stab a person's urine or an article his body has touched (e.g. a bark he has lain upon to sleep) and so cause him to die. Blood thrown into the sea will cause a violent wind and a big tide. The Kulama rite will bring about the same result. No instance has been found of magic being used to entice the spirit from a person's body, yet if a person failed to show sympathy for the dead, the dead person's "shade" would cause that person to die and then run away with his "shade." To mention the name of the newly dead is taboo. If a person accidentally does this he must immediately hit his mouth and spit to cleanse it of the evil.

Names. The names given to the women and men are of three types; the first is the actual name and is given to a person at the Kulama rite; this is an ordinary word such as "honey nest," etc., but it is always in a different language from the ordinary one which is used everyday. The child also receives the name of his father, father's brother or father's sister; this is a traditional name. Then, in the case of a male, come the terms denoting his initiation grade in the Kulama. First stage—*Murakmani*; second stage—*Wadjaneta*; third stage—*Migingartiya*=first song and *Midjintera*=second song; fourth stage—*Mekearterima*=third song; and finally, *Makagala*, which denotes that the man is qualified to conduct a Kulama. Likewise, both sexes have grade names denoting their status in the Pukamane death ritual. Male terms: first stage—*waniati*; second stage—*warunerera*; third stage—*wanerterima*; fourth stage—*wanderara*. With girls and women these names are the same except for the ending denoting the sex.

In the case of women there are terms denoting age or condition. *Kudjine*—child; *alinga*—girl; *miriyaleta*—puberty; *murogarbra*—breasts developed; *piramuruha*—first sign of pregnancy; *paprungata*—pregnant woman; *wananjaka*—woman who has a child dead, and *umparu*—widow. Other terms are *pitukwen*—widower; *mentuygini* and *padrubayga*—boy and girl respectively, whose mother is pregnant; *indjula*—a woman whose breasts have fallen; and as on the mainland, a mother is always called by the sex of the child she carries in her arms: *oriowri* if a boy, *kudjine* if a girl.

Language. The language is peculiar. In many instances, owing to the masculine and feminine endings of the words, the women seem to speak a different language to the men. In addition, another language, or set of words, which is very rarely spoken, seems to obtrude itself. Thus one article will have many names. This is brought about by the strong death-taboo on names; as soon as a native dies, his names and his son's names are taboo and others are substituted. In this way every year new words are coined. Only recently at a Kulama two new ones appeared as a consequence of this taboo. *Purintariya*, new name for tree, and *alepwa*, new name for coconut. Or a Kulama name may be given as, say, *wilinkwawwa*, the meaning of which will be given as honey nest; and yet numerous words for honey are nothing

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Tiwi Marriage

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Cultural Isolation

PEOPLE WHO LIVE in the congested cities and towns of the modern world have difficulty in realizing how different life can be at the hunting and gathering level of human existence. The basic fact about the life of hunters and gatherers is the thinly spread-out manner in which they live and the isolation of families and households from each other. In the case of the Tiwi, these conditions of isolation and dispersal were accentuated by their island habitat. Melville and Bathurst Islands lie off the northern coast of Australia some fifty to eighty miles from Darwin, which is the administrative capital of the empty north. They are separated from the mainland by about twenty-five miles of open sea at the narrowest part. This distance is slightly greater than the distance that separates England from France at the Straits of Dover, and just as the dim outline of coastal France can be seen from England on clear days, so the dim outline of the Australian mainland can be seen from the southern edges of the islands. However, Tiwi tradition is firm and certain that before the white man's arrival there was no contact between the islands and the mainland. To them, the dimly seen coastline of Australia was *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead, to which all Tiwi souls went after death. It follows from this they they regarded the inhabited world as composed of their own two islands, and on those islands they lived a self-contained and exclusive existence. Occasionally outsiders appeared, either castaways from surrounding areas, including presumably the Australian mainland, and in recent centuries, fishing boats and pirates from Indonesia, loosely called "Malays" in the literature. To such visitors from outside, the Tiwi were consistently and implacably hostile. Their own traditions and what little written history there is of "Malay" penetration into the Arafura Sea both tell the same story. Outsiders who landed on the islands were massacred or vigorously resisted. Whether they were classified as *Malai-ui* ("Malays") or *Wona-rui*

361 131 [173] [175] [823] 186 609

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

621 Tiklauila" or "My wife is a Munupula woman"; a mourner would say, "He
619 died when visiting the Munupula and therefore we will have to go to Munupi for the funeral"; an old man would reminisce about being brought up as a youth by his mother's brother, who was a Turupula, and the good times he had in Turupi; and another would recount details of big battles between the Munupula and the Malauila. All of these were band names or band territories. The nine bands thus acted, psychologically, as small tribelets or semisovereign groups, since it was with one of them that every Tiwi most closely identified in his day-to-day life on the islands. It is only when, as nowadays, he leaves the islands to go to work for the white man in Darwin that he has to think of himself as a Tiwi, since there he mingles with men of other tribes. Even then,
[177] work and residence in the white man's town does not entirely obliterate band identification. A Tiklauila in Darwin prefers to work with and to consort in the evenings with other Tiklauila, and Malauila with Malauila.[8]

Because of certain peculiar features of Tiwi domestic life, to be dis-
621 cussed below, it is difficult to sum up the Tiwi band in any simple formula.
591 People, especially women, changed their band residence frequently in the course of their lives, and being born into a band did not at all require permanent residence with that band, either for males or for females. Thus the district (for example, Tiklaru or Malau) was a firm, fixed, known quantity, but the people who "owned" the district (for example, Tiklauila or Malauila) were a flexible and constantly shifting collection of individuals.

The territorial boundaries between bands were clear and well known
423 to everybody, though they were not the sharp lines on a map such as we
621 regard as essential for a frontier or a land boundary. All pieces of country—clumps of jungle, stretches of grassland, sections of thick woods—had names. One such piece of country, say a thickly wooded area, belonged to one band, while the more open country that began where the woods thinned out belonged to another; thus the boundary was not a sharp line but a transitional zone—
[137] perhaps of several miles—where the change from trees to open savannah became noticeable, with the band territories thus fusing into one another rather
[823] than being separated by sharp lines. The Tiwi, so to speak, thought of the landscape as a sort of spectrum where a man moved gradually out of one district into another as he passed from one type of horizon to the next. Since
[133] rivers, and even Apsley Strait, a very narrow arm of the sea separating Melville from Bathurst Island, usually have similar types of vegetation on *both* sides or banks, none of the island rivers nor Apsley Strait was a boundary or frontier between bands. The Mandiimbula, predominantly a Melville Island

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177 [8] In the early 1930's the situation at the Government Hospital in Darwin offered
797 a good illustration of this. The hospital authorities said they gave preference for house-
181 boy jobs to "Melville Islanders because of their greater intelligence and reliability." In point of fact, some of the younger Tiklauila had established a monopoly on hospital jobs and no Tiwi other than a Tiklauila was ever hired there. The whites thought they were hiring Tiwi but the Tiklauila saw to it that they hired only Tiklauila and felt no vestige of obligation to other Tiwi to help them get these desirable jobs. The alleged greater intelligence of the islanders was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Tiklauila, having had a Catholic mission in their territory since 1911, were more used to white requirements.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

773 Puzzled over this new phenomenon, *Jurumu* placed the smouldering wood-
[372] dust into the pith of a dead pandanus palm and blew upon it. To the surprise of both men the speck became larger and larger, finally bursting into a flame. This frightened the men so badly that they rushed to *Purukupali* and asked him to destroy the strange thing they had made. But when *Purukupali* saw the blazing wood and felt its heat he realized that *Jurumu* and *Mudati* had inadvertently discovered something that would give the aborigines not only light to dispel the darkness, but heat to cook their food and to keep them warm.[16]

Calling his sister, *Wuriupranala*, he gave her a torch of bark lit from the blazing log and told her that it was her duty to keep it alight always. *Tjapara*,
[821] who later became the moon, was given a smaller torch.

With the coming of light and heat, the descendants of *Mudungkala* spread over the island, hunting and camping in places which, at the close of the creation period, became their totemic country.

About that time, two men, *Puruti* and *Jirakati*, were spearing fish in Tiaupu, a freshwater swamp at Piper Head, near the northern entrance to Apsley Straits, when they noticed, by the movements of the stems of the water-lilies, some large creature moving about under the water.

Not knowing it was his mother, *Tipuru-undunga*, *Puruti* speared her in the neck. Screaming with pain and urinating in her fright, *Tipuru-undunga*
[823] rushed into the sea, which in those days was fresh water, polluting it so much with her blood and urine that it became as salt as the sea of today.

The wounded *Tipuru-undunga* changed herself into the tall, stately bird,
[825] the jabiru (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) which now lives on the edge of the fresh-water lagoons; while the fishermen, *Puruti* and *Jirakati* became the sea-osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and the graceful white-headed sea-eagle (*Haliaetus leucogaster*).[16]

During those early *palaneri* times, a man, *Jirakupai*, lived beside a fresh-water lagoon, *Jirininga*, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. He had married two sisters, *Kuraruna* and *Jakuia*.

Jirakupai was an expert in the making of both the large many-barbed, male
[411] spears, *tunkaringa*, which have a row of barbs on one side (Pl. 32A), and the female spears, *tunkaguni*, with their double row of barbs (Pl. 32B). Both forms are now used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

[16] The aborigines distinguish between light (*milajuka*) from the sun or burning wood, and heat (*ikwani*) from glowing coals.

[16] The large hawk-like birds, *Jirakati*, the sea-eagle, *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite, appear as men in a number of the myths. In each one they transformed themselves from men into birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 Still railing, *Purukupali* picked up the dead body of his son, which *Bima* had wrapped in a sheet of paper-bark, and walking backward into the sea, called out loudly as the waters closed over his head,

Maulientanili awangtini tangini mu mu.

(You must all follow me; as I die, so must you all die.)

[823] The place where *Purukupali* died, adjacent to Impanali, on the east coast of Melville Island, became a whirlpool so strong that any aboriginal who approached it in a canoe would be drowned. When *Tjapara* saw what had 773 happened, he changed himself into the moon. But he did not entirely escape 821 the decree of *Purukupali*, for, even though *Tjapara* is eternally reincarnated, he has to die for three days. On any clear night, one can see on the face of the moon-man the wounds which he received in his fight with *Purukupali* so long ago.

× 532 One bark painting, Pl. 2B, C, deals with the death of *Purukupali* and his son *Djinini*. At *a*, is the whirlpool off Impanali Point, eastern Melville 773 Island, where *Purukupali*, *b*, carrying his dead son, disappeared beneath the surface of the water.

The foot-marks of *Purukupali*, as he walked backward into the water, are the white dots at *c*; his arms, the two white bars, at *d*; and the dead child he carried is at *e*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, at *f*, is asking for the body of the dead child to restore him to life.

The moon in the sky is shown at *g*; the forked throwing stick, *mihuanta* at *h*; and at *j* are the plain throwing sticks, *muruguna*, which when thrown by *Purukupali*, caused the wounds on the face of *Tjapara*.

At *l*, *l*, are the goose-feather balls, *tokwiunga* (Pl. 31B), of *Purukupali*; *n*, *n*, his cane armlets, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H); *s* (upper left) is his cockatoo-feather head ornament, *primitiki*; *k*, *k*, are his bark baskets, *wanatuna*; *u*, his firesticks; *o*, is his camp fire; and *r*, his water-hole.

Tjapara's fireplace, an unlocalized spot, *Oulini*, in the sky, is at *q*; his camp-fire is at *p*, and his firestick at *t*.

4. THE PUKAMUNI OF PURUKUPALI

773 When *Tukimbini*, who was living at Murupianga, heard of the death of *Purukupali*, he sent a message stick to *Talinini* of the honey-people of central Bathurst Island, appointing him the ceremonial leader (*alowia*) of the burial rituals.

At the same time, because they were near at hand, he told the people who lived at Murupianga, Wuriupi and Wailu, that as they were the appointed

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

The *pukamuni* poles, *tudinis*, *a*, *a*, etc., and *b*, *b*, etc., are now parallel reefs of stone[20] on the sea-coast at Impanali; circle *d*, is a ring of white sand encircling the death place of *Purukupali*; and *e*, a large boulder at Tapararimi, once a stone axe, which the "workers" had used to cut the *pukamuni* poles. 532 773 [823]

The remainder of the designs on the painting symbolize the people of creation times mourning for *Purukupali*. The dots *j*, *j*, on the ground of the painting, represent the coloured ochres on the body of the ceremonial leader, *Talinini*; the black rectangle, *g*, *Waia*, the mother-in-law of *Purukupali*; and *h*, *h*, two bird-women, *Pungatili* and *Makungdili*.

At *k* (left) is a honey-woman, *Imbara*, the sister of *Talinini*; *l* (upper left), her mother, *Latungkala*, who made a bark basket, and *m*, another honey-woman, *Irama*. *Mauwini* is at *n*, he, with *Talinini* and *Taparalili*, performed the first *ilania* at Biawururu, on central Bathurst Island. *Taparalili* is at *q*, and other honey-men, *Tupiringini* and *Maipuringa* are at *p* and *s*.

On Pl. 3C, the artist tried to show some of the decorations used in a *pukamuni* ceremony. The series of cross-hatched, more or less rectangular panels, at the top, represent the painted bark baskets which are left on the grave; the vertical panels at the bottom, lines of colour in the hair of the performers, and the groups of chevron designs, the scars on the bodies of the men and women. The horizontal band across the centre of the painting represents the hair belts of the men.

Pl. 3D and 3E are designs which, the artists told me, would be similar to those painted on the burial poles of *Purukupali*.

The artist of Pl. 3D did not give me the meaning of his design, but on Pl. 3E, the four barred panels, *a*, *a*, etc., represent native roads; the plain bands, *b*, *b*, etc., on either side, horizontal lines of clouds, the diagonal bands, in the upper and lower panels, native fig trees, and the cross-hatched diamond-shaped panels, spider webs on the trees.

Before the rituals at Tapararimi began, the fish-men engaged in a contest to prove who could throw their spears the furthest. *Pipinjawari* was the most skilled of them all, for, even though he stood behind the others, his spears still travelled the greatest distance. Wherever the spears landed, there are now large eucalyptus trees, the largest of them, called *Warukumbi*, being once the spear of *Pipinjawari*. But in winning the contest, the fish-man strained his spine so badly that parts of the vertebrae were forced through the skin. 773 [824]

At the conclusion of the rituals, it was the duty of *Pipinjawari* to pay the "workers" for the labour of cutting and painting the poles, and for making

[20] Other informants state they are large trees. Probably both informants are correct.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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4. THE SEA-DOGS, THE WANKUIS

773 A fragment of a myth tells of how, at the close of the creation period, a mythical man, called *Kirinua*, assembled all the dogs and asked them whether they would prefer to live on the land or in the sea. The present-day dingos, the *Kirijunas*, chose the land, and others, the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, the sandbanks in the sea.

776 The home of one group of the sea-dogs is a long sand-bar on the eastern side of the entrance to Snake Bay, about a mile from the expedition camp, over which, except at the spring tides, the waves break continuously. [823] The aborigines look on the breaking waves as the wagging tails of the *Wankuis*.

When the tide is out in the day-time and the sandbank exposed and dry, the sea-dogs, to escape being seen go to their camps under the sand.

When it is dark, the *Wankuis* leave their watery home, come on shore and make their camps in low caves at the base of a cliff at Snake Bay (Pl. 47E). While there, the *Wankuis* capture the sea-foods of the shallow waters, sting-rays, shell-fish and crabs. The aborigines claim that on the still nights they often hear the *Wankuis* barking.

In the shallow waters of a sandbar near Cape Fourcroy, the aborigines frequently see another kind of *Wankui* which walks on three legs, waving the fourth in the air.

x532 Pl. 47D pictures the *Wankuis* at the sandbar in Snake Bay. In the centre, with many teats, is the mother surrounded by her twelve sons. It is significant 776 that there was no mention of the father.

5. THE RAINBOW, MARATJI

171 A belief in a mythical serpent-like creature, which is associated with, or is, 776 the rainbow, and is dangerous to strangers, but not to the local inhabitants, [821] occupies an important place, not only in the mythology of the Australian aborigines, but in the mythologies of people in many parts of the world. These mythical creatures are usually highly-coloured (like the rainbow), of huge size and have both mane and beard.

I have traced these mythical creatures, in their various forms, from the River Murray in South Australia, through Central Australia to Arnhem Land. In the western deserts of Central Australia, Mountford, 1948, p. 138, writes, "The snake (*wonambi*) is a huge, many-coloured creature with a [778] mane and a beard. It is feared . . . because it attacks all strangers who approach

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

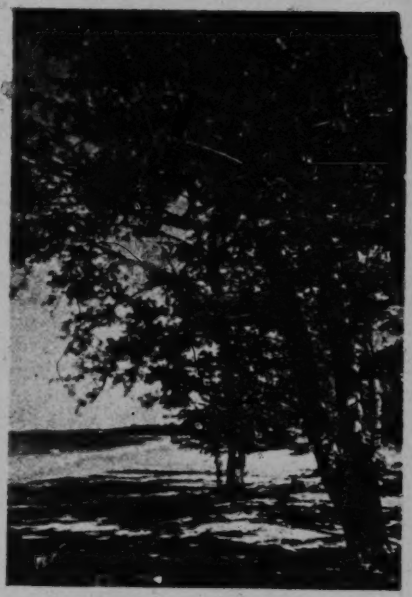

Fig. 4. A casuarina grove

123 clutched Tchuwiunga more tightly
501 and I hugged my KLM bag while the two men worked to head the canoe into the largest waves while trying at the same time to head in
[137] towards the shore. This meant taking a good many not so large waves broadside and we got very wet. Facing sternwards, I could not see the waves, so if a particularly
[823] large one (Agnes called them "female waves!") approached, I would be given a few seconds warning and would duck the breaking spray which would cover the boat and its occupants. The only miserable one was the puppy who presented a very puzzled and hurt expression as he peered out from under the folds of Agnes's *naga*. For the rest of us the cold spray was a welcome relief from the burning sun.

Once in close to the shore, our skilful paddlers brought the canoe safely onto the beach, riding in on one of the breakers. We unloaded everything, although we intended to stop only for lunch, for the canoe would soon be swamped by the sea if left alone. After unloading, Albert swam the canoe out beyond the breakers where he anchored it with a large rock.

123 Then we climbed the low dunes close to the shore and came to a grove of casuarinas. These provided much appreciated shade but a very uncomfortable carpet of spiny seed pods. Taking up our two billy cans, Agnes led me to the back of the grove where she
[312] showed me a small well. There were many footprints around the sandy hole which were identified as belonging to Black Joe's mob, the natives who had preceded us. They had, however, not depleted the well for in the bottom was a small puddle, and since this was at the very end of the six months dry season, it was considered fortunate that there was any water at all. Agnes carefully tasted

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

border, the muddy floor. The other black rectangles, *p*, *p*, etc., indicate rocks in the sea, and their lighter-coloured borders, the waves breaking over them. 532x 778

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Matingalia, at Putawini

A eucalyptus-tree woman *Matingalia* created a rocky island of the same name at the mouth of Putawini Creek, western Bathurst Island. I was not able to gather further details of the mythical story. 773

The central vertical panel *a*, of Pl. 16A, is the open sea, and the outer surrounding white rectangle, *h*, *h*, the dry land of the island. Small hills are at *k*, *k* (top), a large hill is at *o* (top); and deposits of red ochre, *m*, *m*, etc., also form part of the island. 532x 778

A small branch of the Putawini Creek is indicated by the white band at *b*; another branch, Piriki, at *c*; another near Pintamu, at *d*; and still another (unnamed) at *f*, *f*. Timinindu and Dunkunaru Creeks (unidentified) are at *g*, *g*, and *e*, respectively. The eggs of a crocodile, *lukupianga*, similar to those of *Jirakupai*, the dangerous, sea-going *Crocodilus porosus*, are indicated by the white discs, *n*, *n*, etc. [825]

The Bush-fire woman, Puruliangkala, at Turiturina Island

The totemic place of the woman of the bush-fires, *Puruliangkala*, is on Turiturina Island, in Port Hurd, western Bathurst Island, where the mythical bird-man and later the *Ningauis* performed the first *kulama* ceremonies (p. 123). 778 [773]

The central white circle on Pl. 16D, is Turiturina Island: the smaller circles, *a*, *a*, are low rocks in the sea, once the camp-fires of *Puruliangkala*; and *b*, *b*, freshwater springs that provided her with water. The black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., are deposits of red ochre, and *d*, *d*, *d*, etc., deposits of white ochre, used by both the mythical woman and the *Ningauis* to decorate themselves for their ceremonies during *palaneri* times. 532x 778

At *e*, *e*, etc., are many milkwood trees, the sap of which, like the ochre deposits, was also utilized by both *Puruliangkala* and the *Ningauis* for body decorations. This sap is still used in the opening rituals of the *kulama* (p. 131). The dots are white fruits, *mandikama*, which *Puruliangkala* created for food. [824] [386]

The Sand-fly woman, Mandubuka, at Murninini

Mandubuka, the sand-fly woman, established the totemic place of Murninini, south-western Bathurst Island. 773 778

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, 881
dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp, and prepared them for cooking.

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42E).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place 302
where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42E), 881
and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh", threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[23] It is [821]
believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunderstorms and so prolonging the wet season.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikingulas*, the *Mikiatarimas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts, 881
went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* [386]
sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a [824]
line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[24]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the [775]
portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always [824]
present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the *kulama* people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates then sat down to a meal of the edible yams.

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a *pukamuni* man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any [753]
part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them [626]
ill.

[23] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[24] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 463, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated men.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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881 led by the *Mikinatrinas*, carrying the baskets, followed by the *Mikinataras*, the *Mikiatarimas*, and the *Mikingulas*. No *kulama* woman accompanied this party.

As the *kulama* men entered the jungle they separated, each searching for vines which indicated the presence of the yam.[20] Before digging, however, the [824] [753] *kulama* men, softly calling "Oom-oom", gently patted the ground to wake up the yams, for, should any yam get a fright, its spirit, becoming annoyed, would make everyone ill with the *kulama* sickness. When digging the yams, the men were most careful not to break even one of the fine roots (Pl. 44D).

On filling in the holes, the men again made the thunder call, "Oom-oom", [821] which, they said, would cause more rain to fall before the day was over. One aboriginal accidentally broke a *kulama* yam while digging it. Instantly, he was on his feet, and, with the broken yam in his palm, dodged in and out among the trees, to escape the spirit of sickness released by the angry yam. After a few minutes, however, he returned, placed the broken yam carefully in the basket with the rest, and resumed his digging. His companions said that it was fortunate that he had only damaged the yam slightly, otherwise, its spirit would have made not only the careless aboriginal, but all of the *kulama* people ill.

When sufficient yams were collected, the party returned to camp in the same order as they went out, i.e., *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinataras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*. The *Mikinatrinas* carried the yams to the foot of a blood-wood tree, called the *wuringaleta*, cleared the grass from around the base and, taking the yams from the basket, placed them on the ground. They were covered with leaves by the female initiates, the *Mikinatriningas*.

(4) *The Preparation of the Ceremonial Ground*

In the late afternoon, the *kulama* men and the male initiates, excluding the *Marukumuni* and the *W'adjeniatis*, prepared the ceremonial ground, the *milimika*.

372 The men walked toward an open space in the forest, and with low cries, 881 beat the ground with sticks, while the leader, pulling up a tuft of grass, threw it into the air. At the place where it fell, the men dug a small circle, the *tumarapi* (navel), in which the yams were to be cooked. Then, sitting down, the men pushed the sand and grass outwards with their feet until the *milimika*, about fifteen feet in diameter, was cleared and surrounded by a low mound of earth and grass.

[222] [137] [20] The *kulama* yam (*Dioscorea sativa*, variety *rotunda*) (Pl. 44D), is about the size of a hen's egg and covered with hairs similar to a beard. It is held in the palm of the hand until it is placed carefully in the bark basket.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the previous singer's dead father. 881 765

(e) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[84] when I think of you, my uncle." [533] Some of the women cried when the song was finished. [539]

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *saini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants. 252 881

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate it (Pl. 448), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, goodbye",[85] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purugiikini*, did at the first *kulama*. 881 [533] [539]

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women. 535 881

(a) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird). [534]

(b) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 302), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(c) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*ukwiangu*) in his mouth to symbolize the prey of the crocodile.

(d) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(e) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(f) The buffalo,

(g) The shark (Pl. 300).

[84] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *imunka* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions. [826] [774]

[85] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the *ewiingabita* tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten. [824]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532X 776 centipedes, *pierica*, and on the lower right at *e* is a bandicoot. These are the main foods of the *Papinjuwaris*. The outer oval is a line of rocks which surround the home of the *Papinjuwari*; *m*, *m*, are piles of boulders, and designs, *d*, *d*, etc., beach kapok trees, *yingunia*. This *Papinjuwari* is shown with two eyes, although in the mythical story the *Papinjuwaris* have only one.

2. THE SPIRIT CHILDREN, THE PITIPITUIS

776 The *Pitipituis* are small dark-skinned people who have always existed, even in early creation times, although the aborigines cannot explain their origin. The adults are about nine and the children two to three inches high. They live either on outlying islands, in patches of dense jungle near the seashore, or in those of the freshwater swamps. The *Pitipitui* centres are scattered somewhat evenly around the two islands (Fig. 1); they are:

(1) Kaiadju, on the Baxendale reef, a few miles from Murupianga, S.E. Melville Island. In this locality, the *Pitipituis* have made their home among the trees of a mangrove swamp.

(2) Miadibiniadu, near Wailu, N.E. Melville Island, where the *Pitipituis* live among the dense groves of pandanus palms that grow on the edge of the freshwater lagoon. When the aborigines see the pandanus leaves scattered about, they believe that the *Pitipituis*, in their play, have been throwing them at one another. [824]

(3) Pumaduba, near Pirilou, on the Goose Creek swamps, N. Melville Island. In this locality the *Pitipituis* live among the blossoms and leaves of the water-lilies.

(4) Wulrungku (Karslake Island), N.W. Melville Island. Some *Pitipituis* camp in the jungles along the shore of Wulrungku, and others on the bed of the nearby ocean.

(5) Purapundili, a sandy island off Cape Van Diemen, N.W. Melville Island. During the heat of the day they shelter in the jungles of Cape Van Diemen.

(6) Tiatri-inga, a long beach at Murroo Point (south of Mandumbi), N.W. Bathurst Island. Like the *Pitipituis* at Wailu, those at Tiatri-inga live in the thick clumps of pandanus palms. At Mandumbi, near the mouth of Putawini Creek, a group of *Pitipituis* have made their home in a dense jungle.

(7) Jambutu and Juruna, at the head-waters of Port Hurd, S.W. Bathurst Island. Those at Jambutu live among the mangroves and those at Juruna, in the jungle.

(8) Jamputurai and Jurilupa, near Cape Fourcroy. The *Pitipituis* in the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Juwuku; while the sun-woman, the men of the Milky Way, the star women and the moon-man (except for a short period each month) travel daily across its surface. 772 776 821

Above the sky is another world, Tuniruna. This is the day-time home of numberless star women, the *Tapalinga*, and the men of the Milky Way, the *Mahuhiamini*. During the dry season, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*, with her family leave the sky-world, Juwuku, and make their homes in Tuniruna.

Unlike the Ilara, the lowest world, Tuniruna resembles the earth except that there is no sea, although there are many freshwater streams and swamps. All the creatures and plants that live on Melville Island, with the exception of the saltwater fish, are also at Tuniruna.

Every morning the inhabitants of the upper world leave their camps, the women to gather the plant foods of the forest, the men to hunt and capture the creatures, such as freshwater fish and the geese, ducks, pelicans and jabirus, that live in the extensive swamps. Also, many fruits grow at Tuniruna, some of which were specifically named, i.e., *rakarina*, the wild plum; *taururuina*, the white-fruited eugenia; *binamia*, the red-fruited eugenia; *putatakuma*, a small egg-shaped fruit about three-eighths of an inch long; *kworka*, cycad fruit, and the various yams.

By the time the sun-woman has sunk below the western horizon and extinguished her torch, the inhabitants of Tuniruna, the upper world, have returned from their foodgathering and are lighting their camp-fires to cook the food they have brought in. The light from these fires illuminates the upper world as brightly during the night-time as the sun-woman, with her blazing torch, illuminates the earth during the day-time.

About November, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali* leave Tuniruna and travel from place to place in the sky-world, shedding rain on the parched earth. During this time, the aborigines claim that those with good hearing can distinguish a low "Sh . . . sh . . .", the pleasure call of the thirsty trees as their roots drink the moisture from the sodden ground. It is then that the trees and plants of the upper world, using the raindrops as a vehicle, send their spirits (analogous to the human *Pitipinuis*) (p. 146), to the ground beneath, where they grow into plants similar to their progenitors in the upper world.[67] That is, all the plants and trees in the land of the Tiwi were once, as tiny spirits, dropped from the upper world, Tuniruna. 776 821 [824]

[67] I did not specifically inquire whether the creatures in the upper world also sent down their spirits in the same manner as the plants. However, as both plants and human beings have a spirit origin, it is reasonable to assume that the creatures originate in a similar manner. Further research on this subject will be of considerable interest. [124]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

●824 This belief probably accounts for the fact that I did not hear any songs chanted, or witness any ceremonies (with the possible exception of the *kulama*) that would bring about a plentiful supply of food. Nor did I hear [171] of any increase centres such as I saw on Groote Eylandt, (Mountford, 1956, pp. 84, 91), and were seen by Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 166), and myself (1948, p. 145) in Central Australia.

The Sky and the Upper World

×532. 821 772 Pl. 63D is a bark painting of the sky and the upper world, Tuniruna. The central series of concentric circles represent an unidentified planet, one of the wives of *Tjapara*, the moon-man; the designs, *d, d, d, d*, are some of the stars, *Tapalinga*; *f, f*, are the plum trees (already mentioned), which grow in the upper world. The radiating lines are the limbs of the plum trees.

The inner square, *b*, is the upper world, Tuniruna, the chevron patterns are the clouds in the sky, and the outer square the surface of the earth.

The groups of dots, throughout the painting, are the spirit fruits of the many trees at Tuniruna, which (as mentioned earlier), fall from the upper world to the earth beneath.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala

773 776 A myth, belonging to the early creation period, tells of how *Wuriupranala*, one of the first women, was given the task of keeping alight a torch of blazing bark. When, after the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, the men and women changed themselves into creatures and plants, *Wuriupranala* became the sun-woman, who travels daily across the sky, her torch of blazing bark providing the world with light and heat.

776 821 However, before *Wuriupranala* sets out from the eastern horizon, she powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which flying into the air, reddens the clouds of early morning.

When she reaches the western horizon, *Wuriupranala* again powders her body (this accounts for the brilliant sunsets), extinguishes her torch and rests for a while beside a celestial lagoon, Kumpinulu, before returning to the east along a path through the subterranean world, Ilara. On this journey, she is guided only by the light from the glowing end of her smouldering torch.[58]

×532 773 776 821 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60A, B, Pl. 61A, B, and Pl. 63A, B, deal with the myth of the sun-woman.

The designs on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 61A, B, picture the sun, moon and stars.

[58] See pp. 35, 40 for more details of the sun-woman.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

demands it; but usually, when on a simple turtle or dugong hunting expedition, 501
two persons only occupy places in the craft, one near the bow and another near
the stern (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). The boatmen, while propelling the [516]
craft, squat with their buttocks resting upon the heels and with their knees pressed
against the sides. The weight of their body being thus well within the boat, its
stability is thereby considerably increased.

Paddles.—Propulsion is effected by means of paddles which are made of hard 501
wood. They have a single well-shaped blade and a rounded handle (*vide* Plate
XII, Fig. 2). The edges of the blade are parallel or taper slightly towards the end,
which is square or rounded. Apart from the marks left by the tomahawk used in [531]
its making, the implement is without ornamentation. In one case only, a circular
collar was carved around the handle, immediately above the sloping shoulder of the
blade. The longest paddle noted measured 167 centimetres in length, its blade
80; the shortest was 115 centimetres in length and its blade 45. The width
of the blades ranges from 7 to 9 centimetres. Both hands clasp the paddle,
which is dipped alternately on one side or the other as the occasion and the steering
require it.

Balers.—Water that accumulates in the canoe, either by leakage or overwash [415
in a rough sea, is removed by means of a baler which is made out of the melon 824]
shell[1] (*Melo diadema*). The columella of the shell is carefully cut away, leaving
only the large body-whorl, which is used as a scoop (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 3 and 4).
The outer surface of the shell is painted with red and yellow ochre in large cross [531]
pattern, with a fine cross shading.

Dug-outs.—The dug-out canoes to which I have elsewhere referred[2] have, in [175]
all probability, been introduced by Malays from whom the natives obtain them by
barter. Dr. Walter Roth has also proved that the dug-outs met with along the coast of
Queensland are of Papuan origin. The form observed in Apsley Strait is without
outrigger and hollowed out of a single tree trunk. The bow and stern are raised
(*vide* Plate X, Fig. 2).

Corrobborees.

As with all primitive folk, song and dance constitute the ultimate stage of 535
any social intercourse or festivity. The islanders are even more ready than ~~their~~ 527
brothers on the mainland to resort to this means of entertainment. It thus
happened that, wherever we came into contact with the blacks and presented them
with divers small articles, a corrobboree was immediately inaugurated; even though
the encounter happened to occur in the middle of the day. Corrobborees on the

[1] *Cf. Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* vol. ii, p. 17: "the baler (a melon shell) is in constant requisition."

[2] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 53. Among others, note that Major Campbell says of the Port Essington natives that "such of the canoes as I saw were hollowed from the trunks of trees, like those of the Malays and were probably either left by these people or stolen from them," *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 170.

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By JANE C. GOODALE

884 IN 1912 SIR BALDWIN SPENCER, a professor of biology at
[114] the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the
[824] ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately
[114] associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony,
[178] however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe that such participation cannot prepare them adequately
[197] for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what
161 the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a
131 thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Melville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well
178 supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Economically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied,
[224] and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little
825 physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or
462 digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were
868 taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

000 TIWI NATIVE on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11, (B)]

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YOUNG GIRL AND BOY accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

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[181]

part of Tiwi speech. Poetic license in pronunciation and syllabification often occurs. The Tiwi have high regard for the linguistic ability needed to become a good Tiwi composer and singer, and instruction in the art of song composition and delivery is given to the initiates. Each initiate must perform in the *Kulama* before he can be considered a "graduate." According to my Tiwi informants, this requirement is the hardest of all, and it is also the reason for there being no set age for initiation. The old people are said to watch the young, and when the observers consider them mature enough, they swoop down upon their choices "like chicken hawks, without warning"—as the Tiwi say—and start the initiates along the path to adulthood.

884
[171]

As far as I know, the *Kulama* ceremony has no parallel elsewhere in Australia. And there are many interesting questions that come to mind concerning the origin of the *Kulama* as it exists today. For instance, why is instruction in the preparation of a poisonous yam that is not part of the daily diet considered so important for initiation into adulthood? What is the origin of the idea that a yam has power over good and evil, and health and sickness? Why is such prominence accorded a yam in what is principally a hunting and gathering society?

[262]

[824]

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Any answers to these questions must be highly speculative, for the origin of the ceremony and its development lie in the unrecorded history of the Tiwi. However, I believe the following statements may well be valid.

Instruction in the natural resources of the land was considered vital to becoming an adult. Because the *Kulama* yam is poisonous and is not widely distributed, it was never part of the regular diet, but it could be used in economic emergencies if properly prepared. Instruction in its preparation was therefore extremely important as a potential survival measure. However, since the Tiwi live in a favorable environment, it is highly probable that such emergencies were very rare, so it was considered expedient to hold annual instruction periods. Because knowledge of

[262]

[See P. 15, (A) for other part of caption and picture -- Analyst]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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HOT EARTH over baked *Kulama* yams is removed. Yams that are to be eaten at end of ritual must be resoaked in water.

[824]

SOME COOKED YAMS are cut, peeled, and mashed. Water and paint are then added. Yams are always handled with respect.

[951]
[858]

MEN RUB MASH on bodies to insure health, then do so to the uninitiated young, whose health is paternal responsibility.

[P. 16, (A)]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

773 Puzzled over this new phenomenon, *Jurumu* placed the smouldering wood-
[372] dust into the pith of a dead pandanus palm and blew upon it. To the surprise of both men the speck became larger and larger, finally bursting into a flame. This frightened the men so badly that they rushed to *Purukupali* and asked him to destroy the strange thing they had made. But when *Purukupali* saw the blazing wood and felt its heat he realized that *Jurumu* and *Mudati* had inadvertently discovered something that would give the aborigines not only light to dispel the darkness, but heat to cook their food and to keep them warm.[14]

Calling his sister, *Wuriupranala*, he gave her a torch of bark lit from the blazing log and told her that it was her duty to keep it alight always. *Tjapara*,
[821] who later became the moon, was given a smaller torch.

With the coming of light and heat, the descendants of *Mudungkala* spread over the island, hunting and camping in places which, at the close of the creation period, became their totemic country.

About that time, two men, *Puruti* and *Jirakati*, were spearing fish in Tiaupu, a freshwater swamp at Piper Head, near the northern entrance to Apsley Straits, when they noticed, by the movements of the stems of the water-lilies, some large creature moving about under the water.

Not knowing it was his mother, *Tipuru-undunga*, *Puruti* speared her in the neck. Screaming with pain and urinating in her fright, *Tipuru-undunga*
[823] rushed into the sea, which in those days was fresh water, polluting it so much with her blood and urine that it became as salt as the sea of today.

The wounded *Tipuru-undunga* changed herself into the tall, stately bird,
[825] the jabiru (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) which now lives on the edge of the fresh-water lagoons; while the fishermen, *Puruti* and *Jirakati* became the sea-osprey (*Pandion halioetus*) and the graceful white-headed sea-eagle (*Haliaetus leucogaster*).[15]

During those early *palaneri* times, a man, *Jirakupai*, lived beside a fresh-water lagoon, *Jirininga*, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. He had married two sisters, *Kuraruna* and *Jaknia*.

Jirakupai was an expert in the making of both the large many-barbed, male
[411] spears, *tunkaringa*, which have a row of barbs on one side (Pl. 32A), and the female spears, *tunkaguni*, with their double row of barbs (Pl. 32B). Both forms are now used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

[14] The aborigines distinguish between light (*milajiuka*) from the sun or burning wood, and heat (*ikwani*) from glowing coals.

[15] The large hawk-like birds, *Jirakati*, the sea-eagle, *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite, appear as men in a number of the myths. In each one they transformed themselves from men into birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

Jirakupai had just made a number of these weapons, when a party of men from eastern Melville Island rushed into his camp and speared him in the back many times. But, as they struck, *Jirakupai* plucked the spears out and cast them at his opponents. Then howling loudly with pain and picking up the spears he had just made, *Jirakupai* dived into the water to escape further injury. 773

His wives, to avoid capture, changed themselves into birds, *Kuraruna* becoming the night-heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) and *Jaknia*, the brown heron that frequents the mangrove swamps (possibly *Butorides striata*). 773 825

The next morning his enemies saw *Jirakupai* floating in the water, no longer as a man, but as a crocodile. The spear wounds in his back had healed and grown into a spinal crest, his mouth, through shouting so much in his pain, had grown longer and larger, while his bundle of spears had been transformed into his tail, on the extreme end of which was a male, *tunkaringa*, spear, with barbs only at one side.

The totem place of the crocodile (*Crocodilus porosus*) is pictured on the bark painting, Pl. 16a. 532 x

In this painting the central disc is the totemic lagoon, *Jirininga*, near which six crocodiles are resting on the mud. The light-coloured vertical panels are the nests of the crocodiles and the short transverse bars, their eggs.

On the mainland, south of Wulrungku (Karslake Island), three men, *Mudati*, his younger brother, *Pilibiliningi*, and *Jurumu* lived in the same camp as an unmarried woman, *Parabruma*. 773

Mudati and *Parabruma* were fond of each other, a fact which infuriated *Jurumu*, who wanted *Parabruma* for a wife.

One day, when *Jurumu* was out hunting, he saw a bandicoot[16] *tipapu*, run from his grass nest into a hollow tree for shelter. This suggested an idea to *Jurumu* as to how he could injure, or, perhaps, incapacitate his rival. Making a number of short, sharp sticks, he buried them, point upward, in the ground, rearranging the grass nest over them so that it would not show signs of having been disturbed. Then going to *Mudati* he suggested that they should hunt together.

Of course, *Jurumu* led his rival to the faked bandicoot nest where, gesticulating excitedly, he told his companion to jump on the nest before the bandicoot escaped. But *Mudati* demurred, saying that if he waited until the bandicoot showed itself, he could kill it with his throwing stick.

But *Jurumu* was so insistent that his was the better way that *Mudati*, not suspecting treachery, obeyed his instructions and jumped on the faked nest. [825]

[16] These bandicoots build flimsy grass shelters under which they hide.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 As the sharpened sticks pierced his feet, *Mudati* fell to the ground calling
825 *girik-girik* (his call today), then changing himself into the fork-tailed kite (*Milvus migrans*), rose into the air and flew away.[17]

Quickly *Jurumu* sought out the woman, *Parabruma*, and proposed marriage, but she, knowing of his treachery, angrily refused him. Incensed and disappointed, *Jurumu* struck *Parabruma* on either side of the head with his throwing stick, cutting her head so badly that long pieces of bleeding skin hung down on each side.

Screaming with pain (her present-day call), *Parabruma* changed herself into the masked plover (*Lobibyx miles*). One can still see those red flaps of skin hanging on either side of her face. Intent on revenge, *Mudati's* brother, *Pilibilininga*, crept up behind *Jurumu* and speared him in the back. Shouting "*gutli-gutli*" (his call), *Jurumu* changed himself into the wedge-tailed eagle (*Oroaetus audax*). When *Pilibilininga* saw this he became a small brown hawk (unidentified).

Jurumu appears in another early creation myth when he, his wife *Narina*,
773 and her brother, *Kilpuruni*, lived in the same camp. One day, when the woman was out in the forest collecting food for her husband, *Kilpuruni* came up and asked for some. *Narina* offered him an opossum, but he said he was not fond of that meat. After refusing wild honey and several other foods, *Kilpuruni* admitted that he really wanted *Narina* to go in the bush with him. *Narina* refused, saying they could not do so, because they were brother and sister. However, *Kilpuruni*, by persistence and cajolery, finally had his way.

On returning to camp, *Narina* confessed her misdeeds to *Jurumu*, who, although he was angry and punished his wife, did not mention the matter to his brother-in-law. Biding his time, he invited *Kilpuruni* to go with him to look for hives of wild bees.

They had both climbed a high eucalyptus tree, when *Jurumu* showed his brother-in-law a hive at the end of a long projecting branch. Waiting until *Kilpuruni* had climbed out to investigate the hive, *Jurumu* cut the limb, which crashed to the ground on the top of the unfortunate victim.

Kilpuruni, all flattened out, changed himself into the present-day blanket
[825] lizard (*Chamydasaurus kingii*); *Narina*, who, in spite of his misdeeds, was fond of *Kilpuruni*, became the black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksi*) and still mourns for her unfortunate brother, while *Jurumu*, now the wedge-tailed eagle, is always on the look-out to kill and eat his wife's seducer.

[171] [17] A myth, with many points of resemblance, except that the main actors were crows and a wedge-tailed eagle, was collected by the author from the Adnjamatana tribe of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia. (Mountford, 1937, field notes.)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 the ceremonial baskets. But he did not fulfil his obligations. This breach of faith so infuriated the other fish-men that they chased him through the trees to spear him. Thinking to escape punishment, *Pipinjawari* jumped into the sea, and transformed himself into the queen fish. But the other men, also transforming themselves into fish, continued the chase. Even now, on calm [825] days, the aborigines often see *Pipinjawari*, with his broken back-bone now a dorsal fin, jumping out of the water to escape his pursuers.[24]

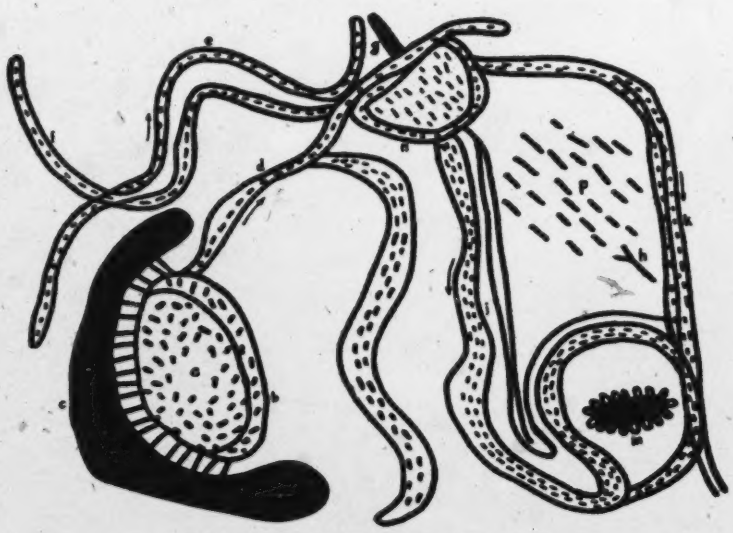

FIG. 3. *Spear-throwing Contest of Pipinjawari*

Fig. 3 is a crayon drawing of *Purukupali's pukamuni* and the spear-throwing contest of the fish-people.

On the lower left is Timbaranapi, where all the mythical people assembled to perform the last *ilania* before carrying out the final burial rituals.

At Timbaranapi, the men danced in the *milimika*, *a*, and the women on the outskirts at *b*. The radiating lines on the edge of the *milimika* are many baskets filled with food for the "workers" (Pl. 25B), and crescent *c*, the ground cleared by the "workers". The men travelled by path, *e*, and the

[171] [24] This is the same fish as the *Tiwimbu* of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford 1956, p. 349).

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

women by *d*, to a place, *n*, where they painted one another for the final *pukamani* rituals. 532x 773

Whilst there, the fish-men engaged in the spear-throwing contest mentioned in the myth.[88] Their footmarks are in circle, *n*, and the places where the spears fell at *p*. *Pipinjawari*, who stood behind the others at *g*, threw his spear the furthest, a large eucalyptus tree, *h*, being the transformed spear. The spears of the other fish-men at *p* are smaller eucalyptus trees.

When everyone had finished decorating themselves, both men and women moved to *m*, where the burial poles had been erected around the grave, the women again reaching their destination by a different path, *k*. It was at the completion of these rituals that the fish-men quarrelled with *Pipinjawari* because he refused to give the "workers" presents for their duties.

5. THE CLOSE OF THE CREATION PERIOD

The escape of *Pipinjawari*, which brought the *palaneri* (creation period) to a close, was the signal for the mythical people to return to their camps and to transform themselves into the various birds, fish, reptiles, heavenly bodies and inanimate objects of today. 773

Tjapara, the moon-man, rose into the sky, his face and body deeply scarred with the wounds he had received in his quarrel with *Purukupali*. [821]
Bima, his lover, and the mother of the dead child, *Djinini*, still bearing the mark on her head where *Purukupali* had struck her with his throwing stick, [825] became the curlew (*Numenius cyanopus*) which still roams the forest at night, wailing in remorse for her misdeeds and for the child she lost.

Wuriupranala, one of the daughters of the original creator, *Mudungkala*, changed herself into the sun-woman, who travels across the sky carrying the torch of blazing bark given to her by *Purukupali*. The *Maludaianini* men, with the ceremonial paint still on their bodies, became that sparkling galaxy, the Milky Way. [821]

Tukimbini, the grandson of *Murupiangkala*, instructed the mythical people (many of whom were his wives and relatives), to establish a totemic place at their old camps on Melville and Bathurst Islands to create the aboriginal foods belonging to each place, and then to change themselves into the particular bird, reptile, fish or inanimate object with which that locality is now associated.

[88] At a *pukamani* ceremony we witnessed at Melville Island, one of the Bathurst Islanders, *Jibungliakuni*, impersonating *Pipinjawari*, threw sticks, as spears, over the men carrying the poles to the grave, chanting "*Kuniprak wanikali kurinari*", meaning "We throw spears to find our who goes farthest." [796]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 However, before all these changes took place, *Tukimbini* assembled the mythical people who had attended *Purukupali's* ceremony, and taught them the rules of behaviour, and the laws of marriage and tribal relationship they must always obey. *Tukimbini* also laid down the periods of light and darkness that still determine the daily cycle of aboriginal life.

512 821 When the first light appears in the morning sky it is the melodious call of *Tukimbini*, now the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) that [825] wakens the aborigines from their sleep.

The sun-woman, rising above the eastern horizon with her blazing torch, is a signal for the aboriginal men, with spears and wooden clubs, to go hunting, and for the women, with bark baskets hanging from the sticks over their shoulders, to gather their food from the forest and the swamp-lands.

About mid-day, the sun-woman, cooking the food she has gathered, makes the heat of the day unbearable. The aborigines then retire to the shade of the trees until the late afternoon when they continue their food gathering, returning to camp to cook their evening meal just as the sun-woman sinks below the western horizon.

Soon, darkness creeps across the sky, the stars, *tapalinga*, show themselves and the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, span the heavens. It is then that the dried perspiration which the *Maludaianini* rub from their bodies, [512] falls on the eyelids of the aborigines, making them so heavy that they cannot keep awake. Next morning, at dawn, *Tukimbini* wakes the aborigines to a new day.

776 778 The following is the list of the totemic places of Melville and Bathurst Islands, illustrated by bark paintings, the names of the totemic people and their relationships to each other.

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
Murupianga	Tukimbini (bird)	Great-grandson of *Mudungkala*
Wuriupi	Garagalani (turtle)	Not known
	Wuriupranala (sun)	Daughter of *Mudungkala*
Panindu	Paninduela (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Wailu	Andjalui (fresh water)	Husband of *Wuriupranala*
	Kwouk-kwouk (frog)	Not known

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

Five bark paintings, Pls. 9C, D, 10B, D, 22A, B, and 58B, deal with Wailu and its inhabitants. 532x 778

On Pl. 9C, D, the totemic lagoon, Wailu, is at *a*, the outer circle, *b*, symbolizing the broken water of the stream, *f* (in circle above) as it runs over the stony bed of a watercourse into Wailu. At *d*, *d*, are the paper-bark and *e*, *e*, *pubiaka* trees which grow on its banks.

At *j*, *j* (below), and *s*, *s*, etc., are living paper-bark, and *m*, *m*, and *p*, *p*, etc., *pubiaka* trees on the bank; *n*, *n*, are dead paper-bark and *o*, *o*, *pubiaka* trees in the swamp. The cross-hatched areas throughout the painting symbolize watergrass on the bottom of the lagoon.

Pl. 58B, which is associated with Wailu, deals with the rainbow-woman, *Maratji*, the thunderstorm-man, *Pakadringa*, and the monsoon rain-woman, *Tomituka*. 532x 776

The four black horizontal bands represent the dark-coloured clouds of *Tomituka* (monsoon rain); the lighter-coloured chevrons indicate large cumulus clouds, the home of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*; and the darker chevrons are the rainbow-women, *Maratjis*, who live at Maundu.

The Frog-Woman, Kwouk-kwouk, at Wailu

The frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, lives with her family, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka*, and *Bumerali*, at Wailu, the totem place of *Andjalui*. 776 778

The three children of *Kwouk-kwouk* always obey their mother, so when, in the wet season, the rain falls and thunderstorms rage, she croaks with joy over their handiwork. No aboriginal would dare to kill a frog; if he were so foolish, her son, *Pakadringa*, and daughter, *Tomituka*, would send down so much rain that everyone would be drowned. 821 825

Pl. 10B deals with the frogs at Wailu. The central black oval is the lagoon at Wailu. At *a*, *a*, are large paper-bark trees which grow in Wailu lagoon, and at *b*, *b*, another species of paper-bark which prefers the drier conditions of the banks. The frogs, which live in the lagoon, are indicated at *c*, *c*, etc.; a water-lily swamp is shown at *d*, *d*, and the white, broken water, running over fallen trees, at *e*, *e*. The groups of dots represent the water-grass, and the faint lines separating them, small streams of running water in an adjacent swamp. 532x 778

Pakadringa, Bumerali and Tomituka at Wailu

During creation times, before *Pakadringa* was transformed into the man of the thunderstorms, he was a hairy giant, huge in size, and repulsive in appear- 776

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

border, the muddy floor. The other black rectangles, *p*, *p*, etc., indicate rocks in the sea, and their lighter-coloured borders, the waves breaking over them. 532x 778

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Matingalia, at Putawini

A eucalyptus-tree woman *Matingalia* created a rocky island of the same name at the mouth of Putawini Creek, western Bathurst Island. I was not able to gather further details of the mythical story. 773

The central vertical panel *a*, of Pl. 16A, is the open sea, and the outer surrounding white rectangle, *h*, *h*, the dry land of the island. Small hills are at *k*, *k* (top), a large hill is at *o* (top); and deposits of red ochre, *m*, *m*, etc., also form part of the island. 532x 778

A small branch of the Putawini Creek is indicated by the white band at *b*; another branch, Piriki, at *c*; another near Pintamu, at *d*; and still another (unnamed) at *f*, *f*. Timinindu and Dunkunaru Creeks (unidentified) are at *g*, *g*, and *e*, respectively. The eggs of a crocodile, *lukupianga*, similar to those of *Jirakupai*, the dangerous, sea-going *Crocodilus porosus*, are indicated by the white discs, *n*, *n*, etc. [825]

The Bush-fire woman, Puruliangkala, at Turiturina Island

The totemic place of the woman of the bush-fires, *Puruliangkala*, is on Turiturina Island, in Port Hurd, western Bathurst Island, where the mythical bird-men and later the *Ningauis* performed the first *kulama* ceremonies (p. 123). 778 [773]

The central white circle on Pl. 16D, is Turiturina Island: the smaller circles, *a*, *a*, are low rocks in the sea, once the camp-fires of *Puruliangkala*; and *b*, *b*, freshwater springs that provided her with water. The black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., are deposits of red ochre, and *d*, *d*, *d*, etc., deposits of white ochre, used by both the mythical woman and the *Ningauis* to decorate themselves for their ceremonies during *palaneri* times. 532x 778

At *e*, *e*, etc., are many milkwood trees, the sap of which, like the ochre deposits, was also utilized by both *Puruliangkala* and the *Ningauis* for body decorations. This sap is still used in the opening rituals of the *kulama* (p. 131). The dots are white fruits, *mandikama*, which *Puruliangkala* created for food. [824] [386]

The Sand-fly woman, Mandubuka, at Murninini

Mandubuka, the sand-fly woman, established the totemic place of Murninini, south-western Bathurst Island. 773 778

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

her camp, now a bed of oysters at *y*; her bark hut, a large boulder projecting from a sandbank, at *ee*; and her paper-bark water-carrier, now a large tree, at *r* (left). 532x 778

The body and head of a carpet snake cooked and eaten by *Mudungkala* are boulders, *x*, *w*, on the coast of Jurubulinai. One of the spots at Cockle Point, in Apsley Straits, where *Mudungkala* camped when returning from *Purukupali's pukamuni*, is now a large rock, *bb* (lower left); a spring of fresh water, where she cooked her shell-fish, is at *ff*; while at *l* (centre), there is a patch of submarine grass, the favourite food of the turtles.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mantinuria, at Rulijunga

The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Mantinuria*, created a totemic place, Rulijunga, on the headwaters of the Tjipripu River. 773 778

At Rulijunga there is a large flat plain (central black design, Pl. 18A), which *Mantinuria* cleared so that the mythical people, travelling from Bathurst and western Melville Island, to attend the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, could perform an *ilania* (p. 32). 532x 773

The circles on the periphery of the central black disc, are the roots, and the eight long ovals, the trunks and leaves of cabbage palms which the *Mantinuria* woman created to provide food for herself and the participants of the *ilania* ceremony.

The outer dark-coloured oval, at *a*, *a*, is the level plain surrounding the ceremonial ground, the inner black line symbolizing the red clouds at sunset and the white outer line, the cumulus clouds of the day-time. The dots represent small shrubs and tufts of grass at Rulijunga.

The Fork-tailed Kite-man, Mudati, and his wife, the Dingo-woman, Kirijuna, at Arunumpi

During *palaneri* times, *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite-man and his wife, *Kirijuna*, a dingo-woman, were travelling together near Arunumpi, southern Melville Island, when *Mudati* saw his wife's brother, *Jurumu*, the eagle-man, coming towards them. *Mudati* warned his wife, for her own safety, not to speak or even look at her brother, but the woman, who had not seen her brother for many years, took a quick glance just to see how much he had grown. Instantly, she dropped dead at her husband's feet. But even as he watched he saw her change into a dingo, rise to her feet and slink away. 773 825 593

Since then, the dingo, ashamed of her actions in those early times, keeps

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

825 out of sight, while, following the command of *Mudati*, aboriginal brothers
[593] and sisters, once they become adult, never look at each other, nor converse, except through a third person.

×532 Pl. 20A, B, describes the natural features at Arunumpi. A large rock, at *a*,
778 was once *Mudati's* camp; a boulder, *d*, his fire; and a path, *c*, made by the mythical man as he walked to and from his camp at *a*. Another path, *b*, was made by a mangrove bird-man, *Ulubingini*, whose camp is at *j*. *Mudati* is at *m*; his wife, *Kirijuna*, at *k*, and *Jurumu*, at *f* (lower left).

Nearby, at *e*, there is a deposit of yellow ochre, and another at *g*, of white, both of which *Mudati* used when he was a *wadjeniati* initiate at the first *kulama* ceremony held at Turiturina (p. 123). *Mudati's kulama* initiation ornaments, now unspecified natural features are: his cockatoo feather head-dress, *primitiki*, at *w*, *w*; arm ornaments, *palmatjinas*, at *x*, *x*, *x*; and cane arm ornaments, *jairinis*, at *v*. A *kulama* ground, *u*, where a ceremony was once held, is now a flat rocky surface, a half a mile in diameter, and the shelter, *t*, behind which the initiates rested during the ceremony, a large boulder.

At *h*, is a patch of jungle where *Kirijuna*, *Mudati's* wife, once collected yams. She left her palm leaf, *tulini*, basket at *l* (upper right); her small bark basket at *o*; and her larger bark basket at *s*. These are now outcropping rocks at the totemic site.

A turtle, once speared by *Mudati*, is now a submerged boulder at *m*; the sand-bank, on which he stood, is a high red cliff at *n*, and the large stream, in which he often caught fish, is indicated by the crescent-shape at *r*.

The Flying-fox man, Murungimpili, and Bamboo-woman, Kaialili, at the Kaialili lagoon

778 At the Kaialili lagoon, near the head of the De Vere creek at Muranapi, southern Melville Island, there are two totemic places, one belonging to *Murungimpili*, the flying-fox man, and the other to *Kaialili*,[44] the bamboo-
[773] woman. Together, these mythical people created many trees, plants, cat-fish, crabs and other sea creatures.

×532 Pl. 20C, D, deals with the topography of the area. At *m*, is the Kaialili
778 lagoon, the totem place of the bamboo-woman, at *p*, the Buliati (De Vere) Creek; at *c*, *c*, are other small watercourses, and *e*, *e*, etc., springs, all of which run into the Kaialili lagoon. The cross-hatching at *o*, *o*, is a swamp, at the source of Buliati Creek, and the cross-hatched area, *f*, *f*, the grass on its

[44] I did not find out the relationships between *Murungimpili* and *Kaialili*; it is likely that they were man and wife.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

775 the white man came, would have been its totemic place. As the *mopaditi* travels, flocks of screeching black cockatoos fly overhead to tell the spirits [825] at its birthplace, that a new *mopaditi* is coming to live with them. The local spirits, on its arrival, rush out to welcome the *mopaditi*, beating themselves over the head and shoulders[41] with throwing sticks to indicate their pleasure. At its new home, no matter what its previous state, the spirit is transformed into a young person of good health and equable temperament, for, in the land of the spirits, everyone must be healthy, happy and at peace with each other.

Making its camp with the other *mopaditis*, many of whom were old companions, the new spirit goes out hunting and foodgathering with them until the beginning of its own burial ceremonies. Then, with all of its dead relatives, the *new mopaditi* returns to watch the living people perform the dances and chant the songs of its *ilania* and *pukamuni* ceremonies.

As the *mopaditis* are invisible to mortal eyes, the performers at the burial rituals do not see them, although they know the *mopaditis* are in the surrounding forest, watching all that is going on.

When the rituals of the day are over, and all the people have gone to sleep, the *mopaditis* themselves enter the ceremonial ground, carrying out the same dances, and chanting the same songs as those of the living. This happens at all ceremonies, whether they are the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni*, or the *kulama* rituals.

At the conclusion of its final *pukamuni*, the new *mopaditi* returns to its birthplace. There it is treated as a youth, and has again to pass through all stages of the *kulama* initiation, progressing at the same rate as when it was a living person.

Occasionally parties of *mopaditis*, especially if not long dead, will return to have a look at their living friends and relatives. But, although the aborigines regard these *mopaditis* as well-mannered and kindly, they still fear them.

Sometimes, particularly at night, a *mopaditi* will follow an aboriginal too [781] closely, making his skin clammy and his hair rise on end. To protect himself, [789] the affrighted person calls out loudly to scare away the spirit. If this is not successful, he will kindle a fire or carry a torch of flaming bark, knowing that the *mopaditis* fear the light. For that reason, the aborigines are safe from the attacks of the spirits of their dead so long as they keep their camp-fires burning.

[576] [41] This is the custom of the living when they meet someone they have not seen for a long while.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing. 768 [428] [783] [825]

(a) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulanimbuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers". 764

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[83] from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *tokwiangu* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs. 302 751 775

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[84] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground 764

[83] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[84] After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditis* fear the light. 123 775

For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764 and dug the grave, which was about six feet long and five feet six inches deep. But when, in the middle of the afternoon, four men appeared, carrying the body, in a fully extended position, and placed it beside the unfinished grave, a number of women, painted all over in white, sat beside the corpse and cried heart-brokenly until the grave was finished. There was a chorus of wailing [302] from both men and women when one of the "workers" painted *Pulanim-* [751] *buwi's* body entirely in white (Pl. 23A), as additional camouflage to confuse his wife's *mopaditi*.

The ceremonials associated with the burial started when first the husband, then a near relative, dancing astride the corpse, called out loudly, "*Yook, yook*". This ritual, called *wuramu*, was first introduced by the pelican-man at *Purukupali's* ceremony. At the present time it is performed by close relatives [775] of the dead, its object being to scare the *mopaditi* into the grave where it will not be a menace to the living.

After this ritual, two other men entered the grave and, standing, one either end, took the dead body from those above. Amid the sounds of wailing women and the clapping of men's hands on their buttocks, the corpse was gently laid on a bed of transverse logs on the bottom. Other "workers" cut green branches and placed them across the top of the grave.

The husband, carrying a lighted firestick, then entered the grave, burnt the hair on his legs and left immediately. The aborigines believe that the [775] *mopaditi*, smelling the burnt hair of her husband, and thinking he was beside her, stayed quietly in the grave.

The bushes were thrown into the grave, logs, about five feet long,[55] laid on top, and the hole was filled in, leaving a small mound which was covered with sheets of paper-bark (Pl. 24C). Short sticks were driven into the ground at the head and foot of the grave, on one of which the husband hung the meagre belongings of his wife.

764 Both men and women then performed a series of dances, the men danced 535 the flying fox, shark and crocodile, while both the elder and younger women moved in a line toward the grave, holding large green leaves in their hands, palm upward, symbolizing the dead woman when a small child, being carried by her mother.

A woman, holding her breasts, impersonated *Nulatini's* mother feeding her, while a near male relative mimed the mother carrying *Nulatini* as an infant.

764 At the conclusion, *Pulanimbuwi* seated himself at the head of the grave,

[825] [55] The aborigines explained that the logs kept the dogs from unearthing the body, but as, at the present time, the body is over five feet underground, this does not appear to be the season. It may be that, when tools were more primitive and graves not so deep, these precautions were necessary.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

764

while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint from his body (Pl. 23E).

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly, while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial, and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real. [304] [785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn, everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual, originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's pukamuni*, was supposed so to confuse the *mopaditi* of *Nulatini* that, should she leave the grave, she would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey, then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over. [775]

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopaditi* to warm herself and to cook her food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanimbuwi*, who should have departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23 D). [775]

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

765

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark, was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as instructed by *Jilungfiatumi* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp could not see it.

761

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines, believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being, not the result of natural causes.

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, having been responsible for the death,[86] had changed himself into a [825] [754]

[86] This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Hurney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the nature-man, *Papinjuwari*, to an enemy.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

761 [825] [761] wallaby, so that he could see the grave of his victim without being recognised.

On one occasion, when I was travelling with *Pulanimbuwi*, just after the death of his wife, he went to her grave, carefully searched the ground for tracks, then lifting up the sheets of paper-bark, examined the mound. Later, *Pulanimbuwi* announced that a *Marajji* (p. 154) had killed his wife, *Nulatini*, by getting inside of her body. But, although still there when she was buried, the *Marajji* had escaped through the hole *Pulanimbuwi* had seen in the mound.[87]

(2) *The Seclusion of the Grave*

769 The grave of *Waniamperi* was about a hundred yards from the road between our camp and the Snake Bay aboriginal settlement. Although aborigines, who were only distantly related to the dead man, walked backward and forward along this road, all the *pukamuni* people had to take a roundabout path from which it was not possible to see the grave site.

One night, *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, had to pass along the road to our camp. When he was approaching the position from which the grave site could be seen in the day-time, his wife, wrapping his head in a blanket, led him past the spot. This practice was only allowed at night; it was prohibited during the day.[88]

[775] [784] No aboriginal man hunted the creatures, or woman gathered the plant foods adjacent to the grave, so that, should the *mopaditi* of *Waniamperi* return to his burial place for a while he would find ample food.

4. THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONIES, THE ILANIAS

(1) *The Ilanias of Waniamperi*

765 About two months after the burial of *Waniamperi*, *Wurarbui*, the ceremonial leader of the Melville Island people, sent message sticks to Bathurst Island aborigines telling them that the *ilanias* (preliminary rituals) of *Waniamperi* were about to start.

[123] We saw eleven of *Waniamperi's ilanias*. But, as they were more or less the same, I will describe only three.

[87] *Pulanimbuwi's* action was viewed with considerable disfavour. He, as a near relative, [765] should not have gone near the grave until the final rituals. Only the *wanaras* (workers) who cut the poles are allowed to do that.

[88] Under the normal tribal conditions, these precautions would have been unnecessary, [183] because the place of burial would then have been in some distant, unfrequented locality.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

announced that he had bought enough food from the store at the settlement to feed all the men who were to cut the poles.[61] 765

Following this announcement, the chief woman mourner, *Prupadau*, whose privilege it was to decide on the size of the burial poles, marked with her toe, in the dust of the *milimika*, the length and thickness of a series of oversized poles.

This led to a great deal of discussion between the leader, *Wurarbuti*, and the woman, *Prupadau*, before he finally persuaded her to reduce the dimensions of the poles to a reasonable size. *Prupadau* wanted the poles for her relative to be as many and as large as possible.

This matter settled, the "workers" brought a number of steel axes into the *milimika*. The *alowia*, painting the handles white and putting red cross lines on the blades, stood the axes in the centre of the dancing ground. Then both the *alowia* and the other performers walked around the axes singing the telephone song. [177] [531]

A series of traditional dances followed, representing *Jirakati*, the white-headed sea-eagle (Pl. 30j), *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Tjalati*, the jabiru (Pl. 29A).[62] Two women and two young boys performed the shark (*Taduwala*) dance (Pl. 25c), the ritual finishing with the honey and mosquito calls. The "workers" picked up their axes and walked away, accompanied by everyone except *Prupadau*, who remained behind, still chanting the *amburu* song of mourning. 535 765 [825]

(*b*) *The Second Ilanias*

The second series of *ilanias* was performed about halfway between *Wurarbuti's* camp and the burial ground. 765

In this series, we were able to see the traditional pattern of the *ilanias* in operation, including the return and feeding of the "workers" after their day's labour of cutting the poles near the grave site. The songs and dances, too, instead of referring, as in the first *ilanias*, to the goods of the white man, his radio and his telephones, dealt almost exclusively with dances belonging to the locality of Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island, the country of *Waniampari's* father and the totemic place of fresh water, *Andjalui* (p. 42). [533] [177]

This series of *ilanias* could be divided into five sections,

[61] At the present time, this is just a traditional gesture, reminiscent of the days when it was the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the workers while they cut and painted the poles (Pl. 23B).

[62] In a creation myth, the jabiru is called *Tipuru-undunga*. It is likely that the bird has several names. Hart (1930, p. 280), draws attention to the multiplicity of names among the Tiwi. [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 slipped down the tree and jumped clear of the fire, the other participants
372 called his totemic name.

Toward the end of this series of *ilanias*, the "workers" announced that they had finished cutting the poles. The leader, the *alouwia*, hearing this, gave permission for the poles to be "cooked", i.e., burnt in a fire of blazing boughs, to provide a black ground on which to paint the designs. The leader
[202] also ordered that the *purunkinas* (message sticks, Figs. 5, 6, 7), be sent out to the various totemic groups. These sticks intimated that the final *pukamuni* ceremonies would take place in about twenty days.

(c) *The Bathurst Island Ilanias*

765 About a week before the final burial rituals of *Waniamperi*, a number of aborigines from Bathurst Island, accompanied by their wives and *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, made their camp and cleared a ceremonial ground not far from the second *milimika* used by the Melville Island people.

The Bathurst Island *ilanias*, under the leadership of an elderly aboriginal, *Jibungliahumi*, followed the traditional form, except that the first two phases were omitted, i.e., the fighting and the feeding of the "workers".

Three groups of songs were chanted to the accompaniment of the appropriate dances.

(i) The *Ningaui* songs and dances.
(ii) The mission lugger songs and dances.
(iii) The jabiru (*Tjalati*) songs and dances.

(i) *The Ningaui Songs and Dances*

533 The leader, *Jibungliahumi*, and his companions chanted the following
539 *Ningaui* songs. These are the literal translations.
765 "I am the head man of the *Ningaui*, I am, Eeh, Eeh."[67]

"I push aside the mangrove branches with my hands, Eeh, Eeh."

"The *Ningauis* are out hunting. The calls of the white cockatoos tell them that someone is coming, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* woman, having just given birth to a child, sings—

"The flies are looking at me, the flies are crawling on my shoulder, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* man, looking at his newly born child, sings—

"Little new-born man lying on the ground, Eeh, Eeh."

[67] This is the call of the *Ningauis* which, the aborigines claim, they hear in the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. It is possibly the call of one of the swamp birds.
[825]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Neither *Jilunglialumi* nor any of the Bathurst Islanders performed spirited 765
dances to these songs. The leader, impersonating a *Ningui*, walked round
the *milimiks* with awkward, bent gait, either beating his music sticks together [534]
or holding his hands tightly against his sides with his fingers outstretched
(Pl. 30E).

Following the *Ningui* songs, the men lit a fire at the base of a eucalyptus tree which *Kasopi*, *Nangrinini*, and several other relatives of the dead man, climbed to perform the rite of *wandiatapinda*. As each man slid down the trunk, the aborigines called the totemic place of Wailu, and the names of rain, thunder and lightning. Later, the men performed the rain dance (Pl. 30B) in [535]
the *milimiks*, while the women, coming in from the side, danced the *amburu* (Pl. 30F).

(ii) *The Mission Lugger Songs and Dances*

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The dances started with a long *ai*, *ai*, *ai*, which announced that the boat had been sighted. Then, while the men danced the sail of the boat, with their hands held above their heads, the leader chanted—

"The waves beat the sides of the boat, but it goes straight on."

With high prancing steps and hands rotating one over the other, the aborigines mimed the engines and the propeller of the lugger.

"The engines spark together as the waves hit the side of the boat."

Other songs, to which the performers danced the relevant actions, were—

"The wake of the lugger."

"The lugger is on the slips ready to be painted."

"We are scrubbing off the old paint and giving it a new coat."

Every time *Kasopi*, the son of the dead man, took part in the dance, the women set up a wail.

At the conclusion of the boat songs, the men and women took part in the 765
pumuti, lightly beating each other's spouses and their relatives with boughs.

(iii) *The Jabiru Songs and Dances*

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The last series of dances were given by a middle-aged Bathurst Island man, *Nilizuma*, who imitated, with humorous gesticulation and much abandon, the antics of the long-legged jabiru, *Tjalati* (Pl. 29A), as it walked, fished and rested in the lagoon.

The words of the *Tjalati* song were— [539]

"When *Tjalati* lifts one leg, he is ready to fly."

At the conclusion of the *Tjalati* dance, the *ilania* ended with the honey [825]
and mosquito calls.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 Many of them referred to "creation times" when *Tukimbini*, of Muruplanga
533 told the honey people of Bathurst Island to be the *pukamuni* men and women
[535] at the burial rituals of *Purukupali* (p. 30).

The following is a selection of the honey songs—

[539] "Let all the men who are *mandalini* (a eucalyptus flower, particularly rich in honey) come to this place (Tapararimi) and dance for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*."

"With all your ornaments, start walking (to Tapararimi)."

"Bring all your ceremonial ornaments to our place (Tapararimi) where we will hold a big ceremony."

Another man chanted a lengthy song describing the death of *Purukupali*, and another, which instructed the performers, at the conclusion of the rituals, to take the cane rings, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H) from their arms and leave them on the grave.

The songs and dances about *Purukupali*, the honey people of Bathurst Island, and their doings at the first *pukamuni*, were followed by another series which related specifically to the collecting of wild honey. In all these
[535] performances, the men carried out the honey dance with high knee action, their hands held above their heads and their fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30D).

One man sang about a fly that lives in the hives of wild bees and about a large hive in a tree with a long snout (entrance) and much honey. Then, accompanied by several others, he mimed the action of bees flying in and out of a hive; the aborigines locating the hive, climbing the tree, cutting off the limb containing the hive, and eating the honey. These dances were followed by the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, calling out the totemic places of honey, most of them on Bathurst Island. As each name was called, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*".

A young man started to sing about a pearling lugger, but was told by old *Tjamalampua* to stop and use only the *palaneri* songs. The same man then
[535] danced the actions of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, to the appropriate song (p. 75), and one relating to the buffalo,[75] to the accompaniment of "*Prr, prr, papringipali*" (go away big eye, prr, prr), then a song of *Aruni*, the poison fish: "*Aruni aruni, drr, drr, drr*", which referred to the sinking of a boat, the *W'anganui*, off south-western Bathurst Island.[76]

[825] [75] The aborigines believe that the buffalo, brought to Fort Dundas in 1824, belong to the *palaneri* (creation) period.

[76] The *aruni* is a spiny poisonous fish (possibly the stone fish), which was supposed to have sunk the *W'anganui* by driving its spines through the ship's bottom. The *drr, drr*, of the song represents the sounds of the spines as they were driven into the ship.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

532 At *c*, is the sun-woman with her *imunka* (life essence) (see Pl. 61A, B).
821 Her palm-leaf baskets are at *u* and *r* (left); her hair-string belts at *k*, *v*
776 (bottom); a dingo-skin hair ornament is at *s* (left), and her head at *m* (top
773 left).

The place where the sun woman appears above the eastern horizon is indicated at *f* (bottom) with her mid-day camp at *g*. There she makes a fire, *e* (the four radiating lines being the firewood), and cooks the food she has collected during the morning. Black rain clouds are indicated at *d*, and a thin cloud, which partly obscures the sun, at *h*.

The upper section of the painting deals with the evening camp *o*, of the sun-woman. Her fire and firewood are at *p*, *q*.

At *n*, on the upper left, is the daughter of the sun-woman (an unidentified star), the central dot at *m*, symbolizing her eye.

The Moon-man, Tjapara

773 At the conclusion of the fight between the moon-man, *Tjapara* and *Purukupali*, during creation times, the moon-man went up to the sky, bearing on his face the wounds he received at the hands of *Purukupali*.[60]

It was then *Purukupali* decreed that the whole of creation once dead, would remain dead for ever. However, *Tjapara*, the moon-man, partly escaped that
821 decree, for, although he dies for three days every month, his life is eternally
776 renewed.

As soon as *Tjapara* comes to life, he eats huge meals of the flesh of the mangrove crabs, which makes him grow fat and round at the end of a fortnight. However, this food makes him so ill that he sickens and dies.

The aborigines look upon the thin crescent of the waning moon as the skeleton of *Tjapara*,[61] and the body of the moon (visible by earth shine) as his spirit, *imunka*.

During his daily journey across the sky, the moon-man follows the same path as the sun-woman. He, however, carries a much smaller torch.

At one time the moon-man used to return to the east by a road just under the southern horizon. But a nest of hornets, which lived along that road, stung him so badly that he changed his path and now returns to his home by a northern route.[62]

The moon has four wives who live in the sky with him. They are the

[60] See p. 29 for details of the fight between *Purukupali* and *Tjapara*.

[825] [61] A larval form of one of the cockroaches which curls up into an almost complete circle, is called *Tjaparalinga*, the son of the moon.

[824] [62] Most informants, however, said that the moon returned to the east through the same underground world as the sun-woman.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca.1940)1943 O120 Tiwi O120

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. Harney and A. P. Elkin[1]

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and 136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog (*wongine*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. ● 825 According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts 757 of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] [1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. Elkin.

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By JANE C. GOODALE

884 IN 1912 SIR BALDWIN SPENCER, a professor of biology at
[114] the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the
[824] ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately
[114] associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony,
[178] however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe that such participation cannot prepare them adequately
[177] for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what
161 the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Mel-
131 ville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Eco-
178 nomically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied,
[224] and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little
● 825 physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or
462 digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual
868 division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

000 TIWI NATIVE on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11, (B)]

Tjipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families. 161 361 648

It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace. 361 177 [631] [224] [464]

By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives, 123 [132] [825]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 0120 Tiwi 0120

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Fig. 2. Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend, Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these

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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the previous singer's dead father. 881 765

(*c*) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[83] when I think of you, my uncle." [533] Some of the women cried when the song was finished. [539]

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *saini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants. 252 881

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate it (Pl. 442), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, goodbye",[84] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purujikini*, did at the first *kulama*. 881 [533] [539]

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women. 535 881

(*a*) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird). [534]

(*b*) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 302), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(*c*) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*sokwianga*) in his mouth to symbolize the prey of the crocodile.

(*d*) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(*e*) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(*f*) The buffalo,

(*g*) The shark (Pl. 300).

[83] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *imunka* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions. [826] [774]

[84] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the *waringalua* tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten. [824]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(8) *Cutting up the Yams*

881 After the yams had been in the oven for about one and a half hours, the
252 men gathered around the oven, felt it, and, after a short discussion began to scrape the warm sand away from the paper-bark covering. As they did so, they pressed handfuls of the warm sand against their elbows, chest, shoulders and knees, believing that this sand made their joints strong and supple (Pl. 45c).

When the paper-bark, carefully removed strip by strip, exposed the
881 cooked yams, the women, who had been quietly standing on the outside of the *milimika* murmured reverently, "Ah, *kulama*, ah, *kulama*." Taking the hot yams from the oven each man held them against his chest, and his
[827] head. This they said would give them added strength and vitality. The women although they did not participate in this ritual, sent their children into the *milimika* to have the yams pressed against their bodies so that they would grow to healthy and strong adults.

As the men peeled the yams, exposing the soft, yellow flesh, they sang
[177] [533] about preparing and eating various kinds of food belonging to the white man,[88] "cutting bread for a meal, carving steak from a bullock and roasting it on the coals, cooking the tongue of a bullock, eating corn beef", and so on. When all the yams were peeled they were left on a sheet of bark whilst
[412] [177] everyone had a meal and a sleep. In the late afternoon the *kulama* men started to slice the yams (cockle shells, *irakapi*, were used before the advent of steel). As they did so, the men mashed up some of the sliced *kulama* between the palms of the hands, mixed this with red ochre, and each rubbed it on his hair, face, whiskers and body. This, they believed, aided by the earlier rituals, would ensure them good health until the next *kulama*.

(9) *Initiation of the Kilipaniatis and Mikinatrinas*

The sliced yams were put in the basket, and stood in the centre of the *milimika*. A *kulama* man walked into the forest, and collected a length of flexible vine. Returning to the *milimika* he bent the vine round the necks of the male *Marukumunis* and the female *Marukumuningas* in such a way that it could not be removed. These initiates were then *Kilipaniatis* and *Kilipan-*
[301] *iatingas* respectively. This neck ornament, which had a number of cords hanging from it, is called a *mariguani* (Pl. 42a). After these initiates had been further decorated with bark armlets, *tjungutis*[89] (Pl. 42b and c), and cane

[88] No doubt, in times past, they sang about abundant supplies of their own favourite foods.

[89] Spencer, 1928, illustrates the bark armlets, *tjungutis*, on Pl. XI and the belt, *ulurimi*, on Pl. IX, No. 1.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat and so prevent the theft. 776 821 648

The Maratjis at Maundu

Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained by the faeces of the *Maratjis*. 776 778

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandubuka* totem are the only people safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from his own armpits, rubs it over his companion. 751 776 [827]

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then, walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi* which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of Maundu. [437] [753] [164]

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon, they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an aboriginal, called *Alumgun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this taboo. [841] [784]

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu. 532 x

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained) water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the 778 776

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 This behaviour led to a great deal of trouble, developing later into a fight in which many of the *Maludaianini* men were wounded.

After that fight, the *Maludaianini* men rose into the sky and became the Milky Way; their wives were turned into stars.

776 821 When the sun-woman sinks beneath the western horizon, and the light from the blazing torch leaves the sky, the *Maludaianini* travel in a long line across the firmament (similar to the processional caterpillars at the beginning of the wet season), visiting their wives, the stars, as they go.

[827] Early in the evening the men of the Milky Way rub their hands over their bodies to remove the dried perspiration. This dried perspiration, falling on the eyelids of the aboriginal people, make them heavy with sleep.[68]

x 532 776 821 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60D, Pl. 62A, and Pl. 63C, illustrate the myth of the men of the Milky Way.

The black bars between *c*, *c*, and *c*, *c*, Pl. 60D, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*; the white disc, *a*, being their camp, while similar white designs, *b*, *b*, indicate the camps of their star wives.

The central white panel, *d*, is the Milky Way; the dark squares, *e*, *c*, etc., are the red clouds at sunrise and sunset, the dark-coloured vertical panels on either side of *d*, white cumulus clouds at night, and the six black discs, dark-coloured clouds, in the night sky.

Pl. 62A is another painting of the Milky Way. The circles with the radiating lines are the camp fires of the stars, the background being the shadows cast by those fires. The Coal Sack in which there are no fires, is the camp of the star women.[64]

The lighter panels, leading from the upper left to the lower right, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, the darker panels, from upper right to lower left, indicate the night sky.

Reading from the left on the lower edge, panels one, three and five symbolize cumulus clouds, *Kumbaratina*, of the night sky, and two, four and six, unidentified clouds, called *aratinia*.

The dotted panels on Pl. 63C represent the men of the Milky Way, the barred panels, the "roads", i.e., dark spaces, in the galaxy, and the five horizontal panels, eucalyptus trees in the firmament.

[855] [68] The aboriginal women, to the accompaniment of a lullaby, send their children to sleep by rubbing their fingers together above the face of the child in the same manner as the *Maludaianini* do in the sky.

[64] The Coal Sack is visible at Melville Island only during the hot "wet" season, i.e. from November to March. This had given rise to the belief that the star-women, who make their camp within that heavenly spectacle, do not need fires. The same belief accounts for the fact that, within the Coal Sack there are no stars (the camp-fires of the star-women).

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

796 An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch his wives or children, because a deadly sweat called *kilamini* comes from his body and
827 will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

[88] Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the
764 Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *emuke:r* of the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the
775 bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yatataka*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

Culture Heroes. They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the
773 "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-
776 tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumereka*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orati*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marakarti*.

The Present Day Spirits. Some spirits vitally affect their present lives.
776 Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain
[82] spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

Magic. Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs
754 slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *kulumpara*. It is interesting to compare the Anula belief; if a person is sung with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending
535 over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *millimiks* to the
766 rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first
[177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[90]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten-
[114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and
[775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[91] the fundamental idea
[517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the
[775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[92]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon
[126] drawings[93] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[90] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.

[91] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women
[832] were attracted to them.

[92] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.

[93] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he was at the same time the executive director of a work unit which he expected 578
to work for him; and the husband of many of its members whom he expected 182
to be faithful to him. The young wives were willing, under supervision, to 837
meet his first expectation, but found it difficult, even under the strictest super- 592
vision, to meet the second. Successful supervision of the morals of young wives
was easy to achieve at night because each camp was then gathered together
and it was relatively easy for the husband and his senior wives to guard the
young wives closely. But during the daytime matters were different. Then the 837
young women of the household were widely scattered through the fairly dense
bush and it was impossible for the old wives to watch them every minute of
the day. And the young men of other households, or even of their own house-
hold, were hunting game in the same neighborhood. Encounters, whether by
chance or by previous arrangement, were likely to occur and probably occurred
with a high degree of frequency. We say "probably" because no anthropologist
working with a tribe which has neither courts nor written records can ever
know how often casual extramarital offenses take place. (There is even some
difficulty in obtaining reliable statistics on such matters in our own society,
as the attacks on the late Dr. Kinsey's statistics indicate.) We therefore make
no statement about how common the act of adultery was in Tiwi culture, but
we can say that, judging by the public accusations of adultery, its practice
must have been widespread indeed. In any Tiwi camp comprising more than 578
two households, few weeks went by without an outraged and angry old hus- 837
band shouting accusations at one of the younger men sitting by another camp
fire a few yards away. The young man accused would (usually) deny it; the
old women of both households would enter the argument, the young man's
mother protesting his innocence, the old man's elderly wives (who had of [595]
course been the informers) giving details of time and place and circumstance;
the young man would produce, or try to produce, an alibi and appeal to a
friend to bear him out; the old man would call the friend a liar and the youth's
mother an old witch; the youth's mother would retaliate by shouting things
she knew (but had never before revealed) about the private lives of everybody
in the old man's household, including the old man himself when he was a
young bachelor. A good time would be had by all, including the listening
anthropologist, but nobody would get much sleep. Such nocturnal uproars, al-
ways starting with accusations hurled by an older husband against a younger
man and always involving incidents that had allegedly occurred while the
young wife was somehow left unchaperoned for a short period during her
daytime wandering in search of food, were a commonplace of nightlife among
the Tiwi; but no case was ever reported, observed, or hinted at in which even
the most adventurous and enterprising bachelor had succeeded in seducing,
or had even attempted to seduce, a young wife when she was back in camp [833]
after nightfall. The deeds were always done in the secrecy of the bush during
the daytime; it was the recriminations and accusations that occurred in the
public glare of the campfires at nighttime.

Sometimes these disputes or accusations went no further than the noc- 578
turnal shouting of charges. Often the young man accused the previous night 684

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 OI20 Tiwi OI20

discussed the factor of relative age as a major determinant of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in the particular type of contract which is universal for first marriages among females and is also the preferred contract for males. I have also described several variant patterns of Tiwi marriage contracts and have shown that these cannot be considered as alternatives to the preferred type but rather as additional patterns which apply only to a woman's secondary marriages. These additional types of contracts are also, to some extent, conditioned by the relative ages of the participants, but the resultant form of marriage may vary from a continuance of patrilateral cross-cousin marriage to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and even to marriage with certain relatives who are not cross-cousins. The wide variation in contracts leading to secondary marriages for women does not affect the continuance of preferred unilateral cross-cousin marriage or the exchange of wives between particular descent and local groups until the second generation after the variant marriage. Consequently, any change in the social organization of the Tiwi brought about by variations in marriage contracts is a gradual change, but it is also an inevitable and accepted form of change. The Tiwi rightly consider that as individuals they have considerable freedom in the selection of mates from almost any descent and local group and even from among a number of categories of kinsmen. Their Ego-oriented marriage system provides both stability and flexibility, and this is reflected in their system of kin classification.

NOTES

1. The field work on which this paper is based was undertaken in 1954 at the Snake Bay Native Settlement on Melville Island and was jointly financed by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.
2. In 1959, I used the relative age of spouses in a preliminary analysis of Tiwi unilateral cross-cousin marriage (Goodale 1959). It was with considerable pleasure that I found that a similar analysis by Rose (1960) had quite independently arrived at the same conclusions. Even more interesting was the fact that in cases where I had to calculate expected ages for many of my kin relations, Rose, with more complete age data, could give the average and range in ages for the same relatives, and that in most cases his "average" and my "estimated" ages were the same or within one or two years of one another.
3. For their valuable comments, criticisms, and advice I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Robbins Burling, Ward H. Goodenough, Edward B. Harper, Barbara S. Lane, and George P. Murdock.
4. Unfortunately, since the only age data collected in the field were for husbands and wives, I have had to use expected ages rather than average or mean ages throughout most of this paper (see note 2 above).
5. The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

observe the spontaneous gesture with which men, on leaving the Mission, automatically threw off their loincloths at the Mission fence and headed for the bush as naked as the day they were born. Women, in pre-white days, habitually carried a piece of bark which they held in front of themselves whenever they met a male. As soon as string or rope was introduced by the early white contacts, the women found it more convenient to tie some sort of band around their waists and double the piece of bark over this waistband. This was much handier since it left the hands free, but the bark, being stiff and unsecured, was at best a very capricious covering, and old women in the midst of public arguments often tore off their aprons and threw them at their opponents as a gesture of contempt.

Young women were more decorous and fussed modestly with their bark aprons when young men were present rather in the same way as American coeds fuss with their skirts in crowded classrooms. Theoretically, young women were supposed never to meet either young men or men outside their own household, and so the bark apron, carried in the hand, was in aboriginal times merely something to have in case of emergency. It was noticeable in Tiwi ceremonies that when the women danced, they did nothing with their hands. We think this was because, in pre-white days, their right hands, at least, were needed to hold their bark aprons in front of their pubic regions, since at dances they were in the presence of strange men.

This brief account of the daily and yearly life of the Tiwi households enables us to draw a few important conclusions about their economic life:

1. Compared with many of the mainland tribes, the Tiwi were economically rather well-off, in that the bigger household units were usually able to produce a food surplus.

2. This food surplus varied directly with the number of working wives that a household head possessed.

3. A household head with many wives was therefore, in Tiwi terms, a wealthy man who could retire entirely from the food quest and devote his time to other activities.

4. Such men were able to devote full time to other activities such as manufacturing useful and ceremonial objects and participation in ceremonial affairs and public life.

5. Wealthy men, active in one or all of these pursuits, were the "big men" of the tribe. In each band there were two or three such men, and in the whole tribe perhaps less than twenty had attained full success or were ranked by public opinion as being the most admired and influential. The next chapter examines the career patterns by which every male Tiwi sought to become, and a few succeeded in becoming, a big man.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

[881] had worn continuously their curious ornaments, *mariguani* (Pl. 420),[81]
[301] around their necks as well as many cane and bark ornaments on their arms. During the whole of that period (about five months) they renewed their body paint continuously. They were not allowed, however, to scratch their heads with their hands, but must use for that purpose a special pointed stick, *murubunga* (Pl. 32F).

The rituals began when one of the *Mikingulas*, coming up behind the male
[302] *Kilipaniati*, cut the *mariguani* from the neck of the initiate, poured water over him to remove his body paint, and decorated him with the design of a *Wadjeniati* (Pl. 42H). Similarly, the husband of the female initiate cut her neck ornament, washed her and redecorated her as a *Wadjeniatinga*. After eating their store of cycad fruit, these new initiates resumed the normal life of the tribe.

About mid-November, thunder and other signs of the oncoming wet season are signals for the *Marukumuni* to discard the design he has been wearing since the ceremonial eating of the cycad fruit. As soon as this hap-
[301] pens the men paint another design on his body (Pl. 42D), put new cockatoo
[302] feathers in his hair, and many cane armlets on his arms. The initiate wears these decorations, continuously renewing his body paint, until the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, which takes place at the beginning of the *kulama* ceremony about four months later.

3. THE KULAMA CEREMONY

(1) *Collecting and Eating the Edible Yams*

Toward the end of January, when the wet season was approaching its climax, the *kulama* leader instructed the women to go into the jungle, locate a number
[262] of the young plants of two species of edible yams, a long one, *jurugani*, and a short one, *karawani* and show them to him so that he would know when they would be ready to eat.

When some weeks later, the leader estimated that the yams were fit for digging and the tall, annual grass was about to shed its seed, he called the people together and told them that the *kulama* rituals would start in a few days.[88]

[81] Spencer, 1928, Pl. ix, No. 4, illustrates a *mariguani*.

[88] From the time of this announcement until the finish of the *kulama* ceremony, no
● [834] fully initiated man, must sleep with his wife. If he does, he will be attacked by *teini*, the mysterious *kulama* sickness, and die. I did not find out the characteristics of the *kulama* sickness.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply. The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece of meat or a dish of *kuroka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he was at the same time the executive director of a work unit which he expected 578
to work for him, and the husband of many of its members whom he expected 182
to be faithful to him. The young wives were willing, under supervision, to 837
meet his first expectation, but found it difficult, even under the strictest super- 592
vision, to meet the second. Successful supervision of the morals of young wives
was easy to achieve at night because each camp was then gathered together
and it was relatively easy for the husband and his senior wives to guard the
young wives closely. But during the daytime matters were different. Then the 837
young women of the household were widely scattered through the fairly dense
bush and it was impossible for the old wives to watch them every minute of
the day. And the young men of other households, or even of their own household, were hunting game in the same neighborhood. Encounters, whether by chance or by previous arrangement, were likely to occur and probably occurred with a high degree of frequency. We say "probably" because no anthropologist working with a tribe which has neither courts nor written records can ever know how often casual extramarital offenses take place. (There is even some difficulty in obtaining reliable statistics on such matters in our own society, as the attacks on the late Dr. Kinsey's statistics indicate.) We therefore make no statement about how common the act of adultery was in Tiwi culture, but we can say that, judging by the public accusations of adultery, its practice must have been widespread indeed. In any Tiwi camp comprising more than 578
two households, few weeks went by without an outraged and angry old hus- 837
band shouting accusations at one of the younger men sitting by another camp
fire a few yards away. The young man accused would (usually) deny it; the
old women of both households would enter the argument, the young man's [595]
mother protesting his innocence, the old man's elderly wives (who had of
course been the informers) giving details of time and place and circumstance;
the young man would produce, or try to produce, an alibi and appeal to a
friend to bear him out; the old man would call the friend a liar and the youth's
mother an old witch; the youth's mother would retaliate by shouting things
she knew (but had never before revealed) about the private lives of everybody
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public glare of the campfires at nighttime.

Sometimes these disputes or accusations went no further than the noc- 578
turnal shouting of charges. Often the young man accused the previous night 684

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

matter might end there. Or the old man might let matters rest until the time of the next big gathering of people at a funeral or at the *kolema* rituals, and then revive the issue under such public circumstances that the accused young man could not slip away unpunished. If he followed this second course, the old man went to the gathering covered from head to foot in white paint, the Tiwi uniform for anybody who came in anger and intended to pick a fight with somebody. The decision between these two lines of action lay, of course, with the old man, and while that decision was to some extent determined by how vindictive and revengeful he felt, nonetheless it was also influenced by how this dispute was related to all the other feuds, disputes, deals, marriage exchanges, and so forth, in which both parties were already involved. Like a good lawyer in our own culture, the old man had to consider, before he took the matter to court, who the young man was and who his friends and relatives were, and had to ask himself whether in seeking vengeance for the blow to his pride he might not be doing himself more political harm than the injury was worth.

In arriving at his decision, the old man was influenced to some extent also by another variable, the attitude of the young man. If the alleged offense occurred only once and the young man denied it and thereafter kept his distance, the accuser would probably let the matter drop. Offenders were very rarely caught *in flagrante*, and the evidence of seduction was almost always circumstantial or hearsay. In every case there was some element of doubt as to whether the right young male was being accused or whether the whole story had not been invented by some of the old wives out of sheer spite toward a young wife. The old man had to take such factors into consideration, not out of any abstract sense of justice, but because, naturally, he didn't like to be made a fool of, either by young men or his own spiteful old wives. But he was most suspicious and unbelieving of his own flighty young wives, and sometimes the accused young man was defiant and persistent in his attentions to the same young wife, or wives. In effect, such a young man was daring the old husband to do his worst. Such continued defiance of the seniority system could not be permitted; it became a case not of simple seduction but of subversive activity, since it was a threat to the whole social structure of the tribe, centered as that was around the marriage of old men to young women. When confronted by such action, a Tiwi elder said (as people of other cultures might), "What would happen if everybody did that? We'd have complete anarchy and free love." Hence an old husband, so defied, was almost duty bound not just to seek satisfaction for the private injury done to himself, but to defend the public weal by hauling the offender before the bar of public opinion and denouncing him before as large a crowd as possible, as a public enemy. If the situation became so flagrant that he could not wait until the next big funeral or the next *kolema* gathering, he began calling in surrounding camps or going himself, dressed in white paint, to summon them to assist him in meting out public justice to the violator of the system. When a sufficient number of upholders of the right (that is, senior heads of households) had been collected together, the usual one-sided duel (see below, Chapter 4) was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The mobility of people other than household heads was much less. 562
Women and children could move only with the permission, and usually in the 571
company, of their lord and master. Occasionally old and trusted wives might
be sent, unsupervised, on a journey by their husbands or their brothers, [203]
usually to carry messages and bring back gossip, but young wives were never
trusted to be out of sight either of the husband or of elderly female supervisors. Young men were less subject to their fathers' orders and hence were fairly free to come and go as they pleased, but the universal suspicion which all husbands bore toward wandering young men put severe restrictions on their mobility and prevented them attaching themselves to any household or camp in which they did not have some close relative.

The fact, then, that a man like Tu'untalumi was (in Tiwi terms) very 159
mobile did not necessarily mean that members of his household shared his
degree of mobility. When he took most of his large household with him on his 222
journeys away from home, as he often did, it was always because he was going 462
a considerable distance and was traveling slowly, living off the country as he 527
went. In such cases he liked to have a large retinue to feed him on the way and also to permit him to entertain in fitting style when he arrived. For while it was true that at a funeral or at an initiation the relatives of the de- [574]
ceased or of the novices were supposed to take care of the feeding of all the visitors, nonetheless, wealthy and generous men like Tu'untalumi believed in taking along with them a bevy of young wives, with a couple of efficient elderly widow-wives in charge of them, to contribute to the food-getting and food-preparing activities. Of course the supervision of the young wives' morals [837
in the strange environment was often difficult, especially in the hectic at- 593]
mosphere of a big ceremonial, but this worry was compensated for by the fact that the visitor who came so attended was contributing a number of extra food providers to the labor force of the harassed hosts and thus making a generous gesture, and also by the fact that such a visitor was not dependent upon the hospitality provided by the hosts. Having his own food-producing unit with him, he could live better and stay longer than if he had come alone or only as one of a party of men. In this respect, as in so many others, a Tiwi household head's decision had to be reached by balancing against one another the two competing motives of, on the one hand, the desire to eat well and, on the other, the desire to keep his young wives safe from prowling bachelors. Ki-in-kumi, the wealthiest man of the Malauila band, usually decided not only to leave his wives at home but also not even to go himself. But Ki-in-kumi was a gloomy, pessimistic old man. Tu'untalumi usually decided to do the thing in style, travel with a large retinue, have all the comforts of home while in strange districts, and take his chances on the strange bachelors. He clearly believed that a good booming ceremony with lots to eat and himself in the center directing the dancing was well worth the risk of a few of his young wives being seduced off-stage. Men like Ki-in-kumi thought Tu'untalumi an [184]
old fool for not leaving his young wives at home, and Tu'untalumi probably thought that old Ki-in-kumi might as well be dead, especially since his death would be the occasion for a really magnificent funeral.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

4

The Collective Life

Legal Affairs

THE MOST SATISFACTORY overall view of Tiwi culture is that, within the general framework of mainland patterns, it had developed along its own distinctive lines. Some of these distinctive lines of development are traceable to the relatively favorable food and rainfall situation; others are traceable to the absence of neighbors. The unusually large polygamous households are, we think, attributable to the good food supply. But the large households of the Tiwi, economically efficient as we judge them to have been, involved certain social costs, the most obvious of which was the enforced celibacy of the younger men. This compulsory celibacy did not, of course, mean chastity. Not only were there the endless charges of seduction against young men, but there was also the more objective fact that most young wives continued to become pregnant with monotonous regularity, no matter how ancient and senile their husbands. (The Tiwi belief that babies came from spirits prevented pregnancies from being used against young wives as proofs of unfaithfulness.) Despite the numerous cases of seduction or alleged seduction, few young men ever took the most straightforward way of escaping from their state of compulsory celibacy—namely, abducting a young wife and running off with her. Here we encounter the other factor of the Tiwi natural environment that explains so much about their cultural development—and that is the absence of neighbors. Young men did not elope with young wives because there was no place to elope to. On the mainland such elopements were common, and the couple sought refuge with a neighboring tribe. But an eloping Tiwi couple could only take refuge with other more remote Tiwi bands where the system was the same as that which they had rebelled against back home, and the people with whom they sought shelter were interrelated with those whom they had defied back home. Hence, no matter where they fled, the Tiwi system, embodied in a war party of the girl's husband's friends and

182 [837] 182 583

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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he still had six years to go after that, not finishing the final grade of *Mikingula* until somewhere past the age of 24 or 25. 561 881

In contrast with the mainland initiation ceremonies, we think the most interesting point about Tiwi initiation resides not in the formal ceremonies but in the removal from the food-production units, for long periods of the year, of all the young males between the ages of 14 and 25. It is true that they did not spend *all* their time in seclusion and that after the age of twenty they remained mostly in their household camps, where they contributed to the household food production. Nonetheless, it remains clear that only a very well-off tribe could afford to allow so much time off from food production to all its young hunters. Tiwi fathers, it would seem, in arranging for the initiation of their sons to begin just when they were becoming productive hunters, were willing to sacrifice that productivity for less tangible advantages. The youths, secluded and guarded in the bush while getting an education, were not only out of the work force but were also out of the predatory-bachelor force. A Tiwi elder made sacrifices to "send his sons to college" but he breathed easier to know that the sons of the other elders were all there too. 171 182 511 881 883 837

All males without exception had to go through the full initiation cycle, and from the time of their first forcible seizure at the age of 14-15 to their final graduation at 24-26, they were in a state of *pukimani* and their personal names were strictly taboo to everybody in the tribe. Each youth was referred to only by his grade name, *Marukumarni* for the first year, *Mikingula* for the last four years, and so on. And here we return finally to a point which was mentioned much earlier—namely, the complete unimportance in tribal eyes of all males below the age of twenty-five. Until they had completed the final stage of initiation, Tiwi males were still boys; they did not even have names. Occasionally, when collecting genealogies and coming upon a reference to a young man, the innocent anthropologist would ask, "Is he married?" In tones of the deepest contempt the informant would reply, "That kid, how could he be married? He's still *Mikingula*." Though *Mikingula* was the stage typically reached by a man at about 20-21 and lasted for the next four years, to the Tiwi it was still a stage in the life of a boy. Not until he had finished as *Mikingula* could he step out into the world and life of men. How he spent the years immediately after finishing initiation decided how soon some senior man would think sufficiently highly of him to aid him in acquiring his first ancient widow. 881 551 881 882 884

nature of the cause they diverged sharply. The same single-minded concentration which Mariano devoted to the cultivation of white men, Louis devoted to his sexual activities. Whether two men devoting most of their time one to preaching acculturation, the other to seduction, can be said to have a common basic personality, is a question best left to the personality experts; but at least to the superficial observer there was something vaguely similar in the grim and humorless way in which Louis pursued other men's wives and the way in which Mariano carried on his acculturation campaign. 159

Sexual irregularities are difficult data upon which to obtain accurate information in any culture. When, therefore, Louis is described as an habitual and constant seducer, no claim is made that he was actually as successful in this line of endeavor as tribal opinion maintained. All that we can be sure of is that Louis had an exalted reputation of this sort and he had it in a tribe where a number of circumstances combine to make seduction almost as easy and almost as common as eating or drinking. The seduction situation is largely the result of the marriage customs of the Tiwi which have the effect of forcing most men to remain bachelors until well into their thirties while concentrating all wives, old and young, in the hands of the older men. This means that the older a man gets the more wives he accumulates, and it would appear that the more he accumulates the more suspicious he becomes that some of them (probably the younger and more physically attractive ones) are being unfaithful to him. These suspicions are accentuated by (a) the way in which the day-to-day food gathering activities of the women are necessarily carried out—the women are widely dispersed through the bush, often working singly, well out of sight and hearing of each other; (b) the fact that young unmarried men are frequently hunting (or pretending to hunt) alone in the same general area of country as that in which an old man's numerous wives are gathering wild foods; and (c) the character of the vegetation in large sections of the Tiwi country, great stretches of it being just open enough to make it easy for native eyes to see somebody slipping through the trees, but just thick enough to make it difficult for them to be sure of identities at any distance.[6] 182 837 [222] [224] [137]

In such an atmosphere it is rare for any bachelor to live for more than a few months at most without having to face an accusation by some old man that he has been taking liberties with one of the latter's wives, and it is even rarer for an old man with a number of young wives not to have reason to suspect most or all of them of having been unfaithful to him several times at least in the course of a year. But in this setting of daily[7] seduction Louis' reputation was outstanding. In the period with which we are dealing here he had been suspected and publicly accused of adultery with almost every possible woman for miles around. His demeanor when accused by the outraged husbands was characteristic. Whereas other seducers denied the charge and asserted their essential purity, or tried to laugh it off as silly rumor ("Why, I don't even know the woman"), or alibied themselves and accused other men ("I wasn't even hunting in that direction that day, it must have been so-and-so, he was following a kangaroo down that way at the time in question"), or sometimes even 159 [837]

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 admitted the charge along the age-old line of "the woman tempted me," Louis always faced his accusers silently, sullenly, almost disinterestedly. He never excused himself, never alibied. On the other hand he never gloried in or boasted of his sexual exploits, he merely gave the impression that he was completely disinterested in the whole procedure of argument and punishment and wanted to get it over with as quickly as possible. It was very evident that, despite his sexual reputation, he was not invested with any glamour nor did he excite any hero-worship on the part of the younger men. The role of Don Juan [555] in some cultures can presumably be a role that leads to a successful seducer's [837] being envied and even to some extent hero-worshipped by the young bloods, but this seems quite absent as a cultural possibility in Tiwi values. Successful young seducers never act publicly as if they were proud of themselves nor in any way show off or assume a "look how clever I am" manner. Absence of such behavior was very noticeable in others besides Louis, and certainly he never acted in such a way, despite his obvious suitability for such a role were it culturally available.

In camp and during the periods of the collective life he was silent, gloomy and dour, frequently irritable, unfriendly and hostile to everybody. He was [582] too young, in Tiwi terms, to rate a wife, but the policy of the Mission to dis- [797] courage plural marriages had as its positive correlate the promotion of marriages for the wifeless young men and Louis was one of those who had obtained a wife through Mission manipulations. She died after a beating which Louis in one of his frequent fits of anger had administered to her, and while the natives never said so openly, they clearly agreed with the Mission's charges that Louis had murdered his wife. Thus accused to his face by the Mission, Louis shrugged his shoulders in his normal, indifferent way. In council he seldom spoke and what he said carried no weight. This, of course, may well have [561] been due to his age as in Tiwi terms Louis at 31 or 32 was still a young man who should keep silent in the presence of his seniors. But it was very noticeable that even in the quick informal conferences between members of a party on the march involving such petty decisions as whether to camp at this waterhole or try and make the next one before nightfall, or in similar minor decision-making, Louis took no part. He listened silently to the debate, was very quick to foresee correctly what the decision was going to be as was evidenced by his starting off again by himself before the main party had realized where the consensus lay, but he apparently felt no urge to express aloud his own views on the issue. His actions showed that in his private analysis of the situation he was way ahead of most of the debaters but apparently his personal satisfactions came from correct anticipation of majority decision rather than from any desire to participate himself in decision-making. The same ability to listen, analyze what he heard, to act upon his own analysis but never to intervene actively was very noticeable in Louis' reaction to the accusations against him by the outraged husbands. An outraged husband usually begins his charges late at night when the camps are quiet. At such a time he begins to yell his accusations through the darkness at the top of his voice, naming the seducer,

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

121 theorists," says Boas, "assume a mental equipment of primitive man distinct from that of civilized man. I have never seen a person in primitive life to whom this theory would apply. There are slavish believers in the teachings of the past and there are scoffers and unbelievers; there are clear thinkers and muddle-headed bunglers; there are strong characters and there are weaklings" (1951). It is notewofthy that this (for Boas) unusually flat and definite statement was made in an attempt to demolish the views of Levy-Bruhl that between civilized man and the primitive there is an impassable psychological gap. Perhaps—as Tipperary would say, if he understood the matter—perhaps, the personality and culture movement is merely Levy-Bruhl in modern dress, perhaps the latent content of the movement is to deny to the people of the simpler cultures the ordinary elementary human qualities of individual difference and human variation, thereby enabling "personality" and "individuality" to be treated as unique creations of the white races to be found only among the followers of the American way of life. If this indeed be the latent content of much "personality and culture" literature, it seems to warrant a flat and unqualified rejection, in terms as emphatic as those of Boas, by all those anthropologists who, like Boas, may not know projective tests but do know something about the simpler native societies.

NOTES

121 [1] In view of the wide discrepancies in the use of the word "personality" it must be made clear again that all that is meant by the word here is the level of description one is apt to get if in ordinary social conversation one asks the question, "What sort of person is he?"

115 [2] The native names of these men are all polysyllabic and difficult for the reader to remember. I use therefore the names bestowed upon them by white men, to aid in keeping them distinctly in mind. The Spanish names, Antonio, etc., were bestowed by certain Filipino carpenters who built the building for the Roman Catholic missionaries when they first arrived. Tipperary is, of course, a white corruption of a native name.

159 [3] It will be noticed by close students of the above information that Turimpi must have been born in the 1830's, Bongladu born somewhere around 1865. She had her first child when she was about 16 or 17, at which time her husband Turimpi was at least 50. This is a perfectly normal Tiwi marital situation, the commonest marriage arrangement being one in which a newly-born female child is betrothed by her father to a man in his thirties.

159 177 797 [4] Even from the anthropologist Dooley would not accept tobacco until he had convinced himself that in return he would not be required to sacrifice any of his principles. Nor would he take his son, to whom he was passionately attached, to the Mission station for medical treatment—perhaps the most striking proof of the uncompromising attitude that Dooley had adopted toward the Mission.

159 [5] Such a speculation about Mariano's personality at the age of 25, seventeen years before the author knew him, is based upon the general belief of social scientists that personality does not change much between 25 and 42, and the particular evidence of the older missionaries that Mariano was "already inclined to throw his weight around" when they first arrived.

13 182 837 [6] Goodenough (1949) is apparently one of the few anthropologists to discuss the relation between extra-marital sexual activity and the opportunities provided by the nature of the physical environment. The point here is slightly different; whether the Tiwi physical environment encourages adultery is uncertain since a social system such as theirs would promote adultery whatever the physical environment, but it certainly helps to increase the suspiciousness of husbands.

837 [7] That seduction has to be a daytime activity is implied in what has already been said. After sundown the women are concentrated in their husband's camp and have no opportunity. Which

6: Hart E-5 (1928-1930) 1954 OI20 Tiwi OI20

leads to the situation—quite foreign to our way of thought and also apparently to that of Polynesian cultures—whereby a young bachelor can prowl around the bush all night without arousing the slightest interest but his daytime wanderings, ostensibly in search of game, are watched by his married seniors with the deepest suspicion.

[8] The buffalo, which are confined to Melville Island, are the wild descendants of domestic East Asian water buffalo which were imported during an early attempt at settlement.

[9] It is perhaps not without interest that one of Tip's jokes is imperishably preserved in the files of the Peabody Museum at Harvard. Tip was in Darwin in 1927 when W. Lloyd Warner was collecting at the Native Compound the anthropometric measurements which were afterwards analyzed by W. W. Howells (1937), and like all other natives in town from many tribes he and a number of Tiwi were measured by Warner. On the card for each subject Warner wished to record the personal name of the native. Led by Tip, all the Tiwi measured bestowed upon themselves the most obscene "native name" they could think of, and years later Tip would shout with laughter when telling how Warner faithfully recorded these obscenities, often repeating them several times to make sure of the correct pronunciation.

[10] This set of sentiments surrounding Tip's wife also gives a little more insight into the sex activities of Louis. His reluctance to move in on her, because of the way "the old men would feel," while showing no such reluctance to move in on Mrs. Bob, supports the view implied above that Louis, while sex dominated, was no fool in his amours. He had an intelligent and realistic appreciation of just how much he could get away with.

[11] I use this slang term deliberately, since it expresses somewhat the Tiwi attitude toward those young bachelors who go about seducing the wives of their elders and betters.

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Fig. 2. Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these

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123 501 served as seats except when the mast was mounted in the forward platform.

It took us quite a while to load, but we finally launched out into the bay about mid-morning. In the stern, sat Albert, his knees folded under so that as he lifted and dipped the heavy ironwood paddle only his arms and back supplied the power. He kept in perfect time with Big Jack who sat just in front of him. They would both paddle on the same side for about six strokes and then bringing the paddles overhead would continue on the other side with perfect rhythm. Agnes and Tchuwiunga sat amidships among the rolls of blankets and cartons of food, while I surveyed the scene from the forward seat, clutching my waterproofed KLM overnight bag containing my camera, toothbrush, and change of clothing and the ever-present supply of pencils and "six-penny" notebooks.

The bay was smooth, too smooth, for not a ripple broke the gently rolling surface. We could, however, see and hear breakers on Piriu Point; so, with the promise of some wind to propel the craft, and incidentally break the close, muggy atmosphere, Albert and Big Jack paddled strongly and swiftly so that soon we reached the opposite shore and began to work our way up to the point. [533 837] Although the men were silent, Agnes entertained us with the singing of other women's love songs. All women, regardless of the degree of affection they have for their husband, have lovers and compose long love songs extolling the chosen man's virtues. Agnes, however, only sang her song about her lover, Ginger-Two, when out of audible range of her husband.

About noon the canoe rounded the point and at once a strong easterly wind prompted us to raise the sail. This required little effort as the thin and greatly patched canvas was permanently attached to the 12-foot mast and boom with wire. All that was needed was to drop the mast through a hole in the forward platform and let the boom fall into place. Unfortunately it was soon apparent that the forces of nature and the design of the canoe were against us; the wind was too strong and without a keel the canoe could not head into the wind which was dead against us. The mast was unstepped, the sail furled, and the paddles taken up once more, but now instead of a calm sea we faced large rollers, some of which broke under the force of the wind. It was heavy going; Agnes

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat and so prevent the theft. 776 821 648

The Maratjis at Maundu

Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained by the faeces of the *Maratjis*. 776 778

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandubuka* totem are the only people safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from his own armpits, rubs it over his companion. 751 776 [827]

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then, walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi* which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of Maundu. [437] [753] [164]

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon, they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an aboriginal, called *Alumgun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this taboo. [841] [784]

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu. 532 778

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained) water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the 776

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 held rather than the family. There was no ambiguity about its "living together" aspect; there were many ambiguities about its kinship aspects. To some of these unusual domestic usages we now turn.

Marriage by Betrothal

589 In many nonliterate societies, including most, if not all of the mainland Australian tribes, there is a tendency to believe that the main purpose in life for a female is to get married. The Tiwi subscribed to this idea, but firmly carried it to its logical conclusion; namely, that all females must get married, regardless of age, condition, or inclination. They (and they almost alone among human societies) took the very slight step from saying "All females *should* be married" to saying "All females *must* be married." As a result, in aboriginal times there was no concept of an unmarried female in Tiwi ideology, no word for such a condition in their language, and in fact, no female in the population without at least a nominal husband. Their own explanation of this unique situation was connected with their beliefs about conception and where
581 babies come from. Anthropologists have long been aware that the Australian
842 aborigines generally (and indeed some of the Melanesians, such as the famous case of the Trobriand Islands) ignored the role of the male in human conception and firmly believed that a woman becomes pregnant because a spirit has entered into her body. The Tiwi were no exception, but went a step further than the mainlanders in dealing with the dangerous situation created by the unpredictability of the spirits. Since any female was liable to be impregnated by a spirit at any time, the sensible step was to insist that every female have a husband *all the time* so that if she did become pregnant, the child would always have a father. As a result of this logical thinking, all
[584] Tiwi babies were betrothed before or as soon as they were born; females were thus the "wives" of their betrothed husbands from the moment of birth onward. For similar reasons, widows were required to remarry at the gravesides
[587] of their late husbands, and this rule applied even to ancient hags who had already buried half a dozen previous husbands in the course of a long life. It can readily be seen that these rules—prenatal betrothal of female infants and immediate remarriage of all widows—effectively eliminated all possibility of an unmarried female from Tiwi society. They also eliminated any possibility of an unmarried mother or a fatherless child. No matter where the unpredictable spirit chose to create a baby, whether it was in the body of a pretty young woman, a toothless old hag, or a little girl of six or seven, the pregnant
[71 female would have a husband, and the children when born would have a
842] father. The Tiwi were thus probably the only society in the world with an illegitimacy rate of zero.

584 The practical application of these two unusual rules had certain unusual
851 consequences. The rule of prenatal betrothal obviously gave a great deal of
593 power to the person with the right to betroth, and in Tiwi this right belonged

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

fifty was likely to be left a widow by him within the next fifteen years, and 587
even if she remarried a man of the same age as her first husband, she could easily be widowed for the second time while still herself a comparatively young woman. There were several different patterns, most of them intermingled in the same household, for a female matrimonial career, but the situation may be illustrated by the concrete case of one of Turimpi's widows, an ancient crone (in 1930) named Bongdadu. Born about 1865, she was betrothed at birth to a powerful old man named Walitaumi who was at least the same age as her father, if not older. Not unnaturally, he died while she was still a child and well before she was old enough to join his household. Her betrothal was then reassigned, so to speak, to Walitaumi's half-brother, Turimpi, then in his early forties. About seven years later, she joined Turimpi's household as a blushing bride of fourteen, her husband then being close to fifty. In the next twenty years she became Turimpi's most prolific wife and bore numerous children, three of whom, Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, all born between 1883 and 1900, were men of importance in Tiwi politics in 1930, and one of whom, Louis, is still alive today.[8] Around 1900, when Bongdadu was still only about thirty-five, she passed to M., a middle-aged Tiklauila, and was his wife until his death around 1925. By this date, Bongdadu was over sixty and had borne ten children, four of whom died young. Not unnaturally, she was beginning to approach the hag or crone stage of Tiwi womanhood. Nonetheless, she had to remarry, but by now all of the people who might have claimed any rights of bestowal in her were long since dead, her eldest sons were adult men of some importance and able to protect their mother's interests, and clearly she was unlikely to produce any more children.[9] Her chief value was as a food producer and housekeeper and female politician, roles for which she had been well trained in her long years as wife of Turimpi and M.

Old women in Bongdadu's position had to remarry, but they were in 587
a good position to exercise some choice of their own as to whom they re- 888
married, especially if they had strong influential sons to support them in their wishes. There was a frequent pattern in such cases for the widow, aided and abetted (or perhaps even forced) by her sons, to arrange a marriage of convenience with some obscure nonentity much younger than herself and usually a friend or contemporary of her sons. In 1925, then, Bongdadu, widowed three times already, married as her fourth husband one Dominico, a man of [554]
no importance whatever, as was shown by the fact that at this time he was nearly forty and had not been able to attract even one bestowed wife. He had, 587
however, already married one widow, so that his marriage to Bongdadu gave 595

[8] Tiwi personal names are polysyllabic and hard for the reader to remember; hence, wherever possible, we have used "whiteman names" for individuals. The frequency of Spanish names among these "whiteman names," such as Mariano or Dominico, derives from the fact that the original buildings for the Mission Station were built by a number of Filipino workmen whom the priests brought with them. [551 128 797]

[9] The Tiwi saw no inconsistency between believing in spirit impregnation and believing at the same time that an old woman was unlikely to bear children. It was to them a matter of probabilities, and of course with them as with us, occasionally an elderly lady did—disconcertingly—have a baby, proving the logic of their position. [842]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the manipulation of the remarriages of elderly widows, who were always in large supply. If a man showed skill and know-how in his early thirties among the widows, then in his late thirties and early forties young wives would be bestowed upon him in abundance. Such a lesson could not have a better exemplar than Gitjara. By age 33 he had done so well among the widows that his first *young* wife would be joining his household by the time he was thirty-eight or thirty-nine, and another was already a year old. Clearly he was a young man of promise and one to be watched—and cultivated. 159 557 582 587

Summit, a man slightly older than Gitjara, must be dealt with very briefly, since the reasons for his success would take us too far afield. In 1929 he had a list of six wives, the only resident one being an elderly widow. The other five were bestowals and the eldest of these was the girl of ten whom we have already mentioned as being in the household of her step-father, Gitjara. Two more, younger than the ten-year-old, were in the household of Padimo (see below) and the remaining two were in the household of one of the elders of the Rangwila band. Summit, in Tiwi reckoning, was a Rangwila himself and had only moved to Malau a few years before. Some four years previously he had been a young Rangwila with no less than five bestowed child-wives. Three of these had been given him by an elder in Malau, two by an elder of his own band. The Malauila girls were older than the two Rangwila girls and his Malauila father-in-law was older than his Rangwila father-in-law. Summit therefore moved north to supervise personally his interests in Malau. He had, however, been out-maneuvered when the Malauila father-in-law died, since Gitjara had then been able to remarry the mother of Summit's eldest child-wife and Padimo had been able to remarry the mother of the other two little girls. Having thus moved to Malau to be near to and a satellite of his elderly Malauila father-in-law, Summit now found himself the technical son-in-law of two young men of his own age group who were among his keen competitors in the influence struggle. To ensure that his three promised Malauila child-wives joined his household when old enough, he now needed to make some arrangements with Gitjara and Padimo. Summit had gotten his bestowals rather early and rather easily but he still had the problem of nailing them down. 159 584 [557 587]

While thus engaged in acquiring five bestowed young wives and trying to promote their safe delivery when ready, Summit had married a widow not much more than forty years old but childless by her two previous husbands.[8] Such a widow at least provided him with a food-getter and housekeeper and enabled him to establish a household into which his five bestowed wives would enter as they successively reached the proper age. Thus Summit's household in 1929 consisted only of himself and his *palimaringa* wife. Within the next fifteen years it would be increased by the addition of at least five young wives, 159 587 592 592 159

[8] Such women who had reached middle age without surviving children were called by a special term, *palimaringa*, in Tiwi and the term referred to childlessness rather than barrenness. Summit's widow, for example, had borne two children, both of whom had died in infancy, and she was classified as a *palimaringa*. When a *palimaringa* became very, very old indeed, the word changed to *timaringa*. [842]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Apsley Strait, continuing her journey eastward until she reached her starting point at Murupiangu. On that last journey, *Mudungkala* created the Clarence Strait, thus completely separating the land of the Tiwis from the rest of Australia. 773

Before *Mudungkala* crawled southward, out of all knowledge of the Tiwi, she decreed that the bare land should be clothed with vegetation and inhabited with creatures, so that her children, whom she left behind at Murupiangu, should have food.

2. THE FIRST INHABITANTS

The two daughters of *Mudungkala*, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, with their brother, *Purukupali*, established themselves in the new land.

The accounts of this period are vague and indefinite, the most consistent being that *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pinipinis*, brought some back, and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, so that they could become mothers.[18] Thus the family at Murupiangu multiplied, and, although many of the genealogies are confused and unreliable, those of the main personalities appear to be consistent.

Murupiangkala, whose husband the aborigines did not remember, had one daughter, *Tukundana*, who, in turn, married *Wilindu*.

Tukundana had two daughters, *Wilinduala* and *Numanirakala*, and a son, *Tulipinini*. *Tulipinini's* wife, *Waia*, gave birth to one daughter, *Bima*, who became the wife of *Purukupali*. It was the death of their son, *Djinini*, that brought the creation period to a close.

Wuriupranala, whose husband was *Andjalui*, had one son, *Wuriuprinili*. The aborigines did not know who were the parents of *Tjapara*, who later quarrelled with *Purukupali*.

In these early days there was neither light nor heat, so the descendants of old *Mudungkala* had to grope around in the darkness to find their food, and having found it were forced to eat it raw.

Once two men, *Jurawa* (later the wedge-tailed eagle), and *Mudati* (the fork-tailed kite), whose parents the aborigines did not know, were rubbing two sticks together, when they noticed a speck of light where the heat, caused by the friction between the two sticks, had ignited the powdered wood-dust. [372]

[18] The aborigines, who almost certainly do not understand physical paternity, believe that the *Pinipinis* have always existed although they could not explain their origin. In the later period of creation, it was one of the duties of *Purukupali* to bring the spirit children to his wife, *Bima*, who gave them to the women. Before he died, however, *Purukupali* told the *Pinipinis* to seek their mothers through the medium of their fathers. [842]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mudungkala,[48] *at Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island)*

773 After the burial of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* sent his wife, *Mudungkala*, to Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island) to establish a totemic place and create the local foods.

*532 Pl. 19c, D, illustrates, with considerable detail, the topography of the island and the home of the little spirit children, *Pitipituis*.

778 The central design, *a*, is Jurubulinai; circle *b*, (lower left) depicts a small island nearby on which there is a freshwater spring where *Mudungkala* once urinated; and circle *c* (lower right) is a bed of cockles, one of the local foods created by the mythical woman.

On the lower left, a crescent, *d*, symbolizes a small salt-water creek in a mangrove swamp where *Mudungkala* quenched her thirst. At *f*, there is a large rock in the deeper water, a favourite haunt of the turtles. Here the mythical woman once collected white ochre to decorate herself.

Boulders, at one time the stone axes, *mungwanis*, of *Mudungkala* are at *e* (bottom); a stony point of land, the transformed bark basket, is at *g*; a pile of red rocks (her camp fire), at *h*; a sandbar (the cycad palm under which *Mudungkala* sheltered), at *j*; and a salt-water swamp (where she ground her stone axe), at *k*, *k*. The passage between Jurubulinai and Bathurst Island is indicated by the horizontal bands, *gg*, *gg*.

The white crescent, *m*, at the top of the painting, a large sand-bar, Unakumba, on the south of the island, is one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*. The aborigines claim that, when some distance from [776] Unakumba, they often see the spirit children, but, as they come closer, the little people disappear.

When the tide is out, the *Pitipituis* play on a sandbar, *p*, but when it is covered, the spirit children go to their camps at *o*, under the sand, where everything is dry and warm.

[787] Should one of the spirit children wish to visit an aboriginal man in a dream, to ask for a mother, it walks along the road, *q*, and, if unsuccessful in [842] its quest, returns by road, *r*. At *s*, on the left-hand side, is the waterhole from which the *Pitipituis* obtain their drinking water, and at *t*, is their diminutive bark canoe, less than a yard long, which, like the spirit children themselves, can be seen at a distance, but disappears when the aborigines come closer.

Red stones, *ee*, and yellow stones, *dd* (right), were once body paint used by the mythical eucalyptus-tree woman. Her nautilus-shell ornament is at *v*;

[48] Locally known as the ironwood tree.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

I. BELIEFS IN THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

The fear of the spirits of the dead and the desire of the living to propitiate them are the bases for the complicated burial rituals, not only of the Tiwi, but of all Australian tribes. 769 765

The Tiwi spirits of the dead, the *mopaditis*, live in self-contained communities at the various totemic places on Melville and Bathurst Islands. The *mopaditis* have the same appearance as the aboriginal folk, except that their bodies no longer have substance, being but nebulous images of their former selves. 775 [778]

No living person has seen these *mopaditis*, for they are invisible by day, white in the moonlight and black in the darkness. Although, normally, the *mopaditis* travel on the surface of the ground in the same manner as the aborigines, they are able, when crossing a river, or an arm of the sea, to walk on the surface of the water.

In the spirit land, the *mopaditis*, who are eternal, retain their totems (*pukwi*), marry spirit women of the correct tribal relationships, and have children who grow to maturity.[47] They eat the same food as the aborigines, going hungry if the hunting is poor,[48] and use the same implements and weapons.[49]

At the death of an aboriginal, the *mopaditi* rises out of the chest of the corpse. If the corpse is that of an infant, or a very small child, its *mopaditi* stays in the immediate neighbourhood, sleeping with the bereaved mother every night, but leaving in the morning before she wakes up. This continues until the woman has recovered from her grief.

After some months, the spirit child, now called a *buda-buda*, re-enters the body of its previous mother through her vulva and starts life again as a human being. [842]

On the other hand, if the person has lived for some time, its *mopaditi* stays around the grave, mourning because it has to leave its old companions. But after three days have elapsed, the *mopaditi* calls out "*Nimbungi*" (good-bye), and sets off, unaccompanied,[50] to the locality where it was born, which, before

[47] The aborigines are not certain whether the children, like their parents, have eternal life.

[48] This is unusual; in most of the aboriginal heavens I have heard of, for example, north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 323), there is ample, easily-gathered food. [171]

[49] These days, the *mopaditis* have even the modern wooden canoes, although, up to fifty years ago, their canoes, like those of the living people, were made from a folded sheet of bark. [177]

[50] Some aborigines believe that the father, or some close relative, comes to the grave and guides the spirit to its birthplace.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

former locality make their camp in a dense jungle, and at the latter, in the forest near the sea-coast. At one time, these *Pitipituis* lived at Juruna, but left after a while and established these camps at Jurilupa and Jampaturai. 776

(9) Unakumbi (Buchanan Island). Here, the home of the *Pitipituis* is on a sandbank on the southern side of the island. When the tide is low, the little people play on the sandbank, but when it is high, they go to their underground homes, where it is warm and dry.

During the early creation (*palaneri*) times, *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the *Pitipituis* in a bark canoe, brought back some of the little people and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala* so that they could have children. In a later period, *Purukupali* gave the *Pitipituis* to his wife, *Bima*, who in turn presented them to their future mothers. 773 776

Before *Purukupali* drowned himself, after the death of his son, *Djinini*, he told the *Pitipituis* that they must find their own mothers. Now, should one of these little people wish to become a human being, it travels to a native camp, and giving her name, asks one of the married men (when he is asleep) where its future mother is camping. After the father has indicated the particular wife, the little sprite waits a suitable opportunity to enter her vulva and start life as a human being. 776 842 787

The aborigines believe implicitly in the *Pitipituis* and the mystical origin of their children; several of them gave me details of how their children came to them in dreams.

Old *Tjamalampua* told of the time when, while he was asleep, the *mopaditi* of his dead father brought him a spirit child, and sat it on his knee saying, "This is your daughter." *Tjamalampua* directed the little *Pitipitui* to one of his wives, who later became its mother.

Muramajua described how his three children came to him.

(1) A boy, now dead, came from a Japanese plane[48] and asked for his wife as a mother. Later she felt the movements of the child. [177]

(2) A little girl came to him in a dream and spat at him. His wife conceived soon afterwards.

(3) His last girl hit him on the head whilst he was asleep, and, in his fright, he slapped her face. It was not long afterwards that his wife became pregnant.

Those accounts indicate that although, ideally, the child comes to the father and asks for the mother, in actual practice they visit the father under a number of conditions.

[48] This aboriginal had worked with the Australian Navy during the war; an example of acculturation.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

All those in number one group belong to the same clan, and are "opposite" to those of number two group, who also belong to one clan. The lines A, B, C and D are intermarrying groups, i.e. Ego marries his *yabunaiya*, etc. 582 601 [614]

Of course, relationship terms also include others denoting the type of relation or blood tie. For instance, a mother's brother or a sister's son (group) when distantly related to Ego could be his father-in-law and would then be called *YUNARENIWA*. A true father is *ERINGANI*, a father's sister, *yananiya*; father's father *ARMINI*; father's mother, *armma*; mother's brother's own daughter, *yamuina*, and one son, *YAMUWANINI*[4]; half brother is *INGULABINI* and a half-sister *inguleba*.[5]

This system of marriage is not unlike the Murngin and Anula system and also is the same as the *wadji wadji* (wrong side marriage) of the Mudbara. In one, cross-cousins—not *inguleba*—can marry, while in the true Mudbara cross-cousin marriage is prohibited. 582

Rites. The rituals centre around the Kulama. The underlying principle of this is to ensure that the Kulama (a small hot yam that embodies the spirit of the "old woman" and guardian of the horde) is cooked correctly, for this ensures her protection against Maradji, the rainbow snake, another old woman who can cause evil to come upon them and "swallow them" up. It is performed during the wet season by each family, and is said to bring about a plentiful supply of food. The Kulama is also used to pass the initiates, both male and female, from a lower to a higher order in the social scale, although I myself could not see that any important results were obtained by the initiates through the ritual.[6] 796 [561]

Some result, or at least protection, however, is obtained: if the Kulama is not sung or danced at the prescribed time or place, the Marakarti (spear grass) and also the ring used for cooking the Kulama yams at the ritual, would give rise to a poison, *Tani*, which would pass into the air and cause sickness; perhaps a youth who had not passed through the Kulama would sicken and die. On the other hand, a youth who has passed through the ritual may gain a certain satisfaction by believing that he can drive the sickness away and protect the family. In addition, the Kulama is not only an increase ritual for yams; in it the father also "sings" the name of his child in a form of song, *apa*, and foretells in a dream that a certain spirit "shade" will be incarnated through one of his wives at some future date; for these children are waiting at that "spirit dreaming" place called Bilawuwi. In other words, it is a human increase ritual. [751] [842]

[4] These are true cousins and cannot marry.

[5] This *inguleba* native is the term for persons who are taboo to Ego; they cannot approach Ego's wives, as their sweat must not touch. They are people who are "out of line" in relationship. For instance, if a Kudjarli man marries two women, one a Tukambani and the other a Mintai, his children would be of two different *pakui* or totems. These children, half-brothers and half-sisters, are *inguleba* to each other.

[6] It is unlike the Karawadi of the subincised people, in which the initiate is freed of certain food taboos, and again in the Kudidjingara, through which the old men receive magical power to levy tribute from the young people of the tribe, who have not passed through that ritual.

601 23 *angamani:* father's father; also FaFaBr, MoMoBr. Affinal application: MaMoHu, MoFaSiHu.

24 *imaninga:* mother's mother; also MoMoSi, FaFaSi. Affinal application: MoFaWi, FaMoBrWi.

Unlike *amini* and *ama*, the terms *angamani* and *imaninga* are not indefinitely extended collaterally, the more distant collateral kin being classed as elder siblings, i.e., *iwuni* or *imbunga*.

Terminology in the Second Descending Generation

25 *inimini:* daughter's son (ms); also BrDaSo (ws). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ws), SiDaDaHu (ms), "Si"Hu.

26 *inimunga:* daughter's daughter (ms); also BrDaDa (ws). Affinal application: DaSoWi (ws), SiDaSoWi (ms), "Br"Wi.

27 *intemili:* daughter's child (ws); also SiDaCh (ms). Affinal application: DaDaHu (ms), DaSoWi (ms), BrDaDaHu (ws), BrDaSoWi (ws). This term is used self-reciprocally and is quite often replaced by sibling terms (*iwini* or *imboka*) for distant kin.

Exchange Between Descent Groups

Consideration of symmetrical versus asymmetrical cross-cousin
582 marriage is but one way of looking at the Tiwi marriage system.
Let us now look at marriage as a system of exchange between descent
614 groups and between local groups.

From both the male and female points of view, the preferred marriage is to a member of Ego's father's matrilineal sib. Of all the marriages I recorded in 1954, 66 per cent were to members of the father's matrisib, and there was no significant difference by sex. These figures were substantiated by statements from informants expressing the preference for the exchange of spouses between two sibs. As in some of the kinship terminology, there is no indication here of asymmetry in the system.

Let us examine some of the ethnographic ramifications of sib exchange. Though a girl can be said to marry into her father's sib, it is more correct to view this as a marriage into her mother's father's sib, for it is her actual MoFa who arranges her Type A marriage, and this man is obligated to the men of his sib to help them acquire wives. If Ego's mother has also married correctly, then Ego's father's sib and her mother's father's sib will be the same. However, it is possible that her MoHu may not be a member of the same sib as her MoFa. This might well account for some of the 34 per cent of "incorrect" marriages in my original analysis, which only took account of the father's sib.

From the point of view of a male Ego it is also important, but
614 for different reasons, to marry a woman of his father's sib. A man's
● [842] children come to him first in a dream and are then directed by him to their proper mothers. Unborn children (*pitapitui*) already have matrilineal sib affiliations and thus must be born to mothers of the same sib. Tiwi fathers call this dreaming of children "finding," and,
[775] if a man is unable to "find" any children, his deceased father is ex-

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

father's name towards him and thus implying their approval of his taking 428
that name. To select one example—there is at present in the Tiklowila 553
horde a man *Pwandjilora* whose father was also a *Pwandjilora* who died about fifteen years ago. His father in turn was also a *Pwandjilora*, who is only remembered by the very old people of the horde.

This succession of names also takes place though to a very much lesser degree in the female line, that is from mother to daughter.

It must not be thought, however, that there is any such thing as 424
private ownership of names by a family. A man but distantly related to 553
Pwandjilora II would be quite at liberty to bestow that name upon one of his children were it not already in use and had a sufficient time elapsed since his death. An example is a famous warrior of the last generation called *Walitoami*. This name has recently been bestowed by one of the Tiklowila upon his son though neither he, the child, nor the mother of the child is closely related to the first *Welitoami*. As a matter of fact the child is the mother's brother's son's daughter's son of *Walitoami I*.

One or two other aspects of this subject may be dismissed briefly 551
as they are more important in a study of kinship or ceremonial, than in a 422
study of names as such.

A man may not in any circumstances use the name of the wife of another man, even the names of his brother's wives, without giving the husband a *casus belli*. A woman is a man's own property and the use of her name is an infringement of his property rights. In the same way a man's own name is his own property and cannot be used with impunity, at least in the presence of the owner of the name. In calling out to a person for instance, he will always be addressed by a kinship term, never by a personal name. This also is the manner by which the news of a death is 551
carried to distant camps and the name of the dead man avoided, "your [196
mother's brother at *Wilrangu* of the *Tjilarui* totem and the son of so and so 203]
is dead at *Brega*" being an example of how a relative is informed. The dead man is thenceforward referred to as "he who died recently at *Brega*."

There is another prohibition against the use by a husband of his own 551
wife's name whilst she is in childbirth. For a couple of weeks before the 843
birth and for a couple of weeks afterwards the husband must not look upon his wife, he cannot use any of her names, nor can any others of the tribe mention her either by name or by implication to him. Even such an

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 expression as *int'abominaiiya* (=your wife) is forbidden, nor for example
843 can one of the woman's brothers enquire the whereabouts of his sister from the woman's husband. There is no such prohibition, however, against the use of her name nor against references to her by the rest of the tribe provided always the husband is not within hearing.

551 None of the names of a person passing through any stage of initiation
561 can be used by anyone at all. Such a person is always alluded to or
881 addressed as *Watyinyirti* or *Mikinyirtiya* or whatever degree of initiation he or she has reached. As the normal initiation ceremonies are carried out continuously from the age of seventeen to the age of about twenty-six for a man and from ten to nineteen for a girl, for those periods of their lives personal names are seldom used.

I propose to call these names "initiation-grade names," since they are applied to an individual according to the grade of initiation he has reached. A full list of them is as follows :—

Initiation-Grade Names (Male).

Average Age.		Duration of Grade.	
15-17	..	1 year	*Maru-kumarni*
15-17	..	6 months	*Kilipirni-ati*
16-18	..	6 months	*Watyinyirti*
18-20	..	2 years	*Mikin yirtiya*
19-21	..	1 year	*Mikin djira*
20-22	..	1 year	*Mikadjirima*
24-26	..	4 years	*Mikin gula*

Initiation-Grade Names (Female)[8].

10-12	..	1 year	*Maru-kumarniya*
15-17	..	6 months	*Kilipirni-atiya*
11-13	..	6 months	*Watyinyirtiya*
13-15	..	2 years	*Mikin yirtiyiya*
14-16	..	1 year	*Mikin djiriya*
15-17	..	1 year	*Mikadjiriniya*
19-21	..	4 years	*Mikin guliya*

551 In addition to these initiation-grade names there is also a series of
561 names which I propose to call "age-grade names." These are more

[8] In actual practice the female names are not nearly as commonly used as the male.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 To sum up then the main points in the customs of the Tiwi connected with personal names, the outstanding features are these :—

(1) Multiplicity of personal names.
(2) Death renders tabu the names of the dead man.
(3) Death renders tabu similar words in the language.
(4) Death renders tabu names bestowed upon others by the dead man.
(5) Method of coining names.
(6) Tabu on names at certain times (*e.g.*, childbirth, initiation).

551 It is fairly evident from the facts cited in this paper that among the
424 Tiwi at any rate a personal name is the absolute property of the person
785 possessing it. Further than that, it is so identified with his personality
198 that even the use of it by anyone else in resented by the owner. There is no space here to describe the theology of the Tiwi, but it must be pointed out that after the death of a man his spirit does not go with his body to the region of the dead, but wanders about the world in a form both invisible and malignant. Just as an individual when alive would resent the use of his name so too will his spirit and will be much more dangerous an enemy on account of his supernatural form. Spirits are not only malignant, they are also unreasonable, and whereas a live man would not quarrel with you for using an ordinary word resembling his name, his ghost is quite likely not to appreciate the difference. Hence the prohibition against similar words. While in touch with the unseen world it pays to be careful. But in dealing with the unseen world the Tiwi have a special language. This body of words has a sacredness of its own, it is a part of the spirit world itself. Therefore you may incur the enmity of a spirit by using his mundane name or some similar mundane word, but the use of a similar word in the sacred language cannot do any harm ; the spirit will not get annoyed with you for using a spirit word, especially as you can only use it in any case on sacred occasions. Hence there is no tabu on similar words in the sacred language.

551 This principle of the sacred language for use when in touch with
844 supernatural situations also helps us to understand several other things. The birth of a child is, to a native, a most mysterious affair and the woman is regarded as being intimately in touch with the spirit world. Hence her name as part of herself is invested with a ghostly character and this is expressed by the tribe in treating her husband as if she did not exist, as if

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

she were dead in fact and for the time being no longer his wife. She 551
is in touch with the spirits and the result will be a child for her husband. 844
Since he is too close to the mystery for comfort they abstain from mentioning it in his presence.

The result of the childbirth is a child and that child was recently a spirit. Therefore the name must come from the sacred language.

Initiation ceremonies also involve a very close contact with the spirit 553
world. Initiation is a sacred rite and sacred names must be taken when 881
passing through its various stages. When *Timalaykumi* is seized by men of his sister's husband's totem and yellow grease is smeared on his chest he ceases to be *Timalaykumi* and becomes *Maru-kumani*, a person in touch with unseen forces, and he therefore must have a sacred name. His previous name came from the sacred language, but this is a change of status and is expressed by giving him a new name, one that is only used on such occasions.

The fact that death renders sacred all the concepts closely associated 553
with the dead man does no doubt play a large part in causing the tabu 587
on names he has bestowed upon other people. There is I think another 768
factor which is even more important in the causation of this particular 593
tabu. When a man marries a widow he becomes to the tribe not the foster father of her children but the actual father. It cannot be pointed out too often that the Australian blackfellow does not distinguish physiological and social fatherhood. The new husband is married to the widow, he therefore must be the father of her children. Her children change their position in the tribe, and the function of the changing of their names is to show this change and the new social relationships that have been imposed upon them by it. It will be remembered in this connection that the husband changes the names of *all* the woman's children whether of her last husband or not, and also that words in either the sacred or the ordinary language which are similar in sound to the former names of the children do not become tabu. That is, it is a social not a sacred change of name.

It might be argued that the widow changes her status also, yet her 587
name is not changed. But in point of fact she does not alter her status; 768
her new husband is usually of the same clan as her last one, and frequently 553
he is an actual brother of the dead man. In any case her new husband cannot change her name as she is not one of the people he can bestow names upon. Nor does her name mean to the tribe any relation to her

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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About the Book

This is a case study of a system of influence and power which is based on a strange currency. The currency is woman. Newborn females, nubile marriageable females, toothless old hags — all are valuable in Tiwi terms. Because men compete for prestige and influence through their control over women, women have the value of a scarce commodity. Under this system there are no illegitimate children, no unmarried females of any age, and wives are either very much older or very much younger than their husbands. 562 [557] [848 589]

A vivid picture of Tiwi life, as viewed from within the culture, emerges in this book. The reader is not made an outsider, left to peer into a dimly understood, formalized, alien way of life. Rather, he is taken inside the family group, by the night's campfire. He becomes a witness to angry quarrels, a participant in involved machinations aimed at success — as defined by the Tiwi. He comes to know individual Tiwi as real people. 114

This book is a study of social interaction. But it is also a study of culture change. Much happened between Hart's and Pilling's visits to the Tiwi. These changes are described, and we see them in the context of the period of Tiwi contacts with the outside world. 121

GEORGE AND LOUISE SPINDLER
General Editors

Stanford, California
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I: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 hold rather than the family. There was no ambiguity about its "living together" aspect; there were many ambiguities about its kinship aspects. To some of these unusual domestic usages we now turn.

Marriage by Betrothal

589 In many nonliterate societies, including most, if not all of the mainland Australian tribes, there is a tendency to believe that the main purpose in life for a female is to get married. The Tiwi subscribed to this idea, but firmly carried it to its logical conclusion; namely, that all females must get married, regardless of age, condition, or inclination. They (and they almost alone among human societies) took the very slight step from saying "All females *should* be married" to saying "All females *must* be married." As a result, in aboriginal times there was no concept of an unmarried female in Tiwi ideology, no word for such a condition in their language, and in fact, no female in the population without at least a nominal husband. Their own explanation of this unique situation was connected with their beliefs about conception and where 581 babies come from. Anthropologists have long been aware that the Australian 842 aborigines generally (and indeed some of the Melanesians, such as the famous case of the Trobriand Islands) ignored the role of the male in human conception and firmly believed that a woman becomes pregnant because a spirit has entered into her body. The Tiwi were no exception, but went a step further than the mainlanders in dealing with the dangerous situation created by the unpredictability of the spirits. Since any female was liable to be impregnated by a spirit at any time, the sensible step was to insist that every female have a husband *all the time* so that if she did become pregnant, the child would always have a father. As a result of this logical thinking, all [584] Tiwi babies were betrothed before or as soon as they were born; females were thus the "wives" of their betrothed husbands from the moment of birth onward. For similar reasons, widows were required to remarry at the gravesides [587] of their late husbands, and this rule applied even to ancient hags who had already buried half a dozen previous husbands in the course of a long life. It can readily be seen that these rules—prenatal betrothal of female infants and immediate remarriage of all widows—effectively eliminated all possibility of an unmarried female from Tiwi society. They also eliminated any possibility of an unmarried mother or a fatherless child. No matter where the unpredictable spirit chose to create a baby, whether it was in the body of a pretty young woman, a toothless old hag, or a little girl of six or seven, the pregnant [71] female would have a husband, and the children when born would have a 848 father. The Tiwi were thus probably the only society in the world with an illegitimacy rate of zero.

584 The practical application of these two unusual rules had certain unusual 851 consequences. The rule of prenatal betrothal obviously gave a great deal of 593 power to the person with the right to betroth, and in Tiwi this right belonged

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

to the husband of the pregnant woman. We carefully say "the husband of the pregnant woman" rather than "the father of the child" because the right resided in the male head of the household at the time of the birth. Although he was ordinarily both the father of the child and the husband of its mother, there were naturally occasions when a child was born after the death of its father, in which case the right of betrothal unquestionably belonged to the mother's new husband. The clearest statement of this rule is to say that the right of betrothal of all newly born females resided in the husband of the mother at the time of the girl's birth. "He who named the child bestowed it."

In most human societies the proportion of males and females in the population is approximately equal, except in the older age-groups where women predominate owing to their tendency to live longer than men. The Tiwi conformed to this norm biologically, but their cultural insistence that all females of every age be married resulted in further unusual features of the domestic situation. No such compulsory marriage was required or expected of males. Hence, the total female population, but only part of the male population, was married. Mathematically this permitted, indeed required, a high degree of plural marriage. The men who held the right to betroth—namely, the fathers of the female babies—could, within certain limits imposed by the kinship system, bestow their about-to-be-born or newly born daughters where they wished, and they certainly did not bestow them on about-to-be-born or newly born males. On the contrary, they bestowed them, generally speaking, where some tangible return was to be anticipated. Put bluntly, in Tiwi culture daughters were an asset to their father, and he invested these assets in his own welfare. He therefore bestowed his newly born daughter on a friend or an ally, or on somebody he wanted as a friend or an ally. Such a person was apt to be a man near his own age or at least an adult man, and hence perhaps forty years or so older than the newly born baby bestowed upon him as a wife. Or, the father might bestow an infant daughter on a man—or some close relative of such a man—who had already bestowed an infant daughter upon him, thus in effect swapping infant daughters. Obviously, the fathers who did the swapping, even if they were not quite the same age themselves, were bound to be many years older than the infant wives they thus received from each other. Or, thirdly, a father looking for a suitable male upon whom to bestow his infant daughter's hand might decide to use her as old-age insurance—in which case he selected as her future husband not one of the older adult men who would be old when he himself was old, but a likely looking youngster "with promise"; that is, a youth in his late twenties or thirties who showed signs of being a good hunter and a good fighting man, and who was clearly on his way up in tribal power and influence. Such a youth, in his late twenties at the time of betrothal, would, with luck, be in his prime as "a big man" in about twenty years—a time when the father of the infant daughter would be getting old and decrepit and much in need of an influential son-in-law who was obligated to him.

There were other bases upon which infant daughters were betrothed,

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11-Goodale 2-6 (1964, 1969) 1963 ORO Thai ORO

Young girl and boy accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

Fig. 15 (A)

baked by placing them atop pieces of anthill heated to a glow by wood fire, then covering the yams with hot earth.

MAN LIGHTS FIRE beneath chunks of anthill. When the pieces are red-hot, burning wood below them will be brushed away.

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Ilifonable E-4 (USA, 1960) 1963 OED Tiwi OED

FATHER PAINTS GIRL to show how it would be done if she were to be initiated. Although no children of group were considered ready, ceremony was held to maintain benefits thought to accrue to the Tiwi who had undergone initiation.

[P. 15, (8)]

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YOUNG GIRL AND BOY accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

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[181]

part of Tiwi speech. Poetic license in pronunciation and syllabification often occurs. The Tiwi have high regard for the linguistic ability needed to become a good Tiwi composer and singer, and instruction in the art of song composition and delivery is given to the initiates. Each initiate must perform in the *Kulama* before he can be considered a "graduate." According to my Tiwi informants, this requirement is the hardest of all, and it is also the reason for there being no set age for initiation. The old people are said to watch the young, and when the observers consider them mature enough, they swoop down upon their choices "like chicken hawks, without warning"—as the Tiwi say—and start the initiates along the path to adulthood.

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[171]

As far as I know, the *Kulama* ceremony has no parallel elsewhere in Australia. And there are many interesting questions that come to mind concerning the origin of the *Kulama* as it exists today. For instance, why is instruction in the preparation of a poisonous yam that is not part of the daily diet considered so important for initiation into adulthood? What is the origin of the idea that a yam has power over good and evil, and health and sickness? Why is such prominence accorded a yam in what is principally a hunting and gathering society?

[262]

[824]

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Any answers to these questions must be highly speculative, for the origin of the ceremony and its development lie in the unrecorded history of the Tiwi. However, I believe the following statements may well be valid.

Instruction in the natural resources of the land was considered vital to becoming an adult. Because the *Kulama* yam is poisonous and is not widely distributed, it was never part of the regular diet, but it could be used in economic emergencies if properly prepared. Instruction in its preparation was therefore extremely important as a potential survival measure. However, since the Tiwi live in a favorable environment, it is highly probable that such emergencies were very rare, so it was considered expedient to hold annual instruction periods. Because knowledge of

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[SEE P. 15 (A) for other part of caption and picture -- ANALYST]

11;Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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HOT EARTH over baked *Kulama* yams is removed. Yams that are to be eaten at end of ritual must be resoaked in water.

[824]

SOME COOKED YAMS are cut, peeled, and mashed. Water and paint are then added. Yams are always handled with respect.

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[950]

MEN RUB MASH on bodies to insure health, then do so to the uninitiated young, whose health is paternal responsibility.

[P. 16, (A)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of bands as part of any political or legal system; they were members of households as part of a domestic system. What held the unit together was the central position and dominance of the father or husband, and hence the life of a household was only as long as his lifetime. When he died, the household broke up and the surviving members joined other households, perhaps in the same district, perhaps in some other band territory. Such change of household was carried out by the individuals concerned, not quite at will, but certainly not with sufficient uniformity for any political or legal label to be put upon it.

Uniformity was derived from the fact that every Tiwi had to live in a household. The universal prohibition on unmarried females was obviously one expression of that requirement. For men, the requirement was less firm, and if a young man wanted to live entirely alone he was free to try—although there is no record of any man having tried it for more than a few weeks at a time. Even if his mother were dead and his father or step-father did not welcome him, he attached himself to some household since, apart from any question of loneliness, this was the only way by which he could eat regularly. For Tiwi households were primarily autonomous food-producing and food-consumption units. A household made its own decisions, camped where it saw fit to camp, moved on when the food quest made it advantageous or necessary to move on. A large household, such as that of Ki-in-kumi or any other big man, was a complete community in itself, with the old man as executive director. He laid down the daily, weekly, and monthly work and travel schedules for the women, the young men, and the children. Most of the time the work went automatically because all the adults and the older children knew their jobs.

Daily Activities

By shortly after dawn each day, the household was up, and after a light breakfast, usually of leftovers from the previous night, everybody left camp to go to work. The women and children (except perhaps the five- to ten-year-old boys, who were rather useless at that age) scattered in every direction from the camp with baskets and/or babies on their backs, to spend the day gathering food, chiefly vegetable foods, grubs, worms, and anything else edible. Since they had spent their lives doing it, the old women knew all about gathering and preparing vegetable foods, and they supervised the younger women. This was one important reason for men marrying widows, and even a man with many young wives was quite likely to remarry an elderly widow or two nonetheless. A husband with only young wives might have a satisfactory sex life, but he still needed a household manager if he wished to eat well. The supervision of the female members of the household was left to the old women and, provided the returns were good, the husband did not attempt to interfere nor to give orders concerning the details of women's work.

After the women had scattered out in a wide circuit from the camp, the husband might hunt, but only if he were not too old. In hunting kanga-

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 This behaviour led to a great deal of trouble, developing later into a fight in which many of the *Maludaianini* men were wounded.

After that fight, the *Maludaianini* men rose into the sky and became the Milky Way; their wives were turned into stars.

776 When the sun-woman sinks beneath the western horizon, and the light
821 from the blazing torch leaves the sky, the *Maludaianini* travel in a long line across the firmament (similar to the processional caterpillars at the beginning of the wet season), visiting their wives, the stars, as they go.

Early in the evening the men of the Milky Way rub their hands over their
[827] bodies to remove the dried perspiration. This dried perspiration, falling on the eyelids of the aboriginal people, make them heavy with sleep.[63]

x 532 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60D, Pl. 62A, and Pl. 63C, illustrate the myth of the men of the Milky Way.

776 The black bars between *c*, *c*, and *c*, *c*, Pl. 60D, are the men of the Milky
821 Way, the *Maludaianini*; the white disc, *a*, being their camp, while similar white designs, *b*, *b*, indicate the camps of their star wives.

The central white panel, *d*, is the Milky Way; the dark squares, *e*, *c*, etc., are the red clouds at sunrise and sunset, the dark-coloured vertical panels on either side of *d*, white cumulus clouds at night, and the six black discs, dark-coloured clouds, in the night sky.

Pl. 62A is another painting of the Milky Way. The circles with the radiating lines are the camp fires of the stars, the background being the shadows cast by those fires. The Coal Sack in which there are no fires, is the camp of the star women.[64]

The lighter panels, leading from the upper left to the lower right, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, the darker panels, from upper right to lower left, indicate the night sky.

Reading from the left on the lower edge, panels one, three and five symbolize cumulus clouds, *Kumbaratina*, of the night sky, and two, four and six, unidentified clouds, called *aratinia*.

The dotted panels on Pl. 63C represent the men of the Milky Way, the barred panels, the "roads", i.e., dark spaces, in the galaxy, and the five horizontal panels, eucalyptus trees in the firmament.

[855] [63] The aboriginal women, to the accompaniment of a lullaby, send their children to sleep by rubbing their fingers together above the face of the child in the same manner as the *Maludaianini* do in the sky.

[64] The Coal Sack is visible at Melville Island only during the hot "wet" season, i.e. from November to March. This had given rise to the belief that the star-women, who make their camp within that heavenly spectacle, do not need fires. The same belief accounts for the fact that, within the Coal Sack there are no stars (the camp-fires of the star-women).

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

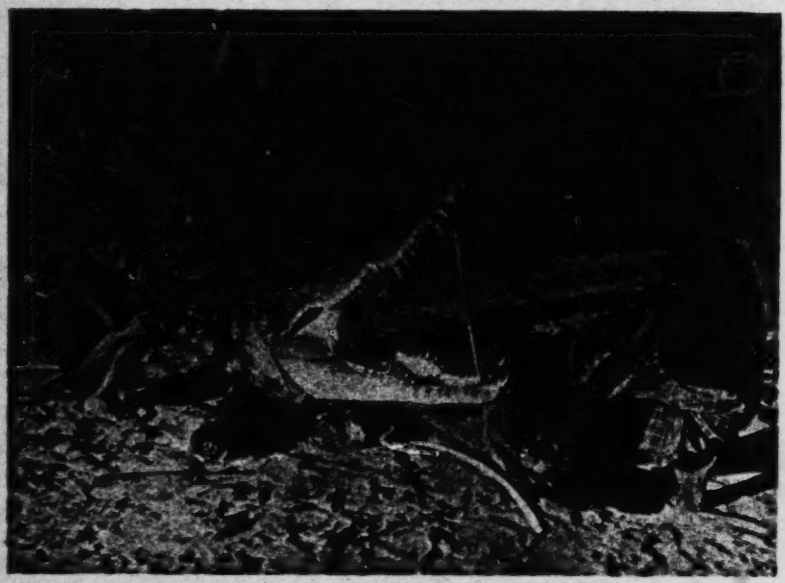

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Fig. 11. Even the youngest respect the teeth of the crocodile

approached our fire. "You savey goose?" he asked me. "Oh yes," I said, "we eat him along America." He handed me a large juicy leg which I gave to Albert to divide, then squatted down at the edge of the fire's glow. I handed my tin of tobacco to Alice and she filled her husband's pipe. Picking up a burning branch from the fire, she knocked a hot coal into the bowl of the pipe and began smoking. Soon she handed it to Young Brook. Suddenly our attention was directed to the opposite side of the clearing where Dennis, the four-year old daughter of Black Joe was crying hysterically. Tuki, a tall powerful man of fifty-five, was doing his best to calm her and disentangle himself from her clinging arms so that he could leave. Tuki and his wife, Fat Alice, were a childless couple and

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12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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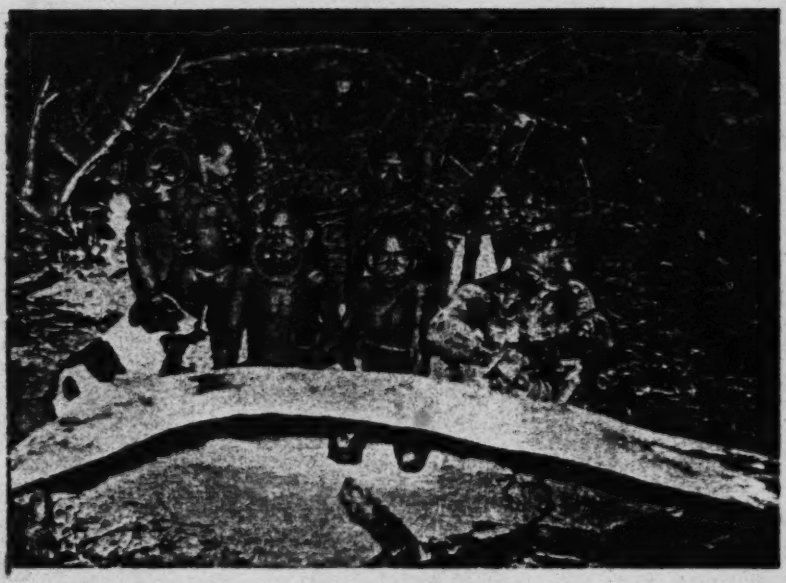

Fig. 12. A Tiwi family camped for the night

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Black Joe, Fat Alice's brother, had given them his eldest daughter in adoption. However, Dennis spent as much time with her proper parents as with her foster parents and it was quite evident that her affection was at least equally divided. Albert went over and managed to bring the screaming, kicking child back to our camp and asked me to give her some of the hard candy which I had brought with me. It was some time, however, before her attention was sufficiently distracted to allow Tuki and the other men to slip away into the canoe to hunt crocodiles for another night. Agnes commented to me, "Let him cry? That white man rule no good. By and by they go silly."

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We strolled back to Black Joe's camp with Dennis, and listened to a discussion concerning the superiority of crocodile hunting over

797 telephone, with which they keep in touch with the Presbytery in Darwin, not only were the good fathers there to greet us, but the children of the mission school had also been given a holiday to celebrate the occasion. Small boys and half-grown lads were there in force and soon crowded round the 'plane. The bearded men against the fence kept in the background, while women and girls peered over the stile that leads into the garden. Men and boys wore only the little naga, women and girls a short sarong [291] —and they are all the better for this lack of clothing.

KINDLY and shrewd old Father Gsell, who founded the mission rather more than a quarter of a century ago, has his own ideas with regard to the black man. He does not ruin his health by dressing him (or her) up in mission clothing, and he sees that the blacks who come into the mission do not become mere spongers and hangers-on. When a black asks for flour or anything else that he requires, Father Gsell replies, "What have you to give for it?" He may have a spear, for which the good father has no use, but he will take it, or anything that the black can offer in payment. If the black's reply is "Nothing," Father Gsell will say "Well, you are a big, strong man; you can dig the garden."

It does not matter that the garden has been dug before. The thing is to keep the blacks from becoming cadgers. Treated so, they retain their self-respect and do not degenerate into useless loafers hanging round the mission station, just for what they can get without any effort. The mission fathers, of course, do all they can for the sick and injured—that is an entirely different matter. Every missionary who has been long on any field in North Australia must recognise that it is impossible to do anything with a full-grown black to alter his outlook in any way, and the methods of the Sacred Heart Mission must appeal to all unbiased members of any church as admirable commonsense.

It is only with the very young that the missionaries can hope for any success in the inculcating of Christian ideals, and it is towards the little boys and girls that the good fathers look for 797 the reward of their self-sacrificing labours. They are able to get them, too, without pandering to the laziness of their parents. 562 The natives, who are always fond of children, are quite willing 567 to have their little boys well fed and well looked after; but, 439 when it comes to the girls, self-interest enters into the question. Little girls can be sold to the Japanese of the pearling fleets, [855] and the Japanese are liberal in the matter of prices.

FATHER Gsell must therefore buy the girls in competition with the Japanese. It has been said that this is countenancing a shameful and revolting slave-trade, and that to buy the girls is definitely wrong in principle. What would the worthy critics do? Are they content to see this dreadful traffic continued, or have they any practical alternative to offer? Father Gsell is trying at least to save as many girls as possible from the horrible fate in store for them. The regular patrol of North Australian waters by the forces of the Government may eventually put an end to the practice, but what of all these little girls in the meantime? As they grow up, the Christian boys and girls marry one another, and, as the Christians have one wife only, they are unwilling to sell or to hire her out to the Japanese. This, like all the dealings of the Sacred Heart Mission with the islanders, is based on practical common sense.

[p. 14(B)]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

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After the women had scattered out in a wide circuit from the camp, the husband might hunt, but only if he were not too old. In hunting kanga- 224 887

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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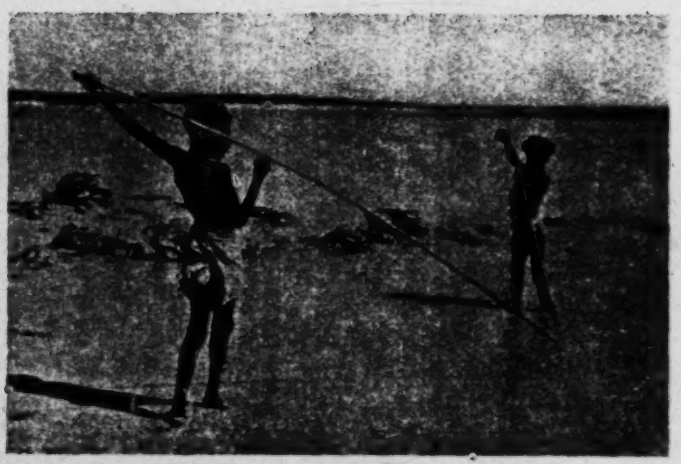

Fig. 9. Two young hunters practicing with fish-spears

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the impenetrable jungle, which were attributed to the *Ningawi*, the
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weird and mysterious "little people" of the mangrove. Rounding a curve in the river, we surprised a flock of whistle ducks sitting on an exposed mudbank. Young Billy tried to shoot one for supper but missed, and soon they were well out of range. On a rare piece of solid ground we saw the long tail and massive hips of a startled
[136]
wallaby as he hopped to safety. However, a successful throw of the fish-spear brought us a large barramundi, and the .22 rifle provided both a possum and a fruit bat, or flying fox, for supper.

All of a sudden the mangroves disappeared and our view was no longer restricted to the river bank; rather we gazed through
[137]
thick, gnarled white paperbarks on the water's edge to wide expanses of marshy grasslands. A few flocks of black and white geese, which had returned to the swamps early in the evening, were startled by the sound of the motor and rose honking in fright.

About five, we reached Minianapi, a landing place about fifteen yards wide, where solid ground reached the river bank. We were

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

162 [621] The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

561 [858 882] [591] Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

561 589 884 [582] [177] The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

561 884 557 [582] The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

159 554 [589] In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.* The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

* Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

765 533 *Wurarkuti* described, in song and dance, how some aborigines from the northern end of the island had tried to kill his father, but the father, being forewarned, had run into the mangrove swamp for shelter. A spear, however, thrown by his enemies, hit him in the side but did not kill him.

[535] [177] Then followed a long series of songs and dances, made up by *Wurarkuti*, describing how the mechanics from Darwin erected a large steel tank at the nearby settlement. To the chanting of songs and beating of buttocks, the actors "rolled" the tank (actually a small log) along the ground, tilted it on one end, rigged blocks and tackle and lifted the "tank" in place. These dances lasted about a half an hour.

Toward the end of this performance, which finished about mid-day, a woman, *Narlaui*, painted entirely in white, and carrying a throwing stick, called upon the dead woman to fight her because, at one time she, *Narlaui*, had reprimanded her for running after men. The aborigines applauded her when she had finished her song. Emboldened by this, *Narlaui* stood in front of one of the poles and challenged the dead woman to a fight.

[535] [177] The ceremony finished[87] with an aeroplane dance, the men posturing in a similar manner to that of the *Jirakati* dance (Pl. 30j).

About sunset, the rituals started afresh with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

Pulanimbuwi and *Muramajua*, acting the part of little children, struggled with each other in the dust of the *milimika* while one of them sang,

[539] "You can't drink from the same breast as I can because we have different mothers."

Old *Malumerinita*, taking up the same refrain, pushed the two "children" aside as he sang,

[539] "I'm a big man, so I'll drink the milk."

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

765 It was after dark before the three "workers", who had cut and painted the burial poles, received their payment (Pl. 27D). As each *pukamuai* man passed the goods, loin cloths, and tobacco to the "worker", he cut his head with a [535] knife, and started a dance in which even a number of little girls took part (Pl. 25A). They had been told by some of the older women what to do, so [868] that the youngsters would be conversant with the woman's place in the rituals.

[87] This ceremony would have probably, like that of *Wonlampari*, finished at mid-day had not the Superintendent of the settlement insisted on sending the chief woman mourner to a distant locality from which she had been unable to return on time.

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By Jane C. Goodale

In 1912 Sir Baldwin Spencer, a professor of biology at the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony, however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe that such participation cannot prepare them adequately for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Melville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Economically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied, and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

Tiwi native on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

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884
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SHARK DANCE is among traditional, imitative figures that are performed during ritual preparation of toxic *Kulama* yams.

442 ceived additional instruction in spear-fishing and birding,
868 while girls were taught more intensively to locate and identify edible plants. The children, as a result, were generally independent economically in their early teens, by
582 which time the girls were already married. Young males
[883] contributed to their parents' larder and to other households, but did not marry and acquire households until they were more than thirty years old. Even now, this late mar-
[183] riage age obtains in theory, but not always in practice.

885 THUS, to the Tiwi, economic independence and/or marriage did not alone signify adulthood. The Tiwi adult was intellectually, rather than physiologically, a mature individual who was expected to join actively in the non-economic affairs of the community. An adult was also expected to be almost entirely responsible for his own health, wealth, and future prospects. This included attaining success in hunting and in war and, for the men, in wife-collecting. If an adult became ill or was injured or, as a Tiwi would say, was unlucky in the pursuit of life's benefits, he alone was responsible for not behaving as an adult should.

884 The annual *Kulama* ceremony, held by each community in April at the end of the rainy season, was a most important event to insure individual success. Although a collec-

[P. 11, (C)]

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 12(C)]

884 194 the technique had to be made meaningful to the initiates, the lifesaving qualities of this famine food were explained as health-giving powers. A ceremony accompanied by song and dance was certainly a dramatic and effective means of impressing the initiates in preparation methods. The ritual served another purpose as well: because traveling is so [180] difficult during the rainy season, each household is isolated from the others. The *Kulama* ritual follows this period, and it is natural to expect a reunion to be an occasion to exchange news, settle differences, and tell stories or sing songs that keep traditions alive.

885 MUCH harder to account for is the Tiwi idea of adulthood. That every adult is solely responsible for his own health and wealth, and that success in life depends entirely on personal behavior and industry, are ideals strangely similar to those that underlie the American way [171] of life, despite the great gulf between the aboriginal culture and our own. But it is not at all surprising that the Tiwi 177 have a great sympathy for much of Western civilization. Many hold the same views as the *Kulama* singer quoted earlier in this article who saw his children wearing clothes and shoes and going to school to learn to write, for this is [181] the Tiwi's contemporaneous idea of success in a way of life introduced to them only a few short years ago.

Early in the summer of 1962 I revisited the Tiwi for [114] two weeks. Although I knew that the Tiwi desired schooling and training in European ways of life and would seize any such opportunity afforded them, I was hardly prepared for the tremendous changes that had taken place during the eight years that had elapsed since my first visit.

Three months after the *Kulama* ceremony of 1954, a [871] government school was opened. Now all the Tiwi children go to school, and some who have finished the six-year program in the government school have received subsequent training as teaching or nursing assistants. Some others have had "on-the-job" training in various activities connected with a large-scale forestry project that has been started on Melville Island. In fact, all the able-bodied Tiwi men and women are currently employed, and their tasks bear little or no relation to their old life in the bush.

It is perhaps significant—but to me not at all surprising—that I did not hear a single real complaint from the Tiwi regarding their new manner of living. They seem to like it and are anticipating bigger and better things (in the [324] Western sense) for their children. Hunting has become a week-end diversion and the children receive little or no [868] real instruction in that traditional skill.

178 784 SOME aspects of Tiwi life are slow to die, however. Most of the old taboos, the observance of which was considered necessary in the past in order to insure health and wealth, are still observed, although at least one teen-ager expressed doubt that the taboos had any actual effect on the outcome of one's life. Western medicine and public 197 health practices are fast replacing belief in the *Kulama*. 884 During the past eight years only three men have begun the six years of training for *Kulama* initiation, and some of the older men no longer participate in the ceremony. However, as long as even a small number of Tiwi believe in the *Kulama*, the ritual will survive, but I doubt that it will for long.

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[P. 16, (8)]

797 ters, supervising the lubras' work and ordering stores, which are brought from Darwin by the mission's own lugger *St. Francis*. The pleasant lunch we had at the refectory, where wide windows, open all round, admitted every wandering breeze, was due to their efforts, and later I was to see something of the results of their teaching.

797 School, both for boys and for girls, takes up only two and a half hours each day, but the pupils learn quickly, and the more 871 they are taught the more they can absorb. Reading and writing are mastered without any more difficulty than in the case of white children of the same age, though the pupils were very shy and almost inaudible when exhibiting their prowess. Arithmetic they do not take to so kindly, unless they happen to be interested by some problem that has a definitely practical application to their own lives; but drawing comes natural to the islanders, as it does to the blacks of the mainland, where I had already seen very spirited sketches made by aboriginal children. Of the affection of the children, both for the sisters and the mission fathers, there was no doubt. To be as close to them as possible was an honour they were all bent on securing.

797 THE "blackies," as they call the girls, range in age from tiny 562 tots to those who are practically young women. They were all much excited by the novelty of our visit, bubbling over with laughter, whispering and giggling together. The older "blackies" eye a visitor coyly, smiling over their shoulders with a flash of white teeth; and, when the pilot and I came along with one of the sisters to hear them sing the "Magnificat" and "Adeste Fideles," they fled shrieking, only to turn round and giggle again when they thought that they were far enough away.

"No more gammon!" called the sister, and they lined up demurely to sing their hymns right tunefully, with spasms of giggles in the intervals. To hold up a finger is quite sufficient to bring shrieks of delight from these childish, happy creatures. "Georgie," a very little boy with a very big tummy, so young that he was not yet at the boys' school, sang "Georgie Porgie, puddiny pie, kissed the girls and made them cry" with much aplomb and gesture. If Georgie was at the girls' school, he did not forget that he was a man. He spoke man's language, not woman's [198 516] talk such as women by custom must use on Bathurst Island, and he sat down like a man with knees wide apart, not together as a woman must.

535 Then, while the older "blackies" formed a circle, chanting in their own language and clapping their hands in time, little girls, [562] two by two, performed women's dances, which again differ from those of the men. There were buffalo, bullock, and lugger dances, when they imitated the animals with arms widespread or bent slightly at the elbows to represent the horns, or held at angles such as those at which sails are set on a lugger, while, now and then, two little fists beaten together faithfully copied the "put-put" of Diesel engines.

More ambitious and complicated was the dance of the overseas mail 'plane that flies from Singapore to Darwin, when whirling arms represented the propellers and stamping feet the beat of [198 533 768] the engines. There is, by the way, a sacred language used for songs, and it is only in this language that the name of the dead can be mentioned. If by chance anyone should mention a dead man's name in the ordinary language, every one within hearing will spit with vigour. If defaceless, the maker of such a faux pas will be hit about the head.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

578 quietly slipped away to some other camp and was not seen the following
684 morning. The matter might then die, depending largely on whether the old husband wanted to carry it further or was content to drop it. If the young
[627] man was still in camp the following day, the old man might insist on a duel then and there, but it would take place only if the camp were large, since Tiwi duels were essentially legal actions and as such needed a sizable audience for their correct staging. Disputes between men, of which old men accusing young men of seduction were by far the most common type, usually remained at the verbal level until a large body of spectators was available. Since such large
[527] concentrations of many households were necessary for the performance of the
627] main collective ceremonials, it was at the time of these ceremonials that most verbal arguments were pushed by the aggrieved party to the action level.

554 During the dry season (April to November) when travel was easy, the
764 only collective ceremonials sufficiently important to draw together a large number of households were those held for the funerals of big men. In the wet season (November to March) when the grass and bush were high and travel was difficult, the main collective phases of the male initiation ceremonies were
[881] held (see Chapter 4), and these brought together for a few weeks at a time large numbers of households. The funeral ceremonies for adults were always held some considerable time after the death and burial of the deceased. How long a period elapsed between the death and the funeral ceremonies depended on the expected size of the gathering, and this figure correlated; at least roughly, with the importance of the deceased. Here again the overriding consideration was food supply, since the chief mourners (that is, the deceased's closer
574 764 relatives) had to feed everybody who came to the funeral while the ceremonies
433 lasted, which might be almost a week. The more important the dead person the bigger the crowd at his funeral, and hence the greater the amount of time
182 needed by the mourners to arrange the catering. As much as a year might elapse between the death and the time when the mourners felt that the funeral arrangements—especially the food supply, but also the ceremonial preparation —were sufficiently well in hand to permit them to set a date and send out invitations for the funeral ceremonies. Funerals, therefore, were not held at regular times but were individually scheduled at times fixed by the chief mourners. They were always held in the dry season, however (except those of
[627] young children, to which nobody came in any case), and therefore an old man who had a dispute to settle or a case to try publicly could always depend on a few big funerals being held in the not very distant future which would provide the large audience necessary to make the settlement of the dispute legal. During the wet season the *kolema* phases of the initiation ceremonial
[881] always drew a large attendance; the annual time of these was pretty definitely fixed by the ripening of the *kolema* yams.

578 Hence the verbal wrangles in the small scattered encampments at night,
684 about seduction during the day, could have any one of three outcomes, depending largely upon the determination of the old man-accuser and the demeanor
627 of the young man-accused. If by the following morning the young man had disappeared and showed no further interest in the old man's menage, the

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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Middle of October: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[9] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing.

End of October: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

End of January: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

End of February: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

[9] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeimpi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

584 lowed this order because, in Tiwi life, infant bestowal was reserved for fathers,
163 and a Tiwi was at least a middle-aged man before he became a father at all. Before he could have a daughter to bestow, he had to be the father of one; and before he could become a father, he had to have a baby girl bestowed upon him and wait for her to grow up to child-bearing age. The much-married Ki-in-kumi did not have his first actual daughter (as distinct from wives' daughters begotten by previous husbands) until he was forty-five, and Enquirio was closer to fifty than to forty when his first real daughter was born. We are inclined to call such daughters free or unencumbered daughters since the step-daughters brought into a man's household by widows, even young widows, were already bestowed by act of the widows' previous husbands and the new husband's control over their marriage was therefore encumbered by the dispositions made by his predecessors.

Thus most men did not have and could not expect to have any free or
584 unencumbered daughters to bestow until they were well into their forties. By that time a man was a prisoner of his past. When at last he had free daughters he was no longer a free man but a junior elder with a mass of obligations both to older men and to younger men, which he had contracted in the previous twenty or thirty years. Even his initiation, which had started when he
[881] was only about fifteen, left him under obligation to the older men who had initiated him. Any bestowals he had received had almost necessarily come to him from older men. In his thirties, it is true, he had operated in the widow remarriage area and put some older men under obligation to him by acting as their agent. But in his agency activities he had also contracted debts, usually in fee-splitting or log-rolling agreements with other agents of about his own age. Thus all his past activities, from his initiation at fifteen until the arrival of his first free daughter at (let us say) age forty-five, were on balance a story of obligations contracted and debts of gratitude assumed in his career of upward mobility. The more successful he had been up to now, the stronger the pressure on him to begin paying off those who had helped him, since it was assumed that his very success was a clear indication of how much obligation he must have to other men, especially older men and contemporaries.

584 If this line of reasoning had been the only relevant one, a Tiwi of age
557 forty-five just presented with his first free daughter would have had problem enough deciding which of his many obligations to liquidate first by his bestowal decision for that daughter. Unfortunately he was at the age when he had to consider the future as well as the past. Some of his old obligations were to men who were very old and unlikely to live much longer. Others were to men of his own age with whom he had been partners ten years before, but by now it was clear that some of these would never amount to much and paying them
[654] off would reap no dividends for the future. Failure to meet the obligation might incur their enmity, but in view of their lack of success, perhaps their hostility was a lesser evil. In 1929, Gitjara, who had needed L. F. B. to get his own career launched, was ready to drop him as a partner now that Gitjara had attracted favorable notice in the form of two bestowals. The junior elders, though obligated to older men like Ki-in-kumi, were not bestowing their scanty

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as 765
ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a
sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own 535
dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major
chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out 765
again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus.
Most of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually [424]
owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to
death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial
occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special 765
to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony,
when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts
and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive
the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners'
state of *pukimani*.

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has 182
been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions 557
of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious 571
occasions. The connecting link was the state of *pukimani* in which death put
the relatives. Men in a state of *pukimani* were at a disadvantage in social and 765
political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things
for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not
afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they [577]
would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the
spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for
the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts
came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and
thus their own *pukimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to
them for many months, came to an end.

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, 881
which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females 571
there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and
elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the
status of *Marukumarni*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and
did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the
ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than
himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for
the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring
it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests.
The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials
or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems;
indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the
beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who 881
were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation 607
of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely [605]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

to marry the boy's sisters, an easily met requirement since girls were "married" so much earlier than their brothers. Very senior and successful men did not bother as a rule with initiation sponsorship because it took too much of their valuable time. Hence in practice, most boys at the *Marukumarni* age were taken in hand by a group of men around 40 years of age who were at least betrothed to, if not already married to, the boys' sisters. Such men justified or rationalized their actions by stating that, as the husbands of the boy's sisters, they wanted their little brother-in-law to be made into a man in proper form. In fact, they were usually given the job by the boy's father, who, having bestowed daughters upon them, regarded it as a legitimate request to make of them. It was the duty of male cross-cousins to initiate their wives' little brothers, but in true Tiwi style the father had to request them to do it, and they counted it in their tallies of what they owed him and what he owed them.

Though the father instigated and stage managed the whole affair, he and his household were always thunderstruck when the cross-cousins—armed to the teeth and painted like a war party—arrived at his camp one evening and proceeded to carry off forcibly the yelling 14-year-old.[6] He had to be dragged literally from the bosom of his family, with his mother screaming and trying to hide him and the father pretending to resist the invaders of his household. From then on, until the final stage (*Mikingula*) at age 24-26, the boy was completely under the authority of the men who carried him off. During these approximately ten to twelve years, he spent much of the time alone with them in the bush where the group lived a monastic existence, as a small band of isolates, speaking to no one (especially not to females) and obtaining their own food. During these phases the tutors guarded the boy as if he were literally a prisoner and taught him all the things—chiefly ritual matters—that grown men should know. At intervals the youth was allowed to go home, on week-end leaves so to speak, but when at home he had to observe all the silences, the modest demeanor, the taboos and the austerities of the isolated life. In monastic language, he was under a strict rule of obedience to his tutors.

Breaking in on the long years of austerity, spent either in seclusion in the bush or in *pukimani* at home, were periodic collective ceremonies when the youth was ritually advanced from one stage of initiation to the next.[7] These were public ceremonies, witnessed by large crowds, and the more important of such transition ceremonies took place in January and February when the *kolema* yams were ripe. At these ceremonies the youths were handled in batches or classes, all the boys of one grade being ritually advanced to the next grade, and the top grade or final class being formally graduated as fully initiated men. The crucial grade—when the pubic hairs were forcibly pulled out and he was at last allowed to talk back a little to his tutors—was usually reached by a youth somewhere between his eighteenth and twentieth years, but

[6] See Hart 1955 for some further details of the tearing away of the boy from the bosom of his family.

[7] A full list of initiation grade names and their duration in years is given in Hart 1931.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he still had six years to go after that, not finishing the final grade of *Mikingula* until somewhere past the age of 24 or 25.

In contrast with the mainland initiation ceremonies, we think the most interesting point about Tiwi initiation resides not in the formal ceremonies but in the removal from the food-production units, for long periods of the year, of all the young males between the ages of 14 and 25. It is true that they did not spend *all* their time in seclusion and that after the age of twenty they remained mostly in their household camps, where they contributed to the household food production. Nonetheless, it remains clear that only a very well-off tribe could afford to allow so much time off from food production to all its young hunters. Tiwi fathers, it would seem, in arranging for the initiation of their sons to begin just when they were becoming productive hunters, were willing to sacrifice that productivity for less tangible advantages. The youths, secluded and guarded in the bush while getting an education, were not only out of the work force but were also out of the predatory-bachelor force. A Tiwi elder made sacrifices to "send his sons to college" but he breathed easier to know that the sons of the other elders were all there too.

All males without exception had to go through the full initiation cycle, and from the time of their first forcible seizure at the age of 14-15 to their final graduation at 24-26, they were in a state of *pukimani* and their personal names were strictly taboo to everybody in the tribe. Each youth was referred to only by his grade name, *Marukumarni* for the first year, *Mikingula* for the last four years, and so on. And here we return finally to a point which was mentioned much earlier—namely, the complete unimportance in tribal eyes of all males below the age of twenty-five. Until they had completed the final stage of initiation, Tiwi males were still boys; they did not even have names. Occasionally, when collecting genealogies and coming upon a reference to a young man, the innocent anthropologist would ask, "Is he married?" In tones of the deepest contempt the informant would reply, "That kid, how could he be married? He's still *Mikingula*." Though *Mikingula* was the stage typically reached by a man at about 20-21 and lasted for the next four years, to the Tiwi it was still a stage in the life of a boy. Not until he had finished as *Mikingula* could he step out into the world and life of men. How he spent the years immediately after finishing initiation decided how soon some senior man would think sufficiently highly of him to aid him in acquiring his first ancient widow.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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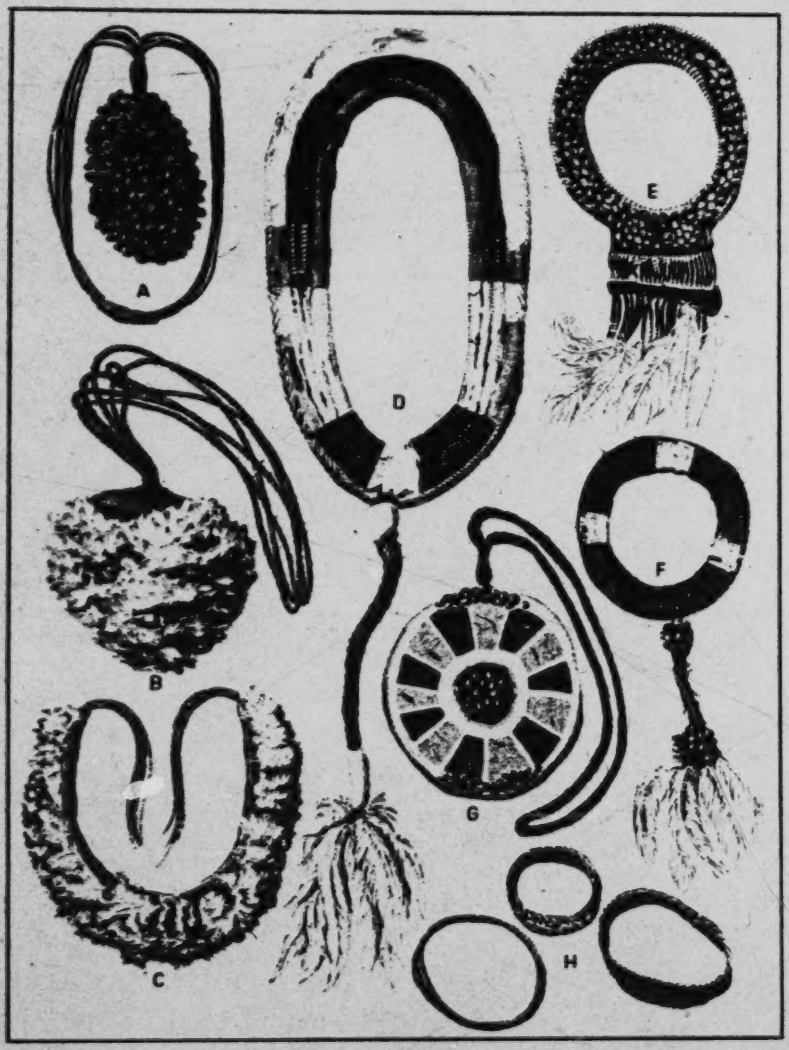

PLATE 31. *Ceremonial Decorations*
A, D, C, Chest Ornaments, Pukabinda; B, Goose-feather Ball, Tokwianga; C, False Beard, Bakadi; E, F, Arm Ornaments, Palmatjinna; H, Cane Arm Bands, Jairinis.

[p. 88 C]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

All the facial designs, about which I was able to find out the meanings (except Pl. 28a), dealt with some totemic creature, or myth. This was in direct contrast to the designs painted on the *tudini* burial poles, where few, if any, were associated with the myths or the totemic places. 302 778 [531]

A Wadjeniati Initiate

Pl. 28A is the facial design of a *Wadjeniati* initiate in the *kulama* ceremony (p. 130). The white dots represent a white edible plum, *murumbatana*, the red dots, a small red fruit, *kupalitju*, and the lines, the limbs of the trees on which the fruit grew. The white around the eyes and on the forehead is symbolical of *Purutjiktini*, the boobook owl-man (*Ninox novae-zealandiae*), the leader of the second *kulama* ceremony. [881]

The Poisonous Water Snake, Tuluma

Pl. 28B, a facial *pukamuni* design, symbolizes the markings on the skin of a poisonous water snake, *tuluma*. Although I neglected to ask the aborigines whether there was any myth associated with this facial decoration, it is likely that the design refers to an incident in creation times.

The Shark, Tudiwala

At *Purukupali's pukamuni*, the shark-man, *Tudiwala*, represented on Pl. 28C, painted his face so that he would appear as ferocious as possible. The radiating lines round his eyes were supposed to have added greatly to his savage appearance. After the *pukamuni*, *Tudiwala* fought with *Kumuninu*, the salmon man, because the latter, although he had a large number of hair-belts, refused to give any to *Tudiwala*. [773]

Although the shark-man escaped injury in that encounter, he wounded the fish-man a number of times with his throwing sticks, wounds which can still be seen, as parallel lines, on the head of the salmon (see Pl. 28F).

The Fish, Mungumini

Pl. 28D is a facial design, called *Mungumini*, worn at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* by a fish of the same name. The markings on the face are supposed to be similar to those on the head of the present-day fish.

The Thunder-man, Pakadringa

Pl. 28E, a *pukamuni* facial design, refers to the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, and the dangerous *Maratji* (p. 154), both of whom are closely associated in the myths.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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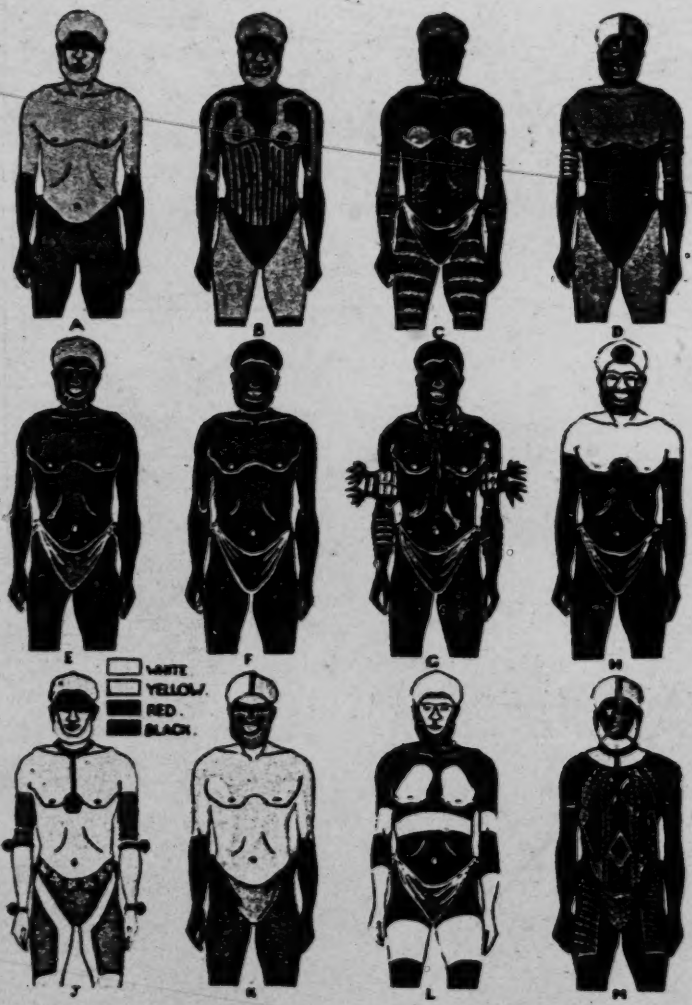

PLATE 42. *Body Decorations of the Kulama Initiation*
A, B, C, D, E, F, Marukumuni; G, Kilipaniati; H, Wadjeniati; J, K, Mikinatrima; L, Kulama Design; M, Mikinatarima, Mikintara and Mikingula.

[p. 120 J]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CHAPTER IV

The Kulama Ceremony

114 881 ALTHOUGH little has been recorded about the colourful *pukamani* burial rituals of the Tiwi, several investigators have published details of the *kulama* ceremony.

Spencer saw a *kulama* ceremony during March 1912. His records of those rituals (Spencer, 1928, pp. 658–76), the most complete we have, show that, [178] during the last forty years the pattern has not changed to any extent. Although the names of the initiation grades given by Spencer do not agree with those recorded by later investigators, it is likely these differences are due to Spencer's interpreter, the buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who was not then fully conversant with the ceremony.

Fry (1949, p. 176), during 1913, witnessed an initiation ceremony in which Reuben Cooper, Joe Cooper's half-caste son, passed from the *Kolliponiati* (my *Kilipaniati*) stage to that of a *Wadjeniati*.

In the same year Fry (1950, pp. 79–80), saw the closing phases of the *kulama* from the peeling of the yam (p. 138), to the final rituals (p. 142). Although Fry was mistaken in considering that this ceremony was part of a burial rite, his record is a valuable and accurate description of the last two days of the *kulama*.

Hart (1930, p. 286), recorded the *kulama* initiation names and the duration of the grades of both male and female initiates. These names correspond closely to those I was able to obtain from the fully initiated men, with one exception. Hart stated that the grade of *Mikingula*, i.e., the fully initiated, lasted for four years. This is obviously incorrect, as the *Mikingula*, being the final grade, lasts for life.

178 881 It appears certain that Tiwi initiation has ceased, although, I feel sure, within comparatively recent times. The *Mikingulas* often talked about initiating some of their companions, but when the opportunity came, they procrastinated.

115 881 However, the same fully initiated men gave me full details of the rituals at each stage of initiation, explained how those rituals fitted into the *kulama* rituals we had witnessed, and either decorated themselves, or painted designs

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

on sheets of paper to illustrate the body markings used at each stage of initiation.

To give a complete account of the full *kulama* which included initiation as well as the preparation of the yam for food, I have included both groups of rituals, as they would have been performed in the original *kulama* ceremony. However, it must be borne in mind that we witnessed only the rituals belonging to the *kulama* yam. As stated before, the details of initiation were obtained from the fully initiated men.

I. THE MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGIN

(1) *The first Kulama Ceremony*

During *palaneri* (creation) times, not long before the death of *Purukupali*, when all the animals and birds were still men and women, *Purutjikini*, a boobook owl-man, and his wife, *Pintoma*, a barn owl-woman, decided to perform the first *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina, in Port Hurd, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1). They invited *Jirakati*, later the white-headed sea-eagle, and *Tupatupini*, the small owl, to be present, planning to make them the first initiates. Many other people assisted in the ceremony, the *Ningauis*, a small spirit people who still live in the mangrove swamps nearby; *Inwati*, *Mouwini* and *Taparalili*, three groups of the honey people; *Jirakupai*, the sea-going crocodile; *Narina*, the black cockatoo, and *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle.

Tukimbini, *Wuriuprinili* and a number of ancestral people from the eastern end of Melville Island, being opposed to the holding of the *kulama* ceremony, did not attend.

At the ceremony, the white-headed eagle, *Jirakati*, was the first *Wadjeniati* initiate (he still wears the ceremonial paint), and the owl, *Tupatupini*, the first *Mikinatrina*. There is no mention in the creation myths of the other grades of initiation.

When the first *kulama* ceremony was finished[18] the participants returned to their homes until the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, which was performed at the end of the *palaneri* (creation period). It was then that *Purutjikini*, the leader

[18] Some informants referred to a fight which took place at the first *kulama* in which *Purutjikini* was attacked because he did not wait for some late-comers. Others described another quarrel which started when one of the *kulama* men followed a woman of the Kalakumunki group into the mangrove swamps and raped her so badly that she died.

The Kalakumunki people attacked the performers of the *kulama*, killing some and driving others into the mangrove swamps where they live today as the *Ningauis*. The more elderly informants, *Tjantalampua* and *Makuariuia*, however, said that there were no quarrels at the first *kulama*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 of the *kulama* ceremony, became the boobook owl, his wife, *Pinaama*, the
881 barn owl, *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, *Jirakai*, the white-headed sea-eagle, *Tupatupini*, a small owl, and so on.

(2) *The Second Kulama Ceremony*

After the close of *palaneri* times, the *Ningauis*, a spirit people, who had been present at the first *kulama*, performed a second ceremony on the same island, Turiturina, as was used by *Purujikini* during the creation period. On the second occasion, the *Ningauis* carried out the complete *kulama*, which included not only the preparation of the poisonous *kulama* yam for food, but also the performance of all the grades of initiation from that of the *Marukumuni* to the *Mikingula*.

At its completion, the *Ningauis* decreed that the form of the ceremony with its proceeding and initiation rituals, should always be the same. The aborigines believe that if this form is altered, a mysterious sickness, called
[759] *saini* will punish them by making everyone ill.

(3) *The Myth of the Ningauis*

After the second *kulama*, the *Ningauis* made their home in the mangrove swamps of a small island, Imaluna, near Cape Helvetius, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1).

The *Ningauis* are somewhat like the present-day aborigines, except that
776 they are small people, about two feet high, with long hair and very short feet, their footmarks resembling those of an oversized dog. The aborigines often see these tracks on the edge of the mangrove swamps of Imaluna (Pl. 22c).

Should an aboriginal, when hunting through the swamps, go too near a home of the *Ningauis*, one of the *Ningauis* by calling, "Eeh", would cause the whole place to be suddenly enveloped in complete darkness. The native could bring the light back again by striking the trunk of a mangrove tree with a stick, but, in the meantime, the *Ningauis*, by taking advantage of the darkness, would have sneaked away. Therefore, no aboriginal has seen a *Ningaui* even though they are often heard in the mangrove swamps calling "Eeh, eeh", to each other.

When the *Ningauis* chant their songs after dark, the mangrove swamps become as brightly lit as in the day-time. There are stories of how aboriginal hunters, lured by the songs and the light, have wandered among the tangled mangroves to see what was going on, but as soon as the *Ningauis* heard the intruders, they finished their song with the word "Eeh",[18] which made the
[533] [18] The *Ningaui* songs chanted by *Jikungilakani*, at one of the *ilanias* of *Wanimpari* (p. 74), all ended with a long drawn-out "Eeh".

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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776 place so dark, and the trees bend together so closely that the hunters lost their way and died. Some informants stated that the *Ningauis* cast a short throwing stick, similar to a *murugana*, at all trespassing aborigines, rendering them insensible.

According to my informants, the *Ningauis*, who gather their food only at night, do not, at present, know the way to make fire, although they were able to do so at the time of the second *kulama*. Therefore, the crabs, shellfish and toredo worms they collect from the swamps, and the edible plants from the nearby jungles, have to be eaten raw.

X532 Two bark paintings and two crayon drawings deal with the *Ningaui* myth. On Plate 22D, the upper space, *a*, is a muddy flat in the middle of the mangrove island of Imaluna. At *b*, is an adjacent jungle; at *c*, a stream of fresh water nearby, and at *d*, *e*, are large dead eucalyptus trees lying in the water. At *f*, and *g*, are two pandanus trees; at *j*, *j*, salt-water creeks in the mangrove swamps; at *k*, *k*, etc., is the sea-shore at the mouth of those creeks, and cross-hatching at *m*, *m*, etc., the mud at the base of the mangrove trees. The squares, *h*, *h*, *h*, *h*, are the camps of the *Ningaui* people.

Plate 22C illustrates the footprints of the *Ningaui* in the swamps at Imaluna. The horse-shoe shaped designs are marks made in the mud by the front of the feet and toes, while the irregular circles, show the prints of the heels. The toe-marks are usually yellow and the heel-marks red. The dots are mangrove trees in the Imaluna swamps.

Fig. 10 is the copy of an aboriginal crayon drawing of a *Ningaui* on the mangrove island at Imaluna.

The central figure is a *Ningaui* standing on the roots, *a*, of a mangrove tree, which, in turn, is growing from a pile of rocks, *b*, *b*, *b*. On either side of the central figure are conventionalized mangrove trees, *c*, *c*; the designs on the lower portion represent the marks on the trunk, and on the upper portion, the foliage. At *e*, is a branch, and at *d*, a pandanus palm.

X532 Fig. 11 is a copy of another crayon drawing which illustrates the *Ningauis* holding the second *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina. The oven for cooking
●881 the *kulama* yam is at *a*, the dots surrounding it representing the upright sticks which keep the firewood in place.[17] The darker circle is the low mound of earth surrounding the ceremonial ground, on the inside of which a number of men are parading and chanting the *kulama* songs. Symbol *b*, indicates the leader of the *kulama* ceremony.

The symbols in circle *c* are the *Marukumuni* and *Mikinatrina* initiates, who do not take part in those particular rituals, and symbols *d*, in the outside

[17] See Pl. 45A.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

circle, the women and children looking on. The designs radiating from the central circle represent a forest of eucalyptus trees.

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FIG. 11. *The Kulama Ceremony*
The Ningauie Performing the Second Kulama Ceremony.

KULAMA INITIATION

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Grades of Kulama initiates		*Period of initiation*
Marukumuni	Male	From approximately April until next Kulama
Marukumuninga	Female	
Kilipanini	Male	From Kulama, mid-March until the fruiting of the cycad, about mid-July
Kilipaninunga	Female	
Wadjanini	Male	From mid-July until the eating of the edible yam, at the next Kulama
Wadjaninunga	Female	

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Grades of Kulama initiates		Period of initiation
Mikinatrina	Male	2 years
Mikinarrininga	Female	
Mikintara	Male	From one kulama until the next
Mikintaringa	Female	
Mikiatarima	Male	From one kulama until the next
Mikiatarimingа	Female	
Mikingula	Male	Fully initiated for life
Mikingulinga	Female	

2. THE PRELIMINARY RITUALS OF THE KULAMA

881 (1) *The Capture of the Marukumuni Initiate*

According to my informants, any tribesman chosen for initiation, must be a mature man, usually married and with children. In fact, all the men pointed out to me as being suitable candidates were thirty years of age or older.[18]

The first time there is a gathering of people after a *kulama* ceremony, such as at a burial, or an *ilania*,[19] the fully initiated *kulama* men, the *Mikingulas*, ask the permission of the leader of the *kulama*, the *Naripikilitipi*, to capture any man or woman, who is suitable for the first stage of initiation, that of the *Marukumuni*.[20] In preparation for this, the *Mikingulas* have already mixed a quantity of yellow ochre.

At a given signal, one of the *Mikingulas*, who has been standing unobtrusively near, suddenly throws his arms around the chosen initiate. The captive struggles to release himself, protesting against being initiated into the *kulama*. But a number of the *Mikingulas* rush to their companion's aid, lay the struggling initiate on the ground, paint a design, in yellow, on his upper arms and body (Pl. 42A), and put the red tail feathers of a black cockatoo in his hair. Meanwhile, other initiated men are walking around the group

[302] [301]

[18] The age of initiation has been raised since Spencer and Fry saw the *kulama* in the early days of the century. Spencer (1928, p. 665) refers to young boys, while Reuben Cooper, whom I knew in 1920 as a young man about twenty, would have only been about thirteen years of age when Fry saw him as a *Kilipaniati*.

[178] [114]

[19] A preliminary ceremony for the burial rituals.

[20] I do not know who captures the female initiate, the *Marukumuninga*.

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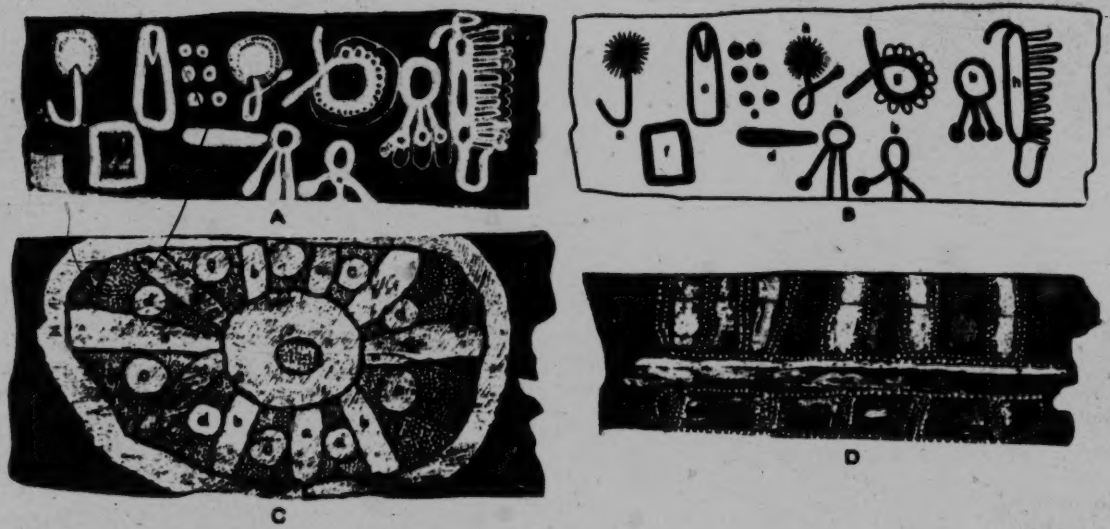

PLATE 43. *Bark Paintings of the Kulama Ceremony*
A, B, Kulama Ornaments; C, The Kulama Ceremony; D, Food Baskets at a Kulama Ceremony.

[p. 128A]

881 [516] [137]

[412] [302]

A

B

C

D

PLATE 44. *The Kulama Ceremony*

A, Chanting Kulama Songs; B, Placing Kulama Yams in Oven; C, Ritual before collecting Kulama Yam; D, The Kulama Yam.

[Cp.1238 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

chanting *kulama* songs. Later, the decorated initiate, now called a *Marukumuni*, is taken to the camp of the man who captured him. It is the duty of this man, now his guardian, to provide the initiate with food. However, he must not be given snakes, for such food would cause his joints to swell and become painful. 881

The guardian takes the food he has collected to the *Marukumuni*'s wife who feeds her husband over a period of four days in the same manner as a *pukumuni* man is fed (Pl. 24A). Neither she, nor any of the food he eats must touch the initiate's body. The food left over from the meal is wrapped in paper-bark and burnt. After four days this taboo is lifted and the *Marukumuni* is free to hunt for and eat all foods, except snake.

(2) *The Eating of the Cycad Fruit*

About August, when the fruit of the cycad (*Cycas media*) is ripe, the *Marukumuni* is decorated with a new design (Pl. 42B). At the same time the leader of the *kulama* ceremony instructs the women of the camp to collect and prepare a considerable quantity of the cycad fruit. As the fruit in its raw state is highly poisonous, it has to be shelled, pounded out flat, and soaked in running water for three days before it is edible. When the fruit is ready for eating, the women, putting it in a number of bark baskets, stand them on either side of a log (Pl. 43D). [302] [252]

Then, while the women walk around the baskets, chanting the songs of the *kulama*, two *Mikingulas* wash the design (Pl. 42B), from the *Marukumuni's* body, and decorate him with a new one (Pl. 42C). This, he must renew continuously until he hears the first sounds of thunder (about mid-November). [533] [302]

As soon as these decorations are completed a member of each family picks up a basket, takes it to their camp, and all have a meal.

The *Marukumuni* initiate, however, is fed by his wife from a separate store of cycad fruit.

At the same time as the *kulama* leader sent the women of the camp to collect and prepare the cycad fruit for the *Marukumuni* rituals, he instructed the women of the *Kilipaniatinga* grade to do the same. However, when the other women of the camp placed their baskets of prepared food beside the log, the *Kilipaniatinga* women poured their cycad fruit on a nearby pad of grass, pushed four sticks into the ground around the heap and seated themselves on the outside.

The ceremonial activity then centred around the men and women of the *Kilipaniani* grade of initiation, who, from the previous *kulama* until then, 301 881

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

[88] had worn continuously their curious ornaments, *mariguani* (Pl. 420),[81]
[301] around their necks as well as many cane and bark ornaments on their arms. During the whole of that period (about five months) they renewed their body paint continuously. They were not allowed, however, to scratch their heads with their hands, but must use for that purpose a special pointed stick, *murubunga* (Pl. 322).

The rituals began when one of the *Mikingulas*, coming up behind the male
[302] *Kilipaniati*, cut the *mariguani* from the neck of the initiate, poured water over him to remove his body paint, and decorated him with the design of a *Wadjeniati* (Pl. 421). Similarly, the husband of the female initiate cut her neck ornament, washed her and redecorated her as a *Wadjeniatinga*. After eating their store of cycad fruit, these new initiates resumed the normal life of the tribe.

About mid-November, thunder and other signs of the oncoming wet season are signals for the *Marukumuni* to discard the design he has been wearing since the ceremonial eating of the cycad fruit. As soon as this hap-
[301] pens the men paint another design on his body (Pl. 420), put new cockatoo
[302] feathers in his hair, and many cane armlets on his arms. The initiate wears these decorations, continuously renewing his body paint, until the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, which takes place at the beginning of the *kulama* ceremony about four months later.

3. THE KULAMA CEREMONY

(1) *Collecting and Eating the Edible Yams*

Toward the end of January, when the wet season was approaching its climax, the *kulama* leader instructed the women to go into the jungle, locate a number
[262] of the young plants of two species of edible yams, a long one, *juruguni*, and a short one, *karawani* and show them to him so that he would know when they would be ready to eat.

When some weeks later, the leader estimated that the yams were fit for digging and the tall, annual grass was about to shed its seed, he called the people together and told them that the *kulama* rituals would start in a few days.[82]

[81] Spencer, 1928, Pl. ix, No. 4, illustrates a *mariguani*.

[82] From the time of this announcement until the finish of the *kulama* ceremony, no
[834] fully initiated man, must sleep with his wife. If he does, he will be attacked by *tuini*, the mysterious *kulama* sickness, and die. I did not find out the characteristics of the *kulama* sickness.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, 881
dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp, and prepared them for cooking.

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42E).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place 302
where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42E), 881
and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh", threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[23] It is [821]
believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunderstorms and so prolonging the wet season.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikingulas*, the *Mikiasirimas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts, 881
went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* [386]
sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a [824]
line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[24]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the [775]
portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always [824]
present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the *kulama* people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates then sat down to a meal of the edible yams.

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a *pukumuni* man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any [753]
part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them [626]
ill.

[23] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[24] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 463, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated men.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

88 ill. The *Marukumunis* were fed behind their bark shelter and the *Wadjeniatis* in the open camp.

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

After dark, on the day following the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, the fully initiated *kulama* men, and all people above the grade of *Mikinatrina*, prepared for the opening ceremony by clearing an oval about fourteen feet long and six feet wide. The *Marukumuni* initiates were brought from their hiding place, the *Wadjeniatis* from their camp and both were seated just outside the ceremonial ground. Neither of those grades, however, took part in the opening rituals.

[372] [759] In the middle of the ceremonial ground were two smouldering logs, but no flames, for fear of attracting *taini*, the *kulama* sickness. Among the trees outside of the ring, were a number of families of uninitiated men, women and children.

Normally the *kulama* party would have been made up of *Mikintaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, and the songs chanted by the men in that order.

177 533 881 539 On the occasion of our visit the ceremony opened when a *Mikingula*, *Wurarbuti*, seated on the ground, beating his throwing sticks, started to hum a song softly. Becoming more confident, he stood up, and pacing backward and forward still beating his sticks, chanted the following three songs.[55]

(*a*) "My father was king, therefore I am the Prince of Wales. As King George was King, so was the old man on the hill, my (dead) father. I will have warships, money and a flag of red and white." When the singer mentioned his dead father there was a high-pitched wail among the near relatives.

(*b*) The second song dealt with the invitation he had received to dance before the Queen of England. "When the Queen was in England, she said 'I would like to see a black-fellow dance', and so I went up. King Philip watched me a lot while I danced."

(*c*) "My uncle in Darwin said to me 'Why haven't you made a lot of *pukamuni* arm rings. If you don't soon do so, you'll cause a lot of trouble among the *pukamuni* people."

Muramajua also chanted three songs;

(*a*) In the first, of which I did not collect the words, he explained, at length,

[55] This man, who was the ceremonial leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, described earlier, had been invited, only a few months previously, to visit the southern States, and dance before the Queen of England. Naturally, this left such a strong impression on his mind that many of his songs dealt with that remarkable experience.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

how a slow canoe journey had made him late for a recent *pukamani* ceremony. 177

(*b*) "I was sick in the Darwin hospital. Sister Philips said it was because I had had too much grog." 533 539 881

(*c*) "There was a man at Cockle Point (opposite the Bathurst Island Mission), who wanted to kill me with a spear. So I changed myself into a mullet and he didn't see me."

Another singer chanted,

(*a*) "I am a goose and a man cast his throwing stick and hit me." 533

(*b*) "I want that girl from Bathurst Island to wash her with fresh water to make it square for giving away my sister."[86] 539 881

Another *Mikingula*, *Palitara*, aired his differences with a woman, *Batali*, in the following song.

(*a*) "I fed *Batali*, but she did not give her daughter to me as a wife."[87]

(3) *Collecting the Kulama Yam*

Early on the following morning, the *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikintaras*, the *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, went to the ceremonial ground of the previous evening. They first dipped their hands in a bark container filled with water, throwing some over their bodies; then, taking a mouthful, they squirted water into the air in imitation of rain, afterwards calling out "Oom-oom", to symbolize thunderstorms. Taking two small sticks, one in each hand, the men used them to clean the wax from their ears, afterwards standing the sticks upright in the ground.[88] 881 [515]

Placing their palms on a sheet of bark covered with white paint, the men patted their hair, chest, wrists and pubes (Pl. 44c), turning toward the north as they again called out "Oom-oom", in imitation of thunder.

Following this ritual, each *kulama* man painted another with a design in white (Pl. 42i.). The leader then picked up the bark basket, held it on his arm, and facing north, south, east and west, again called "Oom-oom", while he made a drum-like sound, symbolical of thunder, by hitting the basket with his hand. After this the men set out to collect the *kulama* yams. They were

[86] I did not find out the significance of this ritual.

[87] When a woman promises her daughter to a man, it is the duty of the future son-in-law to give her continuous presents of food. On this occasion, the woman had accepted *Palitara's* gifts, but when her daughter was old enough, she gave the girl to another man. [584]

Quarrelling at a *kulama* ceremony is forbidden, otherwise *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, will destroy all the participants. This prohibition allows an aboriginal, such as *Palitara*, to air his grievances without causing a quarrel, even though, as on this occasion, the defaulting person was present. [626] [753]

[88] The meaning of this ritual is obscure. According to the aborigines it prevents trouble and quarrelling during the *kulama* rituals.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

●881 led by the *Mikinatrinas*, carrying the baskets, followed by the *Mikinaras*, the *Mikiatarimas*, and the *Mikingulas*. No *kulama* woman accompanied this party.

As the *kulama* men entered the jungle they separated, each searching for vines which indicated the presence of the yam.[29] Before digging, however, the [824] [753] *kulama* men, softly calling "Oom-oom", gently patted the ground to wake up the yams, for, should any yam get a fright, its spirit, becoming annoyed, would make everyone ill with the *kulama* sickness. When digging the yams, the men were most careful not to break even one of the fine roots (Pl. 44D).

On filling in the holes, the men again made the thunder call, "Oom-oom", [821] which, they said, would cause more rain to fall before the day was over. One aboriginal accidentally broke a *kulama* yam while digging it. Instantly, he was on his feet, and, with the broken yam in his palm, dodged in and out among the trees, to escape the spirit of sickness released by the angry yam. After a few minutes, however, he returned, placed the broken yam carefully in the basket with the rest, and resumed his digging. His companions said that it was fortunate that he had only damaged the yam slightly, otherwise, its spirit would have made not only the careless aboriginal, but all of the *kulama* people ill.

When sufficient yams were collected, the party returned to camp in the same order as they went out, i.e., *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*. The *Mikinatrinas* carried the yams to the foot of a blood-wood tree, called the *wuringaleta*, cleared the grass from around the base and, taking the yams from the basket, placed them on the ground. They were covered with leaves by the female initiates, the *Mikinatriningas*.

(4) *The Preparation of the Ceremonial Ground*

In the late afternoon, the *kulama* men and the male initiates, excluding the *Marukumuni* and the *W'adjeniatis*, prepared the ceremonial ground, the *milimika*.

372 The men walked toward an open space in the forest, and with low cries, 881 beat the ground with sticks, while the leader, pulling up a tuft of grass, threw it into the air. At the place where it fell, the men dug a small circle, the *tumarapi* (navel), in which the yams were to be cooked. Then, sitting down, the men pushed the sand and grass outwards with their feet until the *milimika*, about fifteen feet in diameter, was cleared and surrounded by a low mound of earth and grass.

[222] [137] [29] The *kulama* yam (*Dioscorea sativa*, variety *rotunda*) (Pl. 44D), is about the size of a hen's egg and covered with hairs similar to a beard. It is held in the palm of the hand until it is placed carefully in the bark basket.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Dry sticks, about three feet in length, were pushed upright into the ground around the *tunerapi* (oven), kindling wood was laid between them, other pieces of dried wood piled cross-wise between the uprights until there was a stack about three feet high (Pl. 45A). 88 [372]

(5) *Placing the Uncooked Yams in Water*

About sunset, the *kulama* men went to the bloodwood tree, the *wuringakua*, where the *Mikinatrinas* had stored the yams in the morning and, on pulling bushes away, revealed some of the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates squatting, holding in their arms a basket of the uncooked *kulama* yams. The *Marukumuni* initiates took the yams to the water, everyone assisting in laying them on a pad of grass in the bed of the stream (Pl. 46B).

Immediately this task was completed, the *kulama* men pushed the *Marukumuni* initiates over,[20] and, holding them by the legs and arms dragged them backward and forward through the now muddy water to wash off their body paint. They were then taken back to camp, seated beside the *milimika* and painted with a different pattern (Pl. 42F). Neither the *Marukumuni* nor the *Wadjeniasi* initiates took any further part in the rituals of that day. When, after dark, the *kulama* men entered the *milimika* to chant another series of songs, the camp fires were allowed to burn brightly, because the aborigines said that the yams, being in the water, were now "quiet" so that there was no fear of *taini*, the spirit of *kulama* sickness. [302]

The chanting men walked counter-clockwise around the *milimika* because *Purujikini* did so at the first *kulama*. To have walked in the opposite direction, even then, would have made the spirit of the *kulama* yam angry. 881

The following are literal translations of a selection of the songs. 533

(a) "I had a quarrel with Tom Crow, the Superintendent of Snake Bay Settlement." 539 [177]

(b) "My mother-in-law is good to me, she did not take away my promised wife."

(c) "The fruit of the *kinamia* (*Eugenia* sp.) ripens and falls to the ground."

(d) "The little *Pitipituis* (spirit children) are dancing on the beach."

[20] Spencer, 1928, p. 664, describing a similar ritual, states, "Several old men seized the *Wajinyeri* (my *Wadjeniasi*), and plunged into the water with him. As many as could get near him gripped him by the legs and arms, and yelling, splashing and churning up the mud, . . . dragged him backward and forward several times, . . . As soon as the *Wajinyeri* were released, the men turned their attention to the *Marukumuni* boys. . . ." Although my informants did not say so it is likely that the *Wadjeniasi* initiates were also pushed into the water to remove their body paint in readiness for the second design of a *Milimarina* (Pl. 42I). [114]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

533 (e) "The salt water (sea), brings plenty of drift-wood up on the beach for
539 our fires."
● 881 (f) "The *mukwall* (shark) killed a stingray."
(g) "The boat sails fast and the waves are beating its sides."

At approximately 8.30 p.m. the chanting ceased and the aborigines retired to their camps.

(6) *The Lighting of the Ceremonial Fire*

About 6.30 the next morning, the *Mikinastrinings* women collected pieces
[137] of termite mound and put them on the top of the sticks for the fire which had been piled over the oven, the *sumarapi*. This fire could be lit by any man above the grade of *Mikinastrina*. Whilst the fire was burning down, the *Mikingulas* walked around it, and sang a few *kulama* songs, only one of which was recorded.

(1) "When I see the shining iron of the new schoolhouse, I think how my
[177] children will go to school and wear boots."[81]

By 9.30 a.m. after everyone had had a meal, most of the aborigines, includ-
881 ing several children, painted themselves in red and made their way to the swamp to take part in the ritual of bringing the *kulama* yams from the water, to the *milimika*.

On reaching the swamp, the leader took the yams from the pad of grass under the water, placed them carefully in the basket, with a bundle of rushes plucked from a nearby swamp on top, then, putting the basket on his shoulder, carried it to the *milimika* and stood it beside the fire "to warm up the yams".

881 The *Mikingulas*, walking anti-clockwise as before, chanted another series
533 of songs.
539 (a) "I went to Native Affairs (Darwin), drew out £10 (with which to
[177] gamble) and bought a pack of playing cards."[82]

Striding around the ring with two spears in one hand and a throwing stick in the other, the same man sang.

(b) "I have many spears. If the white people were not here, I would kill you all."

881 At the end of the song, the performer called out the name of his dead
765 father, striking himself on the head with his throwing stick to indicate his sorrow. The people on the outside of the ring cried in sympathy.

[185] [81] A parent's hope in a changing society that his children will live at a higher social level that the one which he himself occupies.

[82] A number of the younger Melville Islanders work for extended terms in Darwin, periodically returning to their homeland to take part in the ceremonies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the previous singer's dead father. 881 765

(c) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[88] when I think of you, my uncle." [533] Some of the women cried when the song was finished. [539]

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *saini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants. 252 881

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate it (Pl. 44B), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, goodbye",[89] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purutjikini*, did at the first *kulama*. 881 [533] [539]

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women. 535 881

(a) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird). [534]

(b) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 30B), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(c) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*tokwiangu*) in his mouth to symbolize the prey of the crocodile.

(d) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(e) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(f) The buffalo,

(g) The shark (Pl. 30C).

[88] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *imunbe* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions. [826] [774]

[89] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the *moringalata* tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten. [824]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

(8) *Cutting up the Yams*

881 After the yams had been in the oven for about one and a half hours, the
252 men gathered around the oven, felt it, and, after a short discussion began to scrape the warm sand away from the paper-bark covering. As they did so, they pressed handfuls of the warm sand against their elbows, chest, shoulders and knees, believing that this sand made their joints strong and supple (Pl. 45c).

When the paper-bark, carefully removed strip by strip, exposed the
881 cooked yams, the women, who had been quietly standing on the outside of the *milimika* murmured reverently, "Ah, *kulama*, ah, *kulama*." Taking the hot yams from the oven each man held them against his chest, and his
[827] head. This they said would give them added strength and vitality. The women although they did not participate in this ritual, sent their children into the *milimika* to have the yams pressed against their bodies so that they would grow to healthy and strong adults.

As the men peeled the yams, exposing the soft, yellow flesh, they sang
[177] about preparing and eating various kinds of food belonging to the white
[533] man,[88] "cutting bread for a meal, carving steak from a bullock and roasting it on the coals, cooking the tongue of a bullock, eating corn beef", and so on. When all the yams were peeled they were left on a sheet of bark whilst everyone had a meal and a sleep. In the late afternoon the *kulama* men started
[412] to slice the yams (cockle shells, *irakapi*, were used before the advent of steel).
[177] As they did so, the men mashed up some of the sliced *kulama* between the palms of the hands, mixed this with red ochre, and each rubbed it on his hair, face, whiskers and body. This, they believed, aided by the earlier rituals, would ensure them good health until the next *kulama*.

(9) *Initiation of the Kilipanlatis and Mikinatrinas*

The sliced yams were put in the basket, and stood in the centre of the *milimika*. A *kulama* man walked into the forest, and collected a length of flexible vine. Returning to the *milimika* he bent the vine round the necks of the male *Marukumunis* and the female *Marukumuningas* in such a way that it could not be removed. These initiates were then *Kilipanlatis* and *Kilipan-*
[801] *latingas* respectively. This neck ornament, which had a number of cords hanging from it, is called a *mariguani* (Pl. 42a). After these initiates had been further decorated with bark armlets, *tjunguis*[89] (Pl. 42b and c), and cane

[88] No doubt, in times past, they sang about abundant supplies of their own favourite foods.

[89] Spencer, 1928, illustrates the bark armlets, *tjunguis*, on Pl. XI and the belt, *ulurinal*, on Pl. IX, No. 1.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

arm rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), they seated themselves outside the *milimika*, but took no part in the subsequent rituals. 881 [301]

Other fully initiated men led initiates of the *Wadjeniati* grade to the *wuringalata* tree, where the yams had been stored on the second morning, told them to sit down and erected a low screen of boughs in front so that the initiates could not be seen from the *milimika*.

The *Mikingulas* first painted the bodies of the *Wadjeniati* initiates with yellow paint, then decorated them with many cane rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), on their upper arms, hair-string belts, *ularimi*, around their waists and goose-feather balls, *tokwiangas* (Pl. 31B), on their necks, arms and wrists (see Pl. 42J). This ritual admitted them to the grade of *Mikinatrina* and *Mikinatrinings* respectively. 881 302 [301]

After the *Wadjeniati* initiates were decorated, the senior grades of the *kulama* painted their faces, bodies, hair and beards with elaborate designs in red, yellow, black and white. In one design, peculiar to the *kulama*, the aborigines covered one side of their faces with red paint, and the other side with black,[87] the two colours being separated with a line of yellow (Pl. 42M). The men painted a complex design, usually in red and white on their hair and beards.[88] Some of the men also decorated their children.

The leader of the *kulama* then assembled everyone to see the *Mikinatrina* initiates perform their first dance, which they had been quietly practising for some time. 535 881

At a given signal, each *Mikinatrina* stood up in turn and, gaily decorated with body paint and coloured ceremonial ornaments, and holding a flat fighting club, *juruwila*, in either hand, performed his first dance. As each initiate danced, the assembled people applauded, slapping their buttocks in approbation of both the dancing and the appearance of the initiates. [201]

When the *Mikinatrinas* had finished their dance, the female initiates, the *Mikinatrinings*, similarly decorated, but without the clubs, individually performed their dances. Still painted and wearing their decorations, the male and female *Mikinatrinas* seated themselves outside of the *milimika* beside the newly created *Kilipaniatis*.

After the initiates had finished their dances, several of the *Mikingulas* entered the *milimika* and chanted another series of secular songs. [533]

[87] Spencer, 1928, p. 674, who saw a *kulama* ceremony during 1911, refers to this curious form of facial decoration.

[88] The method of colouring the hair with intricate designs is of some interest. The aboriginal, loading his fingers and thumb with wet ground-up ochre, pinched the hair, instead of rubbing the colour into it. By this means, the operator was able to keep sharp well-defined edges to the design, an effect that could not be achieved in any other way.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

177 *Wurarkui* described some of his experiences when he visited Brisbane to
533 dance before the Queen of England.
539 (*a*) "I saw the big boat, Marella, beside the jetty at Brisbane, many motor
881 cars, boats and trains. The boats went under a big bridge over the river, and across that bridge went the motor cars. The ship's flags were flying."

Another man sang.

(*b*) "The *tapalingas* (stars) are like those on the American flag in Darwin. They lifted the flag up in the morning, and let it down at night."

(*c*) "The *tedawali* (shark) swims about the sea looking for stingrays."

[535] The onlookers applauded this song and asked the singer to perform the shark dance (Pl. 300), which he did to the delight of all.

(*d*) "I am a wireless man, and have sent native tucker (food) all over Australia. The Native Affairs branch in Darwin listened in."

(*e*) "Leo Hickey's boat comes quickly to Snake Bay with a cargo of food from Darwin."

Another *Mikingula* chanted a lengthy song describing the making of a wooden canoe, the felling of a tree in the jungle, the length and shape of the craft and the final launching.

After these songs, the *kulama* men rested in the shade, and the initiates sat by the side of the *milimika*, until about sunset.

(10) *Taking the Cooked Yams to Water*

881 The *Mikingulas*, starting from equally spaced positions on the periphery, crawled toward the basket of cooked and sliced yams standing in the centre of the *milimika*, and pretended to fight over it. While this was going on, the women, beating sticks together, called out "Brr-brr", as did the owl-man, *Purutjikini*, at the first *kulama*. Meanwhile two of the *Mikingulas* vigorously
[535] performed the crocodile dance (Pl. 301). Then with a loud cry, one of them picked up the basket containing the yams, and followed by most of the women and children, carried the basket to the water.

With long-drawn-out calls, and the sound "Brr-brr", the men tipped the cut-up yams from the basket on to a grass bed on the bottom of the stream. While the leader patted the surface of the water, the rest of the people called in a high trilling note, similar to the mosquito call of the *pukamani* ceremony,
[821] ending up in a loud *yei*. These calls, they said, would cause still more thunder storms and heavy rain.

533 It was quite dark (about 7.30 p.m.) when the *kulama* people assembled to
881 hear the *Mikinatrina* initiates sing for the first time. For, at this stage of the ceremony, each male initiate of the *Mikinatrina* grade was invited by the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
0120 Tiwi 0120

Mikinguka to enter the *milimika* and chant his first song, known as the *Ai-ipa*, which he had been practising for some time.[40] The female initiates, the *Mikinarinaga* assisted the *Mikinarinaa* by beating the time on the outside of the *milimika* in the same way as *Pirtoma*, the owl-woman, assisted her husband, *Purujikini*, at the first *kulama* ceremony during creation times. 533 881

One *Mikinguka* told me that when he was passing through the *Mikinarina* grade of initiation, he chanted three songs; one was about a fish, one about a rifle and a third about a crocodile.

When the *Mikinarina* initiates had finished their songs, the men of the higher initiation grades, the *Mikinaraa*, *Mikinarinaa* and the fully initiated *Mikinguka*, entered the ring, one by one, and walking anti-clockwise chanted the following songs:[40]

(*a*) "A big ship brings many things to Darwin." 177

(*b*) "A Japanese plane was flying low over Melville Island. The men on the ground said 'stand-by' and shot it down with a cannon." 533 539

(*c*) "In Darwin, I saw a kite, on a long string, which flew into the sky." 881

(*d*) "The Government plane flew me to Brisbane to see the Queen. It flew through the clouds. I went into the pilot's room in the front of the plane and the wireless told them Brisbane was only seven miles away."

(11) *The Kararijui Songs*

About nine o'clock, the character of the songs changed and all but one dealt with the spirit, *imunka*, of their children.[41] These songs are called *kararijui imunka*. 533 539 881

(*a*) "The spirits of my children have gone to Karsluke Island (Wulrungku), and are playing there." [774]

[40] At the conclusion of the *kulama* ceremony, both the male and female *Mikinarina* initiates wear their ornaments and keep themselves decorated for a month, and every evening when seated in the camp, they chant the same *Ai-ipa* songs as they did at the *kulama* ceremony.

At the end of a month, the initiates wash the paint from their bodies, discard their ceremonial ornaments, and resume a normal life until the next *kulama*.

Two years later, the *Mikinarina* becomes a *Mikinaraa* retaining that grade for another year, when he enters the grade of a *Mikinarinaa*. On the following year, the initiate reaches the full status of a *Mikinguka*.

During the last two stages, i.e., *Mikinaraa* and *Mikinarinaa*, the initiates are not subject to any special restrictions nor do they have to pass through any special rituals. Their body decorations too, are similar to those of the fully initiated men.

[40] The men did not carry their throwing stick in the same manner as they did in the afternoon performance (Pl. 44A).

[41] The Melville Islanders in common with most aboriginal tribes, believe that their spirit (*imunka*) leaves the body during sleep and wanders around. The songs refer to the spirits of their children, who, during the hours of sleeping, play in the forest and on the sea-shore.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

533 (*b*) "The spirits of my children are dancing on a sand-bank beside the sea."
539 (*c*) "My children's spirits are paddling about in a canoe, looking for fish
881 and turtle eggs."

Another man first chanted a secular song, which he had tried to do earlier, but had forgotten the tune.

[177] (*d*) "I saw a tractor pulling big trees out of the ground to make the new aerodrome."

Then he continued with his *Karariṭjui* song.

(*e*) "My little children have gone to the island, but they must come back because they are short of tobacco." After a pause he continued, "They're back because someone has just taken the tobacco out of my hand."

(12) *The Ceremonial Eating of the Kulama Yam*

881 On the third day, at early dawn, everybody went to the swamp to eat some of the prepared yams. The leader quietly plucked a bunch of grass from the edge of the water "to waken the *kulama* yam", for should it get a fright the yam would cause much sickness in the camp.

The fully initiated men, the *Mikingulas*, ate the first few pieces "to tame the yam", after which everyone took some to eat. This ritual ensures for all the participants, good health until the next *kulama*. Some of the prepared yam is left in the water for others to eat should they desire it.

This ritual completed the *kulama* ceremony. Everyone returned to his camp, and, except for the initiates of the lower grades, pursued a normal life. The grass ring and the pieces of antbed were left in place but the *kulama* ground and the *milimika* were deserted (Pl. 45D).

784 There are, however, a number of taboos and restrictions associated with
881 the deserted *kulama* ground and oven. For instance, should anyone make
[778] his camp or light a fire in the deserted *milimika*, the spirit of the *kulama* yam would be offended and blind the culprit.

If anyone were so foolish as to toss a piece of the antbed, from the oven, sand from the *milimika* or a fragment of cooked *kulama* yam into the sea, *Maraṭji*, the rainbow, would be angry and create heavy seas and storms.

[821] The aborigines of the Cape Fourcroy area were convinced that a recent hurricane, which devastated the whole area, was caused by some foolish person throwing a piece of *kulama* into the sea.

On the other hand, if a *kulama* man takes a piece of antbed from the oven,
[224] and throwing it at a tree, hits the mark, his hunting will be successful, until the next *kulama* ceremony. But, if he misses his mark, his hunting will be poor.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Three bark paintings relate to the *kulama* ceremony, i.e., Pl. 43A, B, Pl. 43C and Pl. 43D.

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Pl. 43A, B, illustrates the ornaments used in a *kulama* ceremony.

Designs *a*, *a*, are two goose-feather balls, *tokwiangus* (Pl. 31B); *b*, *b*, etc., bark armlets, *tungutis*; *c*, unidentified; *d*, a throwing stick, *murugunu* (Pl. 32D); *e*, cane arm rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H); *f*, bark basket, *wanatuna*; *g*, false beard, *kuludi* (Pl. 31C), and *h*, a ceremonial belt, *ularimi*.

Pl. 43C illustrates the ceremonial circle, the oven and the performers of a *kulama* ceremony.

The central dotted circle is the oven (Pl. 46C), in which the yams are cooked, and the outer white oval, the mound of earth which surrounds the *milimika*. The ovals, *a*, *a*, etc., indicate the *Marukumuni*; *b*, *b*, etc., the *Wadjaniati*; *c*, the *Mikinatrina* initiates, and *d*, the fully initiated *Mikingulas*.

Pl. 43D is a bark painting showing baskets of prepared cycad fruit leaning against a log (p. 129). The horizontal panel is the log, and the rectangles on either side, the baskets of food leaning against it.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE 45. *The Kulama Ceremony*
A, Building the Kulama Fire; B, Placing the Kulama Yams in Water; C, Pressing Heated Sand against Joints; D, Deserted Kulama Oven.

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[p.144 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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CONCLUSION

105 171 THE study of the Tiwi tribe of Melville and Bathurst Islands, made through the medium of their art, their myths, and their ceremonies, reveals wide differences between many phases of their cultural life and that of the aborigines who live on the adjacent mainland. These differences are probably the result of isolation caused by the dangerous tideways which have separated the two peoples from each other for an unknown, but probably lengthy, period.

Though both are of aboriginal stock, and from the same cultural back- [174] ground (as indicated by basically similar creation stories), this isolation has allowed the two groups to develop independently. It may well be that the beliefs of the Tiwi represent those of one of the aboriginal migrations to Australia, and has remained somewhat constant, while the mainland people, enriched by occasional waves of new ideas, have developed a much more varied philosophical and cultural life.

The main differences between the two cultures can be summarized as follows:

171 x532 (a) The art forms of the Melville and Bathurst Islands are so highly formalized that they seldom resemble the objects they represent. In contrast, the art of their neighbours on the mainland, the Arnhem Land aborigines, is not only entirely representational, but is probably a more vital and colourful art than exists in any other part of the continent.

(b) Compared with the rest of Australia, too, the ceremonies of the Tiwi 171 are particularly limited, there being only two in the whole culture. The 765 major ceremony, that of burial, is by far the more elaborate. It extends over several months, involves the co-operation of many people, and provides the tribe with a complete outlet for their grief, their music, their dancing, and their art. This ceremony is without parallel in Australia, and, so far as we know, elsewhere in the world.

The other ceremony, the Kulama, is a blending of several rituals: the 171 initiation of men and women into the social grades of the tribe; the cere- 861 mony of preparing a poisonous yam for food,[66] which ceremony the participants believe prolongs the wet season; and the airing of grievances

[66] Spencer, 1928, p. 661, speaks of the Kulama as a food increase ritual. It is probable [114] that Spencer was only expressing an opinion, having previously carried out research in Central Australia where increase rituals are both numerous and important. I did not obtain any evidence which indicated that food increase rituals were carried out by the Tiwi.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

without quarrels. Again, there is no comparable ceremony on the mainland. 171 [281]

(c) Throughout the mainland of Australia, women occupy a low social status within the tribal framework. They are rigidly excluded from almost all aspects of the ceremonial life, and of initiation; they also are ignorant of most of the creation myths, the procedures of the secret rituals, and even the existence of the sacred objects. 171 562

These restrictions do not apply to the women of the Tiwi. They are initiated, side by side, with the men, and take similar though not identical parts in the ritual. They also participate in all phases of the burial ceremonies, at which they usually perform their own dance, the *Amburu*, but occasionally take part in dances which are performed by the men (Pl. 25c). A woman even has the right to cut and paint a burial pole, if her husband, who has been allotted the task, is unavoidably absent. In short, I was unable to find any aspect of Tiwi ceremonial life in which women could not take their part if they so desired.

(d) Although the creation story of the Tiwi is basically similar to that of the aborigines elsewhere in Australia, it is not as elaborate as, say, the travels of the Wawalik and the Djunkgao Sisters of Arnhem Land, recorded by Warner (1937), nor those of Central Australia, described by Spencer and Gillen (1899). I did not witness, nor did I hear of any specific Tiwi ceremony that commemorated the myths of the creation period. The dances in the *ilanias*, and the final rituals of the burial ceremony, usually referred to the various creatures or the elements, but seldom to an incident in the creation myth. 171 773 [535]

(e) There are also important differences between many of the myths of the Tiwi and those of the mainland people. For instance, in northern Australia, it is the moon man who brings death to mankind; in Melville Island the same moon-man endeavours to prevent death from coming to the world. I have already pointed out other wide differences between the astronomical myths of the mainland and those of the adjacent Melville Island.

On Arnhem Land, in fact, as far as South Australia, the aborigines, almost without exception, believe that their spirits go to a distant land not visible to human eyes, where there is continuous good weather, and an abundance of easily gathered food. 171 775

On the other hand, the Tiwi believe that at the close of the burial rituals the spirits of their dead return to their separate birthplaces, where each one hunts for food in the same manner as its living relatives, suffering, as they do, from exposure if the weather is inclement, and from hunger if the food supplies are limited.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

551 expression as *int'abowinaiiya* (=your wife) is forbidden, nor for example
843 can one of the woman's brothers enquire the whereabouts of his sister from the woman's husband. There is no such prohibition, however, against the use of her name nor against references to her by the rest of the tribe provided always the husband is not within hearing.

551 None of the names of a person passing through any stage of initiation
561 can be used by anyone at all. Such a person is always alluded to or
881 addressed as *Watyinyirti* or *Mikinyirtiya* or whatever degree of initiation he or she has reached. As the normal initiation ceremonies are carried out continuously from the age of seventeen to the age of about twenty-six for a man and from ten to nineteen for a girl, for those periods of their lives personal names are seldom used.

I propose to call these names "initiation-grade names," since they are applied to an individual according to the grade of initiation he has reached. A full list of them is as follows :—

Initiation-Grade Names (Male).

Average Age.		Duration of Grade.	
15-17	..	1 year	*Maru-kumarni*
15-17	..	6 months	*Kilipirni-ati*
16-18	..	6 months	*Watyinyirti*
18-20	..	2 years	*Mikin yirtiya*
19-21	..	1 year	*Mikin djira*
20-22	..	1 year	*Mikadjirima*
24-26	..	4 years	*Mikin gula*

Initiation-Grade Names (Female)[8].

10-12	..	1 year	*Maru-kumarniya*
15-17	..	6 months	*Kilipirni-atiya*
11-13	..	6 months	*Watyinyirtiya*
13-15	..	2 years	*Mikin yirtiyiya*
14-16	..	1 year	*Mikin djiriya*
15-17	..	1 year	*Mikadjiriniya*
19-21	..	4 years	*Mikin guliya*

551 In addition to these initiation-grade names there is also a series of
561 names which I propose to call "age-grade names." These are more

[8] In actual practice the female names are not nearly as commonly used as the male.

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

she were dead in fact and for the time being no longer his wife. She 551
is in touch with the spirits and the result will be a child for her husband. 844
Since he is too close to the mystery for comfort they abstain from mentioning it in his presence.

The result of the childbirth is a child and that child was recently a spirit. Therefore the name must come from the sacred language.

Initiation ceremonies also involve a very close contact with the spirit 553
world. Initiation is a sacred rite and sacred names must be taken when 881
passing through its various stages. When *Timalaykumi* is seized by men of his sister's husband's totem and yellow grease is smeared on his chest he ceases to be *Timalaykumi* and becomes *Maru-kumani*, a person in touch with unseen forces, and he therefore must have a sacred name. His previous name came from the sacred language, but this is a change of status and is expressed by giving him a new name, one that is only used on such occasions.

The fact that death renders sacred all the concepts closely associated 553
with the dead man does no doubt play a large part in causing the tabu 587
on names he has bestowed upon other people. There is I think another 768
factor which is even more important in the causation of this particular 593
tabu. When a man marries a widow he becomes to the tribe not the foster father of her children but the actual father. It cannot be pointed out too often that the Australian blackfellow does not distinguish physiological and social fatherhood. The new husband is married to the widow, he therefore must be the father of her children. Her children change their position in the tribe, and the function of the changing of their names is to show this change and the new social relationships that have been imposed upon them by it. It will be remembered in this connection that the husband changes the names of *all* the woman's children whether of her last husband or not, and also that words in either the sacred or the ordinary language which are similar in sound to the former names of the children do not become tabu. That is, it is a social not a sacred change of name.

It might be argued that the widow changes her status also, yet her 587
name is not changed. But in point of fact she does not alter her status; 768
her new husband is usually of the same clan as her last one, and frequently 553
he is an actual brother of the dead man. In any case her new husband cannot change her name as she is not one of the people he can bestow names upon. Nor does her name mean to the tribe any relation to her

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. 372 Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

6 :Fry D-5 (1913) 1950 OI20 Tiwi OI20

A Bathurst Island Initiation Rite.

Sir:

000 Not many white men can have had the experience of being tried by a native court. The following story may therefore be of interest.

114 I had visited a native camp in northern Bathurst Island in March 1913, and had made the acquaintance of an adolescent native boy called Cooper. He was smeared from head to foot with red ochre and wore a collar made of a thin piece of wood bent round his neck with the ends tied together with hair string behind with a strand of string about six inches long hanging down his back terminating in a blob of gum.

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[301]
[302]

[p. 167-A]

881 He was in the *kolloponiati* stage of initiation grade and was forbidden in the camp. One
[901] day in great secrecy he showed me some bark arm bracelets known as *tuguti*. A
[114] month later I was on a Malay lugger in the same region and some natives came out to the lugger in canoes. They told me that Cooper was to take the ceremony for his next degree that afternoon. I persuaded the master of the lugger to put me ashore on Papiau beach, opposite old Fort Dundas.
123 The natives were unwilling to take me with them at first, but finally consented. We walked inland for about four miles and met the main group, all painted for the ceremony. Cooper was said to be out in the mangroves, but came in shortly after about midday. He then went out again for a sugar bag. Having learned a few words of the language I attempted conversation. After a time I attempted to ask something about Cooper's *tuguti*. Immediately the cheerful group about me hushed and everyone seemed very concerned. They had gained the impression that I had stolen the *tuguti*. I tried to explain that I had only looked at them. About twenty of the men seated themselves in a circle and proceeded to discuss the problem. I overheard a few recognizable words at times, *ardjidit waitamanna*, no good white men, *paltoa*, dead, *yergobai*, alligator. I was sitting meanwhile with my back to a pandanus facing a salt water inlet. An emissary from the circle visited me from time to time and questioned me anxiously about what I had done with the *tuguti*. One humourist came over several times, tapped me on the shoulder, and grinningly pointed to the water, saying *yergobai*. Suddenly the discussion stopped, everybody stood up, and cordial relations were resumed as if nothing had happened.

881 Cooper returned about 4 p.m. He washed and was smeared all over with red ochre
[313] except the upper part of the face. Mean-

[P. 167-B]

881 while a small trestle had been built of three
[343] upright sticks about 2 ft. 6 in. high in the form of an isosceles triangle, with the apex to the west. Cross sticks were laid across the top of this and the sticks covered with grass. Three old men then took Cooper to a point about twenty yards east of the trestle and faced towards it, two on his right, one on his left. They each held a
[411] flat bladed club, *irruella*, in the left hand horizontally above the head and beat the
[533] point of it with a light round club with a pointed end, *merkunga*. Cooper held three *merkunga* in the crook of his left arm, one being taken and used by one of the old men. The old men advanced towards the trestle, chanting and beating their clubs in the way described. Cooper was slightly behind them. Young men followed the group. Cooper stood before the trestle as at an altar while the old men chanted for about five minutes. Water was called for, and brought by a woman and given to a visitor from the Mugula tribe. He then poured the water over Cooper's head. Cooper rubbed his belly with his *merkunga*. The visitor then pulled the hair string free from one end of the wooden collar, *cladini*, while Cooper made very wry faces. The collar was removed and the ceremony ended. I was
[439] presented with Cooper's *cladini* and *merkunga* in return for gifts, and I was cheerfully escorted back to the beach where the lugger was waiting for me.

H. K. Fry,
D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.

[p. 168 A]

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 OI20 Tiwi OI20

796 An interesting thing in the Kulama is that at that ritual a man must not touch his wives or children, because a deadly sweat called *kilamini* comes from his body and 827 will cause any of his nearest who touch it to die.[7]

[88] Another small ritual is the Miringaleta, a puberty custom for girls; it is connected with the Rainbow snake and is also a marriage ceremony. Last of all comes the 764 Pukamane, a death ritual, the purpose of which is to "lay the shade," *emuke.v* of 775 the deceased person and send it back to its clan centre from its wandering around the bush in an endless "walkabout."[8] The "shade" is said to leave the body after a period when the joints begin to crack (the natives call this *Yatarako*); it then immediately hurries to the various camps, emitting a strange cry, "oom—oom." By this sound—the cry of a night bird—the natives know a person has died.

Culture Heroes. They have culture heroes: Purakapale and with him are the 773 "dream time" heroes, Mudarti (the Kurakun of the subincized people), the wedge-776 tailed hawk, and numerous others all linked together in the legends of long ago; Kuparani, the frill necked lizard and his sister Ikaikgini, the black cockatoo, are characters in the incest tales.

There are also heroes who produced things and turned into animal form, Irakapa, the alligator, the maker and "boss" of the ceremonial spear—*Tumereka*. Rokama, the mosquito, the headman of the ordinary mangrove spear (*Orali*) which is used for everyday work. In making this he copied the speargrass, *Marakarti*.

The Present Day Spirits. Some spirits vitally affect their present lives. 776 Papinowari, or Lamparapari, the destroyer—expressing in a milder form the *Kadaitja* theory of the central natives. Kala is also an ordinary spirit, in fact a shade of a departed native of prowess in the past, who is on the "walkabout." Barminuar is a quaint elusive spirit—an island Peter Pan—who never grows old, and is about the size of a small boy. He is always up to mischief; many tales are recounted of natives meeting with him and always finding him "too clever." In one place they showed me a tree where such a spirit had entered, not through a hole in the trunk, but had just passed through it, splitting it open; the split is there now.[9] The rain [82] spirit is Pakadringa. The lightning is caused by his wife Bumarali, whose axe splits the trees. His other wife, Tomakaka, is the monsoon and when it begins the natives know it is she by the sighs (the hiss of the wind in those rains).

Magic. Their magic is somewhat the same as in other tribes. The idea differs 754 slightly in that with them the aim is to bring the destroyer, Lamparapari, upon the victim. This is done by burning a piece of blood—a hard piece which has dried up—and letting the wind carry the smell to the victim. The latter becomes affected because Lamparapari is attracted by this smell and sucks out his blood.

[7] The name for ordinary sweat is *kulumpara*. It is interesting to compare the Anula belief; if a person is sung with magic, a white exudation appears on the skin, with deadly effect.

[8] These people have no idea of reincarnation; in their view, a spirit is eternal but is never reborn.

[9] Trees often burst like this owing to being hollow and full of water or dirt, the pressure of which bursts them open. This could have given rise to the story.

183 contract for a girl's primary marriage follows a consistent cultural
582 pattern.

In any discussion of a marriage system all the varieties of marriage contracts must be considered. If, however, one variety is [121] found to be more frequent, preferred, prescribed, or invariable, then that is the one to which all the others must be related. In the Tiwi marriage system there is no difficulty in determining which type of contract should be considered basic to the others. The initial contract which leads to a first marriage of a Tiwi girl is prescribed and invariable and is thus necessarily the most frequent from the point of view of a female Ego, and it is also a preferred contract from the point of view of a male Ego. In the following discussion, I shall refer to this type of contract as a Type A contract. Types B, C, and D are all contracts leading to secondary marriages of Tiwi widows and will be briefly discussed later.

584 A Type A contract is made during the five-day period in which
606 a girl is isolated in the bush at the time of her first menstrual period. Although she has been living with her first husband, she is separated from him at this time. When she again returns to her husband's [88] camp, she is not only considered to have reached the status of a woman but also that of a mother-in-law. While she is in the bush, her father places a spear between her legs as she sleeps and then presents it to a boy or man whom he selects to serve his daughter as a son-in-law. The spear is regarded by the recipient as a symbol of a bestowed wife yet to be born to his young mother-in-law. By accepting the spear, the son-in-law becomes obligated to his mother-in-law; from that moment on he must supply her with food and goods and such services as she may request at any time. In return, she is [582] held solely responsible for seeing that her first daughter is sent to his camp when she reaches the wifely age of eight or ten. After receiving the first daughter, the son-in-law is expected to continue his services to his wife's mother, in return for which he can expect to receive other daughters subsequently born to her. The initial contract continues until either the son-in-law or mother-in-law dies. If either fails to honor his obligation, however, the other may terminate the contract. A Type A contract is therefore essentially a contract between a mother-in-law and a son-in-law. The arranger of the contract is the mother-in-law's father.

582 The Tiwi, like the majority of Australian societies, consider cross-cousin marriage to be the proper form of marriage arrangements. For the sake of simplicity, I shall conduct the following analysis as if the preferential marriage pattern involved first cousins, although in fact it generally involves second cousins. For the purpose of viewing the system from the standpoint of relative age the distinction between a first and a second cousin is irrelevant. The question of classificatory cousins will be deferred until the kinship terminology is discussed.

The following analysis of Type A contracts in terms of the factor of relative age will show that the selection of a FaSiSo rather than a

601 It became apparent to me when I was collecting kinship ter-
582 minology, that actual genealogical connection was an important factor in Tiwi kin classification and also, of course, in determining expected behavior. It is perhaps for this reason that I have always viewed the system of preferential marriage as concerned with actual second cross-cousins rather than with classificatory cross-cousins however distantly removed. First cross-cousins are definitely considered a "little-bit-wrong-way." Unfortunately my actual genealogies are too few and too shallow to shed much statistical light on the problem. It has also occurred to me that with extreme polygyny and obligatory remarriage there should be more first and second cross-cousins available to Ego than with monogamy or limited polygyny.

601 With their strong preference for unilateral cross-cousin marriage it might be expected that the Tiwi would have a Sudanese type of cousin terminology in which cross-cousins would be terminologically differentiated on the basis of whom one could and could not marry. When I phrased this question to my women informants, however, I could find no such discrimination. Women do, nevertheless, make a terminological distinction between cross-cousins to whom they are technically married before birth and those whom they may marry in the future when and if their Type A contract lapses.

585 Here I must interject some additional ethnographic information.
881 At the conclusion of a girl's puberty ceremony, she returns to the camp of her husband (*imbunei*), where she is painted. Then her husband and his brothers, all of whom she also calls *imbunei*, line up with the youngest first and the actual husband last. One by one they hit her with a feather pompom (*tokwiinga*) until the husband's turn arrives. At this point the girl runs, and her husband pursues her, catches her, and makes her kneel by a tree, which is marked. I have chosen to regard this ritual as a marriage ceremony in which the Type A contract is finally validated with all its ramifications. The
[582] fact that the husband's brothers are terminologically classed even at this time with the actual husband and play a part in the marriage ceremony may be regarded as validating the continuance of the Type A contract through successive remarriages (of Type A2) to the younger brothers of the original holder of the contract.

587 If a woman survives all her *imbunei*, she becomes eligible to
601 marry any of her other cross-cousins, either matrilateral or patrilateral, through contracts of Types B, C, or D. It is these cross-cousins, who did not become auxiliary "husbands" under her Type A contract, to whom she applies the term *mamaninya* or its variant, *mamanini*.

601 *Terminology in the First Ascending Generation*

11 *ningani*: father; also FaBr, FaFaSo, FaFaBrSo, MoMoFa, MoMoFaBr. Affinal application: MiHu, MoMoMoHu, HuMoBr.

12 *ingnari*: mother; also MoSi, MoMoDa, MoMoSiDa, FaFaSiDa. Affinal application: FaWi, MoMoFaWi, HuFaSi.

10:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1962 O120 Tiwi O120

discussed the factor of relative age as a major determinant of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in the particular type of contract which is universal for first marriages among females and is also the preferred contract for males. I have also described several variant patterns of Tiwi marriage contracts and have shown that these cannot be considered as alternatives to the preferred type but rather as additional patterns which apply only to a woman's secondary marriages. These additional types of contracts are also, to some extent, conditioned by the relative ages of the participants, but the resultant form of marriage may vary from a continuance of patrilateral cross-cousin marriage to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and even to marriage with certain relatives who are not cross-cousins. The wide variation in contracts leading to secondary marriages for women does not affect the continuance of preferred unilateral cross-cousin marriage or the exchange of wives between particular descent and local groups until the second generation after the variant marriage. Consequently, any change in the social organization of the Tiwi brought about by variations in marriage contracts is a gradual change, but it is also an inevitable and accepted form of change. The Tiwi rightly consider that as individuals they have considerable freedom in the selection of mates from almost any descent and local group and even from among a number of categories of kinsmen. Their Ego-oriented marriage system provides both stability and flexibility, and this is reflected in their system of kin classification.

NOTES

1. The field work on which this paper is based was undertaken in 1954 at the Snake Bay Native Settlement on Melville Island and was jointly financed by the National Geographic Society and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.
2. In 1959, I used the relative age of spouses in a preliminary analysis of Tiwi unilateral cross-cousin marriage (Goodale 1959). It was with considerable pleasure that I found that a similar analysis by Rose (1960) had quite independently arrived at the same conclusions. Even more interesting was the fact that in cases where I had to calculate expected ages for many of my kin relations, Rose, with more complete age data, could give the average and range in ages for the same relatives, and that in most cases his "average" and my "estimated" ages were the same or within one or two years of one another.
3. For their valuable comments, criticisms, and advice I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Robbins Burling, Ward H. Goodenough, Edward B. Harper, Barbara S. Lane, and George P. Murdock.
4. Unfortunately, since the only age data collected in the field were for husbands and wives, I have had to use expected ages rather than average or mean ages throughout most of this paper (see note 2 above).
5. The Tiwi believe that sexual intercourse is the direct and only cause of menarche.

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

The Beginning of Tiwi Careers

162 [621] The Malauila in 1928-29 consisted of forty-nine males and sixty females of all ages. The males were divided into the following age groups:

20 years and below	28
between 21 and 30	7
between 31 and 42	7
between 43 and 55	4
over 55	3
Total	49

561 [858 882] [591] Of the twenty-eight males aged 20 or below, none had a wife of any kind, and none of them expected or were expected to have one. This group comprised the male children—boys and youths—and such males were of no importance whatever in the Tiwi scheme of things. They lived in the households of older men and were ignored by the male elders.

561 589 884 The next group, the seven men between 21 and 30, was the group of young men whom the elders were just beginning to take seriously. The younger of them were almost indistinguishable from the "youths," while the older of them were beginning to be watched by the seniors with some interest. Of the seven, six were neither married to a wife of any sort nor promised a wife. One, called Banana by the whites, was a man of about 28 and married [582] to an ancient crone who was childless by three previous husbands, but she was in the category of "disputed" wife since her young husband had only been [177] able to acquire and hold her because of abnormal circumstances arising from the presence of white buffalo-hunters on Melville Island some years previously. Under pre-white conditions, none of the seven men under 30 would have had a wife of any kind.

561 884 557 [582] The years between 30 and 40 were the crucial years for Tiwi men in their establishment of households and careers. It was during this period that men normally married their first ancient widows and the "likely to be successful" became sorted out from the less-likely. As they passed into their thirties, men were allowed to enter for the first time into the influence game and, as the most junior players, they entered it by becoming subordinates and satellites of the bigger and more senior players, or by making alliances among themselves so as to pool their small individual assets.

159 554 [589] In this age group in 1928-29, there were seven Malauila men ranging in age from around 31 to 42. One (Tiberun) was still unmarried and unpromised. He was thus (at age about 33) the oldest bachelor in the band. Not unnaturally he spent a good deal of time with other bands or at the Mission in the hope that his failure to get started in Malau might be remedied by elders of other bands or even by the priests. Tiberun was an older full brother of Banana, the 28-year-old married irregularly to a woman whom he had "stolen." A glance at their family tree revealed one potent reason why Tiberun

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 a "young operator" somewhat before 1900, the deals by which he got his
557 career launched were difficult to reconstruct. The results of them, plus the fact that he lived long enough to draw full dividends from them, gave him by
159 1928-29 a wife-list of twenty-one. These had been accumulated as follows:
595

When around 30 years old he remarried two elderly widows and a year or two later received his first bestowal. Thus by age 33 he had three wives. On that foundation he went ahead thus:

		Total
At age 33		
Had two widows and one bestowed wife		3
Between age 33 and age 43		
Remarried two more widows and had three more bestowed wives join him	+5	8
Between age 43 and age 53		
Three more bestowed wives came into residence	+3	11
(During these twenty years at least five bestowed wives died in infancy or childhood)	+5	16
Between age 53 and age 65		
Two more bestowed wives joined him and he married 2 more widows (one the mother of Boya)	+4	20
Now at age 66 there is still one more bestowed wife, aged about 9, in her father's household	+1	21

Thus his list of twenty-one wives was made up of six elderly widows and fifteen bestowed or rebestowed young wives.

By 1928-29 five of his bestowed wives had died before puberty and one was still with her father. Three of his six widows were dead. Subtracting these nine women, we find that his current household contained twelve resident and active wives: the oldest about sixty, two in their fifties, four in their forties or thirties, three in their twenties, and the two youngest around seventeen or eighteen years of age. Almost all of them had borne children since joining his household, but the death rate had been high among Ki-in-kumi's children and from all of his wives he had only eight living children of whom six were girls. Five of these six daughters he had bestowed or rebestowed on Padimo (see above) and the sixth on a middle-aged Rangwila. His oldest living daughter was the girl of 20 married to Padimo. His oldest living son was a boy of 18, despite the fact that Ki-in-kumi had been "a married man" for over thirty-five years. This was a situation which many Tiwi elders found themselves
159 in at the close of long and successful lives. With numerous wives, numerous
592 step-sons, large households to be managed, and large estates to be liquidated after their deaths, their oldest real sons (as distinct from step-sons) were still boys or youths and as such quite unsuitable as executive assistants while the old man lived or as heirs or executors after the old man died. Quite apart
882 from kinship considerations, the Tiwi emphasis on age and seniority made it
888 impossible for Ki-in-kumi to utilize in any capacity his 18-year-old son. A youth of that age was a nonentity, whoever his father.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

he still had six years to go after that, not finishing the final grade of *Mikingula* until somewhere past the age of 24 or 25.

In contrast with the mainland initiation ceremonies, we think the most interesting point about Tiwi initiation resides not in the formal ceremonies but in the removal from the food-production units, for long periods of the year, of all the young males between the ages of 14 and 25. It is true that they did not spend *all* their time in seclusion and that after the age of twenty they remained mostly in their household camps, where they contributed to the household food production. Nonetheless, it remains clear that only a very well-off tribe could afford to allow so much time off from food production to all its young hunters. Tiwi fathers, it would seem, in arranging for the initiation of their sons to begin just when they were becoming productive hunters, were willing to sacrifice that productivity for less tangible advantages. The youths, secluded and guarded in the bush while getting an education, were not only out of the work force but were also out of the predatory-bachelor force. A Tiwi elder made sacrifices to "send his sons to college" but he breathed easier to know that the sons of the other elders were all there too.

All males without exception had to go through the full initiation cycle, and from the time of their first forcible seizure at the age of 14-15 to their final graduation at 24-26, they were in a state of *pukimani* and their personal names were strictly taboo to everybody in the tribe. Each youth was referred to only by his grade name, *Marukumarni* for the first year, *Mikingula* for the last four years, and so on. And here we return finally to a point which was mentioned much earlier—namely, the complete unimportance in tribal eyes of all males below the age of twenty-five. Until they had completed the final stage of initiation, Tiwi males were still boys; they did not even have names. Occasionally, when collecting genealogies and coming upon a reference to a young man, the innocent anthropologist would ask, "Is he married?" In tones of the deepest contempt the informant would reply, "That kid, how could he be married? He's still *Mikingula*." Though *Mikingula* was the stage typically reached by a man at about 20-21 and lasted for the next four years, to the Tiwi it was still a stage in the life of a boy. Not until he had finished as *Mikingula* could he step out into the world and life of men. How he spent the years immediately after finishing initiation decided how soon some senior man would think sufficiently highly of him to aid him in acquiring his first ancient widow.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

591 while the woman will always be looked upon as belonging to her former
621 horde, the child changes his, taking that of his step-father. Very often
[882] when a boy is aged about 14 or 15 he is taken by his mother's brother of another horde to live with that horde for some years. Often he is initiated there and not quite so often he will spend the rest of his life there. It is no uncommon occurrence for a man to have spent his adolescent years in two or three different hordes in addition to the one into which he was born, always under the supervision of one or other of his classificatory mother's brothers. Two cases at least occurred in the last few years of young unmarried men who had been reared and initiated in one horde leaving that horde of their own free will and going to live permanently in another because they considered they had there more chance of obtaining a wife.[8]

On the other hand, a woman will usually be looked upon as belonging to the same horde all her life, even though she marries young and goes to live with another horde. To the tribe at large such a woman is for example a *Tiklawila*, though she has lived with the *Yeimpi* ever since her marriage, and her *Tiklawila* origin will never be forgotten.

As a result of these conflicting customs it is difficult to lay down any definite rule in regard to membership of the horde. The best generalization is perhaps to say that a woman retains all her life a connection with the horde into which she is born no matter where patrilocal marriage may lead her, while a man on the other hand belongs to whatever horde he is living with at the moment, this being normally but not at all invariably his father's horde.

TOTEMISM

614 The Tiwi have a system of matrilineal totemic clans. Each clan has a special relation to one or sometimes to two and in two instances to three species of natural objects. The members of the clan have a solidarity of their own, helping each other in tribal fights, speaking of each other as "brother" despite the variation in their actual blood relationship, and not marrying women of their own totem. There are,
101 614 however, few of the distinctive features of Australian totemism as known
791 from other parts of the continent. They eat their totem without any

[8] It was hardly a logical proceeding as one left the *Tiklawila* for the *Mumpula* and the other (quite independently) left the *Mumpula* for the *Tiklawila*.

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OI20 Tiwi OI20

 302 561

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SHARK DANCE is among traditional, imitative figures that are performed during ritual preparation of toxic *Kulama* yams.

462 868 ceived additional instruction in spear-fishing and birding, while girls were taught more intensively to locate and identify edible plants. The children, as a result, were generally independent economically in their early teens, by 582 which time the girls were already married. Young males ●[883] contributed to their parents' larder and to other households, but did not marry and acquire households until they were more than thirty years old. Even now, this late marriage age obtains in theory, but not always in practice. [183]

885 THUS, to the Tiwi, economic independence and/or marriage did not alone signify adulthood. The Tiwi adult was intellectually, rather than physiologically, a mature individual who was expected to join actively in the non-economic affairs of the community. An adult was also expected to be almost entirely responsible for his own health, wealth, and future prospects. This included attaining success in hunting and in war and, for the men, in wife-collecting. If an adult became ill or was injured or, as a Tiwi would say, was unlucky in the pursuit of life's benefits, he alone was responsible for not behaving as an adult should.

884 The annual *Kulama* ceremony, held by each community in April at the end of the rainy season, was a most important event to insure individual success. Although a collec-

[P. 11, (C)]

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 12(C)]

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 302 561

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142
308
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[colors appearing in original:
Hair - left: white, center stripe: red, right: yellow.
Face - left: unpainted, center stripe and dots: yellow,
right: red. -- Analyst.]

[Cover]

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ARTICLES

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ADULTHOOD — *Jane C. Goodale* 10
BEAUTY AND SCIENCE — *Meredith L. Jones* 18
ECOLOGY OF THE HEIGHTS — *Lawrence W. Swan* 22
BENEFICENT CANNIBALISM — *Edwin Way Teale* 30
THE SUN
FAMILIAR SHORE BIRDS IN JAPAN — *Dean Amadon* 48
ROOT GROWTH CLAIMS SOIL FROM SEA — *Virgil N. Argo* 52

DEPARTMENTS

REVIEWS — *William R. Ferrand* 3
SKY REPORTER — *Simone Dare Gessner* 56
TRAVEL: FAR AND NEAR — *Tim Spierings* 60
ABOUT THE AUTHORS 64
NATURE AND THE CAMERA — *David Linton* 65

COVER: A man in the group of Tiwi natives living on Melville Island, in the Timor Sea, paints his face while participating in the Tiwi's annual, three-day *Kulama* ceremony, which is named after a tonic yam. The Tiwi who still adhere to tradition believe that great powers for good or evil dwell in *Kulama* yams, and that one must participate in their ritual preparation if one is to benefit from these powers. For these young Tiwi men and women who undergo the six years of instruction in the ritual, it represents a formal initiation into adulthood. Dr. Jane C. Goodale discusses this ceremony in the article that begins on page 10.

142
302
884

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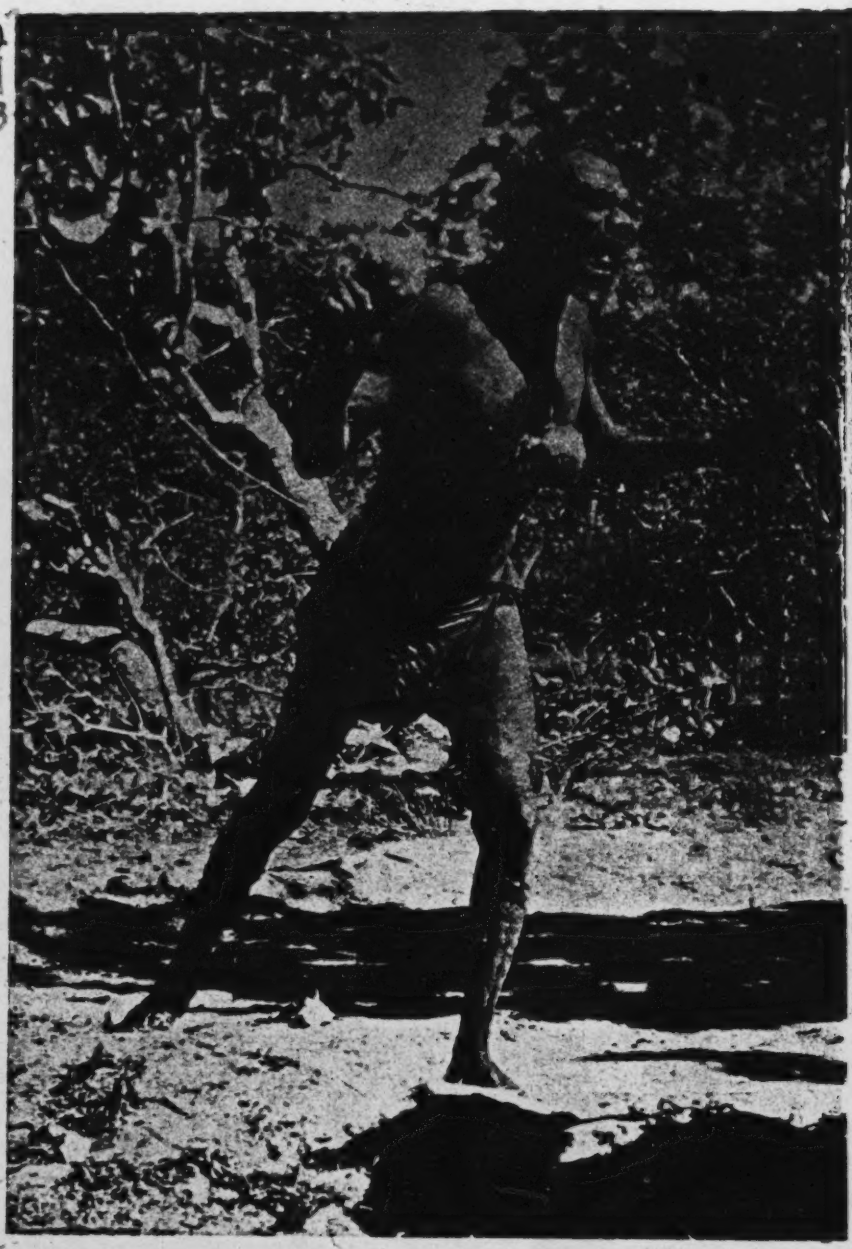
[Title Page]

149
884
533



Tiwi native on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day Kulama ceremony.

[P.10]

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By JANE C. GOODALE

884 IN 1912 SIR BALDWIN SPENCER, a professor of biology at
[114] the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in which a number of young boys and girls participated in the
[824] ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called *Kulama*. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately
[114] associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual *Kulama* ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony,
[198] however, was still being performed with no significant changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place without initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to consider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe
[197] that such participation cannot prepare them adequately for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to those who still perform it, one must first understand what
161 the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a
131 thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Melville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Eco-
178 nomically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gatherers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, digging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and found that little else was needed to exploit the natural resources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied,
[224] and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal and could simply be collected during the day with little
825 physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or
462 digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were
868 taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

000 TIWI NATIVE on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11, (B)]

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SHARK DANCE is among traditional, imitative figures that are performed during ritual preparation of toxic *Kulama* yams.

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885 THUS, to the Tiwi, economic independence and/or marriage did not alone signify adulthood. The Tiwi adult was intellectually, rather than physiologically, a mature individual who was expected to join actively in the non-economic affairs of the community. An adult was also expected to be almost entirely responsible for his own health, wealth, and future prospects. This included attaining success in hunting and in war and, for the men, in wife-collecting. If an adult became ill or was injured or, as a Tiwi would say, was unlucky in the pursuit of life's benefits, he alone was responsible for not behaving as an adult should.

884 The annual *Kulama* ceremony, held by each community in April at the end of the rainy season, was a most important event to insure individual success. Although a collec-

[P. 11, (C)]

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 12(C)]

11;Goodale E-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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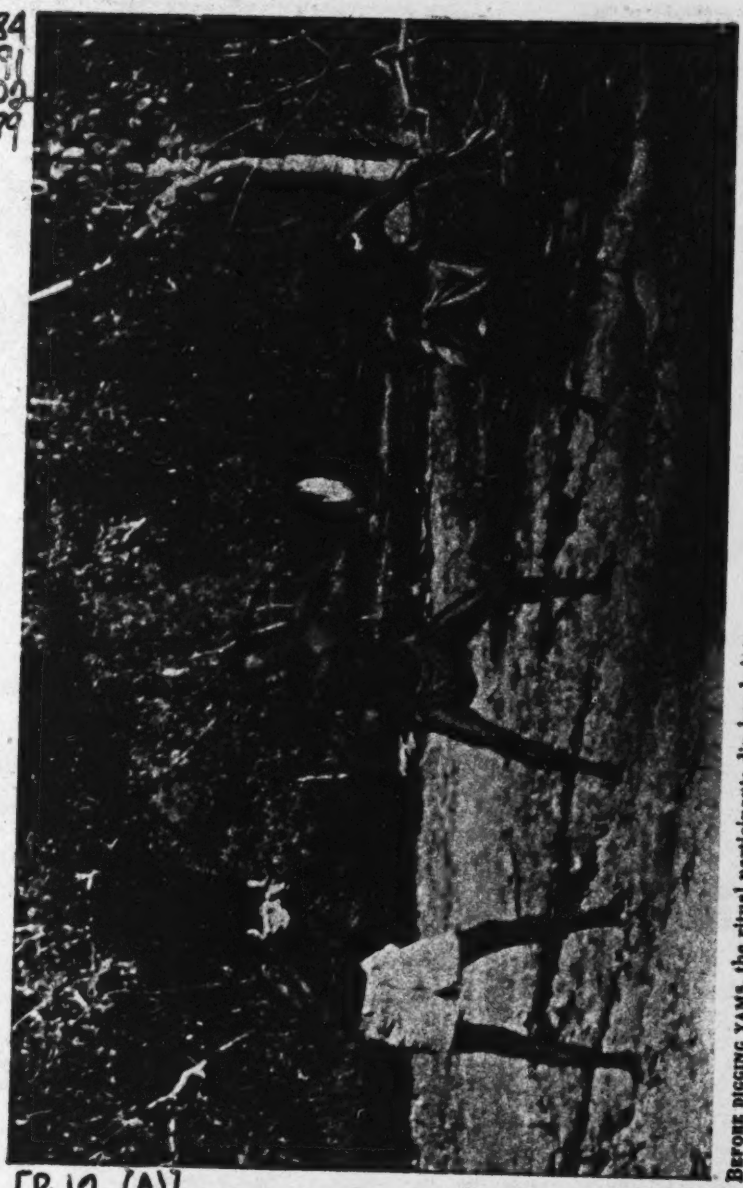

BEFORE DIGGING YAMS, the ritual participants dip hands into white paint and pat it around eyes to insure acute vision.

[P. 12, (A)]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954, 1957) 1963 C120 T1w1 C120

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BEFORE HOEING YAMS, the ritual participants dip hands into white paint and pat it around eyes to insure acute vision.

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CEREMONIAL RING is prepared by clearing ground of grass, sticks, and stones. Participants will sing and dance there.

[P. 12, (B)]

● 884 tive, community ceremony, its benefits accrued only to individual participants, and then only to those who had followed the complex procedures correctly. Thus it was vitally important to every Tiwi individual, male or female, to receive instruction in the *Kulama* ritual before being considered a fully adult member of the tribe. The instruction period lasted six years, during which the initiates, among other requirements, had to participate actively in six *Kulama* rituals. Following this training, the individuals were considered responsible adults by other members of the tribe, but only through continued participation in the ritual could that condition be maintained.

[178] TODAY the ritual is still performed by those who believe in it, and it will probably continue until the last initiated Tiwi dies, or until the underlying meaning is totally lost and is replaced by ideas of how to be successful that have their origins in Western thought.

[262] The ceremony itself takes three days to complete and centers on the preparation of a toxic variety of yam, the [252] *Kulama*. To make this yam edible, it must first be soaked. It is then baked, mashed, and again soaked for a time in fresh water. Even after the poisons have been removed by this elaborate process, an extremely bitter taste remains. The Tiwi say they never eat the yam except at the conclusion of the *Kulama* ceremony. Those who believe in the [778] ritual say the yam has tremendous power for causing good or evil, and thus one must handle the yam carefully during the preparation, speak to it softly, sing to it at times, and always treat it with respect. The individual absorbs the power of the yam by touching it, by rubbing the body with it, and finally by eating it. All these steps are ritualized. [462] Special digging sticks are made, and, contrary to the usual practice of having the women gather plants, only men

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 13(B)...Qual/ist]

11:Goodale E-5 (1954,1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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Running paint into the hair is supposed to prevent illness, and daubing it on the arms and legs wards off broken bones.

[P. 13, (A)]

884 are allowed to dig the yam. A special dance area, or cere-
460 monial ring, is cleared on the ground and a special cook-
535 ing fire is built in its center. On each of the three ceremonial
305 days the participants paint themselves in specified ways
with ocher. During the evening of each day, while the yams
are soaking or cooking, the male participants, singly or
884 together, walk slowly counterclockwise around the cere-
533 monial fire, beating sticks together as an accompaniment
534 to specially composed songs. At times the wives, who re-
main outside the ring, sing with the men, or they may join
their husbands in traditional dances that imitate various
535 aspects of the natural world around them.

The songs are a vital part of the ritual. They must be newly composed for the occasion and may relate to any event or abstract idea the composer chooses. The songs
154 often deal with injustices the singer has experienced in the past year, about which he wishes to register an "official" complaint:

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"There was a funeral,
You went first, I came after.
Old people came in first.
I was late because I had a *Kulama*.
Why didn't you wait for me?"

or

"When Dory have baby girl
The old man said, 'That's for you.'
Dory, my mother-in-law, she burns me.
Dory doesn't know the old people way.
I would like to kill her."

Others may be in the nature of news reports, in which the listeners are informed of anything interesting that may have happened to the singer during the preceding year.
CE20 For instance, the composer of the following song had just

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P.14, (A)--Analyst]
[P.13, (B)]

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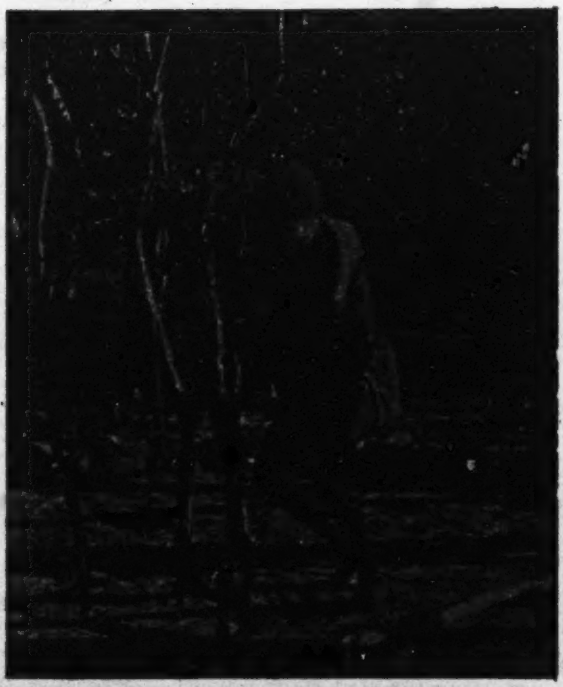

STAKES ARE SET in the center of cleared area to hold mound of sticks and pieces of anthill that will be burned later.

[P.13,(C)]

11;Goodale E-5 (1954,1962) 1963 CE20 Thrl CE20

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YAMS TO BE USED in *Kulama* ceremony are retrieved from a fresh-water pool in which they had been soaked overnight.

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For instance, The composer of the following song had just returned from Brisbane, where he and a group of eight other aborigines had performed dances in honor of Queen Elizabeth's 1954 visit to Australia:

[539]

"The Queen was talking in England,
'I would like to see a blackfellow dance.'
When I was in Brisbane, the Queen said,
'I would like to meet a black boy!'
And I went up.
King Philip, he had a good look at me.
He was watching a lot as I danced.
I was singing into a loud-speaker."

[173]

Some songs are historic in nature, retelling an event that must be kept alive according to the traditions of the tribe. One such composition recalls the Japanese attack on Darwin during World War II:

[539]

"An enemy plane flies low over Melville Island.
The men on the ground, at the word 'Standby,'
Shoot it down with a cannon."

The children of the singer are often song subjects. This first example describes how the children behaved in one of their father's dreams.

[539]

"My children have gone to the other side
of the island.
But they must come back as they are hard up
for tobacco.
My children have now come back.
I know this for they have taken the tobacco
which I have held in my hand."

or

"My children will wear clothes and shoes.
They will go to school and learn to write."

All the songs have the same chanting tune, which is associated with the *Kulama* ceremony, and the composer must fit his words to the set meter of the chant. In many cases this requires using archaic words that are no longer a

[P. 14, (1)]

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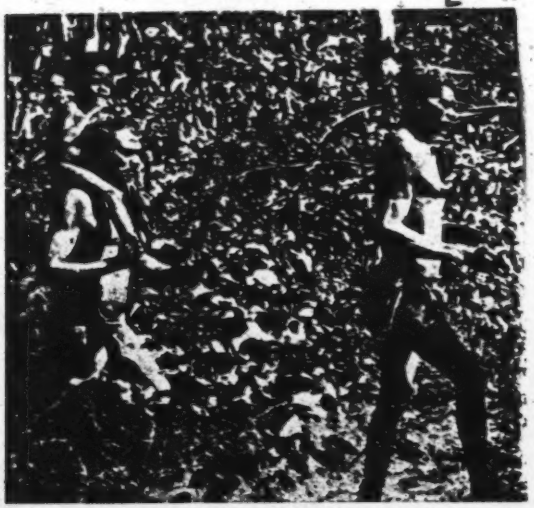

YOUNG GIRL AND BOY accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

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part of Tiwi speech. Poetic license in pronunciation and syllabification often occurs. The Tiwi have high regard for the linguistic ability needed to become a good Tiwi composer and singer, and instruction in the art of song composition and delivery is given to the initiates. Each initiate must perform in the *Kulama* before he can be considered a "graduate." According to my Tiwi informants, this requirement is the hardest of all, and it is also the reason for there being no set age for initiation. The old people are said to watch the young, and when the observers consider them mature enough, they swoop down upon their choices "like chicken hawks, without warning"—as the Tiwi say—and start the initiates along the path to adulthood.

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As far as I know, the *Kulama* ceremony has no parallel elsewhere in Australia. And there are many interesting questions that come to mind concerning the origin of the *Kulama* as it exists today. For instance, why is instruction in the preparation of a poisonous yam that is not part of the daily diet considered so important for initiation into adulthood? What is the origin of the idea that a yam has power over good and evil, and health and sickness? Why is such prominence accorded a yam in what is principally a hunting and gathering society?

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Any answers to these questions must be highly speculative, for the origin of the ceremony and its development lie in the unrecorded history of the Tiwi. However, I believe the following statements may well be valid.

Instruction in the natural resources of the land was considered vital to becoming an adult. Because the *Kulama* yam is poisonous and is not widely distributed, it was never part of the regular diet, but it could be used in economic emergencies if properly prepared. Instruction in its preparation was therefore extremely important as a potential survival measure. However, since the Tiwi live in a favorable environment, it is highly probable that such emergencies were very rare, so it was considered expedient to hold annual instruction periods. Because knowledge of

[262]

[See P. 15(A) for other part of caption and picture -- ANALYST]

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Young girl and boy accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

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Fig. 15 (A)]

baked by placing them atop pieces of anthill heated to a glow by wood fire, then covering the yams with hot earth.

MAN LIGHTS FIRE beneath chunks of anthill. When the pieces are red-hot, burning wood below them will be brushed away.

11.Goodale E-5 (1954,1959) 1963 CEBO TIM/ CEBO

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FATHER PAINTS GIRL to show how it would be done if she were to be initiated. Although no children of group were considered ready, ceremony was held to maintain benefits thought to accrue to the Tiwi who had undergone initiation.

[P. 15, (8)]

LIFE, JUNE 5, 1944, JUNE 12, 1944 ONE TIWI CHIEF

11;Goodale K-5 (1954, 1962) 1963 CE20 Tiwi CE20

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HOT EARTH over baked *Kulama* yams is removed. Yams that are to be eaten at end of ritual must be resoaked in water.

[824]

SOME COOKED YAMS are cut, peeled, and mashed. Water and paint are then added. Yams are always handled with respect.

[851]
[858]

MEN RUB MASH on bodies to insure health, then do so to the uninitiated young, whose health is paternal responsibility.

[P. 16, (A)]

884 the technique had to be made meaningful to the initiates,
174 the lifesaving qualities of this famine food were explained as health-giving powers. A ceremony accompanied by song and dance was certainly a dramatic and effective means of impressing the initiates in preparation methods. The ritual
[180] served another purpose as well: because traveling is so difficult during the rainy season, each household is isolated from the others. The *Kulama* ritual follows this period, and it is natural to expect a reunion to be an occasion to exchange news, settle differences, and tell stories or sing songs that keep traditions alive.

885 MUCH harder to account for is the Tiwi idea of adulthood. That every adult is solely responsible for his own health and wealth, and that success in life depends entirely on personal behavior and industry, are ideals
[171] strangely similar to those that underlie the American way of life, despite the great gulf between the aboriginal culture and our own. But it is not at all surprising that the Tiwi
177 have a great sympathy for much of Western civilization. Many hold the same views as the *Kulama* singer quoted earlier in this article who saw his children wearing clothes
[181] and shoes and going to school to learn to write, for this is the Tiwi's contemporaneous idea of success in a way of life introduced to them only a few short years ago.

Early in the summer of 1962 I revisited the Tiwi for
[114] two weeks. Although I knew that the Tiwi desired schooling and training in European ways of life and would seize any such opportunity afforded them, I was hardly prepared for the tremendous changes that had taken place during the eight years that had elapsed since my first visit.

Three months after the *Kulama* ceremony of 1954, a
[871] government school was opened. Now all the Tiwi children go to school, and some who have finished the six-year program in the government school have received subsequent training as teaching or nursing assistants. Some others have had "on-the-job" training in various activities connected with a large-scale forestry project that has been started on Melville Island. In fact, all the able-bodied Tiwi men and women are currently employed, and their tasks bear little or no relation to their old life in the bush.

It is perhaps significant—but to me not at all surprising—that I did not hear a single real complaint from the Tiwi regarding their new manner of living. They seem to like it and are anticipating bigger and better things (in the
[124] Western sense) for their children. Hunting has become a week-end diversion and the children receive little or no
[868] real instruction in that traditional skill.

178 SOME aspects of Tiwi life are slow to die, however. Most
784 of the old taboos, the observance of which was considered necessary in the past in order to insure health and wealth, are still observed, although at least one teen-ager expressed doubt that the taboos had any actual effect on the outcome of one's life. Western medicine and public
177 health practices are fast replacing belief in the *Kulama*.
884 During the past eight years only three men have begun the six years of training for *Kulama* initiation, and some of the older men no longer participate in the ceremony. However, as long as even a small number of Tiwi believe in the *Kulama*, the ritual will survive, but I doubt that it will for long.

000 NEAR END of *Kulama* ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.
[P. 16, (B)]

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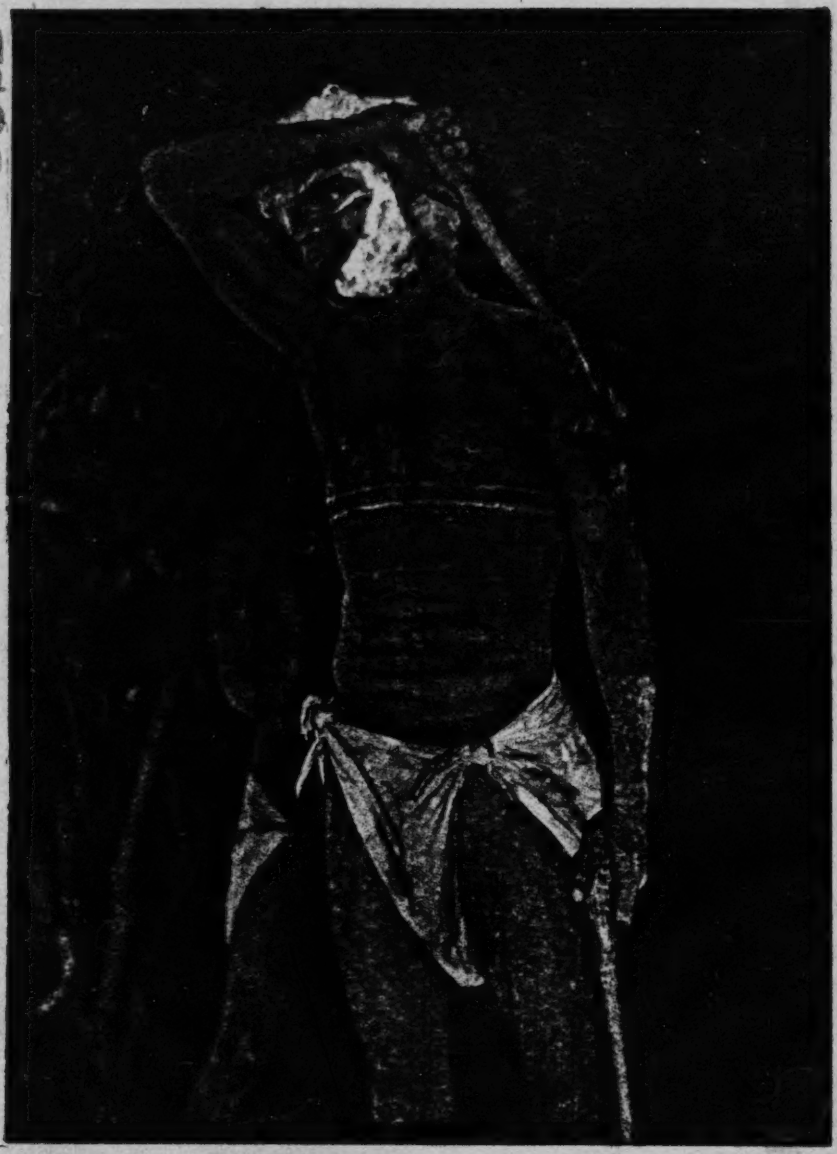

Near end of Kulama ceremony, performer, although hoarse and tired, must continue to sing until late in the night.

[colors appearing in original:

Body - light purple with white.

Hair and beard - left: yellow, center stripe: red, right: white.

Red across nose and upper cheek. -- Analyst.]

[p. 17]

2: Mountford OI20 Tiwi OI20

● 885

[For material on adult initiation rites see category 881.]

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[P. 11, (C)]

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

of bands as part of any political or legal system; they were members of households as part of a domestic system. What held the unit together was the central position and dominance of the father or husband, and hence the life of a household was only as long as his lifetime. When he died, the household broke up and the surviving members joined other households, perhaps in the same district, perhaps in some other band territory. Such change of household was carried out by the individuals concerned, not quite at will, but certainly not with sufficient uniformity for any political or legal label to be put upon it.

Uniformity was derived from the fact that every Tiwi had to live in a household. The universal prohibition on unmarried females was obviously one expression of that requirement. For men, the requirement was less firm, and if a young man wanted to live entirely alone he was free to try—although there is no record of any man having tried it for more than a few weeks at a time. Even if his mother were dead and his father or step-father did not welcome him, he attached himself to some household since, apart from any question of loneliness, this was the only way by which he could eat regularly. For Tiwi households were primarily autonomous food-producing and food-consumption units. A household made its own decisions, camped where it saw fit to camp, moved on when the food quest made it advantageous or necessary to move on. A large household, such as that of Ki-in-kumi or any other big man, was a complete community in itself, with the old man as executive director. He laid down the daily, weekly, and monthly work and travel schedules for the women, the young men, and the children. Most of the time the work went automatically because all the adults and the older children knew their jobs.

Daily Activities

By shortly after dawn each day, the household was up, and after a light breakfast, usually of leftovers from the previous night, everybody left camp to go to work. The women and children (except perhaps the five- to ten-year-old boys, who were rather useless at that age) scattered in every direction from the camp with baskets and/or babies on their backs, to spend the day gathering food, chiefly vegetable foods, grubs, worms, and anything else edible. Since they had spent their lives doing it, the old women knew all about gathering and preparing vegetable foods, and they supervised the younger women. This was one important reason for men marrying widows, and even a man with many young wives was quite likely to remarry an elderly widow or two nonetheless. A husband with only young wives might have a satisfactory sex life, but he still needed a household manager if he wished to eat well. The supervision of the female members of the household was left to the old women and, provided the returns were good, the husband did not attempt to interfere nor to give orders concerning the details of women's work.

After the women had scattered out in a wide circuit from the camp, the husband might hunt, but only if he were not too old. In hunting kanga-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

224 roos,[2] wildfowl, and other game, keen eyesight is essential, hence Tiwi men
[887] did very little hunting once they were past about forty-five, though they hated to admit their hunting days were over. The meat, fish, and game provided for the large household of an old man was obtained by the young men, and this was about the only thing an old man thought his sons or his step-sons were good for. Typically the young man, when he returned at nightfall with
[592 a kangaroo which he had spent most of the day tracking down and spearing, would ignore the old man and dump the carcass at the feet of his mother as
888] if to say, "I brought this back for you, not for that old So and So."

As the women straggled back to camp toward sundown with the results
512 of their day's gathering and the young hunters brought in their bags, cooking
595 began and the main meal of the day (usually the only hot meal) was eaten. The Tiwi themselves had no doubt about the close relationship between plural marriage and good eating. "If I had only one or two wives I would starve,"
[797] the head of a large household once told the missionary who was preaching against plural marriage, "but with my present ten or twelve wives I can send them out in all directions in the morning and at least two or three of them are likely to bring something back with them at the end of the day, and then
262 we can all eat." This was a realistic appraisal of the economic situation and it is to be noted that he put the emphasis on the food obtained by the women
[222] gatherers rather than that supplied by the male hunters. Based on the observations of 1928-29, it would appear that the Tiwi ate pretty well, especially in the larger households. Kangaroo and other marsupials, and some of the larger lizards (for example, the goanna) were very plentiful in the bush, as were fish and turtles and dugong on the coasts and wild geese in many districts. But all these were extras or dividends; the staple everyday foods were the vegetable foods gathered day after day in apparently unending quantities by the women. For most months of the year there was always plenty of *kwoka*,
[252] a porridgelike dish prepared by soaking and mashing the small nuts of a native palm. These nuts grew in such quantity that in every large camp baskets or dishes of *kwoka*, at various stages of preparation, were always available, even for midnight snacks if anybody woke up hungry. *Kwoka* was about as dull and tasteless as Scotch porridge, but equally filling, and naked small boys full of *kwoka* had stomachs distended like balloons. In the wet season the place of *kwoka* was taken by *kolema*, a yam whose ripening and growing season was much shorter than that of the nuts from which *kwoka* was made. It was
[796] on the abundance of the *kolema* yams during January and February that the Tiwi supported the more elaborate of their collective ceremonials.

The abundance of these and other vegetable foods, plus the ample supply of game and fish in many places, meant that under aboriginal conditions the Tiwi lived at a food-consumption level much further above the near-

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[2] Actually there are no kangaroos on Melville and Bathurst Islands; the chief meat animal is a slightly smaller species of marsupial technically called the wallaby. As the distinction is important only to zoologists, and as many of the so-called kangaroos in American zoos are in fact wallabies, we prefer to use the more familiar word.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

staged and this was usually sufficient to incapacitate the offender and make him decide to move—at least for a while—into some other district. The group thus hastily convened to mete out public justice seldom numbered more than sixty or seventy people (seven or eight households) and having been convened *ad hoc* would remain camped together only for the forty-eight hours or less needed to deal with the emergency.

Joint Activities

This discussion of the alternative lines of action open to an outraged household head enables us to specify the relatively rare occasions during the year when the dull, quiet, day-by-day, food-gathering routines of the dispersed household camps were interrupted by events that required many households to gather together in one place and indulge in joint action. Foremost among these occasions were big funerals and the *kolema* ceremonial, both of which were mentioned above. These were the main religious events of the year, full of dancing, singing, wailing, and excitement. The excitement was the psychological result of so many people being together at the same time, a rare experience in the life of any Tiwi. Since the *kolema* ceremonial was an annual event and even the most enthusiastic funeral goer did not attend more than three or four really big funerals in the course of a year, we may reckon that even an old and important man, much concerned with ritual observances, would probably find himself a participant in such crowd activities on not more than some six occasions per year. For less important men and for women and children the number of such occasions was less than six. The *kolema* ceremonial lasted two weeks or more, big funerals, even when they became the occasion for carrying on other public business, did not last more than four or five days each. Hence we may reckon an average of about a week each for the half-dozen times a really big man spent in the company of a sizable crowd of fellow tribesmen, giving a total annual average of about six or seven weeks at most out of every fifty-two—or a little less than 10 percent of the year spent by an old important man in large ceremonial activities or what Durkheim calls the collective life of the tribe.

In addition there were the smaller gatherings, such as the funerals of younger men and most women, and the calling together of a number of households to settle a dispute in the manner we have described above. These were collective occasions also but they brought together a considerably smaller crowd. A really big man's funeral was likely to draw over three hundred people or even as much as one-third of the whole tribe.[4] Not only did many

[4] Tamboo's funeral in May, 1929 (he died in the previous August) drew practically the full band membership (men, women, and children) of the four Bathurst Island bands; almost all the Munupula; many Mandiimbula; and large delegations from the remaining three bands. With such a crowd, an actual head count was difficult, especially of the children, but there must have been over four hundred people present. Needless to say, excitement was intense; more fights occurred, more insults were exchanged, more ancient feuds revived and new ones started, and more food consumed than at any funeral in living memory. At least that was the opinion of Tamboo's chief mourners, but since it was they who threw the party and had to pay for it, they may have been biased.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

outdance and out-sing and out-party most of the men fifty years younger than himself.[6] 159 888

Since Tu'untalumi was a senior Tiwi household head who spent more of his time attending festivals, funerals, fights, and other collective occasions than did most of his contemporaries, it is instructive to examine his movements over a full year. If he had kept an engagement book during 1928-29, it would have looked something like this: 159 887

Early April (end of wet season): Leaves his home base in Tangio where he has spent most of the wet season and visits the Mission station to attend a few small funerals (children who have died at the Mission in the preceding months). During these funerals a series of fights and duels also takes place. Total people present: perhaps fifty or sixty. Time thus spent in helping to wind up public business: five days. Returns home to Tangio and remains there for rest of April. [797]

End of April: Goes to Rangu with a big party of other Tiklauila for a funeral (junior elder). Fairly big funeral, lots of people, lots of disputes. Time away, including leisurely journey to and from Rangu, about two weeks. Gets back home about middle of May. [764 166]

Middle of May—end of June: Lives quietly at home with his household in Tangio.

About July 1st: Goes to Mission for a few days, "visits" with whoever is there. Tries out a new composition of his own (song and dance) on group camped at Mission. Returns home for rest of July. [533 535]

Last week of July: Taking his younger wives and their children with two senior wives in charge of them, sets out for Malau for a big funeral with lots of people and fights. There he performs his new dance; is much consulted on ceremonial matters by the Malauila; gets into a few fights himself but handles them with dignity and honor; remains in Malau two weeks; stops off to visit and attend a small funeral with the Munupula on his way back; has a fight with a Munupula while there; returns to the Mission; stays there a day or two dispensing all the news from Malau and Munupi to those camped there; issues invitations for a grass burning in some sections of Tangio which were not burned in April or May. Goes on home to Tangio where some of his older wives have remained during his absence. Total time away: about three weeks. [166]

End of August: Is joined in Tangio by several other Tiklauila and Rangwila households whom he has invited. Grass burning and joint kangaroo hunting goes on for four or five days. Dancing and partying at night. After five days most of visiting group leave and he and his household remain alone in Tangio until well into October. [224]

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[6] There is no suggestion that Tu'untalumi was in any way an official ritual leader. All old men, by virtue of their years, were to some extent ritual leaders; he had merely worked harder and longer at it than most of them. His tirelessly joyful personality had a good deal to do with his success in the self-established role. In a culture that might be thought likely to make all its men gloomy, anxiety-ridden introverts, he was a warm, happy, dignified old extrovert and he was widely admired. [156]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 887 [166]

Middle of October: Rains about to commence. Last chance for travel before the wet season. Goes to another district for the naming ceremony of a new baby (he is its mother's father, having bestowed the mother on the man now naming the child). Goes on from there to the Mission. Finds a large party there about to visit the Mandiimbula on Melville Island, ostensibly for a funeral but really for a big argument since Tiklauila-Mandiimbula relations were badly strained at this time.[7] Joins this party. They go in force to the Mandiimbula country. Big fight. He is not much involved in the fighting, concentrates on the dancing.

[578 764]

End of October: Returns to Mission. War party disbands. He returns home to Tangio and remains there until the initiation ceremonies begin in late January. During this period (November-January) makes occasional very short visits to neighboring households and is occasionally visited by neighbors who drop in on him from no great distance away.

[881 574]

End of January: *Kolema* phase of initiation begins. As guardian of ritual, he is in much demand by the various groups with boys of suitable age. All the Tiklauila and Rangwila households gather together (about 300 people) for nearly four weeks to conduct these ceremonies. Much feasting, much dancing, he in the center of everything. Very few fights or disputes, which is the way he likes it.

[881]

End of February: Finish of *kolema* season. Finish of ceremonies. Households disperse. He and his household return to Tangio and remain there for the balance of the wet season, which usually ends toward the end of March.

During the year for which we have listed the details, Tu'untalumi attended three big funerals, one big *kolema* ritual, and several small funerals, and made a few other miscellaneous visits to other districts. In addition, he was the host at a joint kangaroo hunt in his own district and attended the naming ceremony of one of his daughters' children. He also was a member of one war party. Although this hectic social whirl totals up to about thirteen weeks spent away from home or with a large party of guests in the home, even the busy and popular Tu'untalumi spent about thirty-nine weeks out of the year living alone with his household and seeing nobody except members of that household. Since there were few other Tiwi as gregarious as he, we may take this figure as an outside limit and conclude that the great majority of "big men" spent at least four-fifths of their time in the isolated environment of the single household, engaged largely in the daily routine of getting a living and supervising their wives and children in their unending food quest.

571

[7] We have tried to keep out of the text those factors in the 1928-30 situation which were clearly due to post-white influences, and this friction was of that order. Briefly, Mandiimbula fathers with daughters bestowed on Tiklauila husbands were failing to deliver the girls at puberty to those husbands, hoping instead to hire them out as prostitutes to the Japanese pearling boats which periodically visited the Mandiimbula and Yeimpi beaches in search of women. See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of this outside influence as well as that of the Mission, which (for different reasons and motives) was also in the girl-buying business at this time.

[177] [548]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

592 595 587 The matter of men traveling to distant camps for ceremonials illuminates again, and from a new angle, the great value of elderly widows in the household. Tu'untalumi, during his visit to Malau in August, was able to split his household efficiently by taking a couple of old wives with him to supervise his young wives on the journey and leaving other old wives at home in Tangio to begin storing up food for the grass-burning project which he intended to stage on his return. It will be noticed in the account of his movements that he began issuing invitations to the grass burning on his way home from Malau, [224 251] showing his confidence that the elderly wives he had left at home would have the preparations well in hand during his absence. A big man with a big household really needed three or four elderly widows because these enabled him to split his work force in various ways as his various political and social obligations required and to be sure of trustworthy supervision of each of the segments. A man without widows in his household, or with only one, could not do this; in fact, it was hard for a man without widows to attend ceremonials at all, or even to receive a large party of visitors to his household. And, as we have already pointed out, since such a man would probably go hungry very often because he would not dare to send his unsupervised young wives into the bush to gather food, there were practically no such men nor such households. Widows were indispensable to a senior Tiwi, both in his public and in his private life.

Making Things

592 887 Throughout this chapter we have been stressing the contrast between the dull routine of life in an isolated Tiwi household during the greater part of the year and the sort of life typical on those relatively rare occasions when something special—a festival, a funeral, a fight, a grass burning, a naming ceremony, some collective phase of men's initiation—required the assembling together of several households for joint activity. Before leaving the daily life of the isolated camp, we should mention one other area of activity—namely, the manufacturing activities of the tribe. The Tiwi did not manufacture much, [32] but spears, throwing sticks, canoes, digging sticks, baskets, bodily ornaments, graveposts, and all the miscellaneous paraphernalia used in ceremonials had to be made in whatever leisure time people could find during the long weeks and months when each of the households lived more or less in isolation from the others. Crude and simple as these artifacts were, their construction required time, and only the older men had the time and the skill based on experience to make the more important of them.

[147] Largely because of their failing eyesight, the older men hunted very little and hence tended to remain in camp all day while the young men were hunting and the women were gathering. There were, of course, some old men who took advantage of this time to do little except doze in the shade, but 182 most of the household heads spent a fairly active day in camp engaged in 511 making things. Here we find another aspect of Tiwi culture that results from 531

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

the relatively favorable food supply. Some of the Tiwi artifacts, particularly the highly decorative graveposts and ceremonial spears, are unique among Australian tribes, and the carving and painting of these graveposts and spears were skills possessed only by the senior men. They were provided with the leisure time necessary to develop and use these skills by the efficiency in food production of the large household which all old men were expected to accumulate with age, and which many old men did succeed in accumulating. We said earlier that the bigger the household, the better its members ate. We now add the further correlation that the bigger the household, the more leisure time was provided for its head to engage in manufacturing and artistic production. Tu'untalumi has been cited as an example of a large household head (twelve resident wives and thirteen children at home in 1928-29) who loved ceremonial affairs. It would be wrong to infer from this that Tu'untalumi only loved going to parties. He also loved preparing for them, and this preparation (for him as for all other senior men) included the manufacture of ceremonial spears, the preparation of graveposts, and the composition of songs and dances. In the long dull periods between trips outside his home district, he spent most of the days and many of the nights in the creation of these ceremonial necessities. He was not a full-time specialist in the sense that he made spears or posts to exchange with other men who had neither the time nor the skill—the rules of kinship required that every senior man make his own ceremonial spears and contract for his own posts. Tu'untalumi manufactured his graveposts to meet his own ritual obligations, but he took a more magnanimous view of those obligations than did most men. Put in our terms, we might say that he was wealthy enough (in the size of his household) to be generous with his own productions. One example of this attitude was his attendance at funerals that other men of equal kinship to the deceased did not find it necessary to attend; his frequent contribution of an extra gravepost to those provided by the chief mourners of the deceased was a similar gesture. "Tu'untalumi not only came to our mother's funeral, he also made a gravepost for it" was a very gratifying reflection for an obscure group of mourners to cherish among their memories, and of course it was acts of this sort that made the old man so well liked and admired. The economic point of the matter, however, is that only a man with as large a household as his could afford the gesture of giving away, in a situation where kinship obligations did not demand it, a gravepost that required about a week's full-time work.

It was, however, sad to observe that as an artistic producer Tu'untalumi, like many intellectuals in other cultures, tended to operate in too many media. His work as a composer of songs and dances was universally admired, but his graveposts, while appreciated, were not regarded as being as outstanding, technically speaking, as those of another old man, his crony Timalarua. In personality, Timalarua, a successful household head (eleven living wives, ten children at home), was quiet spoken, placid, and only mildly gregarious, and he is mainly of interest because in his leisure-time activity he paid but routine attention to song and dance compositions and concentrated rather single mindedly on making canoes, ceremonial spears, and graveposts. Fre-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

517 quently, on the banks of some creek or river in Tiklauila territory, a party
837 wanting to cross would scout around and find a canoe hidden in the weeds. Everybody would use it to cross, and the question "Whose canoe is it?" would elicit the reply, "Oh, it's always there and everybody uses it who wishes to cross." But if the question were "Who made it in the first place and put it there?" the answer would be, "Probably Timalarua. He likes making canoes; he makes them all the time." He also liked making spears and posts, though he was not as generous with them as Tu'untalumi. When one of his posts appeared at a funeral, people would point it out admiringly saying, "Timalarua made that one" and the speaker would trace the lines and designs on it with his finger, using much the same gestures as an art critic in a modern gallery. When a post by Tu'untalumi was identified and admired, however, the admiration was for Tu'untalumi the generous person rather than Tu'untalumi the
[554] artist. One was a wonderful craftsman, the other was a wonderful man. But acclaim given to the song and dance performances of the two men was just the reverse: the dances of Timalarua were adequate but not outstanding, those of Tu'untalumi were in a class by themselves.

Comparison of the activities of these two old men illustrates the impossibility of drawing any line, in the simpler cultures at least, between artistic production and technological production. The canoes and the posts manufactured by Timalarua and the posts manufactured and the new dances created by Tu'untalumi were all, so to speak, in the same category, as far as the Tiwi were concerned. The distinction we might make between the canoes as "useful" products and the posts and dances as ceremonial or artistic products never occurred to them. All were objects or products which only successful old men had the required skill and leisure to make. The fact that one old man liked to make canoes and leave them around for other people to use, and another old man liked to compose dances and perform his compositions widely for other people to enjoy, to them merely indicated individual taste and choice; it did not make the first a craftsman and the second an artist. This point has been overlooked in most of the theorizing about primitive art; perhaps a necessary first step in the development of primitive artists is for a society to be able to provide a few men with enough leisure time to be able to cultivate what might perhaps best be called hobbies, since a hobby can equally well be something "useful" to society, like canoe making, or something personally satisfying, like dancing or decorating graveposts.

[411] The huge, heavy, painted spears made by these old Tiwi men were
531 mainly used only for display, and even the oldest men were positive that
556 this had always been the tradition. In fact, they seemed a little shocked at the implication that such beautiful and valuable objects could ever have been used for such mundane purposes as hunting or warfare. The cutting and painting of such spears took time and skill—more time than a gravepost—and no important man went to the smallest gathering without bearing on his shoulder at least half a dozen of these symbols of his importance. If on his way through the bush he sighted a kangaroo, he dropped his painted spears and stalked
[224] the animal with an ordinary spear, or more probably left it to the young men in the party who carried only ordinary ones.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

with many free daughters were usually men well over fifty. "Comers" were men in their thirties. In so choosing the "comers," the old and wealthy men reached right over the junior elders and the forty-year-old group down to the ranks of the young operators. In this way we may say that the real power group, the successful old gerontocrats, chose their own successors. They chose young men twenty or more years younger than themselves (as Ki-in-kumi chose Pedimo) because men at such an age were not rivals or competitors. A man so chosen in his thirties could be already powerful and fairly wealthy by his middle forties (like Tomitari in 1928) and very wealthy in his fifties. Such men went up fast because of their selection by the group in power. Those not so chosen had to go up the hard way by accumulating what position and influence they could by manipulations of the few available females not controlled by the wealthy old men. The "haves" left a small minority of women available to the "have-not" men to keep them quiet, but the great majority of females were concentrated in the hands of a few old men and these old men chose their own successors. Thus the Tiwi system actually deserves to be called a primitive oligarchy as much as it deserves to be called a gerontocracy. It was run by a few old men who ruled it not so much because they were old but because as young men they had been clever and then had lived long enough to reap the rewards of their cleverness. These rewards made up Tiwi wealth—many wives, much leisure, many daughters to bestow, many satellites and henchmen, and much power and influence over other people and tribal affairs.

888

888 STATUS AND TREATMENT OF THE AGED--cultural definition and explanations of old age; idealized and derogatory evaluations of old age; conception of the ideal old man and old woman; symbols and synonyms for age and longevity; prerogatives and disabilities of the aged; special exemptions (e.g., from legal sanctions, from taboos); etiquette toward the aged; treatment of the aged (e.g., exploitation, neglect, obedience, respect); support of the aged (e.g., investments, fees for services, annuities, pensions, assistance from relatives); care of the aged; customs of abandoning and killing the aged; etc. See also:

Investment 454
Insurance and annuities 456
Age stratification 561
Etiquette 576
Status of widows 589
Family relationships 593
Polygamy 595
Legal liability 672
Incidence and relief of old age dependency. . 737
Social insurance 745
Last favors before death 763

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
0120 Tiwi 0120

to the husband of the pregnant woman. We carefully say "the husband of the pregnant woman" rather than "the father of the child" because the right resided in the male head of the household at the time of the birth. Although he was ordinarily both the father of the child and the husband of its mother, there were naturally occasions when a child was born after the death of its father, in which case the right of betrothal unquestionably belonged to the mother's new husband. The clearest statement of this rule is to say that the right of betrothal of all newly born females resided in the husband of the mother at the time of the girl's birth. "He who named the child bestowed it." 584 851 593

In most human societies the proportion of males and females in the population is approximately equal, except in the older age-groups where women predominate owing to their tendency to live longer than men. The Tiwi conformed to this norm biologically, but their cultural insistence that all females of every age be married resulted in further unusual features of the domestic situation. No such compulsory marriage was required or expected of males. Hence, the total female population, but only part of the male population, was married. Mathematically this permitted, indeed required, a high degree of plural marriage. The men who held the right to betroth—namely, the fathers of the female babies—could, within certain limits imposed by the kinship system, bestow their about-to-be-born or newly born daughters where they wished, and they certainly did not bestow them on about-to-be-born or newly born males. On the contrary, they bestowed them, generally speaking, where some tangible return was to be anticipated. Put bluntly, in Tiwi culture daughters were an asset to their father, and he invested these assets in his own welfare. He therefore bestowed his newly born daughter on a friend or an ally, or on somebody he wanted as a friend or an ally. Such a person was apt to be a man near his own age or at least an adult man, and hence perhaps forty years or so older than the newly born baby bestowed upon him as a wife. Or, the father might bestow an infant daughter on a man—or some close relative of such a man—who had already bestowed an infant daughter upon him, thus in effect swapping infant daughters. Obviously, the fathers who did the swapping, even if they were not quite the same age themselves, were bound to be many years older than the infant wives they thus received from each other. Or, thirdly, a father looking for a suitable male upon whom to bestow his infant daughter's hand might decide to use her as old-age insurance—in which case he selected as her future husband not one of the older adult men who would be old when he himself was old, but a likely looking youngster "with promise"; that is, a youth in his late twenties or thirties who showed signs of being a good hunter and a good fighting man, and who was clearly on his way up in tribal power and influence. Such a youth, in his late twenties at the time of betrothal, would, with luck, be in his prime as "a big man" in about twenty years—a time when the father of the infant daughter would be getting old and decrepit and much in need of an influential son-in-law who was obligated to him. 162 [581 595] [584] 593 582 581 [562] [572] [606 868]

There were other bases upon which infant daughters were betrothed, 582 593

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

fifty was likely to be left a widow by him within the next fifteen years, and 587
even if she remarried a man of the same age as her first husband, she could
easily be widowed for the second time while still herself a comparatively young
woman. There were several different patterns, most of them intermingled in
the same household, for a female matrimonial career, but the situation may be
illustrated by the concrete case of one of Turimpi's widows, an ancient crone
(in 1930) named Bongdadu. Born about 1865, she was betrothed at birth to
a powerful old man named Walitaumi who was at least the same age as her
father, if not older. Not unnaturally, he died while she was still a child and
well before she was old enough to join his household. Her betrothal was then
reassigned, so to speak, to Walitaumi's half-brother, Turimpi, then in his early
forties. About seven years later, she joined Turimpi's household as a blush-
ing bride of fourteen, her husband then being close to fifty. In the next twenty
years she became Turimpi's most prolific wife and bore numerous children, three
of whom, Antonio, Mariano, and Louis, all born between 1883 and 1900,
were men of importance in Tiwi politics in 1930, and one of whom, Louis, is
still alive today.[6] Around 1900, when Bongdadu was still only about thirty-five,
she passed to M., a middle-aged Tiklauila, and was his wife until his death
around 1925. By this date, Bongdadu was over sixty and had borne ten children,
four of whom died young. Not unnaturally, she was beginning to approach the
hag or crone stage of Tiwi womanhood. Nonetheless, she had to remarry, but
by now all of the people who might have claimed any rights of bestowal in
her were long since dead, her eldest sons were adult men of some importance
and able to protect their mother's interests, and clearly she was unlikely to
produce any more children.[7] Her chief value was as a food producer and
housekeeper and female politician, roles for which she had been well trained
in her long years as wife of Turimpi and M.

Old women in Bongdadu's position had to remarry, but they were in 587
a good position to exercise some choice of their own as to whom they re- 888●
married, especially if they had strong influential sons to support them in their
wishes. There was a frequent pattern in such cases for the widow, aided and
abetted (or perhaps even forced) by her sons, to arrange a marriage of con-
venience with some obscure nonentity much younger than herself and usually
a friend or contemporary of her sons. In 1925, then, Bongdadu, widowed [554]
three times already, married as her fourth husband one Dominico, a man of
no importance whatever, as was shown by the fact that at this time he was
nearly forty and had not been able to attract even one bestowed wife. He had, 587
however, already married one widow, so that his marriage to Bongdadu gave 595

[6] Tiwi personal names are polysyllabic and hard for the reader to remember; hence, [551
wherever possible, we have used "whiteman names" for individuals. The frequency of 128
Spanish names among these "whiteman names," such as Mariano or Dominico, derives 797]
from the fact that the original buildings for the Mission Station were built by a number
of Filipino workmen whom the priests brought with them.

[7] The Tiwi saw no inconsistency between believing in spirit impregnation and [842]
believing at the same time that an old woman was unlikely to bear children. It was to
them a matter of probabilities, and of course with them as with us, occasionally an
elderly lady did—disconcertingly—have a baby, proving the logic of their position.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

224 roos,[2] wildfowl, and other game, keen eyesight is essential, hence Tiwi men
[887 did very little hunting once they were past about forty-five, though they hated to admit their hunting days were over. The meat, fish, and game provided for the large household of an old man was obtained by the young men, and this was about the only thing an old man thought his sons or his step-sons were good for. Typically the young man, when he returned at nightfall with
[592 a kangaroo which he had spent most of the day tracking down and spearing,
888 would ignore the old man and dump the carcass at the feet of his mother as if to say, "I brought this back for you, not for that old So and So."

As the women straggled back to camp toward sundown with the results
512 of their day's gathering and the young hunters brought in their bags, cooking
595 began and the main meal of the day (usually the only hot meal) was eaten. The Tiwi themselves had no doubt about the close relationship between plural
[797] marriage and good eating. "If I had only one or two wives I would starve," the head of a large household once told the missionary who was preaching against plural marriage, "but with my present ten or twelve wives I can send them out in all directions in the morning and at least two or three of them are likely to bring something back with them at the end of the day, and then
262 we can all eat." This was a realistic appraisal of the economic situation and
[222] it is to be noted that he put the emphasis on the food obtained by the women gatherers rather than that supplied by the male hunters. Based on the observations of 1928-29, it would appear that the Tiwi ate pretty well, especially in the larger households. Kangaroo and other marsupials, and some of the larger lizards (for example, the goanna) were very plentiful in the bush, as were fish and turtles and dugong on the coasts and wild geese in many districts. But all these were extras or dividends; the staple everyday foods were the vegetable foods gathered day after day in apparently unending quantities by the women. For most months of the year there was always plenty of *kwoka*,
[252] a porridgelike dish prepared by soaking and mashing the small nuts of a native palm. These nuts grew in such quantity that in every large camp baskets or dishes of *kwoka*, at various stages of preparation, were always available, even for midnight snacks if anybody woke up hungry. *Kwoka* was about as dull and tasteless as Scotch porridge, but equally filling, and naked small boys full of *kwoka* had stomachs distended like balloons. In the wet season the place of *kwoka* was taken by *kolema*, a yam whose ripening and growing season was much shorter than that of the nuts from which *kwoka* was made. It was
[796] on the abundance of the *kolema* yams during January and February that the Tiwi supported the more elaborate of their collective ceremonials.

The abundance of these and other vegetable foods, plus the ample supply of game and fish in many places, meant that under aboriginal conditions the Tiwi lived at a food-consumption level much further above the near-

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[2] Actually there are no kangaroos on Melville and Bathurst Islands; the chief meat animal is a slightly smaller species of marsupial technically called the wallaby. As the distinction is important only to zoologists, and as many of the so-called kangaroos in American zoos are in fact wallabies, we prefer to use the more familiar word.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

matter might end there. Or the old man might let matters rest until the time of the next big gathering of people at a funeral or at the *kolema* rituals, and then revive the issue under such public circumstances that the accused young man could not slip away unpunished. If he followed this second course, the old man went to the gathering covered from head to foot in white paint, the Tiwi uniform for anybody who came in anger and intended to pick a fight with somebody. The decision between these two lines of action lay, of course, with the old man, and while that decision was to some extent determined by how vindictive and revengeful he felt, nonetheless it was also influenced by how this dispute was related to all the other feuds, disputes, deals, marriage exchanges, and so forth, in which both parties were already involved. Like a good lawyer in our own culture, the old man had to consider, before he took the matter to court, who the young man was and who his friends and relatives were, and had to ask himself whether in seeking vengeance for the blow to his pride he might not be doing himself more political harm than the injury was worth.

In arriving at his decision, the old man was influenced to some extent also by another variable, the attitude of the young man. If the alleged offense occurred only once and the young man denied it and thereafter kept his distance, the accuser would probably let the matter drop. Offenders were very rarely caught *in flagrante*, and the evidence of seduction was almost always circumstantial or hearsay. In every case there was some element of doubt as to whether the right young male was being accused or whether the whole story had not been invented by some of the old wives out of sheer spite toward a young wife. The old man had to take such factors into consideration, not out of any abstract sense of justice, but because, naturally, he didn't like to be made a fool of, either by young men or his own spiteful old wives. But he was most suspicious and unbelieving of his own flighty young wives, and sometimes the accused young man was defiant and persistent in his attentions to the same young wife, or wives. In effect, such a young man was daring the old husband to do his worst. Such continued defiance of the seniority system could not be permitted; it became a case not of simple seduction but of subversive activity, since it was a threat to the whole social structure of the tribe, centered as that was around the marriage of old men to young women. When confronted by such action, a Tiwi elder said (as people of other cultures might), "What would happen if everybody did that? We'd have complete anarchy and free love." Hence an old husband, so defied, was almost duty bound not just to seek satisfaction for the private injury done to himself, but to defend the public weal by hauling the offender before the bar of public opinion and denouncing him before as large a crowd as possible, as a public enemy. If the situation became so flagrant that he could not wait until the next big funeral or the next *kolema* gathering, he began calling in surrounding camps or going himself, dressed in white paint, to summon them to assist him in meting out public justice to the violator of the system. When a sufficient number of upholders of the right (that is, senior heads of households) had been collected together, the usual one-sided duel (see below, Chapter 4) was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

221 so high and rank that the hunters were unable to get near the kangaroo. In
224 this event, a senior man of the district might decide to convene a grass-
[554] burning posse. To it he invited more or less whom he pleased, so long as he included other household heads of the same band and other senior men from outside it whose ancestry gave them some claim to be invited. At the appointed time the hunters assembled, perhaps ten or fifteen adult men, with younger ones doing the actual hunting and the older ones supervising. The women and children acted as beaters; the grass was set on fire over a big area, and the kangaroos rounded up and killed while dazed by the smoke and the noise. The bag of animals killed in such a concerted hunt sometimes ran higher than one kangaroo per participant, so that every man, woman, and child present was able to gorge himself on kangaroo meat for a day or two. This sudden glut of meat was not, however, the main object of the burning, but a dividend. Even though few kangaroos were caught in the smoke and confusion, the burned-over area would provide good visibility for kangaroo hunting during the rest of the dry season, since the new tender shoots that sprang from the burned-over grass were a favorite food of the kangaroo and served to lure them out of the denser scrub areas and the mangrove swamps where hunting them was always difficult.

224 These occasional joint hunts, like the occasional small fights and the
57 funerals of unimportant people, usually brought together only the members
619 of households who lived relatively close to one another, so that while they are included in the list of events which interrupted household isolation, they did not, as a rule, involve any interaction between members of any wider group than the neighboring households. Perhaps the whole matter of activity beyond the household and the band can be illustrated best by an actual case.
159 We have already mentioned the venerable Tu'untalumi, an old man resident
● 888 among the Tiklauila, who as late as 1929, and despite the fact that by then the Tiklauila were the band most subject to mission influence, nonetheless had a list of twenty-one wives. In other ways besides his record of polygamy, Tu'untalumi was a pillar of the old culture. Though past seventy and much too old to hunt, he was a most enthusiastic and indefatigable song and dance composer, and in his zest for ceremonial he made a point of attending every big festival and as many smaller ones as he could get to. The whole tribe respected Tu'untalumi as a big man, liked him as a person, admired him for his steadfast support of Tiwi traditions, and most of all accepted him as a sort of leading authority on ritual matters. When dubious or disputed points of ceremonial were submitted to him, his decision, given clearly and firmly and with much citation of precedent and the distant past, was accepted without demur. His presence at a gathering located outside his own district was always a source of gratification to the household which had convened the gathering. The fact that Tu'untalumi had seen fit to attend not only made that household feel important but also provided its members with a technical guide and arbiter for unofficial help in running the rituals. The old man loved going to parties—and he was always a welcome guest—and years of such activity had given him such a sturdy, wiry constitution that despite his near-seventy-five years he could

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

outdance and out-sing and out-party most of the men fifty years younger than himself.[6] 159 888

Since Tu'untalumi was a senior Tiwi household head who spent more of his time attending festivals, funerals, fights, and other collective occasions than did most of his contemporaries, it is instructive to examine his movements over a full year. If he had kept an engagement book during 1928-29, it would have looked something like this: 159 887

Early April (end of wet season): Leaves his home base in Tangio where he has spent most of the wet season and visits the Mission station to attend a few small funerals (children who have died at the Mission in the preceding months). During these funerals a series of fights and duels also takes place. Total people present: perhaps fifty or sixty. Time thus spent in helping to wind up public business: five days. Returns home to Tangio and remains there for rest of April. [797]

End of April: Goes to Rangu with a big party of other Tiklauila for a funeral (junior elder). Fairly big funeral, lots of people, lots of disputes. Time away, including leisurely journey to and from Rangu, about two weeks. Gets back home about middle of May. [764 166]

Middle of May—end of June: Lives quietly at home with his household in Tangio.

About July 1st: Goes to Mission for a few days, "visits" with whoever is there. Tries out a new composition of his own (song and dance) on group camped at Mission. Returns home for rest of July. [533 535]

Last week of July: Taking his younger wives and their children with two senior wives in charge of them, sets out for Malau for a big funeral with lots of people and fights. There he performs his new dance; is much consulted on ceremonial matters by the Malauila; gets into a few fights himself but handles them with dignity and honor; remains in Malau two weeks; stops off to visit and attend a small funeral with the Munupula on his way back; has a fight with a Munupula while there; returns to the Mission; stays there a day or two dispensing all the news from Malau and Munupi to those camped there; issues invitations for a grass burning in some sections of Tangio which were not burned in April or May. Goes on home to Tangio where some of his older wives have remained during his absence. Total time away: about three weeks. [166]

End of August: Is joined in Tangio by several other Tiklauila and Rangwila households whom he has invited. Grass burning and joint kangaroo hunting goes on for four or five days. Dancing and partying at night. After five days most of visiting group leave and he and his household remain alone in Tangio until well into October. [224]

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[6] There is no suggestion that Tu'untalumi was in any way an official ritual leader. All old men, by virtue of their years, were to some extent ritual leaders; he had merely worked harder and longer at it than most of them. His tirelessly joyful personality had a good deal to do with his success in the self-established role. In a culture that might be thought likely to make all its men gloomy, anxiety-ridden introverts, he was a warm, happy, dignified old extrovert and he was widely admired. [156]

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[6] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[6] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Women were, however, a form of capital that possessed the power of talking back to the investors. As daughters or as wives they were quite thoroughly subordinate to the wishes of their fathers or husbands, and Tiwi wives were as frequently and as brutally beaten by their husbands as wives in any other savage society. But as mothers and as sisters the women were not coerced by their sons and their brothers. On the contrary, sons or brothers wishing to use their mothers or their sisters in their political schemes (typically when those mothers or sisters became or were about to become widows) could only do so with the active collaboration of the women concerned. Tough-minded young widows could drive a hard bargain with their brothers as to where they remarried, since each needed the other to make the remarriage acceptable to the tribe at large and to beat down the other competitors (the dead husbands' brothers, for example) who wished to control the remarriage of the widows. Young girls thus had no bargaining power but young widows had a good deal. Old mothers with influential senior sons were extremely powerful. Any affront to an old woman was an affront to her sons, and some of the strongest influence networks were alliances of several senior brothers, in which their old mother seemed to be the mastermind and the senior sons largely the enforcers of what the old mother and her middle-aged daughters (their sisters) had decided among themselves. 562 593 587

Thus, for women, as for men, age and political skill were the crucial factors in determining their position. Young girls were chattels and as such were passed around from husband to husband. But with increasing age, smart young women, especially in alliance with their smart young brothers, could control their own fate with some firmness, and if they and their brothers had a shrewd old mother (also with powerful senior brothers still alive) to advise them and support them, then the decisions of such a group as to where the girls remarried were very difficult decisions for anybody else to combat or oppose. Not as independent operators, but as behind-the-scenes allies of their sons and brothers, Tiwi mothers and sisters enjoyed much more essential freedom in their own careers as often-remarried widows than would appear at first sight in a culture which ostensibly treated all women as currency in the political careers of the men. No matter how males, both old and young, might connive, they were constantly aware that no remarriage of a widow could ever be arranged and made to stick unless the widow herself was agreeable. 562 888 553 587

In the limited space available, all we can offer are a few samples of how the influence game was played by a few selected individuals of various ages. Age was of great importance in Tiwi careers and therefore we select our samples from all the adult male age-groups. We have selected them all from the same band—the Malauila—so as to show as clearly as possible the interplay between one career and another for men of the same band. And finally we select men of the Malauila band for our examples because in 1928-29 it was a band little affected as yet by the outside influences—Catholic missionaries and Japanese pearl divers—which were beginning to modify Tiwi marriage customs among some of the other bands. 557 888 177 797 121

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

159 a "young operator" somewhat before 1900, the deals by which he got his
557 career launched were difficult to reconstruct. The results of them, plus the fact that he lived long enough to draw full dividends from them, gave him by
159 1928-29 a wife-list of twenty-one. These had been accumulated as follows:

595

When around 30 years old he remarried two elderly widows and a year or two later received his first bestowal. Thus by age 33 he had three wives. On that foundation he went ahead thus:

		Total
At age 33		
Had two widows and one bestowed wife		3
Between age 33 and age 43		
Remarried two more widows and had three more bestowed wives join him	+5	8
Between age 43 and age 53		
Three more bestowed wives came into residence	+3	11
(During these twenty years at least five bestowed wives died in infancy or childhood)	+5	16
Between age 53 and age 65		
Two more bestowed wives joined him and he married 2 more widows (one the mother of Boya)	+4	20
Now at age 66 there is still one more bestowed wife, aged about 9, in her father's household	+1	21

Thus his list of twenty-one wives was made up of six elderly widows and fifteen bestowed or rebestowed young wives.

By 1928-29 five of his bestowed wives had died before puberty and one was still with her father. Three of his six widows were dead. Subtracting these nine women, we find that his current household contained twelve resident and active wives: the oldest about sixty, two in their fifties, four in their forties or thirties, three in their twenties, and the two youngest around seventeen or eighteen years of age. Almost all of them had borne children since joining his household, but the death rate had been high among Ki-in-kumi's children and from all of his wives he had only eight living children of whom six were girls. Five of these six daughters he had bestowed or rebestowed on Padimo (see above) and the sixth on a middle-aged Rangwila. His oldest living daughter was the girl of 20 married to Padimo. His oldest living son was a boy of 18, despite the fact that Ki-in-kumi had been "a married man" for over thirty-five years. This was a situation which many Tiwi elders found themselves
159 in at the close of long and successful lives. With numerous wives, numerous
592 step-sons, large households to be managed, and large estates to be liquidated after their deaths, their oldest real sons (as distinct from step-sons) were still boys or youths and as such quite unsuitable as executive assistants while the old man lived or as heirs or executors after the old man died. Quite apart
[882 from kinship considerations, the Tiwi emphasis on age and seniority made it
888 impossible for Ki-in-kumi to utilize in any capacity his 18-year-old son. A youth of that age was a nonentity, whoever his father.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

554 of Units I and II and made their wives available for redistribution. The working of the Tiwi system made this possibility unlikely. Unsuccessful junior elders could not expect to step into the shoes of successful senior elders merely by [888] outliving them; nor could one rise to power in the gerontocratic system [555] merely by living past fifty-five. What was necessary was age *plus* ability, and the time to demonstrate the ability was in one's thirties. If it was not demonstrated and recognized by then, a man could not forge ahead in his middle forties and early fifties, for by then it was too late. This fact gave a certain cyclical quality to the transfer of influence in Tiwi. The influence of successful 557 senior elders, to the extent that such an intangible thing was transferable at 587 all, tended to skip a decade and bypass the men currently in the junior elder category in favor of the men in the current "young operator" category. Since Ki-in-kumi was already quite old, there was in 1929 a great deal of political maneuvering going on in Malau and elsewhere in anticipation of his death, and it was clear that the people most likely to profit by his death and the redistribution of his twelve resident wives (one-third of all resident wives in [561] the band) were the men aged from thirty-two to forty-two such as Padimo, Boya, Summit, and Gitjara, all of whom were jockeying for position to take advantage of the death of any old man, especially such a wealthy elder as Ki-in-kumi. Some of the widows would undoubtedly remarry into other bands, but these younger Malauila, living with or near the old man's establishment, were already taking advantage of their strategic location to make some preliminary deals and marriage arrangements for the old man's widows even before his death. Neither Padimo, as Ki-in-kumi's son-in-law, nor Boya, as his nominal "son," could themselves marry any of the widows, but as resident members of his establishment and the only two men so situated, each was in an excellent spot to act as an honest broker in the disposal of Ki-in-kumi's large estate. Anybody interested in obtaining a widow or two at the death of Ki-in-kumi was well advised to have a few quiet words with either Padimo or Boya well ahead of time. Both of them had wives who lived and worked every day alongside Ki-in-kumi's womenfolk and thus they each had ideal communication systems to the women's side of the band. This was why they had held off setting up their own separate establishments though they were both married men. Neither were "heirs" of Ki-in-kumi in any strict Western use of that word, but it was obvious that it was their careers that would be promoted and their spheres of influence that would be enhanced by the death of Ki-in-kumi. The junior elders, all approaching or past the age of fifty with only small establishments and small spheres of influence, were being bypassed in the transfer of the old man's assets.

Every Tiwi anxious to obtain a Ki-in-kumi widow recognized the strategic positions of Padimo and Boya; the problem was to decide which broker to retain, since the positions of the two men in relation to Ki-in-kumi were so different. For the past four or five years Padimo had been the right-hand man and trusted lieutenant and undoubtedly it was he upon whom Ki-in-kumi was relying to carry out his own wishes about the distribution of his widows. We said earlier that old men found it difficult to control the remarriage of their

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

with many free daughters were usually men well over fifty. "Comers" were 557
men in their thirties. In so choosing the "comers," the old and wealthy men 571
reached right over the junior elders and the forty-year-old group down to the 584
ranks of the young operators. In this way we may say that the real power [888]
group, the successful old gerontocrats, chose their own successors. They chose
young men twenty or more years younger than themselves (as Ki-in-kumi chose
Padimo) because men at such an age were not rivals or competitors. A man so
chosen in his thirties could be already powerful and fairly wealthy by his
middle forties (like Tomitari in 1928) and very wealthy in his fifties. Such
men went up fast because of their selection by the group in power. Those not
so chosen had to go up the hard way by accumulating what position and in-
fluence they could by manipulations of the few available females not con-
trolled by the wealthy old men. The "haves" left a small minority of women
available to the "have-not" men to keep them quiet, but the great majority of
females were concentrated in the hands of a few old men and these old men
chose their own successors. Thus the Tiwi system actually deserves to be called 561
a primitive oligarchy as much as it deserves to be called a gerontocracy. It was 887
run by a few old men who ruled it not so much because they were old but
because as young men they had been clever and then had lived long enough
to reap the rewards of their cleverness. These rewards made up Tiwi wealth—
many wives, much leisure, many daughters to bestow, many satellites and
henchmen, and much power and influence over other people and tribal affairs.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

627 really wild, such a spear was apt to carom off the ground at an unexpected angle
684 and inflict a severe wound before the spectators (as collective umpires) had time to call it—in which case the duel was over and the accused was punished.[2]

Apart from those that unpredictably deflected off the ground, or even off a neighboring tree, the young man could dodge the old man's spears indefinitely if he wanted to. He was much younger and hence almost invariably in much better shape than the older man. But if he did this, the old man soon
[626] began to look a little ridiculous, and Tiwi society thoroughly disapproved of
[888] young men who made old men look ridiculous in public. Continued dodging and jumping and weaving of the body, no matter how gracefully they were done, were not prolonged by any young man who hoped in time to become a respected elder himself. The elders in the last analysis controlled bestowals, and holding one of them up to public ridicule was sure to antagonize all of them. So the young man, having for five or ten minutes demonstrated his physical ability to avoid being hit, then showed a proper moral attitude by allowing himself to be hit. This took even greater skill in bodily movement. Trying to lose a fight without making it too obvious to the crowd and without getting hurt too much oneself is a problem that confronts some professional athletes in our own culture, and few of them do it with as much skill as the younger Tiwi in the same situation. A fairly deep cut on the arm or thigh that bled a lot but healed quickly was the most desirable wound to help the old man inflict, and when the blood gushed from such a wound the crowd yelled approval and the duel was over. The young man had behaved admirably, the old man had vindicated his honor, the sanctity of marriage and the Tiwi constitution had been upheld, and everybody went home satisfied and full of moral rectitude. Seduction did not pay.

This was the Tiwi duel as it ideally should be conducted, and in per-
183 haps as many as two-thirds of all such disputes it was so conducted. Divergences
627 from this form clearly arose from the unpredictability of human beings and
684 their fondness for trying to exercise choice instead of following a set pattern. Though the dice were heavily loaded against them, some Tiwi young men chose defiance instead of repentance. There were various avenues of defiance open to them. The mildest was to refuse to allow the old man's spears to hit
627 the target. Slightly more brazen were the young men who turned up at the
684 beginning of the duel with throwing sticks or hunting spears in their hands, even though they used these not to throw but to knock aside contemptuously the spears of the old man. More brazen still was the young man, rare but not unknown, who went so far as to throw missiles back at the older accuser. All such attempts to defy the traditional pattern of the duel met with the same response, and that very quickly. The duel began as usual with the two antagonists facing one another inside the circle of spectators. As soon as it became apparent that the young man was not conforming to the normal pattern of meekness and nonretaliation, there would be immediate activity on the

[2] Two cases of broken legs below the knee within six weeks of each other in 1928 give some indication of the force with which such badly aimed spears would bounce off the ground.